

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background of the study, formulation research problem, the purpose of the study, formulation of hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of the study**

The most basic part of our lives is language. One of the functions of language is used as a communication tool in every nation in the world. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010: 311) language is the method of human communication in which sounds (or their written representation) are organized into larger units in a structured manner. With communication, we can express our feeling, idea, and everything that we mind. In other words, as a system of arbitrary signals such as sounds, gestures, or written symbols, language helps us in all of our activities.

English is an international language, realizing it permits us to speak with individuals from different societies and nations. English has effectively been educated as an unknown dialect in our country. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010: 590), The term TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) is used to describe the process of teaching English to those who do not learn it natively. From kindergarten to college, English was taught to students in school. The students can improve their abilities in various fields

through English learning. In English learning, there are three components, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, and four abilities, they are writing, speaking, listening, reading. The components and skills in English have a relationship or connection with one another like grammar and writing. According to Fatemi (2008:7), writing and grammar are intimately connected, as effective writing relates much of its quality to flawless grammar. There is an assumption that "good writing requires good grammar". In other words, grammar is a necessity of composition for individuals who need to deliver sentences, paragraphs, essays, and stories.

According to Puspitasari and Kurniawan (2017:83), grammar is an assortment of decisions that direct how words are consolidated or assembled to frame rational sentences that can be spoken and written accurately and viably. The next definition, the highlights of a language, like sounds, sentences, development, and arrangement words, grammar is the construction and which means the arrangement of language (Etfita, 2019:59). From the definition above, the components of a language and the principles for organizing these elements into a meaningful unit have often been referred to as grammar. In the case of grammar, teaching that focuses solely on the definition yields more productive results.

According to Ellis (2009: 144), the issues of contemplating grammar can be isolated into three classifications: the troubles related to ecological of language, phonetic components, and mental challenges. The frequency at which the information is received from the environment is one factor relevant

to the language environment. The linguistic factor is the essence of a language's grammar, while the psychological factor is the capacity to understand. In comparison, students in Indonesia need more grammar instruction because English is not their native language and they rarely use the English language in their life. As a result, when students learn grammar, they struggle with linguistic and psychological factors as well as environmental factors.

In English learning, there are four skills of English language (reading, speaking, listening, and writing). Writing is one of the principal abilities in the English language that have complicated than other skills. According to Puspitasari and Kurniawan (2017:83), writing is a unique intellectual cycle where the writer takes ideas and communicates them graphically. The most important ability in a language is writing. In other words, writing is the most difficult skill from others because it involves many segments like the structure of language, words, and expressions to be mastered. So, if the students want to write, they should pay attention about the segments of writing (Etfiti, 2019: 60).

Nowadays, the students are difficult to writing because of many problems. Byrne (1993:4) identified three problems that make writing difficult: linguistic, cognitive, and material difficulties. The first problem is linguistic in fact. This is due to our ability to compose proper structures, which helps the sentences to fit in with one another. The text's final result is something that readers can use effectively. The second problem is a cognitive

one that has to do with our mastery of the various types of language, structure, and grammar that we need to communicate effectively in writing. The third problem concerns the definition. It was linked to our ability to formulate a concept in writing. As a consequence, we sometimes lose ideas while writing.

Therefore, learning is basic for creating writing, especially English learning in Indonesia, because writing is the change of ideas and thoughts into clear composed structures. Moreover, many individuals favor writing as the method for conveying data in various ways, including postal letters, business letters, and important data in an organization's items. The kinds of the genre in writing are descriptive, narrative, report, recount, explanation, procedure, anecdote, spoof, and news items, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, discussion, reviews.

There are different approaches to sort out sentences in a piece of writing. One of them is descriptive text. According to Oshima et al (2007: 61), descriptive writing uses sensory information to clarify how something shows up, looks, scents, tastes, and sounds. A proper of description is a picture, readers can imagine the picture of the object, location, or individual. While the definition focuses on visual perception, it also includes other forms of perception. Based on the definition above, descriptive text is composed to describe someone, location, or thing. Overall, descriptive text is used to describe an individual, location, or thing through visual experience. It's used to make a visual image of individuals, locations, and even time, days, or seasons. It can be used to describe the outwards appearance of individuals. It

can show data about the character. Not all students can write clear content appropriately and fittingly with the current components in the descriptive text. Many students can't write because of some cases. Most of the students lacked the vocabulary and failed to apply English grammar.

