

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

English is an international language used in many countries. Therefore, in schools across various nations, it is made a mandatory subject. Indonesia is no exception; English is included as a subject in schools from elementary to high school and even at the tertiary level, where it is a popular field of study among many students. This inclusion is not without reason, as the government recognizes the significance of this language in the era of globalization. When discussing English, it is crucial to address the four fundamental skills that need to be mastered: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This study focuses specifically on writing ability. Writing skills can be a primary criterion for better academic ranking and greater success in learning. The importance of writing in education cannot be understated, as writing is one of the four effective skills in learning English. As a productive skill, many students find mastering English writing particularly challenging. Research findings indicate that students' writing abilities are still unsatisfactory. Katilie conducted a study to explore why students do not perform well in English writing. The results showed that the reason for students' lack of success in English essays is due to the implementation of inappropriate teaching strategies in the classroom (Katilie, 2003).

To address this issue, educators must develop additional interactive methods for teaching the subject. Although textbooks have limitations in teaching languages effectively, this does not imply that textbooks should be avoided in language

classrooms. On the contrary, it underscores the importance of creating authentic and student-centered teaching materials. Therefore, a potential solution to this problem may involve selecting materials that reflect everyday experiences and connect with students' personal lives, known as "Authentic Materials."

Authentic materials are teaching resources used in language learning that originate from original sources rather than being specifically created for language teaching purposes. Authentic materials refer to content that is not explicitly designed for language instruction but is utilized in the classroom, such as genuine newspaper reports, magazine articles, advertisements, recipes, songs, and videos. Kilickaya notes that the majority of educators worldwide believe that using authentic texts or materials in the language learning process offers numerous benefits (Kilickaya, 2004). This notion is supported by Mishan, who argues that authentic texts are the most valuable sources of diverse and comprehensible input for language learners. Furthermore, they impact crucial emotional elements in learning, such as motivation, empathy, and emotional engagement, and foster a 'holistic brain process' that can lead to more lasting learning outcomes (Mishan, 2005).

In line with the aforementioned discussion, the researcher aims to implement authentic materials into the students' writing instruction. The research site targeted is SMAN 1 Taebenu. Given that the researcher has previously conducted teaching practice at this high school and encountered several challenges faced by students in writing instruction, there is a keen interest in applying authentic materials to determine whether students at SMAN 1 Taebenu experience changes

in their learning process and whether the application of these materials can enhance students' enthusiasm for learning.

## **1.2 Research Problems**

Based on the explanation on background above, the problem of this study is:

1. What are the students' experiences with using authentic materials in enhancing their descriptive writing skills in English classes ?
2. How do eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Taebenu perceive the impact of authentic materials on their interest in writing descriptive texts ?

## **1.3 Aims of Study**

The aims of this research are:

1. To identify students' experiences in using authentic materials to enhance their descriptive writing skills in English classes.
2. To understand the impact of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Taebenu using authentic materials on their interest in writing descriptive texts.

## **1.4 Significance of Study**

This section contains the theories that support this research and the benefits it produces.

### **1.4.1 Implication**

This research is supported by the theory Moreover, Mardaningsih (2015) conducted research about the use of authentic materials on teaching writing descriptive text. In this research, she used two experimental classes in comparing

authentic and simplified materials. It is found that both authentic and simplified materials significantly improve the students' writing descriptive text achievement. Authentic materials are proven to be more effective in improving the students' writing recount text ability in terms of vocabulary and language use. Authentic materials help the students' critical thinking in writing and developing the main idea and giving more new familiar words for the students to write a descriptive text.

The analysis of using authentic materials for writing interest in descriptive texts has significant implications for both language teaching and learning. First, it highlights the potential of real-world materials to engage students more effectively than traditional textbooks, fostering a deeper connection to the writing process. Authentic materials, such as newspapers, advertisements, or personal narratives, can provide learners with genuine examples of language use, motivating them to write with greater interest and relevance. Secondly, the use of authentic materials could bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life communication, encouraging students to write descriptively with an eye toward real-world applications. This approach may enhance students' creativity and critical thinking skills as they analyze and replicate real-life text structures, vocabulary, and styles.

Moreover, the findings suggest that teachers could leverage these materials to design more dynamic and interactive lessons, encouraging students to explore diverse topics and broaden their writing horizons. By fostering a sense of authenticity in writing tasks, students might not only improve their descriptive writing skills but also become more confident and capable communicators.

In conclusion, the implication of this analysis emphasizes the importance of incorporating authentic materials in writing instruction as a means of increasing student engagement, improving writing skills, and providing a more meaningful and contextually rich learning experience.

#### **1.4.2 Application**

##### **a. For Teachers**

This research is expected to provide English teachers with insights into the effectiveness of using Authentic Materials in teaching writing skills. Teachers can use these findings to improve their teaching methods and make learning more contextual and relevant for students.

##### **b. For Students**

Students can benefit from the use of Authentic Materials, which can increase their motivation and interest in writing, as well as deepen their understanding of the contextual use of language in real life.

##### **c. For Schools**

The results of this study can serve as a basis for schools in designing more effective curricula or learning programs by utilizing Authentic Materials, thereby enhancing the overall quality of English language learning.