

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem of the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the problem, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a subject in Indonesia that has been taught since elementary school. The Indonesian government decided to make English the first foreign language taught in junior and senior secondary education, and English is also a major in many Indonesian universities (Situmorang, 2020). There is no denying the significance of English. Learning English will make it simple to interact and build relationships with people from around the world for business purposes, study, idea sharing, introductions, and other purposes (Afidah, 2022). Learning English as a foreign language begins with engaging in English learning activities that involve learning the skills needed. Students need to understand every skill in English, including writing, speaking, listening, and reading (Aulia, 2019). Kristiana (2021) stated that writing is one of the skills that students need to have when learning English. Writing skills are important for many other reasons than only facilitating written communication, they are also often used naturally in daily activities including completing exercises, assignments, and written tests. In this case, the researcher will be focus on writing.

Writing is the process of putting thoughts or ideas into written form so that readers may learn more from them. According to Nurfidoh (2021),

writing is a method of expression that allows students to express their ideas, feelings, thoughts, and even arguments and knowledge by writing them down on paper. It is a difficult skill to master, especially if people write in a foreign language that they are not yet fluent in, because it is different from their mother language (Kristiana, 2021). Usually, the difficulties in writing a text that students face can be caused by a loss of vocabulary, a lack of understanding of grammar, and so on (Situmorang, 2020). The difficulties in writing are caused by some factors. Byrne (1997) stated that three main categories cause writing difficulties are linguistic difficulties (language use and vocabulary), psychological difficulties (content aspects), and cognitive difficulties (organization and mechanics). Linguistic difficulties are about grammar, vocabulary, language use, and sentence choice. Psychological difficulties are the writer's difficulties due to the absence of direct interaction and feedback from the reader when writing. Meanwhile, cognitive difficulties are about spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraph creation. So, this can make it difficult for students to write a text.

Duha (2022) stated students must also understand the type of text they will write. There are five types of English texts taught in schools, especially at the junior high school level, namely descriptive, narrative, procedure, recount, and report (Putra, 2023). Descriptive texts are the most frequently found in learning, especially in the English Foreign Language.

Descriptive text is a type of text that describes a subject such as describing people, places and objects. Which explains the characteristics of people, places, animals and objects (Mukarromah, 2021). Descriptive text is a

text to describe an individual, a place, or an object and includes specific words that appeal to the senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch, and others). The generic structures of descriptive text are identification and description. The language features of descriptive text consist of the use of verbs, adjectives, and simple present tense. Students can learn how to describe things by learning how to write descriptive texts.

Students' difficulties in writing refers to the inability or limitations of students in producing writing that is clear, structured, and suitable with language rules, including grammar, vocabulary, content, text organization, and writing mechanics (Fadilah, 2024). Many students find writing difficult because they do not know how to do it well. That is why they need to learn and practice writing more. The reasons for students' difficulties in writing descriptive texts, according to Duha (2022), are divided into three problems. The first psychological problems shows that students are less interested in learning English, do not want to pay attention to their teachers when teaching, lack of writing practice, and even students are lazy to write the lessons given by the teacher. The second linguistic problems show that students do not master vocabulary, do not understand grammar, and do not even know what tenses are. The third cognitive problems shows that students do not know whether the words they make are right or wrong, they do not understand what capitalization and punctuation are, and they do not even know where to put them and when to use them. One of the interview results from Duha (2022), there were students who said "*Saya jarang belajar bahasa inggris miss, karena saya tidak suka bahasa Inggris. Bahasa inggris itu mata pelajaran*

yang sangat sulit untuk dimengerti", there were also other students who said "Saya tidak tahu, bu. Saya pikir dua duanya benar. "He" dan "She" sama-sama memiliki arti "Dia" dalam bahasa Indonesia. Jadi, saya pikir itu terserah apa saja yang kita gunakan".