Grammar and writing are two components and abilities that are identified with each other. There is an assumption that "good writing requires good grammar". The dominating of language structure is a necessity for writing for individuals who need to create sentences, articles, stories, and essays. Swan (2002: 23) states, "grammar is the guidelines that say how words are combined, arranged, and changed to show various implications". In other words, grammar controls the formation of different definitions that are utilized to make a sentence in writing.

Another statements about the correlation between grammar and writing in descriptive text, the research also connected her research discoveries to previous studies that relate to Nadrun (2015). The research was to check whether there was a correlation between students' ability to grammar mastery and their writing ability. The samples of research are fourth-semester students at STIKES Pembina Palembang's midwifery study program. The other research was from Wahyuni and Wati (2018). The purpose of research was to (1) decide the capability level of grammar mastery at English department students, (2) decide the capability level of writing thesis at English department students, and (3) research the relationship between grammar mastery and writing a thesis at STKIP YDB Lubuk Alung during the sixth

semester. The research utilized a correlational study, and the participants were sixth-semester students in academic year 2017/2018. The total sampling technique was used to choose 32 students for this study. Moreover, the following research was from Etfita (2019). The focus of this research was to see if there was a correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability to write news for the fourth semester English department students at Universitas Islam Riau's faculty of teacher and training. The correlation research design was utilized in this research. The sample contained 26 students from the 4C class, who were chosen utilizing the cluster sampling technique. Grammar and news writing tests were utilized to collect data. Also, research about grammar and writing was finished by Pamuji (2020). The reason for this research was to check whether there was a correlation between students' capacity to master grammar and their writing ability. The participants in the research are fourth-semester students at STIKES Pembina Palembang's midwifery study program.

The statement above showed that the differences between previous research and this research are four previous studies took the object of research in different places (SMA Negeri 1 Pasangkayu, STKIP YDB Lubuk Alung, Universitas Islam Riau, STIKES Pembina Palembang), sample (X IPA 1, 32 sixth semester students chosen by using total sampling technique, 4C, 22 of fourth-semester students of the midwifery study program), instrument (questionnaires and tests), (2015, 2018, 2019, 2020) year in academic. These are the statements from four previous studies. In this research, the researcher

wants to make new something and not the same as other previous studies. This research is held in the academic year 2020/2021. The sample of this research is X-TKRO 4 (Mechanical Engineering Student) from Vocational High School Bandung, Tulungagung. It used two kinds of tests, they are multiple-choice (the material based on the basic competence in the syllabus of curriculum 2013 for first-grade students of vocational high School) for grammar test and writing descriptive text about the individual, things, the location for writing test. The following are the differences between previous studies and this research: in the academic year, sample, and the way to collect data from two tests of the independent and dependent variable. It showed that new research is needed to cover the weaknesses of previous studies and the new research is the research in this thesis.

When the researcher was doing an observation at Vocational High School One Bandung from 21<sup>st</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020. At the time the researcher taught the first semester of the 10th grade in mechanical engineering students (X-TKRO 4). The researcher got material about descriptive text chapter. In the process of teaching and writing English, the researcher explained about definition of descriptive text, generic structure, the purpose of descriptive text, and language features of descriptive text. To improve understanding students, the researcher gave some examples of descriptive text. From the explanation above, the students were taught English lesson about descriptive text chapter maximally, and commonly the student could write descriptive text. However, the students were still difficult to write

descriptive text. Based on the researcher's experience was doing an observation at Vocational High School One Bandung. The researcher found some problems that were found based on the phenomenon. They are some of the students had problems writing descriptive text based on generic structure, language features in descriptive text, mechanics (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).

