

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the development of this era, people are required to speak English because English has become an international language. Most countries in the world use English as a second language. So, many people are starting to learn English. Meanwhile, in Indonesia itself, English is a subject at every school level and is required to be learned by students.

In the process of learning English, there are four important skills that students have to master. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Furthermore, the students must master English components or subskills such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. Both skills and components correlate, such as grammar and writing. Thus, in writing a paragraph, students should master the grammar as the requirement of good writing.

Grammar is the rules used in the preparation of correct sentences. Grammar is used in all languages to arrange words into perfect sentences. Everyone can communicate well and correctly because they know the rules of grammar that make the sentence meaningful. According to Hestingsih (2016:210), grammar is the center of teaching and learning of language, and grammar is one aspect that is difficult to teach properly because grammar is a set of rules that govern clauses, phrases, and every word and sentence in a language.

Besides, Freeman and Murcia (2006:1) mentioned that grammar is a set of rules that describe its structure or parts. Based on the observations, many students who are fluent in English already know and learn about grammar in English. Students who are fluent in English are good at arranging words into meaningful

sentences using grammar rules. However, some students still need to master their knowledge of spoken and written grammar. From the definition described above, a conclusion can be drawn that grammar has always been the element of a language and the rules of arranging these elements into a meaningful unit.

Writing is one of the four basic skills which is very important in teaching-learning activities. Lyons and Heasley (2006:9) mentioned that, writing is a very complex process that involves the ability to speak a foreign language and the ability to compose texts from the writer ideas effectively. According to Khoi (2011:495), a student's writing ability will be fast, if the student's interest is recognized, giving them a lot of opportunities in writing and encouraging students to become participants in the writing community. Then, Harmer (2004:4) argued that a writing can be used for various purposes resulting from various forms. Therefore, in writing process, students must have an idea about what they will write. One simple way to make writing more meaningful to students is to make them write about a paragraph.

Writing is considered the most difficult skill because it requires grammatical mastery. One of the difficulties that the students found was using grammar. The use of grammar in writing is not easy to apply because the students have to understand the correct grammar, syntax, etc. Besides, writing skills are skills to compose sentences so that readers can easily understand the sentence meaning. Therefore, grammar and writing have a very important relationship, because grammar helps to regulate the way writing is going on. So, it can be ensured that the writing is easily understood by the reader.

Based on the description above, the researcher investigated the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. For that, the researcher would

make a study in the form an ex-post facto research entitled “The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability of the Eighth-grade Students of SMPN 2 Kupang in Academic Year 2021/2022.”

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background, the research problem can be stated as follows: is there any significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the research problem, this research aims to find out if there is a significant correlation between English grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

As the topic suggests, this study is conducted to discuss the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022. In this research, the researcher would focus on simple present tense and writing test. The writing test was carried out specifically in the form of writing a descriptive paragraph. To assess this test, the researcher used a scoring rubric and the Statistical Package for Special Science (SPSS) to analyze the data.

1.5 Significance of the Study

In this study, the authors hope to provide information about students' grammar and writing ability. The study is expected that the findings of study can give some contributions to English language teaching and learning as follows:

Theoretically, this research aims to determine the relationship between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022.

Then practically this research can provide input and information that can be useful for teachers, students and other researchers. For the English teachers, the research findings are useful for the English teacher as guidance in assessing students' writing ability. For the students, this study would help them to realize that grammar is very important to write a sentence. Thus, in writing a sentence, they would be more critical and more careful. In addition, other researchers who are interested in correlation research can get the information from this research. The researcher would know the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the students.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

Based on the research, to avoid misunderstanding the reader in reading the research, the researcher provides a clearer definition of the terms in the research. The following are the terms.

1) Grammar Mastery

Grammar mastery is operationally defined as the mastery of simple present tense of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang.

2) Writing Ability

Writing ability can be defined as writing achievement of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022 in expressing ideas, sharing information, and responding language purposes appropriately in the context of descriptive paragraphs.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

This part discusses the theories of correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. Then, in the study, there are several reviews in the literature related to this research: grammar, simple present tense, writing ability, and descriptive paragraph.

