

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a review of the research's background, research problem formulation, purpose/goal of the study, research hypothesis, research scope and limitations, importance/Significant of the study and glossary of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Writing is an important part of communication that the students have to master in school. Writing is a crucial aspect of communication that students must master during their time in school. It serves as a fundamental tool for expressing ideas, sharing knowledge, and participating effectively in academic and social settings. According to Byrne (1995) writing is transforming our thoughts to become language or written form. It is in line with the statement by Nunan (2003) writing is the physical act of committing words or idea, thinking about how to express them and organizing them into statements and paragraph that will be clear to the reader.

Writing is one of the four basic skills that are normally considered to be the mainstay of English language teaching, besides listening, speaking, and reading. As a productive skill, writing requires students to develop the ability to express ideas, notions, and information in the form of clear and structured written language. However, writing is considered to be one of the most difficult skills to achieve, especially when it relates to learning English as either a second or foreign language.

The Merdeka Curriculum, launched by the Ministry of Education,

Culture, Research and Technology in February 2022, marks a new milestone in Indonesia's education system, writing and presenting have a very close relationship, where they complement each other to help students develop overall communication skills. Writing serves as the basis for organizing ideas in a structured and logical manner, giving students the opportunity to clearly design their message before delivering it orally. By writing, students can think deeply about the content they want to convey, design the flow of the presentation, and ensure each point made has the support of relevant arguments or data. This provides a strong foundation for producing presentations that are not only engaging, but also informative and persuasive.

Presenting, on the other hand, gives students the opportunity to practice what they have written, practice speaking skills in front of an audience, and learn how to convey ideas convincingly through voice intonation, facial expressions, and body language. This process helps students understand the importance of simplifying the ideas from their writing into key points that the audience can easily understand. In addition, the experience in presenting allows students to reflect on their writing, for example, whether the message written is clear enough or whether the language used is effective to reach a particular audience.

The integration of writing and presenting is an approach that connects students' ability to write with the skill of conveying ideas orally. Writing serves as the foundation for developing structured and clear ideas, while presenting allows students to convey those ideas to an audience in an engaging and persuasive way. Through this integration, students are taught to transform

writing into effective presentations, such as simplifying ideas into key points, utilizing visual aids, and practicing verbal as well as non-verbal communication. Conversely, the presentation experience can also strengthen writing skills by encouraging students to focus more on the core message and relevance of the content. This approach not only improves students' overall literacy but also equips them with essential communication skills for academic and professional life.

Through this integration, students not only learn to write better, but are also able to convey their ideas with confidence and professionalism. This approach reflects the principles of the *Merdeka* Curriculum which emphasizes learning that is relevant to the real world, equips students with 21st century skills, and encourages them to become skilled communicators, both in writing and orally. Writing and presenting, thus, become two inseparable skills, where success in one support success in the other.

With the integration of writing and presenting, it confirms that writing is not just about producing text, but also has a significant impact on various aspects of language skills, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and conveying ideas. Writing helps students organize ideas in a structured way, enrich vocabulary, and understand the proper use of grammar, all of which are important cornerstones in effective presentation. In this context, morphological awareness, which is part of vocabulary acquisition, also plays a crucial role.

Morphological awareness allows students to understand the structure of words, such as prefixes, suffixes and roots, which helps them recognize the

meaning of new words and use them in writing and oral communication. This skill not only supports the development of a broader vocabulary, but also improves accuracy and creativity in writing. When students have a good command of morphology, they can construct more complex and varied sentences, making their writing more interesting and effective. This, in turn, affects their presentation, as a rich vocabulary and proper grammar will increase confidence and clarity when speaking. The integration of writing and presenting in the *Merdeka* Curriculum reflects a holistic approach to language learning, where writing is not only seen as a separate skill, but also as a foundation to support various aspects of communication. Thus, writing not only trains students' literacy skills, but also becomes an important foothold in building a complete language competence, from reading, speaking, to listening.

Writing is not only a communication process but also a way of expressing ideas or ideas that show one's creativity (Rizki and Fitriani, 2020). Writing skills are very important for students because by writing students can pour their ideas, thoughts, and ideas into written language. In addition, writing skills require students to be more creative in organizing their mindset (Putri, et al., 2019). However, in reality, students' ability to express ideas or ideas in writing is still lacking (Febrina, 2017). Writing skill activities are pouring ideas into written form, even many benefits can be obtained from writing activities, one of which is that writing can express the ideas or ideas it has (Mustofadan Ihsan, 2021). Writing is the most difficult language skill because writing involves various other skills, including the skill of compiling what is in the mind and what is felt

using words so that it becomes the right sentence then arranges it in a paragraph according to grammatical rules. (Marlisa et al., 2020).