From the description above, the researcher assumes that grammar is one of the language parts which take a role in writing ability, especially in descriptive text. Having strong grammar mastery, allowed writers to deliver their message to the reader clearly and understandably. On the other hand, writing in a grammatically incorrect manner simply makes it more difficult for readers to understand. It's crucial to utilize the right words to get the idea through, as well as to practice good basic grammar when writing descriptive text. Based on school reality in nowadays they get the English lesson in the school only once a time a week (online and offline learning) because of a pandemic. It's different from four previous studies at senior high school, university, STKIP, STIKES that got the English lesson more than once time a week, and at the time all previous studies used offline learning in their school (before pandemic). So, the researcher wants to know how the competence of the students with the less get the theory in this pandemic.

Based on the problem above, the researcher was interested in investigating the problems above into research entitled: "The Correlation Between Students' Grammar Mastery and Their Competence in Writing



Descriptive Text at The Tenth Grade SMKN 1 Bandung in Academic Year 2020/2021”.

### **B. Formulation Research Problem**

Is there any correlation between students' grammar mastery and their competence in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade SMKN 1 Bandung in academic year 2020/2021?

### **C. Purpose of The Study**

To find out whether there is correlation between students' grammar mastery and competence in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade SMKN 1 Bandung in academic year 2020/2021.

### **D. Formulation of Hypothesis**

A hypothesis is a statement concerning the relationship between two or more variables for research. Based on the research problem and the research objective, there are two hypotheses in the research as follows:

1.  $H_0$  (null hypothesis)

$$H_0: \rho = 0$$

There is no correlation between students' grammar mastery and their competence in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade SMKN 1 Bandung academic year 2020/2021.

2.  $H_1$  (alternative hypothesis)

$H_1: \rho \neq 0$

There is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their competence in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade SMKN 1 Bandung academic year 2020/2021.

### **E. Significance of the Study**

Theoretically, it is used to practice the researcher's knowledge in test the theory. Practically, the finding of the present research is expected to give some scientific contribution for the English teachers, and future researchers.

1. English Teachers

The result of this research can inform them about the relations between to improve the result of this study will become the input to English teachers in teaching-learning processes, especially in writing.

2. Future researchers

The researcher hopes that the research will be useful for future researchers as the reference to make further research. It is expected

for future researchers to conduct the same research in a wider area. So, it will be more advantageous and beneficial to the development of English education.

## **F. Scope and Limitation**

### **1. Scope of the research**

In this research, what is involved in the discussion is related to students' grammar mastery and its relation with students' competence in writing descriptive text. This research area focuses on using grammar to write descriptive text which is suitable with the instructional syllabus design for the first semester of first-grade students.

### **2. Limitation of the research**

This research is only conducted for class TKRO 4 of first-grade students at SMKN 1 Bandung who registered in the academic year 2020/2021 and it consists of 35 students.

## **G. Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Correlation**

Correlation is a connection between two or more variables. In this research, the object or something that correlated is students'

grammar mastery and their competence in writing descriptive text. The number shows the strength and the direction of correlation. It is from -1 to + 1. If getting closer to 1, means the stronger correlation, and getting closer to 0, means the weaker correlation. So, the positive or negative score of their mastery in grammar will give a result significant correlation or no correlation to their writing descriptive text is finding out after the data, as well as the result, are obtained. The SPSS program will be used to determine the correlation.

## 2. Grammar Mastery

According to Richards and Schmidt (2010: 251-252), Grammar is the structure of language and how components of linguistic such as words, phrases that combined to make a sentence. Mastery is a condition about understanding and knowledge completely to certain activities (Oxford). Grammar mastery in this research is as knowledge and understanding of students about how to use grammar mastery when writing descriptive text. According to Tronbury (2000:141) commonly, grammar is tested by using the discrete-item test. It is about the individual component of learning knowledge. According to Heaton (1975:34), there are some ways to measure grammar mastery such as multiple-choice, rearrangement items, completion items. The type of multiple choice is liked by many constructors of grammar test. From the statement above, the researcher does a grammar test to measure grammar mastery.

### 3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text describes the characteristic of someone or the object. The purpose of descriptive text is to describe people, places, and things. Gerot and Wignell (1995:208) defined descriptive text as written to describe a specific person, location, or object. From the statements above, the researcher concludes that descriptive text is a text that is used to describe someone, place, or thing through visual experience.