

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Grammar is one of components in English language. Then, having a good mastery in grammar is crucial. It is because grammar plays important role in every English skill especially in writing. Next, Hyland (2003:3) states that an intricate structure that only can be learned by developing the ability to manipulate lexis and grammar is called as writing. It means that grammar helps students in writing. It is because using correct grammar makes the reader easily to comprehend the text and avoid misunderstanding. Thus, based on that statement it can be concluded that grammar plays an important role in English skills.

Moreover, according to the explanation above, one of grammar material is tenses which will affect students' writing ability, especially in constructing descriptive paragraphs or other kinds of paragraph. Simple present tense is one of language features in descriptive paragraph because it is not only used to state the habitual, but also fact or general truth. Students were expected to master simple present tense for supporting in writing descriptive paragraph activity. The purpose of simple present tense in descriptive paragraph is to show the readers that the paragraph is about a fact. It is necessary to signify the ideas in making descriptive paragraph. Thus, students can easily create descriptive paragraph by knowing how to form simple present tense correctly. It is because in mastering grammar it will help writers in arranging the sentences, so that the readers could understand the ideas which are tried to be delivered.

Besides grammar, writing is also crucial to be learned and also mastered by the students. Students can easily transfer the information into the written form by writing. Writing is also known as a language skill categorized as the productive skill. It means that there are products or outputs that the students should produce. Moreover, the process and product of writing skill can be seen and it makes this skill different than the other skill such as reading, listening, and speaking (Brown, 2004:118). Next, the academic success is measured by writing (Bijami et al., 2013:92). Then, from the statement it can be known that writing is being the central measurement of the academic success. Therefore, from the explanation above it can be concluded that writing is crucial to be learned.

Furthermore, writing is an activity that cannot be done only in one step (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:15). It means several steps should be followed such as creating ideas, organizing the ideas pictures, writing the rough draft, and polishing the rough draft. In addition, Nunan (2003:88) states that writing is a unit of cyclical process and product that cannot be separated. It means that to produce a good product of writing such as letter, story, report, etc. the process that is like cycle needs to be followed because it is connected each other. Then, from those definitions, it can be known that writing is not an instant process, but it requires some practices and also steps. Many problems were faced by the students when they are writing. For example, there are some problems in generating and organizing ideas, choosing appropriate diction, organizing the sentences into coherent paragraph, and writing a paragraph in the good format with the correct usage of punctuation. It is because writing as one of English skills also needs the basic English knowledge such as handwriting, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and

punctuation, so that writer can keep on track of a topic, organization, choices, and audience need. Therefore, it is crucial to consider those components and one of the examples is grammar because it plays an important role in constructing sentences especially in writing process. Thus, one of products in writing is descriptive paragraph and it is also taught at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.

Descriptive paragraph is type of paragraph that is used to describe someone, something, or place appearance or how it looks. It is also supported by Oshima and Hogue (2007:61) that state telling how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and sounds is a genre of writing that is called as descriptive writing. Next, a descriptive paragraph can be categorized as a good paragraph if it can makes the readers imagine about the object which is being described in their mind. Moreover, in constructing a descriptive paragraph several language features should be considered. According to Knapp and Watkins (2005:98), several things that should be considered in describing something or the language features of descriptive paragraph are as follow: (1) Using simple present tense in describing things or objects from factual point of view; (2) Using relation verbs when describing appearance/qualities and parts/functions of phenomena; (3) Using action verbs when describing behaviors/uses; (4) Using adjectives to add extra information to nouns; (5) Using adverbs to add extra information to verbs; (6) Using adverbial phrase to add information about manner, place or time. Therefore, to construct a good descriptive paragraph, it is necessary to know the language features of it.

Considering about the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability, the researcher found and correlated the research findings with the previous

researches that appropriate entitled “The Correlation between Students’ Grammar Mastery and Their Writing Ability on Descriptive Paragraph at the Tenth Grade Students of SMAN 2 Tapung in Academic Year 2017/2018” written by Putri (2018). In the research, the subjects were the first grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung. Next, the result showed that there was a correlation between grammar mastery and students writing ability. Besides that, there was another research entitled “The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 3 Mengwi in Academic Year 2020/2021” written by Wisnaya (2021). The subjects in this research were the second grade students of SMPN 3 Mengwi and the result of this research also found the significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability.

