CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Writing is an essential skill needed at all levels of education as it significantly contributes to communication. Students attempt to express their thoughts through written language, allowing them to convey their ideas effectively (Husna, 2017: 17). Writing is not merely about expressing ideas; it also involves using language elements such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and conjunctions accurately. Therefore, writing is not only a communication tool but also a means of critical thinking and problem-solving. Writing is often regarded as a challenging skill for many students because it requires several abilities to be used at the same time. Students need to generate ideas, organize them logically, and express them in correct sentences. At the same time, they must pay attention to grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation so that their writing can be easily understood. As a result, many students experience difficulties in producing clear and well-organized written texts.

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According to Johnson (2008:203), the writing process consists of several stages: generating ideas, organizing them, and executing them through writing. In this context, language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation are considered tools for achieving successful communication rather than the ultimate goals. Besides, productive skills are essential in the communication process, especially when ideas cannot be verbally conveyed. An effective writing process generally involves four stages: forming ideas, composing them, drafting, and refining through editing and revision. These phases help students practice and

develop their writing abilities, guiding them to create well-structured paragraphs while improving grammar, vocabulary, and overall language use.

A paragraph is a collection of sentences that thoroughly discusses a particular topic. Each sentence within the paragraph serves to explain the main idea that the writer intends to present. When a new main idea arises, a new paragraph is started. Paragraphs may function to provide information, express opinions, explain concepts, or even narrate short stories. A logically structured paragraph helps readers easily grasp the author's intended message. By following a structured writing process, students can develop their paragraph-writing skills, analyze paragraph models, generate ideas, and transform them into coherent sentences.

Although writing skills play an important role and are supported by a structured writing process, many students still experience difficulties in applying these skills effectively in real learning situations. In classroom practice, students often struggle to generate ideas, organize them logically, and transform them into coherent and grammatically correct sentences. These difficulties indicate that writing remains a challenging skill for many learners and requires appropriate instructional support to help students develop their writing abilities optimally.

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However, based on interview and initial observations conducted on the seventh-grade students of SMPN 8 Denpasar a significant gap was found between what students are expected to achieve in writing (das sollen) and their actual performance (das sein). Students struggled to compose well-organized paragraphs, particularly descriptive ones. They faced difficulties in generating ideas, organizing them logically, and using writing mechanics such as punctuation and formatting appropriately. These shortcomings resulted in low writing performance and a lack

of motivation, as reflected in their declining interest in writing tasks.

The current writing instruction at the school still relies on conventional methods, mainly involving question-and-answer sessions followed by assignments to write paragraphs. While this method might be manageable for high-achieving students, it does not adequately support those with average or low proficiency levels. These students often find the tasks overwhelming and disengaging, which leads to minimal improvement in their writing skills. This situation calls for an innovative teaching approach that not only guides students but also motivates them to participate actively in the learning process.

The researcher proposes the integration of a writing strategy known as the Tell-Show Strategy with the use of pictures as a learning medium to address this challenge. Peha (2003:34) explains that the Tell-Show Strategy is beneficial for writing paragraphs, especially when students need to create detailed descriptions. This strategy uses a Picture series divide: the "Tell" picture for identification and the "Show" picture to display a specific picture related to that identification. Implementing this strategy encourages active student participation and helps them compose descriptive paragraphs more easily. Furthermore, the addition of pictures can stimulate students' imagination and assist them in translating visual information into descriptive language.

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This strategy is particularly relevant to the researcher, as it aligns with the need to improve students' writing performance through practical and student-centered approaches. The researcher is personally interested in exploring how integrating writing strategies with visual media can foster a more meaningful and engaging writing experience for students. The Tell-Show Strategy combined with

pictures is believed to bridge the gap between students' current writing limitations and the expected writing competence. Therefore, this study is conducted under the title: "Improving Writing Skill of the Seventh-Grade Students of SMPN 8 Denpasar in the Academic Year 2025/2026 through Tell-Show Strategy Combined with Picture.".

