

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the things that underlie this study consist of the background of the study, questions of the research, purposes of the research, significance of the research, hypothesis, limitation of the research, and previous study.

A. Background of the study

Writing is an important skill that should be mastered by students. Writing can help students to improve other skills unconsciously. Nation (2009:113) stated that writing supports and prepares the development of other language skills in English, namely listening, speaking, and reading. Additionally, writing can stimulate students' critical thinking and communicate complex ideas (Allyn, 2011). In writing activities, students try to generate their ideas and organize them into texts. Thus, they express what they see or think about something through writing. Likewise, they do in speaking.

In Competency-Based Curriculum 2013 and the syllabus of the first grade of Junior High School, students are required to write based on certain genres. One of the genres that students should create is a descriptive text. In writing descriptive text, it is like picturing something with words. Wyrick (2011:323) stated that the writer of description creates a word-picture of persons, places, objects, and emotions using a careful selection of detail to make an impression on the readers. It means students must be able to express what they see or think clearly so that the information conveyed about the subject can be understood by the readers as they see a picture.

However, writing is not easy to master; students have some problems in writing or in describing something — they difficulties in choosing appropriate words to present their ideas into text. According to Diharyono's research finding as cited in Raja (2013) reported that students know or have the ideas of what they are going to write, but they do not know how to put them into words.

The writing process is not only mastering how to use language but also content that writers want to write and the way to arrange it into the paragraph. Moreover, there are several problems with learners in components writing, such as grammar, vocabulary, handwriting, layout, and punctuation (Harmer, 2001:326). It means that good content in writing descriptive text is not enough; the students also have to learn the components of writing such as content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics in the order they can create great writing, easy to understand and useful for the readers.

Based on the teaching training experience at the school, the researcher has found some problems among students who had low skills in writing and a lack of enthusiasm for doing the task to write that given by the teacher. Generally, they were confused about starting writing, lack of vocabulary, and low skills in grammar accuracy. Besides, one of the school's visions is promoting technological capabilities. It is why almost all students always brought their cellphones to the school. Thus, this is an opportunity for teachers to be more creative in teaching writing English. Teachers should create a creative and innovative way of teaching a descriptive text to make it easy for students to master and provide more exciting and enjoying the teaching-learning process to the students.

In the millennial generation era, digital technologies are shaping students writing in a myriad of creative and innovative ways. It can become a facilitative tool for teaching writing to students. As Purcell, Buchanan & Friedrich (2013) stated that internet and digital tools such as social media, cell phone, and texting, in general, technologies can facilitate students' expression and creativity in learning, increasing students' interest in writing, expanding readers to exchange ideas regarding their writing, and encouraging students learning spaces to write more frequently. Similarly, Harwood (2010) stated that social media could be used as a medium in learning English, especially in the teaching of writing.

At present, there are many social media that can be used as a medium of teaching and learning; one of the popular current social media which can be

used as a medium in teaching writing is Instagram. Instagram is the most popular social media, especially among teenagers. Salamon (2013) stated that young people are currently spending more time on Instagram than on Facebook. Instagram primarily provides students with the opportunities to read and write through photo descriptions and comments as well as the direct message. It can improve sentence structure, coherence, vocabulary mastery, and grammar accuracy (Kelly, 2015; Shazali et al., 2019). Moreover, students work on Instagram, reaching more extensive readers that can give feedback on students writing.

From the reasons above, the researcher utilizes social media Instagram to overcome the problem and improve students' ability in writing a descriptive text. Instagram is an effective medium and a suitable strategy to use as an arrangement for learning English, particularly in teaching writing a descriptive text (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018). Pictures and videos on Instagram can help the students to stimulate their ideas and make it easier to write where the flexibility of Instagram can make the learning process of writing more exciting and more visual (Zhang, 2017; Shazali et al., 2019). Thus, Instagram has provided an ideal environment for students to produce descriptive writing and improve their writing skills.

In this study, the researcher used Instagram as a medium in the teaching of writing a descriptive text. Instagram is a platform that can be used as a teaching tool for improving students' ability in writing descriptive text (Al-Ali, 2014; Soviah & Etikaningsih, 2018). Thus, the researcher tries to propose a solution as a way to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text by using Instagram.

B. Research Questions

1. What is the result of students' ability in writing descriptive text taught using Instagram?
2. What is the result of students' ability in writing descriptive text taught without Instagram?

3. How significant is the difference between the students' ability which was taught using Instagram and without Instagram?

