

# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is the center of teaching English because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their ideas. Students often instinctively recognize the importance of vocabulary for their language learning. As what has been clearly noted by Schmitt (2010:4), “Students carry dictionaries and not grammar books. Based on the statement, students must bring a dictionary when they want to learn more about vocabulary so that they can add and get new vocabularies including its meanings. Increasing vocabulary mastery can help students communicate with others in English and add insight. In other words, written language vocabulary is far more extensive and varied than spoken so that the integration of language components and skills are important. It may affect their language performances that is useful in daily life.

Olinghouse and Wilson (2012) argue that vocabulary mastery has some effects and relationships with writing ability; the students who have higher size or mastery vocabulary may learn and practice writing English well. Vocabulary facilitates the process of writing ability; without vocabulary such things cannot be expressed. In other words, vocabulary mastery is categorized as the key to success in improving writing skill. The extensive mastery of vocabulary enables students to creatively express their ideas in the form of written product such as paragraph, texts or essays. They could not only become creative in writing, but they also could develop their writing skill into more extensive forms of written products.

In accordance with the statement above, the researcher is interested in knowing whether there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar and their descriptive paragraph writing ability. It is important for students, especially the eighth graders of junior high school, to know the use of language elements of descriptive paragraphs consisting of rules for vocabulary that affect ability to write descriptive paragraphs. Thus, the researcher decided to conduct a research entitled ‘‘The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023’’.

Writing is complex skill which is difficult to be mastered by students especially in English Writing. The purpose of teaching writing is to improve student’s ability in expressing their ideas in written form. To produce good writing, they have to follow the steps of writing as what has been stated by Oshima and Hogue (2007:15), writing is never a one-step action; it is an ongoing creative act. When writers start writing, they already think about what to say and how to say it. Then after they finish writing, they read over what they have written and make changes and corrections. They write and revise again until they are satisfied that their writing expresses what they want to say. By writing, they can share their ideas.

Writing can be in the form of a paragraph. According to Zemach and Islam (2005:9), a paragraph can give information, tell an opinion, explain something or even tell a short story. The sentences are arranged logically, so the readers can easily understand what the writer wants to say. In English, writing is a practical ability that must be learned by students at school. Based on 2013 curriculum in basic

competency, the eighth- grade students of junior high school are expected to be able to arrange a short and simple descriptive paragraph, both in the form of spoken and written about a person, animal, and thing, by considering the purpose, structure and language elements of the material correctly and contextually.

In writing a descriptive paragraph, the knowledge of words, phrases, or expressions should be great requirements to deliver meaning. In addition, they need the skill of sentence patterns or syntax to make any kinds of sentences as well as the comprehension of a text writing procedure, and grammar. It means that the students need to focus on their choice of words, spelling, vocabulary and grammar.

### **1.2 Research Problem**

The research problem is the most important aspect of doing a research. Scientific investigation begins with a problem, which needs to be solved by using a scientific method. Furthermore, the scientific method is expected to solve the problem faced by the learners based on what has been described in the background. The research problem in the present study is carefully constructed in the form of a question as follows: is there any significant finds correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in the academic year 2022/2023?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to find a scientific solution to answer the research that has been formulated previously. The present study is much related to scientific investigation. In line with the problem which has been formulated above. The objective of this study if this find whether or not there is any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability

of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.

#### **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

As previously stated, the learning process in this study needs to be limited because it is very important to make the discussion more specific and avoid broad discussion. As the topic suggests, this study intended to reveal whether there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth grade SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. Furthermore, vocabulary mastery is limited to the content words which include verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs. Meanwhile, the descriptive paragraph writing ability is limited on describing a person, which consists of an identification, descriptions, and conclusion. The results of the descriptive paragraph in this study are scored by adapting a scoring rubric that is focused on five criteria of a good paragraph format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure.