1.2 Research Problem

Students of the seventh grade at SMPN 8 Denpasar face significant challenges in writing descriptive paragraphs, particularly in generating, organizing, and expressing ideas clearly,because writing requires students to think about ideas, organize them logically, and express them in correct sentences at the same time. These difficulties indicate the need for an effective instructional strategy that supports idea development and writing structure. One such strategy is the Tell-Show technique combined with pictures, which offers visual support to enhance students' descriptive writing. Thus, the research question is formulated as follows: Can the writing skills of seventh-grade students at SMPN 8 Denpasar in the academic year 2025/2026 be improved through the implementation of the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures?

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1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures in enhancing the writing skills of seventh-grade students at SMPN 8 Denpasar in the academic year 2025/2026. This study aims to support students in developing and organizing ideas more effectively when composing descriptive paragraphs through the integration of structured strategy and visual media.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to improving the writing skills of seventh-grade students at SMPN 8 Denpasar in the academic year 2025/2026, specifically in writing descriptive paragraphs. The focus is on the use of the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures as the instructional approach to support students in organizing and developing ideas effectively.

The scope of the study is narrowed to descriptive writing that emphasizes describing a person's physical appearance and personality using the appropriate generic structure, which includes identification, description, and conclusion. Pictures are used as visual media to stimulate students' ideas and support the writing process.

In line with the Merdeka Curriculum implemented at SMPN 8 Denpasar, this study refers to the specific learning objective stated in ATP 7.8, which requires students to write a short descriptive paragraph based on a picture of a person. All teaching materials and learning activities are adapted from the Grade VII modules provided by the school under this curriculum framework.

1.5 Significance of the Study

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The results of this study are expected to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of English language teaching, particularly in teaching writing to EFL learners. It may serve as a reference for educators, researchers, and curriculum developers in understanding how the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures can be effectively applied to improve students' descriptive writing skills.

The practical benefits of this study lie in its potential to offer insights and applicable strategies for improving English writing instruction, especially

descriptive paragraph writing. The practical significance can be detailed as follows: This study provides an alternative instructional strategy that combines structured writing support with visual media. It can help English teachers enhance the effectiveness of their writing instruction, particularly for students who struggle with organizing and expressing ideas. By using the Tell-Show strategy with pictures, teachers may create more engaging and student-centered writing activities that encourage participation and creativity. The study introduces students to a writing method that simplifies the process of developing descriptive paragraphs. Through the integration of pictures and the Tell-Show, students are expected to find it easier to generate, organize, and elaborate ideas. This approach may also increase their interest, motivation, and confidence in writing English texts. The findings of this research can serve as a valuable reference for other researchers interested in conducting similar studies or exploring innovative techniques in teaching writing. It also opens opportunities for further research involving different strategies, skills, or educational levels in the context of EFL instruction.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To ensure clarity and avoid misunderstanding, it is important to define key terms used in this classroom action research. The two main variables in this study are writing skills and the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures. These terms are defined operationally as follows:

1.6.1 Writing Skill

Writing skill refers to the ability of seventh-grade students at SMPN 8 Denpasar to write descriptive paragraphs. Operationally, it is defined as the students' ability to compose a simple descriptive paragraph consisting of 6 to 12 sentences. The paragraph should describe a person and follow the generic structure

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of identification, description, and conclusion.

1.6.2 Tell-Show Strategy Combined with Picture

In this study, the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures is defined as an instructional strategy for teaching descriptive writing. It is implemented in class VII at SMPN 8 Denpasar in the 2025/2026 academic year. The strategy begins with a Picture series titled “Tell and Show” that helps students organize their ideas. A picture is used as a visual stimulus. In the “Tell” picture, students identify key topics or traits based on the picture. In the “Show” picture, they provide detailed descriptions. Once the pictue is completed, students summarize their ideas and compose a descriptive paragraph based on their observations.

