

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is an international language that is used by almost everyone in the world. Indonesian citizens assume English as a foreign language and it is studied by students from elementary school to university. In learning English, four aspects of skills must be mastered by students. These skills are writing, reading, listening, and speaking. These four aspects must be mastered by students so that they have good English skills.

Writing is one of the four language skills that must be mastered by students because it is a communication tool used by people to share information. For example, people write descriptive text for describing something in specific, and it is supported by Harmer (2004) that the writing process is a way of seeing what people do when they write texts. While Daulay et al. (2018) stated that writing is an expression of language in the form of letters, symbols, or words. The main goal of writing is communication. In the process of writing, writers must explore their minds to find interesting ideas to create meaningful writing.

Writing skills are very important for students in gaining independence, understanding, fluency, and creativity in writing. If students have mastered this skill, they will be able to write well, so that they can not only read what they have written, but readers can also read and understand the contents of the student's writing. In the English curriculum that applies to junior high schools, five genres of text must be learned by students, there are narrative texts, descriptive texts,

recount texts, procedure texts, and report texts. However, this study only focused on descriptive text.

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), descriptive text is a text type we use when we want to tell how something looks, smells, feels, acts, tastes, sound etc. It means that when we want to describe how something looks, smells, feels, acts, tastes, sound to someone by a text, we can create descriptive text. Basically, it provides detail information about characteristics of people, places, and things. The detail information is used to help the reader in creating a mental picture. There are two generic structures of descriptive text; namely, identification and description. In identification, the learners will identify phenomenon or subject that is going to be described. While, description, the learners will describe specifically parts, qualities, and characteristics of an object that is being described. Furthermore, they also explain about the grammatical features (language features (simple present tense, action verb and adjective), vocabulary, and mechanics) of descriptive text.

The results of previous research conducted by Hidayati et al. (2016) showed that students in several junior high schools in Indonesia had several problems while learning descriptive texts such as students having difficulty starting their writing, and they could not develop their writing properly. Then Budiyati (2017) found that some students were unmotivated and uninterested or bored to write.

Based on the results of pre-research interviews with English teachers at a junior high school in Surabaya, it was found that some students also had problems writing descriptive texts. In this case, students often found some difficulties in

writing descriptive texts even though they have been guided by their teacher to write them. There were some difficulties students faced while writing descriptive paragraphs. **First**, problems in developing ideas. Some students wrote many main ideas in one paragraph, and the idea of that paragraph was still ambiguous. Besides, several paragraphs are written in one sentence. The idea of the paragraph is still unclear. **Second**, Second students have not been able to explore ideas for writing descriptive text so that the writing they compose is easy to read. **Third**, students found difficulties in grammar. Grammar difficulty will affect certain patterns of how words are put together to form correct sentences. This will **not** make the idea develop properly. **Fourth**, when students continue to write something, they encounter many problems such as a lack of vocabulary and they also experience difficulties in developing their ideas related to their theme.

According to the English teacher at a junior high school in Surabaya, some students are still unsure about choosing the right words when composing a descriptive text. A lack of vocabulary makes students confused in developing the ideas they have. The last difficulty is related to spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Based on the phenomenon above, the researcher is interested in conducting **the current** research with the title "Students' Descriptive Writing Performance: The Analytic Scoring Assessment Usage".

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the background above, the problem formulation of this research is as follows: What are the levels of students' descriptive writing performance in junior high school?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem described above, this study has the following objectives: To explore the level students' descriptive writing performance in junior high school.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The benefits of this research are divided into two parts, namely as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits

The results of this study are expected to provide information and knowledge regarding the study of English, especially regarding skills in writing descriptive text.

2. Practical Benefits

A. For students

The results of the research are expected to be able to identify students' abilities and weaknesses in writing descriptive texts so that they can improve these weaknesses.

B. For teachers

The results of the research are expected to be used as materials for evaluating the causes of students' weaknesses in writing descriptive texts.

C. For further researchers

This research is expected to be used as a reference and reference materials for future researchers who wish to research the same topic.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is regarding the 8th grade students' ability in writing descriptive texts at SMP Stanislaus Surabaya, which discusses the level of their ability in writing descriptive texts. This research is only focused on the eighth-grade students at SMP Stanislaus Surabaya, in which case the researcher took only one class to be the subjects of the study.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Writing is not an easy thing. According to Brown (2007), writing is a thinking process because writing is a process of putting ideas on paper to turn thoughts into words and provide a coherent structure and organization. In this case, students carry out the process of thinking through writing descriptive text. Descriptive text is a type of writing consisting of descriptions, characteristics, and definitions of something or objects. Writing descriptive text is a corporate disclosure activity, describing places, things, and objects.

Based on the results of the pre-research interviews that have been conducted, the writer found several problems in grade 8 of SMP Stanislaus Surabaya, where students found it difficult and confusing in writing descriptive texts. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research related to the analysis of the

abilities of Grade 8 students at SMP Stanislaus Surabaya in writing descriptive texts.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The following is a definition of terms used in this study:

1. An analysis is a systematic examination and evaluation of data or information (Sugiyono, 2015). In this case, the focus is on descriptive texts written by 8th-grade students at SMP Stanislaus Surabaya.
2. Student Ability is the ability of students to do something (Robbins & Judge, 2014). Students are said to have abilities if they can do something that they have to do. In this study, the ability is defined as the ability possessed by students in writing descriptive text.
3. Writing is a process of action or process in building a larger unit of ideas, thoughts and feelings to form words in a sentence or paragraph (Brown, 2007). In this study, writing is a student activity in writing descriptive text.
4. Descriptive Text is a text intended to describe a particular person, place, or thing (Oshima and Hogue 1997).

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

The systematic discussion of this thesis is as follows chapter I introduction is about the background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumptions, theoretical framework, scope and limitations of the study, definition of key terms and organization of the thesis.

Chapter II review of related literature is about underlying theories consisting of components of writing and descriptive texts. In addition, this chapter discusses previous studies. Chapter III research method is about research design, research instruments, participants, procedure of collecting the data, technique of data analysis. Chapter IV discusses the data analysis and findings, discussion. Chapter V discusses the conclusions of the research that has been done and suggestions to several parties.