In addition, the researcher wanted to know about the correlation between grammar mastery and the ability of students in writing descriptive paragraph at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar. The researcher was motivated to conduct this research because the researcher wanted to know if there is any correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. Therefore, the researcher interested in conducting a study entitled “The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in Academic Year 2022/2023”.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher was interested in finding out the significant correlation between students’ grammar mastery in simple present tense and writing ability in writing descriptive paragraph. The

research question of this present study can be identified as follows: is there any significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Every research has its own objective. Research objectives describe concisely about what the research is trying to achieve. Moreover, the objective of the study should be in line with the background and the research problem that has been formulated for the study. The objective of the study is to solve and answer the researcher's curiosity. Then, the objective of this study is to find out the significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of the study is fundamental to make a discussion about the research problem more specific. Considering the complexity and broadness of the problem that has been mentioned above, the limitation of the study was formulated. In the present study, the researcher focused on investigating the significant correlation between grammar mastery and students' writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. The researcher limits this study on students' grammar mastery especially in simple present tense and students' writing ability in descriptive

paragraph especially in describing person such as best friend, idol, family, etc. as stated in syllabus that is used at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar “Students can write a short and simple descriptive text about person, animal, and thing based on the social function, text structure, and language features correctly”.

1.5 Significance of the Study

One of the practical reflections which were taken into account in undertaking the present study was the significance of the expected research findings. Moreover, it is because the significance of the study is important in conducting research. In addition, the study was only focused on figuring out whether there was a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. The results of this study were expected to give a description about the correlation between grammar mastery and students’ writing ability. Next, the description also can be used to predict students’ achievement in using simple present tense and writing descriptive paragraph. In conclusion, the findings of the present study were expected to give both theoretical and practical significance on the correlation between grammar mastery and students’ writing ability in descriptive paragraph that will be conducted in the future.

Theoretically, the results of this study were expected to distribute and support the theoretical and empirical outcome of the existing correlation theory, especially about grammar mastery and students’ writing ability. Furthermore, the results of the present study were also intended to strengthen the theory that has been existed. Moreover, the additional empirical evidence is expected to be used

in the future studies or to give more empirical evidence on the existing findings related to the correlation between grammar mastery and students' writing ability. In addition, the findings of the present study can disclose further areas of research, so that it could be used by other researchers as bases of undertaking a similar study.

Practically, the results of the present study were expected to be beneficial for English teachers, students, and other researchers. For the English teachers, it was expected to give information that can be used as a consideration to get better results for the students that being taught at SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar. For students, it was expected can give awareness about the importance of grammar especially simple present tense in writing ability especially writing a descriptive paragraph, so that it can makes students being motivated to learn more about grammar and improve their writing ability. Next, for other researcher, it was expected that the results of this study can be a good reference to the next research.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

To make the reader understand the content in the present study, the researcher provided two definitions of key term, which were defined operationally. The key terms that are used are grammar mastery and writing ability.

1. Grammar Mastery

Grammar mastery is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar to use grammar correctly especially in forming sentences by using verb, adjective, noun, and adverb. In

the present study, the researcher highlighted the grammar mastery in simple present tense.

2. Writing Ability

Writing ability is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar to construct a descriptive paragraph about person that consists of 6-12 sentences based on the generic structure such as identification, description, and conclusion by considering to the format of paragraph, punctuation that is used correctly, content, and organization of the paragraph.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The theoretical review is a review of the theories that are related to the conducted study. Furthermore, it is used to support and build this study. Next, in this chapter, the researcher described the prominent points including theoretical reviews related to this study. The present study dealt with the correlation between Grammar Mastery and Students' Writing Ability. Then, the present study was conducted based on the following theoretical frameworks from the experts. Several areas are described and discussed in this chapter as follows: grammar, grammar mastery, simple present tense, writing, writing ability, and descriptive writing.