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CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Theoretical analysis includes the examination of various theories related to the research being conducted. To carry out scientific research, a strong theoretical foundation is required. In addition, it is also important to pay attention to the concepts and theories that will be used as references at every stage of the research. To gain a deep understanding of the formulated issues, a study is conducted on several theories related to writing skills and the strategies used. The researcher discusses various important aspects of relevant studies that support this study. The theoretical framework that is the basis of this research consists of: (1) Writing Skills, (2) Descriptive Paragraphs, (3) "Tell-show" method which is reinforced by the use of pictures, and (4) Writing Assessment. These details were described as follows:

2.1.1 Writing Skill

Writing is a fundamental language skill that students must master, as it serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for self-expression and critical thinking. It allows individuals to convey ideas, thoughts, and emotions that may be difficult to express verbally. Effective writing requires not just technical skills but also creativity and reflection to produce meaningful and structured content. According to Harmer (2007:246), writing is a productive skill that demands both coherence a logical flow of ideas and cohesion, or clear connections between sentences. He outlines four key stages in the writing process: prewriting, organizing, drafting, and revising/editing. Writers are encouraged to first gather and

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organize their ideas, then draft freely, and finally revise for clarity and correctness. Hyland (2003:9) emphasizes that writing is a developmental and personal process, where students are guided to express their own ideas within a supportive environment. Teachers play an essential role in helping students recognize their strengths and build confidence in expressing personal meaning. Urquhart and Urquhart & Mclever (2005:3) describe writing as a process of exploration that benefits both students and teachers. Through writing, students learn to develop and express their thoughts clearly while also practicing grammar and punctuation. Regular writing practice supports steady improvement. Graham (2008:2) states that writing is a complex skill that requires time, commitment, and clear guidance from teachers. As students advance, writing instruction becomes more demanding and must be integrated across subjects to meet academic goals.

Brown (2004:335) highlights that writing involves several interconnected stages composing, organizing, and revising each requiring specific skills. Effective writing demands logical development of ideas, appropriate discourse markers, and attention to grammatical accuracy. Patel & Jain (2008:125) define writing as a form of language in which spoken ideas are transformed into written symbols. Writing enhances vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure while also fostering cognitive development by helping students organize and articulate their thinking. Additionally, writing is a learnable intellectual skill that benefits academic and professional life. It does not require extraordinary talent, but rather a strong grasp of writing components and a willingness to keep learning. Clear and organized writing allows individuals to be better understood and more effective in various communication settings.

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Writing is a valuable and multifaceted skill that supports learning, communication, and personal development. In this study, the researcher adopts the process-based writing approach, which includes the stages of prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This model provides a clear structure for improving students' writing abilities, particularly in composing well-organized and coherent descriptive paragraphs.

2.1.2 Descriptive paragraph

Writing well-organized paragraphs is an essential skill for students, as paragraphs are the foundation of written texts. Typically consisting of six to twelve sentences, a paragraph focuses on a single topic and supports a central idea through logically connected sentences. It can serve various functions such as informing, explaining, expressing opinions, or telling short stories and must present ideas in a structured and detailed manner to ensure clarity for the reader.

Among the four main types of paragraphs, a descriptive paragraph aims to provide vivid detail about a person, place, object, or event. This paragraph type usually follows a structure of identification, description, and conclusion. The topic sentence introduces the subject, supporting sentences elaborate with specific details, and the concluding sentence summarizes or reflects the writer's perspective. According to Oshima & Hogue (2007:61), descriptive paragraphs describe aspects such as appearance, texture, taste, and sound. By carefully selecting vivid and sensory-based words, writers help readers visualize the subject more clearly. These details should engage the five senses sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch to create a strong mental image.

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Zemach & Rumisek (2005:25) emphasize the importance of adjectives in conveying emotions and characteristics of the subject being described. They note that a descriptive paragraph includes three main parts: an introduction that sets the context, a body that details the subject's attributes (e.g., physical traits or personality), and a conclusion that offers final thoughts or evaluations. Descriptive writing can also be categorized into objective and subjective types. Objective descriptions present the subject factually, while subjective descriptions reflect the writer's personal impressions. Both approaches rely heavily on sensory details to make the writing come alive. Furthermore, descriptive paragraphs often use the simple present tense and focus on visual and emotional impact. Writers are encouraged to observe carefully and include only the most relevant and vivid details to maintain unity and coherence throughout the paragraph.

Descriptive paragraphs play a crucial role in helping students develop their ability to convey clear and detailed information through writing. The theories from Oshima and Hogue (2007) and Zemach and Rumisek (2005) provide a strong foundation for understanding and applying the structure and purpose of descriptive writing in this study.