C. Research Purposes

1. To find the students' ability in writing descriptive text taught using Instagram as a medium on teaching and learning
2. To find the students' ability in writing descriptive text taught without Instagram
3. To reveal the significant different improvement between the students' ability in descriptive text taught using Instagram and without Instagram

D. Research Significances

The research results are expected to give significant input to the following people:

1. Practical Significances:
 - a. For the students: This research is expected to improve students' writing skills. So, the positive results of the study are if the students' ability in writing descriptive texts increases, such as in developing ideas, organizing ideas, grammar accuracy, vocabulary mastery, and mechanics. Besides, by using Instagram as a teaching tool, this research is expected can stimulate and motivate students in writing.
 - b. For the teachers: This research is expected can contribute significantly to the teaching of writing skills. This research can help English teachers in choosing the appropriate media of teaching to improve students' writing skills and make teaching activities more interesting to students.
 - c. For the researchers: This research is expected can be increased knowledge and information for future studies about the use of Instagram as a medium to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text to create a better teaching and learning process in the future.

2. Theoretical Significance

The findings of this study can contribute to developing the teaching theory for improving students' writing skills and in choosing the appropriate kinds of media in improving students' writing skills, especially in teaching-learning of the descriptive text. This study can be used as a reference for further researchers who want to research related to this study and also the use of Instagram as a medium in teaching can be a reference for teachers as a creative and innovative way.

E. Theoretical Framework

Descriptive text is one of the genres which must be learned by students. Descriptive text is a type of text in English that describes something. Wyrick (2011:323) stated that the writer of description creates a word-picture of persons, places, objects, and emotions using a careful selection of detail to make an impression on the readers. It means that the students must be able to express what they see or think clearly so that the information conveyed about the subject can be understood by the reader as they see the picture. Besides, in writing descriptive text, students must use correct tenses, spelling, and punctuation. Additionally, In general, the purpose of descriptive text is to describe something or provide information about the phenomenon to the readers so that the readers can imagine what the writers have described. As Hyland (2004) stated that the purpose of a descriptive picture is to give an account of imagined or factual events and phenomena.

In the process of teaching and learning to write descriptive text, the role of media is very important that can help teachers improve students' writing skills. According to Sadiman as cited in Fitrawati & Ningsih (2014) stated that media is a kind of tool used to deliver information from a sender to receivers, which can interact with their mind, feeling, attention and interest of the students. While Scanlan, as cited in Fitrawati & Ningsih (2014) stated that media is an instructor and teacher might use to implement instruction and facilitate learner.

It means that media can facilitate and help the interaction between teachers and students in the learning process productively and effectively.

There are many media that can be used in teaching and learning. Some internet technologies, like social media, can be used as the media to teach English, especially in teaching writing (Harwood, 2010:61). Students' writing ability can be improved by fostering their interest, motivation and enjoyment for writing, through technology (Graham & Perin, as cited in Fared et al., 2016). Inline, Richard, as cited in Anggraeni (2017), stated that many new technological tools and online resources are available to support student writing. Additionally, Social Network Sites can be used to develop the four primary skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, especially in teaching ESL writing and also to the development of vocabulary, grammar, and sociopragmatic awareness skills (Prichard, 2013; Yunus et al., 2016).

One of the social media that can be used as a learning tool is Instagram, especially in improving students writing skills (Kelly, 2015; Soviah & Etikaningsih, 2018; Shazali, 2019). Instagram is a platform that allows the users to upload photo or video with the description as a caption which is provided under the photos (Kelly, 2015). It means that Instagram provides an environment for producing text where students can write descriptive paragraphs under the photo or video as captions. Besides, the students can reach more readers to get responses to their writing. Therefore, photos or video uploaded on Instagram have significantly enhanced the descriptive writing proficiency (Kelly, 2015).

Instagram can be a suitable media that can be used for increasing students' ability to write descriptive text (Soviah & Etikaningsih, 2018). The teachers can use Instagram as medium to teach and improve students' ability in descriptive text. Using Instagram can improve students' ability to master vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy in writing descriptive (Kelly, 2015; Shazali et al., 2019). Moreover, Instagram has provided a maximum of 2200 letters; it provides more opportunities for students to improve their writing skills, especially in improving the structure, coherence, and thematic

development in their writing (Kelly, 2015). Additionally, many writing activities can be done on Instagram. By giving task on Instagram, it can help students in improving writing skills by making them motivated in learning writing in English where on Instagram they learn new vocabulary by reading comments or discussing with their classmates, and they also get to gain new ideas with assistance from friends (Shazali et al., 2019). It supported by Handayani (2017) stated that Instagram could improve students' writing skill by giving comments to each other to the photos or videos which are uploaded by the students. Moreover, the users can find whatever the photos they want by using hashtags in the search feature where the hashtag is used to find appropriate kinds of pictures easily. Thus, Instagram is an ideal media that can be used as a medium in teaching writing a descriptive text.

F. Hypothesis

According to Creswell (2012) defined that hypotheses are statements in quantitative research in which the researcher predicts the outcome of the relationship among characteristics. It means hypotheses predict it gives significant influences or not. Hypotheses are used often in experiments in which investigators compare groups. In this study, the hypothesis test is a major role in testing the significance different in experimental class and control class. It works by statistical analysis of the students' scores of post-test in experimental class and control class.