2.1.1 Definition of Grammar

Grammar is one of the essential components of learning English language. It is because grammar plays an important role in English and mastering grammar can advance students' skills (Azar & Hagen, 2009). Besides vocabulary and pronunciation, students should acquire grammar because it is usually considered as one of the language components. Grammar is essentially about the systems and patterns that are used to select and combine words. Mastering grammar will help students construct a written text because students can choose appropriate words. According to Hyland (2003:3), writers' grammatical and lexical knowledge can be

seen from their writing product. Then, from the statement it can be concluded that if writer has good grammar mastery they can produce a good written text because it will make the reader easily comprehends the text and avoid misunderstanding.

In addition, Nelson (2002:1) states that grammar knowledge can help writers choose words while composing and writers can easily construct a good paragraph which means that writers can take important role in English especially in writing because knowledge. Therefore, it can be concluded that grammar has important role in English especially in writing because by knowing grammar means understanding what the paragraph means correctly. Considering those definition and explanation, the researcher showed that grammar is a set of rules from a language that enable people to understand what they read or construct in sentences.

2.1.2 Definition of Grammar Mastery

Grammar is one of the components of English language. Then, if students want to have a good product in writing, they should have a good mastery in grammar. It is because grammar helps students in writing correctly. Moreover, if students have a good mastery in writing, it makes the reader do not feel misunderstanding about what are transferred into written form. Therefore, students have to study about grammar if they want to write in a good manner or correctly.

Furthermore, Knapp and Watkins (2005:39) state that grammar gives students available resources to write in English as a system for producing in language. Then, based on the statement above, it can be known that good

grammar mastery will influence the meaning of the sentences that students write. Thus, as what has been explained above, having good mastery in grammar will help students produce a good writing product. Therefore, students should be more comprehensive and emphasize the construction of English writing with appropriate grammar.

Next, Wulandari et al. (2019) state that grammar mastery is a skill to construct right patterns of sentences as a knowledge of the complete set of grammar rules. Then, based on the statement above, it can be known that people can be categorized have a good mastery of grammar if they can correctly construct sentences by using the set of rules or pattern in English grammar because if the grammar is wrong, it can cause misunderstanding and affect the sentences. Then, if the meaning that is transferred is wrong, it can cause misunderstanding and it affects the product in English skills. Therefore, it is necessary to master the grammar in order it does not cause confusion or misunderstanding. Thus, mastering grammar is essential in English language.

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2.1.3 Definition of Simple Present Tense

One of the grammar components that is important in writing is tenses. Simple present tense is one of the sixteenth forms of tenses that indicate the certain time in English. Murphy (2004:4) states that something happens repeatedly or the general truth is expressed by using simple present tense. It means that if someone wants to say a fact or daily activity and any kind of repeated action, they should use simple present tense. Next, depending on the subject, pure form of a verb or add -s or -es in the end of a verb is the rule in

simple present tense. The verb's infinitive form is used if the subjects are I, You, They or We. Meanwhile, if the subjects are She, He or It, the verb is followed by –s or –es.

Moreover, simple present tense indicates an action or event happening in present. For example, it can be used to state the daily activity or habit that is done until the present time. It means like the activity is always done every day until now and not the past habit that is not done anymore. Next, as what has been stated above, simple present tense is used to express habitual and general statements of fact; meanwhile it can also be used to express future. Simple present tense can be used to express future by using adverb or adverbs phrase. For example is, “My holiday ends tomorrow”. To summarize, simple present tense is one of tenses that repeatedly state action and something true in the past, present, and will be accurate in the future.

Furthermore, Hogue (2008:231) states that sentence-writing skill can be improved by sentence combining. Then, sentence-combining can be done by combining two or more short sentences into the longer sentence. After that, all long sentences can be used to construct a paragraph. There are several rules in combining sentences correctly:

1. You may not repeat words if possible;
2. You may omit words, but do not leave out any important informant;
3. You may change words. For example, you may change a noun to a pronoun or make a singular world plural;
4. You may add words, but you need to add the connecting word.