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2.1.3 Tell-Show Strategy with Picture

Writing can be difficult for students, especially when they are asked to write descriptive paragraphs. Many students feel confused about how to start writing and often have limited ideas to develop. As a result, they may find it hard to organize their ideas and produce cohesive texts. These difficulties show that students need clear guidance during the writing process.

To help students overcome these problems, an effective instructional strategy

is required. One strategy that can be applied is the Tell–Show Strategy combined with pictures. Through the Tell stage, students are guided to identify key ideas from the given pictures. Then, in the Show stage, students develop those ideas into more detailed descriptions using appropriate words and sentences. This step-by-step process helps students understand what to write and how to develop their ideas.

By applying the Tell–Show Strategy with pictures, students are better supported in organizing their ideas and expressing them clearly in written form. This strategy not only simplifies the writing process but also encourages students to participate actively in learning activities and increases their confidence in writing descriptive paragraphs.

The implementation of the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures, adapted from Peha (2003), consists of several steps. First, the teacher provides a picture series related to the topic. Second, students write the identification or general description in the "Tell" picture. Third, students describe the object or person in detail in the "Show" picture by using the visual information provided. Finally, students combine the Tell and Show parts into a complete descriptive paragraph.

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Nunan (2003:270) also emphasizes the value of visual media such pictures in supporting learning. By incorporating tools like Picture series and images into writing lessons, teachers can foster a more relaxed and focused environment. These media help students visualize their subjects, which aids in idea generation, organization, and creativity.

Zemach and Rumisek (2005:25) state that descriptive writing, when supported by visuals, becomes more accessible. Students often find it easier to write

when they can observe a clear image of their topic. Pictures serve as stimuli that trigger ideas and support the elaboration of details. Similarly, Harmer (2007:330) points out that visual materials play an essential role in routine writing practice. Pictures from books, journals, newspapers, or classroom illustrations stimulate cognitive engagement and provide context for students to describe and elaborate on content effectively. Combining the Tell-Show strategy with pictures offers a powerful tool for teaching descriptive writing. As Peha (2010:33) explains, "showing" enriches writing and mirrors the style of great literature. The steps for implementing this strategy, adapted from Peha (2003), are:

1. The teacher provides a Picture series with relevant pictures.
2. Students write the identification in the "Tell" picture.
3. They describe the object or person in the "Show" picture using the picture and the information provided.
4. Students compile the two pictures into a complete descriptive paragraph.

The Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures helps students systematically generate and organize ideas. It supports creativity, encourages clear and detailed expression, and is especially effective in helping students construct descriptive paragraphs. By engaging visual and written modes, this method strengthens both comprehension and writing performance.

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2.1.4 Assessment Writing

Writing is a process that involves production and evaluation. Among these, evaluation plays a vital role in measuring students' progress and identifying areas for improvement. It should be conducted objectively, using clear criteria to ensure fairness and consistency across all students. Every learning interaction whether

answering, commenting, or experimenting can serve as a moment for assessment.

According to Cheng & Fox (2017:1), assessment is central to the language teaching-learning process. Teachers must implement high-quality evaluation practices to support students effectively. These assessments, whether individual or group-based, include class tests and daily evaluations. To ensure transparency, teachers must communicate the criteria clearly. McKay (2006:140) explains that class assessment includes formative and summative types. Formative assessment provides continuous feedback for learning improvement, while summative assessment evaluates student achievement at the end of a learning period. Both types are essential for supporting progress and refining teaching methods. Evaluation should align with curriculum goals, competencies, and learning objectives. Teachers may also refer to theoretical frameworks to enhance assessment quality. A comprehensive evaluation should cover all writing stages from brainstorming and drafting to revision and final output ensuring students receive meaningful and developmental feedback.

In writing assessment, students are often asked to compose texts such as essays or descriptive paragraphs. These tasks are used not only to evaluate content mastery but also the ability to organize ideas, develop arguments, and use accurate grammar and punctuation. This ensures alignment with curriculum standards and expected outcomes. According to Brown (2004:218), assessing writing is complex and requires well-defined objectives. Writing performance can be classified into categories such as imitative, intensive, responsive, and extensive. Descriptive paragraphs fall under responsive writing, where students must connect sentences logically and compose coherent short texts.

