

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In learning foreign language, students have to be able to communicate language in spoken and written form. The mastery of grammatical structure makes students easier to deliver the message by means of oral and written form in communicating with other people. English language components must be mastered, such as; grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling because all of them are integrated, on the other hand, the most important thing which has to be mastered is grammar. Grammar plays important role in language. Grammar affects the meaning of sentence. Ungrammatical sentence is nonsense and illogical which will be a useless thing to say. It means that grammar is the rule which underlines a language, because it can be emphasized on the teaching of English as guidance for the students in recognizing and producing meaningful unit of utterance in communication.

The mastery of students' grammar can be measured from how the students arrange sentences into good sentences based on the rule of English grammar. Greenbaun and Nelson (2002: 1) state that grammar is the central component of language. Without knowing grammar, students will not be able to learn English perfectly. Grammar determines how words are arranged to form a meaningful sentence. Before speaking, reading, listening and writing, we have to master grammar in purpose that the information can be well delivered and received by the listener, reader and speaker. Jackson (2005: 4) also adds that grammar is an

essential component of both spoken and written language. It means that mastering grammar is very important in learning English since it is the essential component English language.

Writing involves transferring messages from our thoughts to form of flat surface (written form) using language. Philips (2008) writing is much more than the simple mechanics of getting the words down; it also involves being creative, spelling, grammar, punctuation, choice of appropriate word, sentence linking, and text construction and for older children, having idea about content and the ability to be self-critical and to edit their own work. Thus, with writing we can revealed and develop not only the structure of the sentence and vocabulary in use, but also the ideas, thinking, and our feeling about a meaning. On the other word writing is considered the most difficult to learn than others, because in writing involves many components that must be understood. When students write something they should pay attention to grammar, word or phrase that is in use. Writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements (Heaton, 1988:135).

Based on Harmer (2004:31) writing (as one of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing) has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English. Writing is one of the skills in the English language that is learnt by students in the school, while the vocabulary is supporting components. Thus, the writer tried to connect both of them, especially in terms of writing a descriptive text. The writer also wanted to determine the level of students' ability

to learn the vocabulary and writing. Then the writer searched the relationship between the both.

Based on the description above, the writer assumes that grammar is one of language components which take a role in writing skill. Having strong skills in writing and grammar, it allows writers to deliver their message to their readers in a clear and understandable way. On the country, writing in grammatical incorrect manner is only confusing the readers. It is important to use words properly in order to get the point directly, and to practice good basic grammar to add credibility in writing.

Realizing that grammar is inescapable in writing process, people, especially teachers, could encourage the students to examine grammatical errors in their own writing. Although the students are good in grammatical concept, they still get guidance to become effective writers. Effective grammar instruction begins with what students have already known about grammar, and it helps them to use this knowledge as they write. By connecting the mastery of grammatical concept to writing strategy, the students can know that grammatical concept give effect in their ability to write effectively.

The researcher is curious to find out the correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability in SMP Negeri 2 Denpasar by doing the interview with the teacher and observing students' ability to write a sentence using Simple Present Tense. The researcher conducted the observation through an online class when doing an internship in ELT course. The researcher found phenomenon at school when the students have different level of writing ability. It was found that one thing that makes the students unable to write well enough is because they

have no idea about the grammar. Those reasons make the researcher conduct the study. Therefore, in accordance with the fact above, the researcher can conclude that the students need to master their grammar and writing ability to make the students easier to deliver the message.

1.2 Research Problem

In order to make systematic approach to solve the problem, the writer conducted the research on the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. The research question can be formulated as "Is there any significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability in writing?"

1.3 Objective of the Study

Every scientific study certainly has an objective which is used to find a valid and reliable answer for the research problem that has been previously formulated. According to the research problem which is stated above, the present study intends to know whether there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

As the topic suggests, this study is conducted to prove whether or not there is a significant systematic relations between grammar mastery and the ability in writing. Therefore, this study is limited to analyze the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. Grammar mastery that use in this study is

Simple present tense, the students able to make a descriptive paragraph using simple present tense.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is expected to give some contributions to English language teaching and learning. This research can find whether there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability. Some people assume that without a working knowledge of good grammar, good writing is impossible. The extent to which grammar mastery affects the students' ability in writing. For the English teachers and learners, the finding of the research can inform them about the relations between grammar and writing. The researcher also hopes that the result of this study will become input to English teachers and also English learners for their teaching and learning. The students will know whether the grammar mastery will help them much or not in making a good writing.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Key terms are very important to make the reader understand clearly about the content in this research. In addition, the researcher should provide definitions of the key terms used in this study to prevent misunderstanding and confusion for the readers. In addition, the definition of key terms also provides limitations on the terms of this research and makes it clear in understanding the research. Therefore, the researcher provides two definitions of operationally defined key terms. In this study, the key terms used are mastery of grammar and writing skills.