The formulation of the hypothesis of this research is presented below :

1. H_0 is rejected if $t\text{-count} < t\text{-table}$: It means that there is no significant difference between using Instagram and without Instagram in term of students' ability in writing a descriptive text for seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Cileunyi.
2. H_a is accepted if $t\text{-count} > t\text{-table}$: It means that there is a significant difference between using Instagram and without Instagram in term of students' ability in writing a descriptive text for seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Cileunyi.

G. Research Limitations

This study focuses on the use of Instagram as a medium in teaching writing descriptive text to the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Cileunyi Bandung in the academic year 2018/2019. The sample is chosen in class VII A and VII G, as preliminary observation and suggested by the English teacher. The researcher taught students more in writing skills, specifically focusing on improving students' ability to write descriptive texts. There are five components in writing, such as developing ideas, organizing ideas, vocabulary mastery, grammar accuracy, and mechanics. The researcher conducted treatments in the classroom of experimental class and control class based on the syllabus and prepared lesson plans for four meetings. The researcher uses a creative way in which all features of Instagram are used as a medium in teaching writing a descriptive text in the experimental class. The topics of writing descriptive text to be studied are as follows: describing persons, describing animals, and describing places.

H. Previous Studies

Some previous studies are related to this research. So, in this part, the researcher reviewed some previous studies related to this study entitled “*The Use of Instagram to Improve Students’ Ability in Writing Descriptive text.*”

The first study was conducted by Al-Ali (2014). The title was “*Embracing the Selfie Craze: Exploring the Possible Use of Instagram as a Language mLearning Tool.*” This study explored the use of Instagram as a learning tool for a holiday writing project in two pre-intermediate/intermediate ESL classes. It was implemented where the students asked to take a picture and caption it. This study used action research to integrate Instagram as an effective learning tool in a language bridge program. The results of this study showed that although students are not enthusiastic at first, then they have an idea and become more creative in completing their writing activities. This study was concluded that Instagram could be implemented as a learning tool in second language classrooms.

The second study was conducted by Kelly (2015). The title was “*An Exploration of Instagram to Develop ESL Learners’ Writing Proficiency.*” This study seeks to explore how the Social Network site Instagram may be used to develop learners’ descriptive writing proficiency and to discover their attitudes towards Instagram as an interactional learning tool in an informal setting. This study was action research. The participants were five English language learners in this study. The five language learners’ Instagram post containing descriptive writing was given corrective feedback and analyzed. This study found that Instagram can facilitate the students in writing a descriptive paragraph, and it becomes effective tool for developing students in vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy.

The third was conducted by Mubarokah (2017), it was entitled “*using Instagram to motivate students’ writing descriptive text at second grade in SMAN 1 Gresik academic year 2016-2017*”. The focus of this study motivates the students in learning the descriptive text by using Instagram. It was implemented where Instagram as a medium in teaching-learning of descriptive text in the classroom. This study is qualitative using a descriptive approach. Furthermore, this study used qualitative analysis that emphasizes methods of collecting, analyzing data, and describing the results of the investigation. The result of the study can be concluded that using Instagram can motivate students in writing descriptive text to the tenth-grade student of SMAN 1 Gresik in the academic year 2016/2017.

The fourth study was conducted by Soviyah & Etikaningsih (2018) entitled “*Instagram Use to Enhance Ability in Writing Descriptive Texts.*” This study aimed to find out the effectiveness of Instagram in Improving students’ writing descriptive skills. The main research question was focused on whether there was a significant difference in the ability to write descriptive text between students who were taught using Instagram and those who are not. The population was students of a private high school in Yogyakarta. The results of the study showed that students in teaching writing by using Instagram pictures are more effective than teaching without using Instagram pictures.

From the explanation about each previous study above, using Instagram in teaching writing was used for any time by the researchers. The study by Al-Ali (2014) is to integrate Instagram as an effective learning tool in a language bridge program. Instagram was used for a holiday project of students in writing. The study by Kelly (2015) is to investigate the learner's descriptive skills and describe their attitude after using Instagram. The study of Mubarakah (2017) focuses on motivating students in writing descriptive text and describe the response students in teaching writing descriptive text by using Instagram. The study by Etikaningsih and Soviah (2018) completed researching the effectiveness of the use of the Instagram application on the students' performance in writing descriptive texts. This study uses experimental research and uses random sampling.

In the previous studies, generally most focused on using Instagram as a learning tool for facilitating teaching writing; describe the attitude students and increasing students' motivation. This study is quite different from the previous study, such as in the focus of the study, treatment of the study, and participants of the study. In this study, the researcher focuses on improving students' writing descriptive skills. In the treatment of study, the researcher focuses more in improving the components that students must fulfill in writing descriptive text, such as developing ideas, organizing ideas, vocabulary mastery, grammar ability, and mechanics by optimizing all the features on Instagram in facilitating student learning in the classroom and the execution of their tasks. This study uses quasi-experimental research; it is non-probably random sampling. The participants are the 7th-grade students of SMPN 1 Cileunyi Bandung.