2.1.1 Grammar

Grammar is an important rule or structure used in creating a sentence. Using grammar in daily communication, we can speak or write regularly and can control our expressions. As a result, grammar can be said as one of the important components in communication by spoken or written. According to Knapp and Watkins (2005:33), grammar is not only about rules, but grammar is also about what can and cannot be done with organization and the use of words in English sentences, but also the way they are written English serves to communicate experience and knowledge about world. The next definition of grammar is the system or structure by which the rules or principles of the language works (Brinton, 2000:8). It means that grammar is important for writing because when people write something, it will show the meaning of the sentences.

Grammar is concerned with sentence forms such as clauses, phrases and words. Therefore, mastery grammar helps speaker or writer to communicate emotions and the goals effectively. Otherwise, a person will be like a child because their thinking is irregular and cannot express their thoughts properly. Therefore, grammar has an impact on communication, both verbal and written

communication. It can be concluded that grammar helps someone build communication with other people become sense and grammar can make communication with someone will be much clearer.

2.1.2 Simple Present Tense

A simple present tense is an event in the simple form that is happening or taking place. This event can occur continuously, or it can become a daily habit. According to Azar (2002:2), simple present expressions about events or situations that have always existed, or even become habits that exist now, have existed in the past and may exist in the future. The simple present tense is used in several conditions, such as:

1. Recurring incident or a habit

Example: I go to school every morning.

2. Fact

Example: Komodo lives on Komodo island.

3. Future condition

Example: The museum opens at 09.00 a.m.

4. Express feeling or possession

Example: He is so handsome.

5. Command or instruction

Example: turn off the lamp at night.

Besides, this tense has two types, namely: verbal and nominal. Both of the types have each formula.

1. Verbal

In this form, the sentence uses verb 1 or present tense verb.

- Positive: Subject + verb 1 (+s/es) + object

Notes:

For the subject of he, she, it uses the suffix of s/es. To find out how to use the suffix, the following rules should be used, such as:

- If the verbs end in 'y' and the letter before 'y' is a vowel, it should be added a suffix of 's'. For example, 'Troy buys a new car.'
- If the verbs end in 'y' and the letter before 'y' is a consonant, it should be added suffix 'ies' and 'y' is removed. For example, 'She studies English every Saturday morning.'
- The verbs ended in o, ch, sh, x, and z should be added to the suffix 'es'. For example, 'Nina goes to the church every Sunday.'

- Negative: Subject + do/does + not + verb 1 + object

Notes:

- In the subject of I, you, they, we, 'do' should be used. For example, 'We do not enjoy the movie.'
- In the subject of he, she, it, 'does' is used. For example, 'He does not live in Denpasar.'

- Interrogative: Do/does + subject + verb 1?

For Example: Do you know her brother's name?

Does she follow the seminar?

2. Nominal

In this form, the sentence uses to be (is, am or are) and complement.

- Positive: subject + to be (am/is/are) + adjective/noun

Example: I am a student.

- Negative: subject + to be (am/is/are) + not + adjective/noun

Example: You are not ugly.

- Interrogative: to be (am/is/are) + subject + adjective/noun?

Example: Are you happy now?

2.1.3 Writing

Writing skills are language skills used to communicate indirectly and face to face with other people. On the other hand, writing is an activity carried out by a person to convey their ideas without any encouragement from others. When you write something, you use words and information to express your viewpoint. According to Fellowes (2007), writing is an expression mode of communication in which the message conveyed is written clearly and conveyed effectively.

In Addition, Hyland (2016:5) indicated that, writing is our idea passing from one mind to another, through good and accurate writing which the reader can understand clearly. Then, according to Ismail (2011), writing is really seen from the discovery process of a writer who struggles to think, organize, and unite ideas. Based on these definitions, we can conclude that writing is not an easy thing for someone to do. However, writing is one of the important skills that must be done by someone. During writing, the writer must find new ideas. However, as a writer, we must write a sentence, a paragraph, which is acceptable to the reader.

By writing, we must produce interesting sentences and according to the existing grammar. It is not just grammar that writers need to pay attention. However, there are other things too. According to Hyland (2016:23) as a skilled writer, writer is able to anticipate misunderstandings from readers regarding written works. So, to make writing easier for a writer to write a sentence, the writer can apply some processes and stages.