In addition, the key terms used in this study are clearly and concisely explained as follows:

1. Grammar Mastery Grammar mastery is operationally defined as the mastery of grammar especially in simple present tense of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 2 Denpasar in writing a sentence.
2. Writing Skill writing skill is operationally defined as the skill of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 2 Denpasar in writing a descriptive text that describes the topic that will be provided.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Theoretical review is a review of some theories relate to the study. A scientific research is expected to base on the appropriate theoretical background. Therefore, it is use to support and build this study. In addition, a research is also required to be conducted on the basis of relevant theoretical constructs and empirical evidence. The present study is based on the discussion of the following theoretical framework: (1) Grammar Mastery of the students, and (2) Writing Ability. For the purpose of present study, some theoretical new points as well as empirical evidences are review. Some of the viewpoints are as follows:

2.1.1 Grammar Mastery

In the context of education, there are several definitions of grammar. Grammar is usually considered one of the language components beside the vocabulary and sound system which students should acquire. Knowing grammar means understanding what the text means correctly. Grammar gives language users the control of expression and communication in everyday life. Besides, mastery over words helps speakers to communicate their emotions and purpose more effectively. Furthermore, grammar deals with the form of sentences and smaller units such as clauses, phrases and words (Huddleston & K. Pullum. 2010:1).

Grammar is the study of how words combined to form sentences. It provides us with the terminology we need to talk about language in an informed way, It also enables us to describe our own use of language, as well as that of other people. In writing, a mastery of grammar enables us to evaluate the choices that are available to use during the composition (Nelson, 2002:1). On the other hand, Richards and Schmidt (2002:251-252) states grammar is a description of the structure of a language and how language units like words and phrases are formed into sentences.

One of the important things in writing grammar is tenses. In sixteen forms of tenses which indicate the certain time of action in English, there is simple present tense. The simple present tense is used to talk about something that is true in general and it happens all the time or repeatedly (Murphy, 2004:4). In other meaning, the simple present tense is used to tell the facts and events of a story that is happening now or in the future (Sargeant.H, 2007:58). Simple present tense is using the pure form of a verb or by adding -s or -es to the end of a verb depending on the subject. If the subject is either I, You, They or We, the verb that is used in simple present tense is the pure or original form. On the other hand, if the subject is either She, He or It, the verb that are used simple present tense is followed with s or-es at the end.

Grammar gives language users the control of expression and communication in everyday life. Jennifer Peat (2002:214) states that grammar is about knowing why something reads badly and knowing how to fix it. It is impossible to write well without using words correctly. It means that, when people want to write something, they should know about grammar because it

shows the meaning and relation with every single word that becomes a sentence. Mastery over words helps speakers to communicate their emotions and purpose more effectively. Otherwise, communication can sound like a toddler getting frustrated because he or she does not have many words to express his or her thoughts well. Moreover, grammar also gives effect in written communication. Moreover, understanding the basic principle of word, sentence and paragraph structures bestows writers with the flexibility to plan how they communicate a message, from a simple text to a presentation. If people cannot successfully speak or write to one another, they cannot share their thoughts to other people.

In addition, Kolln and Funk (2010:3) point out three definitions of grammar. First, grammar is the system of rules in our heads. It means that the study of grammar a lifetime of "knowing" how to produce sentences. This subconscious system of rules is your "language competence". It is important to recognize that these internalized rules vary from one language community to another. Second, grammar is the formal description of the rules. This definition refers to the branch of linguistic science concerned with the formal description of language, the subject matter of books like this one, which identify in an objective way the form and structure, the syntax of sentences. Third, grammar is the social implications of usage, sometimes called "linguistic etiquette". This definition could be called do's and don't's of usage, rather than grammar.

The theory that used in the present study is from Sargeant.H (2007:58). The simple present tense is used to tell the facts and events of a story that is happening now or in the future. On the other words, grammar is a set of rules derived from a language that enable people to understand what they read or what

they construct in sentences or expressions when they communicate. Grammar is the way of the spoken and written language to be organized. It is concerned with the order of word groups, clauses and sentences and morphemes in words. It is closely related to generic structure and cohesion.

2.1.2 Writing Ability

In global society, it can be said that writing is a crucial part. Through writing, we can learn many things, from the simplest one such as how to make a glass of milkshake until how this earth is formed, for example. In short, writing plays a significant role in our life. Oshima and Hogue (2007:15) state that writing is the action that needs some process such as thinking, writing, and reading, correcting and revising. Those are not the simple steps in writing because people have to realize that what they write what they want to say or express. Therefore, for some people, writing might be hard even in their first language. It could be more difficult for them to write in a foreign language.

Out of the four main English skills, writing is considered to be the most complex skill. According to Harmer (2004:258), the writing process cannot be done in just 15 minutes. Writing takes time to brainstorm ideas, draft a piece of writing and then review and edit it in various ways with the teacher's help perhaps. In addition, According to Brown (2001:336), writing is the very process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words, to sharpen the main ideas and to give them structure and coherent organization, Besides, writing process also involved how to revise text for clearer meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar and how to produce a final product.

