

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is dedicated to an exploration of the study's underlying context, the research question, the goals of the investigation, the proposed hypothesis, the boundaries and constraints (scope and limitation), the importance of the findings, and the explanations for key terminology.

A. Background of the Study

English holds a vital position because acquiring linguistic elements and abilities is essential for students to achieve proficiency in the language. As noted by Hasan & Subekti (2017), mastering English requires students to grasp four key skills. On the other hand, Marwati et al. (2022) point out that beyond skills, learners must also build deeper understanding of three core language aspects: vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Of these three, proficiency in vocabulary stands out as a highly critical element of language learning. Richards & Renandya (2002) emphasize that vocabulary serves as a core building block of language and a basic principle that students need to learn, comprehend, and utilize. Furthermore, it acts as an essential framework enabling students to engage in reading, writing, and speaking.

One of the core aspects of mastering a language is vocabulary, which lays the groundwork for strong communication skills. Neuman and Dwyer (2009, p. 385) describe it as "the words needed to communicate successfully; those for speaking (expressive vocabulary) and those for understanding when listening (receptive vocabulary)." In agreement, Nation (2001) stresses that the

greater one's command of vocabulary, the better they can interpret and articulate thoughts in spoken and written contexts. Regarding writing abilities, Oshima and Hogue (2007) note that a solid vocabulary empowers students to build sentences that are richer in description, more accurate, and more compelling. This is vital in descriptive writing, as the clarity, depth, and choice of words directly affect the quality of the composition. Therefore, proficiency in vocabulary is essential to support students' achievements in writing, especially in generating descriptive texts that are transparent, enlightening, and significant.

Writing abilities are also quite crucial. The most crucial aspect is writing ability, which is a complicated producing activity that may be transferred to readers in order for them to obtain easily understandable information. According to Ghazali & Mohammad in Abdullah (2019), writing a decent paper requires a student to go through multiple procedures and employ a variety of approaches. According to Sa'diyah in Abdullah (2019), a learner needs have particular qualities to write, such as the ability to generate and arrange thoughts about what they want to write, as well as the ability to put these ideas into words. By writing, students can share their thoughts, feelings, or whatever is in their minds. Writing skills are also essential for kids to complete school assignments while learning English. Writing can also help pupils think creatively and process the correct words.

In English language learning, students are required to develop several competencies, including writing skills. One essential element that supports

this skill is vocabulary, which helps learners convey their thoughts more clearly. Writing is considered one of the core competencies in mastering English (Harmer, 2004). It involves various text types, such as descriptive texts that illustrate people, places, or objects; procedural texts that provide instructions; and recount texts that narrate personal experiences. In the context of descriptive texts, vocabulary mastery is very important, because the right vocabulary can help students describe objects or places in a clear way. A strong vocabulary foundation enables students to form well-structured sentences and produce higher-quality written work. When learning to write, students must also pay close attention to writing conventions, including organization, grammar, and appropriate word choice, to ensure their texts are coherent and meaningful.

Nevertheless, numerous students encounter obstacles in acquiring vocabulary proficiency. They often find it hard to retain unfamiliar terms, mix up synonyms that carry subtle differences, or have insufficient contact with genuine language application (Schmitt, 2008). Such hurdles impede their capacity to produce descriptive texts that are substantive and captivating. Hence, recognizing the link between vocabulary development and writing skills in descriptive composition is vital for pinpointing approaches that can enhance students' writing proficiency.

Several pertinent studies explore the relationship between vocabulary proficiency and writing skills in descriptive texts. The initial investigation by Yulistiani et al. (2020) analyzed the connections between vocabulary mastery

and writing competence, reading routines and writing performance, as well as the joint impact of vocabulary knowledge and reading habits on students' writing capabilities. The subsequent research by Maryamah (2021) examined the effects of vocabulary control and grammatical knowledge on writing proficiency in narrative compositions, considering both collective and individual influences. The final study by Sumaliyo et al. (2019) identified and outlined the associations between vocabulary command and mastery of effective sentences with the ability to write expository texts among eighth-grade students at SMP Nusantara during the 2018/2019 academic year.

Existing research is still limited, particularly concerning studies that specifically examine the relationship between mastery of insight/knowledge and the ability to write descriptive texts. Furthermore, previous studies were conducted in schools with different student characteristics, meaning their findings cannot be directly generalized to the context of SMPN 5 Kediri City. Observations at SMPN 5 Kediri City indicate that the school has adequate access to resources, such as libraries, language laboratories, and internet facilities, which are highly supportive of English learning. The availability of these resources is crucial for developing insight, a key component necessary for writing descriptive texts clearly and effectively. Consequently, research focusing on the relationship between the mastery of insight and descriptive writing ability at this specific school is expected to provide teachers with more focused understanding of the role of knowledge in students' writing skills, thereby addressing the existing research gap.

B. Research Problem

Based on the provided background information, the research problem for this study can be articulated as follows:

Is there any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and student's writing ability of descriptive text at SMPN 5 Kota Kediri?

C. Research Objective

Based on the statement of the problem above, the primary goal of this research is to investigate the correlation that exists between vocabulary mastery and their descriptive text writing ability at SMPN 5 Kota Kediri.

D. Hypothesis

The researcher considers hypothesis to make purposes of the study clear. The researcher has two hypotheses, these are:

1. *H₀*: There is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and the writing ability of descriptive text at SMPN 5 Kota Kediri.
2. *H_a*: There is no significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and the writing ability of descriptive text at SMPN 5 Kota Kediri.

E. Scope and Limitation

In this study, to answer the limitation of the problem that will be developed, the researcher only focuses on vocabulary mastery and the writing ability of descriptive text in first grade at SMPN 5 Kota Kediri. The researcher limits' students' writing ability in descriptive text.

F. Significance of the Study

This research holds significant implications, both in terms of theory and practical application. Theoretically, the findings are anticipated to enrich the existing body of knowledge regarding the correlation between vocabulary acquisition and writing proficiency, particularly within the scope of Indonesian language education. By quantifying the influence of vocabulary mastery on the ability to produce descriptive texts, this study establishes a valuable benchmark for subsequent research examining other facets of language skills. From a practical standpoint, the outcomes offer valuable guidance to teachers and educators, assisting them in formulating more efficacious instructional strategies aimed at boosting students' writing competence. Improving students' lexical command is thus expected to translate directly into better descriptive text writing ability, consequently enhancing students' self-assurance in written communication.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

To ensure clarity regarding the essential terminology employed throughout this study, the subsequent definitions are established:

1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a collection of English words known and utilized by a person. Vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language abilities because, without proper vocabulary knowledge, a person will have trouble in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Mastering vocabulary is crucial for writing and communicating effectively. A broad vocabulary is necessary for language acquisition, as it provides individuals with the means to convey their concepts accurately and succinctly. Even the most effective grammatical frameworks may not be able to express the desired meaning if one lacks a good knowledge of vocabulary.

3. Writing Ability

Writing ability is a language skill that includes the ability to convey ideas while paying attention to structure, grammar, vocabulary, and clarity of the message so that it can be understood by the reader.

4. Descriptive Text

A descriptive text is a type of writing that provides a detailed description or explanation of anything, be it a person, location, object, or event.