Skilled in writing descriptive text means being competent or able to produce descriptive text (Matisa, 2016). The abilities that students get from descriptive text are the first, there is knowledge of structure and language referring to the understanding of text structure (identification and description) and language features such as adjectives, comparisons, and phrases. The second is vocabulary, the more often students create texts, the more vocabulary they have. The third is writing skills, students can apply structure and style in text production. The last is interpretive ability, taking the main idea, concluding implicit meaning, and understanding the relationship between text elements. Students should have these abilities because descriptive text can be included in other types of text, for example in narrative text that tells fairy tales. In fairy tales, some characters must be described in nature and form. Writing that describes a person, place, or object must be done carefully and correctly to provide readers with an incredible reading experience (Agustine, 2022). Although writing descriptive text sounds simple, students usually have trouble with it when it is written in English, which is a foreign language to them. Descriptive text is written using simple present tense which makes the writing consist of general, repetition, and habitual activities. However, to avoid terms from being used repeatedly

in descriptive writing, having a lot of vocabulary is important (Johannes, 2021).

There are some previous studies related to the student's difficulty in writing. The research is written by Aulia (2019). The aim is to analyze the ability and the difficulty that students face in writing narrative text. This research used descriptive design. The sample of this research is the eleventh-grade students consisting of 23 students in a class. The result of the study is the mean score indicated that the eleventh-grade students of MA Muallimin Muhammadiyah Makasar are good and have the competence of their ability in writing narratives. Then, most students have difficulty in writing narrative text. This means students have difficulty in organizing their ideas. They cannot improve their ability in writing, words, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. There are also several other studies related to students' difficulties in writing text on chapter 2. The similarity between this study and the previous studies is to investigate the students' difficulties in writing text. This study aims to analyze students' difficulties in writing descriptive text. There is also a gap in this research regarding interviews that do not take samples randomly but are taken equally from those with high to low abilities.

This research was conducted at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri because the researcher had conducted preliminary research before, and the students at the school were suitable to be the research sample. The reason why the researcher chose descriptive text was because it was the most basic text material taught in writing. Second, descriptive text was related to the surrounding environment; for example, every day people certainly saw others or objects

that could be described. That was why the researcher chose that title to find out why students had difficulties in creating descriptive text and the causes of their difficulties in writing descriptive text.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the research problems for this research can be formulated as follows:

1. How is the students' ability in writing descriptive text in the eighth grade at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri?
2. What are the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text in the eighth grade at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the problems of study above, the purposes for this research can be stated as follows:

1. To find out the students' ability in writing descriptive text in the eighth grade at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.
2. To explain the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text in the eighth grade at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

1.4 Significances of the Study

The results of this research can provide benefits for:

1. Students

It is hoped that this research can enrich their knowledge and increase their skills in writing descriptive texts and understand the importance of learning to write descriptive texts.

2. Teachers

It is hoped that this research can help teachers to find out students' difficulties in writing descriptive text so that it increases knowledge for teachers to teach their students well on this material. As well as helping them explore teaching methods so they can expand their knowledge in teaching.

3. Future Researchers

This research can be used as a source of information for other researchers interested in conducting related research. Also, it provides research method inspiration for other researchers when conducting research.

1.5 The Scope and Limitation of the Problem

There are many kinds of writing text, such as procedure text, narrative text, recount text, etc. The scopes of this study is to focus on describing students' ability and problems aspects in writing a descriptive text. The reason researcher chooses descriptive text is because it is a basic type of text which will be the foundation for moving on to other types of text. In schools or institutions, they will definitely teach texts starting from descriptive texts first and then other texts, because descriptive texts contain explanations about something in detail. For example, in narrative text, report text, or other kind of texts there must be a section that contains a description of something. In this research, the researcher limits the study to describe students' abilities and difficulties in writing descriptive text for eighth grade students at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To support reader understanding, the researcher includes further explanation of the terms used below:

1. Students' Writing Difficulties

Students' writing difficulties refer to the challenges they face when they are unable to clearly express their ideas through words or sentences. These difficulties, especially in writing descriptive texts, can be caused by various factors such as limited vocabulary, limited language skills, lack of knowledge about effective writing strategies, and others.

2. Writing Skill

Writing skill is the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and information clearly through writing. It includes using correct grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, as well as organizing ideas in a way that is easy to understand. Writing skill helps people share their messages with others in an effective way.

3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a text which is intended to describe a particular person, place, or thing. The generic structure of descriptive text is divided into two namely, identification and description.