CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents Background of the Research, Research Problems, Objectives of the Research, Significance of the Research, Scope and limitations of the Research, and Definition of Key terms.

A. Background of the Research

Learning English is not only about understanding the meaning of its sentence but also comprehensing the use of sentences as well as developing the appropriate sentence based on grammar rules. The ability to produce text such as writing is very important in communication. Writing is a language skill that works as a means of indirect communication.[1] Therefore, students should be able to write texts. Students should be able to write texts that describe phenomena in their surroundings or express their ideas. Writing is the physical process of transferring notions or words into a medium.[2] Writing itself is the process of producing text in the form of symbols and signs that presented visually. Text writing refers to students ability to organize ideas from one paragraph

[1] Selvia Lisa Asni, Susi Susanti, and Stkip Al-azhardiniyyah, "An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Writing Recount Text at the Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 20 Kota Jambi" 02, no. 2 (2018).
[2] David Nunan, *Practical English Language Teaching* (McGraw-Hill Education, 2003).

to the next and combine these ideas systematically with clarity so that they are substantial.[3]

In the context of English language learning, writing is considered one of the skills that is difficult for students to master. Although for native speakers, writing is not a easy skill since it needs more than a graphic speech representation but also how to present organized ideas.[4] This skill is not merely focused on words, phrases, sentence patterns, and grammar, but is also focused on the ideas presented in each paragraph. Writing can be viewed as a cognitive activity in which the brain processes are used to organise ideas before they are expressed in written form, in this process writers are required to use their imagination and creativity to transform their thoughts into meaningful words.[5] Writing can be defined as the use of graphic symbols to convey meaning and also as an activity of composing text. Several linguistic components make it challenging.[6] Students need to pay attention to some writing aspects such as word choices, vocabulary, spellling, mechanics, chapitalization and grammar in the process of writing.[7] Among these components, grammar plays a crucial

[3] Baiq Wilda Muliadi, Teacher Training, and Corresponding Author, "An Analysis of Generic Structure on Recount Text Written by Accelerated Students at SMAN 1 Praya Tengah in Academic Year 2021 / 2022," 2022.

[4] Hami Salisati, "The Correlation Between Tenses Mastery and Ability in Writing Descriptive Paragraph at the Second Year Students of SMA Negeri 1 Kampar Kiri Tengah," 2013.

[5] Melanie Selvaraj et al., "Systematic Review : Approaches in Teaching Writing Skill in ESL Classrooms Systematic Review : Approaches in Teaching Writing Skill in ESL Classrooms" 8, no. 4 (2019): 5, https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v8-i4/6564.

[6] Bashir Elbashir, "Writing Skills Problems : Causes and Solutions" 11, no. 5 (2023): 6, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37745/ijelt.13/vol1n55264.

[7] Herman Sidabalok, Lustriyani Petronella, Dumaris E. Silalahi, "The Correlation Between Students Grammar Mastery And Writing Achievements Of Eleventh Grade Students At Sma Negeri 5 Pematang Siantar," *Jurnal Scientia* 12, no. 4 (2023): 5.

role in ensuring that the written text is accurate and comprehensible. This makes it easier for writers to convey their messages to readers clearly and comprehensively.

Mastering writing skills requires not only grammatical knowledge but also the use of rhetorical devices and the integration of conceptual as well as evaluative elements, which makes writing considered one of the most complex skills to teach.[8] Several obstacles emerge in this process, such as limited fluency, inadequate cultural awareness, lack of accuracy and complexity, and even low self-confidence caused by insufficient knowledge and experience.[9] Achieving strong writing ability in one's native language is already challenging, and it becomes even more demanding when it comes to writing in a foreign language like English.[10] Since effective writing is developed through continuous practice, students need sufficient time before they are able to produce well-constructed texts. Nevertheless, although writing is widely recognized as a difficult skill, students are still expected to develop it, as writing perform as a vital role in the learning process and acts as a medium to express their ideas. Moreover, in the era of modernization, writing skill has become increasingly crucial not only for daily communication but also for professional contexts.

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[8] John Brian Heaton, *Writing English Language Tests*, New Ed (London: Longman, 1988).

[9] Jonathan M Newton et al., "Teaching English to Second Language Learners in Academic Contexts Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking" 27, no. 2 (2018): 6.