#### **1.5 Significance of The Study**

In this study, the researcher concerned with the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their ability in writing descriptive paragraphs writing. One of the practical reflections taken into account in undertaking the present study is the significance of the expected research findings. It means that it is not only used as an additional review but it is also implemented in the real situations. Research findings are expected to have several advantages in terms of theoretical and practical significance. The findings of the present study are expected to give both theoretical and practical significance as follows.

Theoretically, the result of this research is expected to enrich theories and become references for future study related to the correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade student in SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar. Furthermore, the procedures for conducting the research can be good guidance to be used to conduct a related study. Moreover, the findings are expected to be used as evidence that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade students in SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar academic year 2022/2023.

Practically, the findings of this study are useful to give information to the English teachers, students, and other researchers. For the English teacher, it is expected to give information that can be used as a consideration to get better results of teaching the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar. For the students, it is expected that it can help them overcome the issue by considering better learning strategies in the future so that they can improve their vocabulary and solve their problems in writing a descriptive paragraph. In addition, the results in the present study are also beneficial for other researchers. The present study can be used as a reference for future researchers who want to carry the same research related to the correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. The findings of this study may have some weaknesses that can be refined by the other researchers in the next research to make it much better.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

The title of the present study is “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023”. Before discussing the

research more deeply, the researcher should give clear definitions that are related to the terms that are used in this research. In addition, to better understand this research, the researcher provides two key terms that are defined to clarify this research, namely vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. The description of these key terms can be seen as follows.

1. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary Mastery in this study is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 in mastering the meaning of the content words especially nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

2. Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability

Descriptive paragraph writing ability is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 in writing a good descriptive paragraph which is usually used to describe and express a particular person, and it consists of identification, descriptions, and a conclusion.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL AND EMPRICAL REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The theoretical review is a set of concepts and terms from the experts that are used and required in the present research. Therefore, a scientific research should be conducted on the basis of relevant theoretical constructs and it is hoped to give practical significance and empirical evidence in relation to this study. Theories show the expert opinions and specifications about the subject. The relevance of theoretical reviews is very necessary to support this research. There are three areas that are clearly and briefly described and discussed in this chapter as follows: vocabulary mastery, writing ability and descriptive paragraph.

##### **2.1.1 Vocabulary Mastery**

Vocabulary learning is an essential part of foreign language learning as the meanings of new words are very often emphasized, whether in books or in classrooms. It is also central to language teaching and it is paramount importance to a language learner. The research indicates that teaching vocabulary may be problematic because many teachers are not confident about the best practice in vocabulary teaching and times do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning (Blachowicz and Ogle, 2008). In other words, vocabulary mastery is very important in developing the students` language skills as the vocabulary are the bulk of the language that should be firstly mastered.

Moreover, Linse and Nunan (2005) state learners` vocabulary development is an important aspect of their language development. It means that vocabulary is

one of the language aspects that should be learned by students or language learners. It helps students in reading, speaking, listening and writing. In learning vocabulary, automatically learners have to know the meaning of the words itself. Neuman and Dwyer (2009) state that vocabulary can be defined as words. those students must know to communicate effectively words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary). It also makes the students communicate effectively for a particular situational context.

Willis (2008:80) states that rich vocabulary reflects success in almost every area of the brain, from memorization memory to working and relational memory, categorization, connections, patterns, storages, and executive functions. Individual processes that enter into the learning and use of words shows that vocabulary processing requires students to organize their thoughts through a neural network that connects brain regions in several lobes. If students have studied a foreign language, they might remember some of the basic initial sentences and their limitations in texture and depth. With the increased vocabulary, students grow in verbal writing and comprehension.

Meanwhile, Johnson (2008:93) mentions that vocabulary instruction is used to help student learn new words and to help them acquire a deeper understanding of the words the know. Attending student's vocabulary is an important part of developing their ability to read, write, speak, listen, and think. It is because word knowledge influences students' ability to help them expand their knowledge base, which in turn facilitates their vocabulary growth. There are four different vocabularies; listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary. In writing vocabulary, students can express their ideas into written form.