This challenge may arise because writing encompasses many aspects of language, such as vocabulary, grammar, and the organization of ideas. Not only that, but the process of writing also requires critical thinking and the ability to deliver messages to readers. For most students, problems in writing are usually related to a lack of mastery in grammar, which makes it hard for them to come up with grammatically correct sentences. In addition motivational factors also play an important role. Too often, lack of enthusiasm and confidence to write holds them back from honing their skills.

This difficulty may equally be supported by other variables such as a lack of understanding of linguistic structures, a lack of strategies in the composing process, and limited experience in writing. Therefore, factors that may support the students writing skills development should be discussed, including linguistic variables like morphological awareness that would help them understand and apply language structures in their writing.

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies word structure, including the formation, function, and relationship between word-forming elements such as roots, prefixes, suffixes, and derived word forms. Morphology focuses on analyzing how the smallest meaningful units, called morphemes, are used to form words and affect the meaning and function of words in language. According to Katamba (1993), morphology can be defined as “the study of the internal structure of words and the rules by which words are formed.” In other

words, morphology helps explain how small elements of words combine to create new words and how changes to those elements can alter the meaning or function of words.

Morphology is very important in language learning as it affects vocabulary comprehension, grammar, and written and oral communication skills as stated by Carlisle (2000). By developing a deep understanding of word structure, students can significantly improve their writing in a variety of ways. These include choosing the most appropriate and precise words to convey their intended meaning, constructing more complex and nuanced sentences that reflect a higher level of linguistic competence, and enriching the overall expression of ideas in their writing. A strong understanding of word structure enables students to recognize root words, prefixes, and suffixes, which not only expands their vocabulary but also empowers them to use words creatively and accurately. In addition, this knowledge contributes to improved grammar and sentence variety, helping students create more engaging and impactful writing. As they become more adept at manipulating word forms and structures, they can better communicate their thoughts, arguments, and narratives, ultimately fostering greater confidence and proficiency in their written expression.

According to (Carlisle, 1995; Larsen & Nippold, 2007a; Nagy, Berninger, Abbott, Vaughan, & Vermeulen, 2003) Morphological awareness refers to the ability of individuals to consciously consider word structure in terms of the smallest meaningful units and to analyze and manipulate these units. In line with that, Zakaria (2018) stated that morphological awareness is students' knowledge

of how to form new words from basic words. This will certainly affect the results of their writing because, first, developing vocabulary knowledge in accordance with their writing ability. because morphological awareness is the ability to manipulate morphemes at the word level. It also makes it easier for them to express the content they want to write by using the right vocabulary. Secondly, it will lead them to analyze words by breaking them down into their morphological components, which will help students to guess their meaning. Thirdly, they can create correct writing correct word structures and manipulate the word structures they will use in their work.

To help student achieve their writing goals, teachers should consider a number of aspects that affect students' writing competence. Morphological awareness, a component of vocabulary acquisition, is one important element. The ability of students to comprehend word structure, including prefixes, suffixes, and roots, and how these components influence meaning is known as morphological awareness. Students that possess this knowledge are able to deconstruct complicated words into their basic components, which aids in their deeper comprehension of word meanings. This skill helps pupils build a larger vocabulary, which enables them to create sentences that are more intricate, varied, and significant.

Reading comprehension and morphological awareness are positively correlated, according to research. Pupils are better equipped to extract meaning from the texts they read and use that meaning in their writing when they comprehend how morphology functions. This implies that a solid grasp of word

structure significantly supports students' capacity to communicate their thoughts in writing in addition to enhancing their reading comprehension. Furthermore, because they comprehend the patterns and norms that comprise language, students who have a stronger grasp of morphology also typically make less mistakes when using language, both in writing and when speaking.

Furthermore, morphological awareness can be applied as an effective learning strategy to improve students' writing skills. By teaching morphology, teachers help students understand and analyze words in complex texts, making it easier for them to convey their ideas clearly in writing. This strategy also helps students to be more confident in using more diverse and accurate vocabulary. Thus, the integration of morphological awareness learning in writing instruction not only enriches students' language skills but also provides them with a strong foundation for success in various aspects of academics and communication.