Next, the researcher focused on simple present tense mastery in grammar mastery. Besides that, the main theory that was used in this present study was from Murphy (2004). It was stated that in expressing repeatedly action and general truth, simple present tense is used as the form (Murphy, 2004:4).

2.1.4 Definition of Writing

In learning English language, there are several skills that should be mastered such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Next, one of English skills that is crucial to be learned is writing. It is because by writing students can easily transfer the information into the written form. Then, writing ability is the ability of students to express their ideas in minds into written form of language. According to Brown (2001:336), the process of giving structure and coherent organization by sharpening the main ideas is called as writing as an activity of transferring thoughts on the paper. Therefore, in writing writers need to organize their ideas to make the text understandable for the audience or reader. In addition, Harmer (2001:113) states that the process of writing is involved when students are writing. Thus, from that statement it can be concluded that writing is not an instant process. Writers need to go through some process in order that reader can get or see the product from writing activity such as letter, essay, and story.

Moreover, Nunan (2003:88) states that writing is a unit of cyclical process and product that cannot be separated. It means that to produce a good product of writing such as letter, story, report, etc. the process that is like cycle need to be followed because it is connected each other. Then, from this statement also can be seen that the process in writing emphasizes to the several steps that should be

done. Besides that, it can be stated that the process in writing will affect the product of it. Therefore, when students are starting to write, it is a must to follow the process of writing in order the product of writing is good. In summarize, to be good in writing, students should follow the process of writing because it will help students to construct a good written text and also help them in learning.

In addition, it is also in the same line with Oshima & Hogue (2007:15) that state writing is an activity that cannot be done only in one step. Then, from this statement it can be known that in writing the process is not only one, but there are some processes that should be through and it is crucial. Next, the step that is emphasized and should be followed in constructing a written text as what has been stated above is called as process of writing. The process of writing has four steps that are started from creating ideas, organizing the ideas, writing a rough draft, and the final step is editing and revising the draft into final writing (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:15). Therefore, writing cannot be done just only in one step.

2.1.5 Definition of Writing Ability

Writing ability is the ability of students to express the ideas of feelings or something in minds to others by using written language. Then, this ability needs process because students are not able to do it only in one step. The students have to write a piece of writing in process of learning in English. Moreover, although the result of students in writing is bad in the beginning, it is one of process to create a good writing.

The writing ability can be started by planning; students are able to plan about topic, audience, and purpose in their writing. Students can write until all of

the writing aspect is there. Then, if the aspects of writing are complete, they will make the ideas and the information appeared clearly by readers. After that, having ability in writing needs long process, but if students want to start and put hard work, it can be had easily in the short time. Moreover, as what has been stated above, writing has several steps and good writers go through several steps to produce a piece of writing. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007:15), roughly there are four steps as the process of writing as follow;

1. Prewriting

Prewriting is the step of getting the ideas. This is one of important steps in the process of writing. Then, in this step the writer also choose and collect the ideas to explain the topic. Moreover, it can be done by listing technique that ask the writer to write the topic in the top of piece of paper and make a list of words or phrases that appeal in their minds quickly.

2. Organizing

Organizing is the step of writing an outline by organizing the ideas. In this step the writer connects the list of words to form sentences. Next, by following this step, writer can easily in constructing sentences.

3. Writing

Writing is the step in constructing the rough draft. In this step the writer construct the paragraph quickly without thinking about grammar, spelling, or punctuation.

4. Polishing: Revising and Editing

Polishing or that is known as revising and editing is the step to polish what has been written in the writing step. In this step, the writer revises the rough draft related to the grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

2.1.6 Definition of Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing is one kind of text that tells how something works, feels, smells, tastes, or sounds because it appeals to the sense (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:61). Then in constructing a descriptive paragraph, students should make the readers can imagine about the object that is being described. However, in fact not all students are able to write a descriptive paragraph correctly and inappropriate with the existing elements of it. Several factors can cause and one of them is students do not know the components of descriptive paragraph. Therefore, in describing something students need to arrange sentences to provide detail that can reflect the object. Thus, from the explanation above it can be concluded that descriptive paragraph is one kind of paragraphs that describe something such as person, thing, animal, or place as close as the object which is being described.