According to Harmer (2004:4), in writing has some processes such as:

1. Planning

Writers plan what they are going to write. Writers have to thinking about the main issues. In the first is the purpose. They also produce the language they use, and the information they choose to include. Secondly, the writers have to thinking about audience they are writing for. It is not only the shape of writing, but also the choice of language. For example, it is formal or informal tone. Thirdly, writers have to consider the content structure. That is about how the best sequence the facts, ideas or arguments.

2. Drafting

They can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. Draft is to produce on the way to the final version.

3. Editing (Reflecting and Revising)

In writing they have to read through what works and where it does not, to avoid unclear information and ambiguous or confusing writing.

4. Final Version

Once writers have edited their draft and making the changes. They may look the differences of both the original plan and the first draft, because things have changed in editing process. After that, the written is ready to send by writer.

2.1.4 Descriptive Paragraph

A paragraph is an idea from someone written in the form of a series of sentences. According to Zemach and Rumisek (2005:11), a paragraph is a series of sentences about a single topic and paragraphs can be made in the form of 5-10

sentences or longer or shorter depending on the topic. In making a paragraph, it is necessary to pay attention to several things such as the topic of the paragraph, the content of the paragraph and the closing sentence of a paragraph. In addition, Zemach and Rumisek (2005:12) state that, a paragraph should have three basic parts, as follows:

1. The paragraph must have a topic from the sentence or the main idea of the paragraph.
2. Paragraphs must explain in detail the ideas based on the topic or this can be said as a supporting sentence.
3. In a paragraph, it must contain a concluding sentence.

So, to make a paragraph requires sufficient accuracy, because the paragraph aims to explain what is on our minds. Writing paragraphs is an activity to express and identify our main these thoughts can be seen. Therefore, one type of paragraph that is suitable to be assembled is a descriptive paragraph.

Descriptive paragraph is a paragraph that is made to describe or something visible. According to Zemach and Rumisek (2005:25), descriptive paragraph is explaining how someone or something looks or feels. Descriptive paragraph is a paragraph that might be imagine and often to the five senses of touch, smell, vision, sound and taste. It can be assumed that in descriptive paragraph the writer makes a descriptive sentence that allows the reader to understand information about the description of an object such as people, animals, objects, etc.

Each paragraph must have a generic structure. For descriptive paragraphs, there are several generic structures. According to Savage and Mayer (2005:33), descriptive paragraph has three kinds of structure. The three generic structures are, introduction, body paragraph and conclusion. Firstly, in introduction is to

introduce about the object or event of description, the sentences provide the background and the thesis statement tells the reason why object or event is important for writers. Secondly, body paragraphs are most of description, adjectives and adverbs make the experiences more vivid, often described with preposition and can make the writing more descriptive, familiar and expressive. Lastly, conclusion is the final opinion of the description.

2.2 Empirical Review

In this research, empirical evidence supporting the fibre of an empirical review is needed. Some information will be obtained from empirical review, and the information obtained will be useful for knowledge in this research. In addition, empirical review helps researchers to obtain evidence which avoids repeating previous studies. Therefore, the researcher uses several studies as consideration in conducting this research. The following are the studies:

The first research was carried out by Saputra (2019), entitled “The Correlation Between Students’ Grammar Mastery and Their Ability in Writing Narrative Text” of Islamic Senior High School 1 Kampar. This research was aimed to find out the correlation between students’ grammar mastery and their writing ability. On the other hand, this study used random sampling, and for analyzing the data, the researcher used the product moment formula through SPSS. According to the study, the researcher stated that there was a significant correlation between the research variables in this study.

Then, research was done by Rismasari (2019), entitled “A Correlation Between Student’s Grammar Mastery and Student’s Writing Ability of the eighth grade at SMP UNISMUH Makassar in academic year 2018/2019. In this study,

the researcher used grammar tests and writing test for the instrument. For the sample, the researcher used purposive sampling. Then, the researcher found out students' grammar mastery and students' writing ability correlate. There was 0.50 classified in the average relationship. Thus, it means that there is a significant correlation between the reserch variable.

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that all studies have the same purpose, which is to find out the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. To find out the correlation between the two variables, the researcher used different technique to determine sampling. Then, the result of the studies shows that, there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. However, in this study the researchers did not provide the right aspects in the assessment rubric based on Oshima and Hogue (2007: 196) that the aspects were focused on format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure. The researcher needs to pay attention to these aspects because in writing a paragraph it is important.

2.3 Hypothesis

There is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kupang in academic year 2021/2022.