Schmitt (2010:4) states that learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books. It means that student need the dictionary to increase their vocabulary knowledge than grammar books. In a dictionary, student learn about many words with meaning. Meanwhile, in the grammar books, student learn about the pattern of sentences. Teaching vocabulary helps students understands and communicate with others in English. In the writing process, the writers do not only think about ideas but they also must pay the attention to the use of appropriate vocabulary to convey the ideas. In learning vocabulary is important if the learners understand it, they will be able to write correctly and appropriately.

Learners make mistake in doing vocabulary exercises. Most of their mistakes that they make are about lexical mistakes, for example, they are wrong in word spelling, using suffix, etc. Thornbury (2002:29) categorizes mistakes into two main types related to forms and meaning. The first is form-related errors which include incorrect selection, wrong information, and spelling. In this term, the incorrect selection means that the existing word form is chosen by the sound that is similar to the correct form in the language use. For example, students write “My mother is very hungry for me”, in which the word should be “angry”. Incorrect information is when words are applied in the wrong formation rules and produce wrong words. This gives rise to misinformation and confuses the reader.

Furthermore, Richards and Renandya (2002:225) state that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and it has a significant role in language, as the basic of how well learners speak, listen, read and write. Learners often achieve less than their potential without extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary and maybe discouraging from making use of language learning

opportunities around them. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002:580), vocabulary is a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms. Furthermore, a well-developed vocabulary is essential for success on more than just standardized tests. The students` vocabulary mastery will bring them into much more proficient English language learners.

On the other hand. Linse and Nunan (2005:121) note that vocabulary is the collection of words that an individual knows. It means that the students have to learn about vocabulary more than before until they know various of vocabulary. A six-year-old speaker who has a highly developed vocabulary for their age in their native language might know words that are abstract and dynamic. Otherwise. they can say that a six-year-old child who does not know rectangular words and home has a very limited vocabulary. Furthermore, it means that people who learn more vocabulary from their early ages or since they are children will master more vocabulary than children who do not learn vocabulary from their early age.

According to Kamil and Hiebert (2005:3), vocabulary is the knowledge of the meanings of words. There are also kinds of vocabulary which are divided into four categories: productive, receptive vocabulary, oral, and print vocabulary. The productive vocabulary is set of words that can be used when writing or speaking. These are often used and heard by an individual, particularly in writing and speaking. In contrast, receptive vocabulary is the words that are less familiar to students as well as are considered being less to be used. In other words, the students may not use these spontaneously, for they may recognize the words` meaning in reading and listening. In addition, oral vocabulary is the set of words which is used

in speaking or reading orally. While print vocabulary consists of those words in which the meaning is known when writing or reading silently.

### **2.1.2. Writing Ability**

Writing is one of the language skills learned by students at schools writing is also a form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on pieces of paper. In addition, writing is a productive skill that is used as a communication and speaking tool. Students use their writing skills when they want to write reports, letters, diaries, notes, emails, social media status and so on. However, writing ability has been recognized as a difficult subject by students. The students need time when they start putting their ideas, making sentences and arranging sentences into paragraphs. Students need to develop their writing ability because it is essential for their academic, business, and personal relationship.

As what has been mentioned above, writing in English is not easy language skill for students, including those who study English as their foreign language they must pay attention on some writing criteria so their writing products are easily understood by the readers. Pollard (2008:50) states that there are two terms that must be applied to writing skills. The first is coherence which is the way writing is arranged. This includes logical development of ideas and careful organization within and between paragraphs. The second is cohesion which refers to how one idea is connected to another. This is generally achieved by using reference words and links. The language items mentioned are mostly, not only applied in writing but also as a guide for readers through writing.

According to Harmer (2004:31), when writing, students frequently have more time to think than they do in oral activities. They can go through what they know

in their minds, and even consult dictionaries, grammar books, or the reference to help them. Writing may be very important for one group of students but much less important for others. Writing is an essential feature of learning a language because it provides very good meanings for fixing the vocabulary, spelling, and sentence patterns. These are important components of writing, and the writer needs to consider those components. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007:15), writing is not instant, but it needs some steps. By following the steps, it will make the writer easier in the writing process. These are four steps in the writing process.

