English as a Foreign Language (EFL). However, helping students to be able to be a good writer is not easy. It also needs some effective efforts. Saima *et al* (2013:130) states that writing is more complicated than the other language skills. This is supported by Heaton (1990:135) who states that writing is complex and difficult to teach and also to learn, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgemental elements. From this point of view, writing skill covers the mastery of language, mechanical skills, treatment of content, stylistic skills, and evaluative skills.

In *KTSP* curriculum, the goal of teaching writing in junior high school level has been stated clearly. They have to construct a paragraph or text in different types. There are descriptive, narrative and recount text. When students have graduated from junior high school, they are expected to master those text.

Based on the English syllabus for the eighth grade of junior high school students, recount text is as one of genres in writing that should also be well mastered by the students. They must be able to write a recount text. Its purpose is either to retell, inform or to entertain the reader. There is no complication among the participants and that differentiates from narrative. A recount text has an orientation, a series of events in chronological order, personal remarks on the events, and a reorientation that "round of" the sequence events.

In reality, writing recount text is not easy, based on the writer's interview with one of SMPN 1 Maesan teachers, it was found out that many students at that school face difficulties in writing recount text. Students could not develop their ideas, and they are lack of vocabulary. The English teacher also said that the students' participation in the teaching learning process in English classes was

passive or in other words students relatively inactive in writing an English text. It is clear that they need more various learning method in the teaching writing ability so that the students are active and motivated in learning writing.

Harmer (2004:11) states that student's attention is directed to *what* rather than the *how* of text construction. The students only analyze the text in terms of language rather than how it is constructed. It causes them difficulties in discovering ideas in the beginning of writing. It will be a problem when students write nothing on a piece of paper. They often feel frustated in discovering ideas. Although they have so many ideas in their mind, they could not transform them into words. When students face the writing assignment, they sometimes suffer "writer's block." The ideas cannot come easily so that they only stare at their blank piece of paper.

Considering to problems, brainstorming is proposed to be an effective way in teaching writing for students. Brainstorming can help students develop the topic by asking many questions as the writer thinks about the subject. Haririan and Maghsoudi (2013:1) states that brainstorming is a technique used to encourage individuals to generate ideas and come up with a list of possible solutions to a certain problem. In order to make students more easily to brainstorm, the writer provide clustering instruction. Langan (in Eramona and Hafizh, 2014:75) states that clustering can be used to generate in writing. Its helpful to think in visual way. The most important point of this method is to get our ideas down a piece of paper fast. We do not have to worry about grammar, punctuation, spellings, and even complete sentences. Thus, brainstorming technique by clustering is an effective way on the production of ideas in writing.

Based on the reason state above, the writer takes a title of her "thesis" **"**Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text Through Brainstorming Technique by Clustering at SMPN 1 Maesan in 2016/2017 academic year."

1.2   Problem Formulation of the Research

Based on the research background above, the research problem was formulated as follows:

How can brainstorming technique by clustering improve students' ability in writing recount text on the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Maesan in 2016/2017 academic year?

1.3   Objective of the Research

Related to the statement above the writer formulates the objective of the research is to improve students' ability in writing recount text through brainstorming technique by clustering on the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Maesan in 2016/2017 academic year.

1.4   Operational Definition of the Terms

The operational definition of the terms are intended to avoid misunderstanding between the researcher and the reader about the concept used in this research. These terms are operationally defined as follows:

1.   Brainstorming Technique by Clustering

In this research, brainstorming technique refers to a prewriting activity spoken or written. In the process of brainstorming, the researcher provide clustering instruction to ease the students in generating and organizing ideas based on the topic before starting write. It is used as a technique in teaching writing.

2.   Writing Ability

Students' writing ability in this research deal with the students' ability to write recount text after being taught through brainstorming technique by clustering. The final product of the writing will be in the form of simple essay. The students' writing ability is demonstrated by the scores of writing covers vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, organization, and content.

3.   Recount Text

Recount tell the reader about something that has happened in the past. It might have happened to the writer to someone else. The purpose of a recount is to retell an event and the function of a recount text is to list and describe writer's past experience by retelling events in the order in which they happened. Recount paragraph consist of three parts of element, they are: orientation, event and reorientation.

1.5   Significance of the Research

The findings of this study are expected to be useful for teaching learning process who may apply this as one of the alternative teaching model in improving the quality of teaching writing, especially teaching writing recount text. The results are hopefully useful to students who want to help themselves improved their writing ability. It is hopefully also useful for other researcher as information or a reference to conduct further research design or the same design with different text type to increase the students' ability in writing recount text through brainstorming technique by clustering.

1.6   Scope of the Research

This study is focused on the application of brainstorming technique by clustering in teaching writing recount text to the students on the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Maesan in 2016/2017 academic year.