Various previous studies have shown the relationship between morphological awareness and writing ability. For example, a study by Hafifah Azahra and Rafista Deviyanti entitled *A Correlation between Students' Morphological Awareness and Their Accuracy in Writing Recount Text* revealed that morphological awareness significantly affects students' accuracy in writing recount text. This study used a quantitative approach with an ex-post facto design. Similar results were also found in Olin Nita's (2020) research entitled *Morphology Mastery in Writing Popular Articles*, where there is a significant relationship between morphology mastery and popular article

writing skills. This research was conducted with a quantitative approach using the correlation method. Unlike the previous studies, this research adopts the Spearman Correlation Coefficient correlation method. This approach is expected to provide a more in-depth and specific analysis of the relationship between morphological awareness and writing competence. This study aims to understand the extent to which students' ability to recognize, understand, and use word structures (morphological awareness) contributes to their competence in producing writing that is structured, meaningful, and in accordance with grammar rules. In addition, this study also aims to explore the role of morphology mastery in improving writing skills, such as the ability to use appropriate vocabulary, form complex sentences, and avoid grammatical errors.

Based on the description above, the researcher concludes that one of the language skills that must be mastered for writing is morphology. Acquiring knowledge of language is essential as it will enable students to write accurately and precisely. If someone understands about morphological awareness, they will write about it. Writers can easily convey their intended meaning to readers when they use the right terminology in their sentences. When writing, writers not only have to find ideas but also have to use the right words to express them. This study was conducted to find out whether there is a significant relationship between morphological awareness and competence in writing. The researcher is interested in conducting a study with the following title based on the description that has been presented above *The Correlation Between Students' Morphological Awareness and Their Competence in Writing*

B. Formulation of Research Problem

Based on the description of the background above, the researcher will formulate the problem in the research which is presented directly into the following questions, “Is there any correlation between students’ morphological awareness and their competence in writing?”

C. Objective of the Study

The purpose of this research in general is to find answers to the formulation of the problem stated above. So, based on the problem formulation above, the purpose of the research is to find out the correlation between students’ morphological awareness and their competence in writing.

D. Formulation of Hypothesis

Hypothesis are tentative answers to questions obtained from previous studies or theories. There are two hypotheses used in this study, namely as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho)

There is no correlation between student’s morphological awareness and their competence in writing.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

There is a correlation between student’s morphological awareness and their competence in writing.

E. Scope and Limitation

To guarantee precise information and to avoid misinterpretation of the problem, the researcher would like to limit the scope of the study. This study

focuses on the relationship between students' morphological awareness and their competence in writing. Although this study provides insight into students' writing ability, it is limited by the specific context of junior high school specifically the grade VIII *Merdeka* curriculum chapter 1 on congratulatory cards.

F. Significance of The Study

1. For teachers: This finding is expected to provide practical benefits for teachers, so that they can design more effective learning strategies to increase students' morphological awareness. With this awareness, students will not only be more skillful in constructing grammatically correct sentences but also more confident in expressing their ideas in a more structured and meaningful way. Hopefully, the positive impact of this research can be felt by students not only in the classroom but also in the context of their communication outside of school.
2. For Students majoring in English: As students majoring in English, the findings in this study are expected to make a significant contribution in increasing students' awareness of morphological aspects in their daily language use, especially during classroom activities. A better understanding of morphology can help students to understand word structure, the use of affixes, as well as how word form can affect the overall meaning of a sentence. Thus, students will be better able to use English appropriately, both orally and in writing.
3. For future researchers: The results of this study are expected to add

knowledge and experience in conducting research on the relationship between students' morphological awareness and writing skills/competence.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstandings or unwanted things, researchers need to explain some of the terms used in this study:

1. Morphology

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies word structure, including the formation, function, and relationship between word-forming elements such as roots, prefixes, suffixes, and derived word forms. Morphology focuses on analyzing how the smallest meaningful units, called morphemes, are used to form words and affect the meaning and function of words in language.

2. Morphological Awareness

Morphological awareness is students' awareness with morphology. That is, students have the knowledge to form words, analyze word structures, and create new word structures with new meanings. In discussing morphological awareness, we must understand the meaning of morphology. Etymologically, the term morphology comes from the Greek morph which means shape, form, and morphology is the study of shape or form. In linguistics, morphology refers to the conceptual system involved in word formation or refers to the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed. In this study morphological awareness used is to assess students' understanding of word structure,

recognition of affixes, and the ability to differentiate meanings based on changes in word forms.

3. Writing competence

Writing competence in this study are defined as the ability to produce written text that is grammatically correct and in accordance with applicable rules. In writing English, a good command of vocabulary is very important, especially in the use of words with the right affixes. Affixes play an important role in shaping the meaning and function of words in a sentence, so mistakes in this aspect can affect the clarity of writing. Therefore, morphological awareness is very important in writing skills. By understanding how word structures are formed and how affixes affect meaning and grammar, students can construct more structured, accurate and effective sentences. This awareness not only helps students produce better writing, but also improves their ability to express ideas clearly and logically in English.