The first step is pre-writing. It is a step to get an idea by choosing a topic and thinking about the idea to explain it. The second step is organizing. In this step, the writer organizes the idea into a simple draft. The writer can write a simple draft on a piece of paper. The draft will be very useful for the writer in the writing process. The third step is writing. In this step, the writer can start to write their descriptive paragraph. Besides, the writer should consider the organization of the descriptive paragraph: identification, description, and conclusion. In addition, grammar, spelling or punctuation is the important points that should be considered. The last step is called polishing. In this step, the writer writes and refines the writing that has been written. This activity will be successful if the writer follows the steps correctly, makes revisions, and then edits their writing.

### **2.1.3 Descriptive Paragraph**

Descriptive writing appeals to the senses, so it tells how the object looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/or sounds as these senses are common in human daily life (Oshima and Hogue, 2007:61). A good description is a word picture; the readers can imagine the object, place, or person in their mind. When students want to talk

about a person, thing, and place, it must include more figurative language or describe feeling or emotion. Furthermore, a descriptive paragraph express or describes a place, thing and person in such vivid detail that the readers can easily visualize or imagine the described place, thing, and person in the paragraph.

Good writers constantly consider the readers as what they write. The students would consider a lot of things in writing such as adjectives, verbs, and nouns. Folse et al. (2010:143) state that using adjectives that the writers know will help their audience imagine and relate to the person or thing that they are describing. An adjective is a part speech that describes a noun. Adjective is important powerful kind of word that students can use in writing a descriptive paragraph. It is like spices they add flavor to written work in order to make their writing more interesting. Then, it can make the readers get the feel of what the author meant in writing. Therefore, the readers interested and not bored reading because the writer is able to bring the readers into the atmosphere being written.

Furthermore, Oshima and Hogue (2007:3) state that a paragraph is a group of related statements that a writer develops about a subject. The first sentence states the specific point, or idea, of the topic. The rest of the sentences in paragraph support that point. That meant descriptive paragraph has a topic to be discussed and tell the main idea. Moreover, the other sentences in the descriptive paragraph called supporting sentence. It gives more information about topic, specific details and explanations. Then the last sentence is conclusion sentence to close the paragraph. The writers put some descriptive sentences to make the readers easy to understand. Therefore, it can be concluded that the well- written paragraph is a group of

sentences that consists of specific points or ideas that are structure into the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a conclusion sentence.

Moreover, Savage and Mayer (2005:33) state that there are three basic parts of the descriptive paragraph such as introduction, body, and conclusion. The first is an introduction which that introduces the object or event of description writers give detail information about the object, physical appearance, and characteristics using adjective and adverbs in order to help the readers imagine and relate to the object that is being described. Besides, the scene is often described with a preposition and prepositional phrases that specify location. Besides, the last is the conclusion. In this part, the writers give their final opinion about the description.

In a descriptive paragraph, the more details are included, the more clearly the readers will imagine what the students are describing (Oshima and Hogue, 2007:65). They also explain that the language focus is using adjectives. Furthermore, the students have to describe the object in more details so that the readers will be able to imagine their descriptions. On the other hand, descriptive writing also defines that description as the method that is used in writing. The aim is to describe physical items or objects. The features are concrete or touchable. It should be attained through using the sensory of language or five senses that consist of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch in the paragraph.

The descriptive paragraph has generic structures such as identification, description, and conclusion. Evans (2000:7) defines a descriptive paragraph is about describing a person that should consist of an introduction, main body, and conclusion. Introduction in which the writer gives general information about a person, or it can be called identification. The main body is where the writer

describes their physical appearance, personal qualities, and hobbies. It can be called a description. The conclusion is the point in which the writer writes the opinion and/or feelings about the person described. This part is a sentence at the end of the paragraph that acts to unite the information that has been presented to develop controlling ideas in the topic sentence. Furthermore, the students should make a conclusion to complete the whole paragraph of descriptive.