[10] Lestari Setyowati et al., "The Correlation between Grammar and Writing Achievement of EFL Sophomore Students at STKIP PGRI Pasuruan , Indonesia" 3, no. 1 (2019): 6.

In the Merdeka Curriculum, tenth grade students are required to master various types of texts, including recounts, narratives, reports, descriptions, procedures, expositions, explanations, discussions, news items, anecdotes, and reviews. Descriptive texts in particular require students to not only understand the structure and purpose of the text, but also to master the appropriate and varied grammar and vocabulary. Descriptive texts enable students to convey observations, impressions, or experiences through descriptions of people, places, or objects. Writing descriptive texts requires not only an understanding of structure and purpose but also the ability to use accurate and varied vocabulary. Research by Pradana and Dharmayanti (2023) confirms that descriptive texts are the form of writing that most demands grammatical accuracy, especially the use of the simple present tense.[11]

In Indonesia, descriptive text is taught in the tenth grade. If students have studied descriptive text, students should understand and be able to write descriptive text simply. Specifically, when describing a person, students should be able to explain physical appearance, personal characteristics, and other relevant attributes by using appropriate grammatical structures, particularly the simple present tense. However, if students can not write descriptive text clearly and coherently describe a person, it means that the learning objectives have not been fully achieved.

[11] Danik Eka Pradana, Putu Ayu Paramita Dharmayanti, and Anak Agung Putu Arsana, "The Correlation Between Grammar Mastery Tenth-Grade Students of SMAN 1 Mengwi in Academic Year 2022 / 2023" 3, no. 2 (2023).

Since students are expected not only to recognize the generic structure of descriptive texts but also to produce meaningful and communicative writing that portrays a person accurately, the researchers decided to focus on this issue. Therefore, the ability to write descriptive texts that focus on describing person has been selected as the main focus of this study.

Some previous studies have been investigated on the same field. First, a study that has been done by Amelia & Indrawati entitled "The correlation Between Students' Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability in Descriptive Text".[12] The outcome showed that there is no meaningful correlatin between students' grammar mastery and their writing abilitty in descriptive texts.

Second, a study conducted by (Pradana et al.,) entitled "The Correlation Between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability In Descriptive Text of the Tenth Grade Students of SMAN 1 Mengwi in Academic Year 2022/2023".[13] The result showed tht there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing descriptive text. Third, a study was conducted by Putra et al., with the title "The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Skill of the Tenth Grade Students at SMK Ratna Wartha Ubud in Academic Year 2021/2022".[14] To collect data on writing skill and grammar mastery, the researcher employed two

[12] Indrawati Rizky Amelia, "The Correlation between Students ' Grammar Mastery and Their Writing Ability in Descriptive Text," *English Education Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023).

[13] Pradana, Dharmayanti, and Arsana, "The Correlation Between Grammar Mastery Tenth-Grade Students of SMAN 1 Mengwi in Academic Year 2022 / 2023,".

[14] I Nyoman Juni et al., "The Correlation Between Grammar Mastery and Writing Skill of the Tenth Grade Student of SMK Ratna Wartha Ubud in Academic Year 2021 / 2022" 2, no. 2 (2022).

exams. The finding showed that there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing skill. The fourth, a study was conducted by Handayani with the title "Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Skill at the Tenth Grade Students of SMA Argopuro Panti Jember in the 2020/2021 Academic Year".[15] The data were collected from grammar test and writing test. The result showed that there is a positive correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing skill. The Fifth, a study conducted by Novarita with the title "The Correlation Study: Student's Mastery of Simple Present and Their Ability in Writing Descriptive".[16] It showed that a strong and significant correlation between students' descriptive writing ability and their grammar mastery of the simple present tense was found.

Four out of those five previous studies have indicated a significant correlation between the two variables. However, one study found no significant connection between students' grammar skills and their writing skills. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship between grammar skills and writing skills may vary depending on the level of the students, the learning environment, and language exposure. In addition, most of these studies were conducted at the junior high school, high school, or vocational high school levels, while very few focused on students at State Islamic High Schools (MAN).

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[15] Fifin Handayani, "Correlation Between Grammar Mastery and Writing at Tenth Grade Students of SMA Argopuro Panti Jember in the 2020 / 2021 Academic Year," 2021.