According to Ramsey (2001:3), writing is a process of synthesis. As you write, you used words and information to express your viewpoint in a coherent whole an essay. But writing draws on intuition as well as reasoning, on sensation and emotion as well as fast and memory. According to Heaton, there are five skills necessary for writing that are (1) Language use is the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences; (2) Mechanical skills is the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language: (3) Treatment of content is the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information; (4) Stylistic skills is the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs, and use language effectively; (5) Judgment skills is the ability to write in appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize and order relevant information. Based on the description above, the writer assumes that writing is the most difficult skill of language because there are many rules and aspects that should be considered by learners in order to the readers comprehend about the text.

In addition, writing skill has many kinds of text. One of them is descriptive text. The points of descriptive text begin with identification, then description, and the final is the conclusion. As Savage and Mayer (2005:331) state that the description should make the readers feel like responding to what they are reading. The point of descriptive text begins with identification, in which it introduces the object of description. Then description, in which it gives vivid details to make the writing more descriptive, familiar, and expressive. The final is the conclusion, in which it states the opinion of the description.

Besides generic structure, writer also has to consider the language feature that are used in descriptive text According to Knapp and Watkins (2005:98), the languages features of descriptive text are as follows: (1) Using simple present tense when describing things from a technical or factual point of view, (2) Using relational 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, and (6) Using adverbial phrases to add more information about the manner, place or time. As an upshot, it is necessary for the students to know about the language features which will be useful in writing a descriptive text.

In the present study, the theory that is used is from Langan (2008:13) states that writing is a skill that anyone can learn by practice although difficult. Writing is a skill; it is a process that by hard work, students can master. Students need to realize that they must do more practice if they want to become good writers. Moreover, writing is a process of theory; it is done in a series of steps. Sometimes, students would find the problem when they want to develop their writing so they must explore their thoughts in writing. It means that the students must practice well in order to get state that the description should make the readers feel like responding to what they are reading.

2.2 Empirical Review

Empirical review is the review of relevant researches that have been conducted; in which it reviews the previous research that is relevant to the present

research. Empirical evidence can help the researcher avoid unintentional replication of the previous study results and to clarify as well as define the concept of the study. It also used as a reference since they examined the same study. Moreover, it is to look over both strengths and weaknesses which guide the present studies in achieving more results. The related studies which are used as references are described in chronological order below.

The first research was conducted by FauzulEtfita (2019) in his correlational research entitled "The Correlation Between Students' Grammar Mastery and News Writing Ability". The objective of this research was to find out the correlation between students' grammar mastery and News writing ability of the fourth semester students of English Language Education at the Faculty of Teachers' and Training Universities' Islam Riau. Moreover, based on the research results using the instruments of grammar and writing tests, the results showed that there was a correlation between students' grammar mastery and News writing ability. There is a positive and significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing news. Based on the data analyzed by using Bivariate Correlation (SPSS). Therefore, the correlation of students' grammar mastery and their achievement in news writing is considered significant and very high correlation as the coefficient correlation by interpretation correlation table. The result showed that the correlation between students' grammar mastery and News writing ability is significant.

Additionally, the strength of the previous study was in its research findings. The findings of the previous research showed that there is a correlation between two variables; those are students' grammar mastery and news writing ability.

However, there is no clear scoring rubric used in the scoring both of the test. Furthermore, there was no specification of the test used by the previous researcher. It made the reader will confused how to get existing data when read the journal. The researcher of the present study adapted the scoring rubric from Brown (2004:246). Besides, the criteria have already been justified with the students' level. To avoid the same issues, the researcher in the present study explained the aspects and descriptors used in the rubric clearly. The researcher also was provided specification of the test that made the reader easy to identify and understand what test used in the present study.

Another study was conducted by Oktawidya and Wahyuni (2018) entitled "The Correlation Between Grammar Mastery and Writing Thesis Proposal at STKIP YDB LubukAlung" at the sixth-semester students in academic year 2017/2018. The objectives of the study are to find out the correlation between the students' grammar mastery and their writing thesis proposal. The method of this research is a correlational study and applied a total sampling technique, with the total number of the sample is 32 students. The data were gained through tests, namely grammar test and documentation test. The findings of the research showed that there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing thesis proposal. From the result of his research, the researcher showed that the better the students' mastery in grammar, the better their writing ability in thesis proposal. It also means describe that there is a significant correlation between students' grammar knowledge and their ability in writing.

In addition, the strength of the previous study was clear research in the students' grammar mastery, .writing thesis proposal and their correlation.

However, there was no specific grammar mastery was test by the researcher. In scoring procedures, there was no clear scoring rubric used in the scoring both of the test. Furthermore, the sample that used in the previous study was 32, it was made the results of the research not strong. In the present study, the researcher would like to focus on the simple present tense as a test of grammar mastery and descriptive paragraph is a test of writing skill. The researcher also provides the scoring procedures clearly. Moreover, the sample of this research is about 60 students that took from three classes to make the strong result research.

2.3 Hypothesis

According to Singh (2006:54) hypothesis is defined as a tentative solution of the problem. Hypothesis is needed to predict the existence or non-existence of a relationship. It is because the only persuasive argument we know of is that of contradicting an existing widespread belief (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009:39). The researcher assumes that there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing skill of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 2 Denpasar in the academic year 2021/2022.