Based on the statement above, the researcher concludes that writing a descriptive paragraph is a type of writing that gives a clear and concise description of a place, person, or thing. The primary objective of descriptive writing is to frame an image of the place, person or thing in the mind of the readers through sufficient details and allow them to feel that thing through their five senses. Based on the definition above, writing is a process of creation of thoughts, ideas, and feelings expressed in writing language with the certain goal. The writer gives a final opinion about the description which is clearly presented.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

The empirical review is the way to get the information about the previous researches. It purposes at providing the review of theories that is related to the present study and as the references for this study. The focus of the present study is to know there is any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability. The researcher used two previous researches which have been carried out, as a reference in the writing of the current bachelor thesis. Furthermore, the researcher provided similar studies that have been conducted by other researchers in the past as the empirical evidence.

The first research was conducted by Dwiwati (2016) entitled “The Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and their Ability on Writing Descriptive Text at the Seventh Grade Students of MTs Ma`rif Kepil Wonosobo In the Academic Year of 2015/2016’’. The previous research was intended to find out is there any significant correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their ability on writing descriptive paragraph at the seventh-grade students of MTs Ma` arid Kepil in the academic year of 2015/2016. In addition, the objective of this study was to analyses are the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery of the seventh-grade students of MTs Ma` arid Kepil in academic year 2019/2020 affect their writing ability in writing descriptive paragraph. The researcher found the results of the study that there was a positive and significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and descriptive text writing ability of the seventh-grade students of MTs Ma`arif Kepil in academic year 2015/2016.

Another research was conducted by Azizah (2017) entitled “The Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Their Writing Ability in Descriptive Text (A Study for the seventh Grade Students of SMP Islam Sudirman 1 Bancak Semarang District in the Academic Year 2016/2017)’’. The previous research was intended to find out is there any significant correlation between students` vocabulary mastery and their ability on writing descriptive text and also the levels of students` vocabulary mastery and writing ability at the seventh-grade students of SMP Islam Sudirman 1 Bancak, Semarang in academic year of 2016/2017. In addition, the objective of this study was to analyses how significance is the correlation between the students` mastery of vocabulary of the seventh-grade students of SMP Islam Sudirman 1 Bancak, Semarang in academic year 2016/2017.



Both of the previous researchers have done the research well. They gave focused on the test given. The test is given correctly. The instrument they used to test the vocabulary are easy to understand and have been tested before applied for students. Furthermore, both previous researchers has the same weaknesses. They put different scoring rubric in the theory and in the real assessment of students` worksheet. done the research well. They gave focused on the test given. The tests are given appropriately. The instrument they used to test the vocabulary is easy, understandable and have been tested before applied for students. Furthermore, both previous researchers has the same weaknesses. They put different scoring rubrics in the theory and in the real assessment of students` worksheet. In the theory, they stated rating scale of the scoring rubric to score the descriptive paragraph. However, in the real assessment, they used percentages in the scoring rubric. Furthermore, the scoring rubric they used is not based on a grand theory as a definitive guide. It can make the readers confused, raise many questions and debate able about the result obtained. In the present study, the researcher decided to use a scoring rubric which was proposed by Oshima and Hogue (2007:196). This was expected to make the readers understand the scoring rubric clearly. The scoring rubric consisted of 5 criteria such as format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentences structure. Moreover, the scoring rubric has already given clear points in each criterion. It made easier to give the students worksheet score.

### **2.3 Hypothesis**

A hypothesis is a tentative statement about the relationship between two variables. The hypothesis is like a guiding material to arrive at certain conclusion. The purpose of the hypothesis is to provide a tentative proposition suggested to any

study`s research problem. It will serve as the pathway to follow without wasting time or effort in looking for answers without any directions. In the present study, the researcher used a hypothesis to predict the correlation the correlation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the eighth-grade student of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. Based on the theoretical review and empirical review before, the hypothesis is proposed in the present study. The hypothesis formulated by the researcher is as follows:

- a. Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ): there is a significant correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and descriptive paragraph writing ability of the Eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.
- b. Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): there is no significant correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability of the Eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.

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