[16] Novarita, "The Correlation Study: Student's Mastery of Simple Present and Their Ability in Writing Descriptive" 301, no. Icla (2018).

The fact shows that there are some differences between school under the auspices of ministry of Education affairs and those under the auspices of ministry of Religious affairs. One of them is in term of their curriculum. In terms of the curriculum, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) implements a curriculum that integrates general subjects with Islamic studies. This condition can affect the allocation of learning time, learning focus, and language exposure. English language teaching at MAN may receive relatively limited time allocation, as students are also required to study religious subjects. As a result, students may have fewer opportunities to practise grammar structures and develop intensive writing skills, which may affect their overall English language proficiency. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill this gap by re-examining the correlation between students' grammar proficiency and their writing skills at the State Islamic Senior High School (MAN) level. These findings are expected to enrich the discussion on the influence of grammar proficiency on students' writing skills at the Islamic senior high school level.

Furthermore, this research focuses on the language features of descriptive text since the grammar rules are very various and abroad. The researcher limited it by focusing on the use of grammar in the langauge features of descriptive text such as the usage of simple present tense, adjective, and the spesific noun since the students also learned this languge features in the class. In the process of learning, the students are expected to be able to write a simple or short descriptive texts. However, if students cannot apply correct grammar, many errors will occur, which may affect

the achievement of learning goals. As few studies show that grammar mastery affects writing achievement, the awareness to emphasize grammar learning also increases. Therefore, the researcher decided to take the title "The Correlation Between Students' Grammar Mastery and Their Writing Ability in Descriptive Text of the 10th Grade at MAN 1 Tulungagung.

B. Reserach Problems

1. How is the grammar mastery of the tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Tulungagung?
2. How is the writing ability of the tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Tulungagung in writing descriptive text?
3. Is there any significant correlation between the students' grammar mastery and their writing ability in descriptive text of the tenth grade at MAN 1 Tulungagung?

C. Objective of the Research

The purpose of this study is to answer the research questions above. Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To describe the grammar mastery of the tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Tulungagung.
2. To describe the writing ability of the tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Tulungagung in writing descriptive text.
3. To analyze whether there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability in descriptive text of the tenth grade at MAN 1 Tulungagung.

D. Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis is used as a tentative answer of the research problem. Null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H1) are explained as follows:

1. H0: There is no significant correlation between the students' grammar mastery and their writing ability in descriptive text at MAN 1 Tulungagung.
2. H1: There is significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability in descriptive text at MAN 1 Tulungagung.

E. Significan of The Research

Information on teh results of this research can provide benefits to teachers, students, and further researchers.

1. For teachers

   Teachers are able to know how far is the student's grammar matery and how far is the student ability in writing a descriptive text. By the result of this research, the teachers can anticipate the writing activity in the classroom regarding to other texts in the future.

2. For students

   Students can know to what extent they have to improve their writing skill and they know the importance of learning grammar.

3. For further researchers

   If other researchers want to research the same field, they can get the benefit from this research as a reference. The result of this study can strengthen their hypothesis. They can develop the variables in the different research designs.

F. Scope and Limitations of The Research

Researcher needs to restrict the discussion so that the discussion remains on topic. These are the scope and limitations of the research.

1. Scope

   This study is limited to investigate the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing descriptive text. The

discussion of the students' grammar mastery is adapted to the material taught at the MA/SMA level. The descriptive text discussed is also based on the syllabus.

2. Limitation

This study does not explain deeply how or why students' grammar mastery can be correlated to their writing ability. This study does not discuss the other aspects of grammar that are used in different texts. The data needed are only those related to students' grammar mastery and their achievement in writing descriptive text.

G. Definition of Key Term

To avoid the possible understanding, some terms need in this study need to be defined as follows:

1. Correlation

It refers to association of two variables (grammatical mastery and writing ability, in which data of the two variable are analyzed using statistical computation coefficient (r).

2. Students' grammar mastery

Grammar mastery can be interpreted as the ability to implement grammar knowledge into text production activities.

3. Descriptive Text

According to Hermawan et al., descriptive text is one type of writing that emphasizes on portraying the characteristics, features, and qualities

of a specific subject by using descriptive language, particularly adjectives and adverbs.[17]

[17] Nining Suryaningsih Budi Hermawan, Dwi Haryanti, *BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress*, 2022.