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In this study, students are asked to write descriptive paragraphs based on pictures. Their writing is evaluated using a structured rubric that includes five components: (1) format (5 points), (2) punctuation and mechanics (5 points), (3) content (20 points), (4) organization (35 points), and (5) grammar and sentence structure (35 points). The total score is 100. Sharing this rubric beforehand helps students understand what is expected.

The researcher administered pretests and posttests using the rubric above to measure students' improvement in writing. Each paragraph should consist of 6–12 sentences and meet all five criteria to ensure clarity, coherence, and accuracy. This structured approach allows for fair, transparent, and targeted evaluation of students' writing skills.

2.2 Empirical Review

Empirical review involves the examination of existing studies and theoretical frameworks related to a particular topic, including its historical development. The main objective of this review is to determine whether similar research has been conducted previously. It also serves as a basis for evaluating the potential effectiveness of the current study in comparison with earlier research. In this study, the researcher seeks to extend previously applied methodologies while addressing gaps identified in prior investigations. Through this approach, the research is expected to offer new insights and practical instructional strategies. Specifically, the researcher intends to implement the Tell-Show strategy combined with the use of pictures to support students in improving their writing skills. This approach is anticipated to increase students' engagement and understanding. Accordingly, the following studies are reviewed as part of this empirical analysis.

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The first study was carried out by Rovida (2023) entitled “The Use of the Tell-Show Strategy to Improve the Writing Skills of Eighth-Grade Students at SMPN 2 Ubud in the 2022/2023 Academic Year.” The study aimed to examine whether the writing performance of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Ubud could be improved through the application of the Tell-Show strategy. The results of the research indicated that students’ writing skills showed improvement after the strategy was implemented. Additionally, students’ responses toward the use of the strategy were predominantly positive. The findings further revealed that the Tell-Show strategy contributed to the enhancement of students’ writing abilities, suggesting that effective instructional strategies can have a significant influence on students’ motivation and academic achievement. The positive feedback also indicated that students perceived the strategy as engaging and helpful.

The main strength of this study lies in its comprehensive discussion of expert theories related to the instructional techniques that support the research. In addition, the lesson plan was systematically and thoroughly designed. Nevertheless, the earlier study did not incorporate any instructional media. In practice, the use of media such as pictures can significantly assist students in developing ideas when composing paragraphs. Addressing this limitation, the present research intends to integrate pictures to facilitate students in writing paragraphs. The inclusion of visual media is expected to encourage more active student participation and foster creativity in writing. Moreover, pictures are anticipated to provide students with a clear framework of what should be described in a descriptive paragraph. Consequently, students’ writing learning outcomes are expected to improve.

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The second study was carried out by Maheswari et al (2022) entitled "Improving Writing Skills Through the Tell-Show Strategy Combined with Picture of the Eighth-Grade Students of SMPN 2 Kuta Utara in the Academic Year 2021/2022." This study aimed to examine the improvement of descriptive paragraph writing skills among eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kuta Utara during the 2021/2022 academic year through the implementation of the Tell-Show strategy combined with pictures. The results revealed that students' writing abilities showed notable improvement when the Tell-Show strategy was applied alongside visual stimulation in the form of pictures. These findings indicate that the integration of visual elements plays a significant role in enhancing students' writing performance.

The strength of this study is reflected in its use of various expert theories proposed by researchers to strengthen the research foundation. The lesson plan has been systematically designed, and the procedures for implementing the strategy are explained in detail. In addition, the application of tests and questionnaires as research instruments is clearly described. However, in his study, pictures were not explicitly discussed, even though the strategy was integrated with a picture. As a result, the picture could not effectively support students during the teaching and learning process. In other words, the students' writing performance may not have reached its full potential. In the present research, the researcher would incorporate Tell-Show strategy with pictures as a teaching medium. This combination would provide students with a clear overall representation of what would be described in the descriptive paragraph. Consequently, students' writing achievements could be enhanced.

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