Moreover, every text in English has its generic structure and language features. Then, the generic structure of descriptive paragraph consists of identification and description. In identification, students as writer should explain about the object being described in general. Meanwhile, in description students should describe the characteristics, part, and qualifies of object which is being described. Furthermore, the things that should be considered when describing or the language features of descriptive paragraph are (1) Using simple present tense in describing things or objects from a factual point of view; (2) Using relation

verbs when describing appearance/qualities and parts/functions of phenomena; (3) Using action verbs when describing behaviors/uses; (4) Using adjectives to add extra information to nouns; (5) Using adverbs to add extra information to verbs; (6) Using adverbial phrase to add information about manner, place or time (Knapp & Watkins, 2005:98). Therefore, to construct good descriptive paragraph students as the writer should include those components on the paragraph.

Next, in this present study, the researcher used the theory from Oshima and Hogue (2007). It was stated that writing is an activity that cannot be done just only in one step (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:15). Moreover, Zemach and Islam (2005:9) state that a paragraph consists of 6-12 sentences. Then, a paragraph consists of topic sentence, supporting sentence, and concluding sentence as the basic form of paragraph (Zemach & Rumisek, 2006:12).

2.2 Empirical Review

The empirical review is the review of relevant research that has been conducted in the previous research and relevant to the present research. There were other researchers that showed the correlation between students' grammar mastery and students writing ability. The researcher used those studies as a basic consideration to conduct the present study.

The first study was conducted by Putri (2018) in her correlational research method entitled "The Correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Their Writing Ability on Descriptive Paragraph at the Tenth Grade Students of SMAN 2 Tapung in Academic Year 2017/2018". In addition, the objective of the study was to find out the correlation between students grammar mastery and writing ability

on descriptive text. The result of this study showed that there was a correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. It was also explained that students with good grammar mastery would have good descriptive text. In contrast, students with low grammar mastery would have difficulty in constructing a descriptive text.

The second research was conducted by Wisnaya (2021) in his correlational research entitled “The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 3 Mengwi in Academic Year 2020/2021”. Next, the result of this study also showed that there is significant correlation between students’ grammar mastery and writing ability.

Furthermore, considering the results of the data, those two studies presented the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability in a good way. However, related to the instrument of the first study, in the writing test from the research conducted by Putri (2018), the scoring rubric that was used is less complete because it only focused on the content and organization of the paragraph and there is no scoring rubric for the format of the paragraph. On the other hand, from research conducted by Wisnaya (2021), the researcher did not state the theory about the criteria of sampling, so it could not be known whether the sample that was used could represent the whole population or not. Next, in this present study the researcher used complete scoring rubric that was adopted from Oshima and Hogue (2007) and for the sampling, the researcher had put the statement from the expert about the quantity of choosing good sample as the representative for the whole population. In addition, this research implemented flexibility and learner choice in collecting the data as one of aspects that emphasized in Hybrid Flexible

learning model. Learner choice means learners have a role in choosing the way they will participate the learning process in the class (Beatty, 2019:30). Therefore, in collecting the data students as the sample were given a freedom in answering the test by online or offline. Thus, from the explanation above it can be seen the difference between this study with both previous studies.

2.3 Hypothesis

Singh (2006:54) states that hypothesis is solution of the problem that is uncertain. Then, it can be stated that hypothesis is a prediction of the outcome of a research project considering to the relationship between two variables in the research. Moreover, the previous relevant theories are taken as the consideration to take the hypothesis (Singh, 2006:57). Next, based on the empirical above and to answer the research problem in this study, the researcher assumes that there is significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing ability of the eighth grade students of SMP (SLUB) Saraswati 1 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023.