

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

Teaching materials are materials specifically designed for learning purposes and are useful in the learning process in class. Teaching materials consist of material that is arranged systematically to create an environment or atmosphere that allows students to learn well. In classroom learning, teaching materials have an important role because interesting and flexible teaching materials can provide benefits for educators and students. For educators, teaching materials help save teaching time, change the role of educators to facilitators, and create an efficient and interactive learning atmosphere. Meanwhile, for students, teaching materials can foster independence in learning, expand opportunities to continue learning, and motivate them to learn better.¹ Teaching materials play a very important role in achieving educational goals. Good teaching materials must be arranged systematically and adjusted to the needs of students so that learning becomes more

¹ Bahraeni “Efektifitas Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Ilmu Pendidikan Islam Berbasis Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe Jigsaw Melalui Kegiatan Desiminasi Pada Stais Ddi Maros” , Jurnal PAI FTK, Vol. VI No. 1, (Juni 2017), h. 101.

effective and efficient. By knowing the needs of students, English learning can be directed to equip them with comprehensive communication skills, both verbally and in writing.

The four main language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are an important focus in developing students' English language skills. Each of these skills is interrelated and needs to be developed in a balanced way so that students are able to communicate well. Among the four skills, writing is often considered the most challenging skill.

In terms of skills, creating a coherent, fluent, and extended piece of writing is likely the most challenging task in language.² Writing is considered a challenging skill for students learning a language. The difficulties encompass generating and organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, structuring sentences and paragraphs, and compiling these elements into a coherent and intelligible text.³ Writing is a process that not only involves the ability to compose correct and precise sentences, but also creative

² Yadollah Alidoost, “ *The Effect of Picture Story in Creating Textual Coherence in Narrative Genre* “. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 February (2014), P. 359.

³ Luu Trong Tuan, “ *Teaching Writing through Genre Based Approach.*” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol 1, N0.11 November (2011). P. 1471.

thinking skills to filter out irrelevant information. Because of this, writing is often considered difficult by students causing students' interest in writing to decrease.

Based on the results of interviews with three eighth grade students at SMPN 2 Ciruas, it was found that two out of three students stated that writing skills were the most difficult English skills, while one other student felt that speaking skills were the biggest challenge. The main difficulties that emerged in writing skills were limited vocabulary and grammar mastery, while in speaking skills, the obstacles faced were related to pronunciation and vocabulary selection. Regarding the teaching materials currently used, students expressed that the materials were quite helpful, especially through the provision of sample texts, but some parts of the materials were considered too difficult and the exercises provided were considered inadequate. As a form of additional support, students suggested more writing exercises, simpler grammar explanations, and more frequent speaking practice opportunities.⁴ This finding is in line with the principles of the

⁴ Based on the results of observations conducted in September 2024 involving three eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ciruas.

Kurikulum Merdeka which emphasizes learning that is centered on student needs.

The Kurikulum Merdeka gives teachers the freedom to innovate and create teaching materials that suit students' needs.⁵ In this way, students can develop their interests and talents and gain meaningful learning.

Based on previous research, students' needs for teaching materials for writing skills vary greatly depending on their level of education and learning environment. In discussing students' needs in english writing materials, the article by Sumarsono (2017) and the study by Ilham (2020) show some interesting similarities and differences.

Both studies emphasize the importance of understanding students' needs in the writing learning process. Sumarsono found that students want a structured approach to writing, including the role of teachers as guides and feedback providers. This is in line with the findings of Ilham, who also emphasized the need for teaching models that are appropriate to the characteristics and needs of

⁵ I Putu Tedy Indrayani,dkk. *Penerapan Strategi dan Model Pembelajaran pada Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar*. (Bandung: CV. Media Sains Indonesia, 2022), hlm. 7.

students. Both agree that the use of relevant and interesting materials, such as images and supporting topics, can increase student engagement in learning.

However, there are differences in the focus and context of the research. Sumarsono focused on fifth-semester students at the University of Muhammadiyah Mataram, while Ilham was broader, covering students from various semesters. This suggests that while there are similarities in the challenges faced, the specific context of students can influence their needs. For example, second-semester students may need more reinforcement of basic skills, while fifth-semester students may focus more on developing more complex academic skills.

Overall, these two studies complement each other in providing insights into the challenges and needs of students in learning to write in English. Both emphasize the importance of appropriate approaches in teaching to improve students' motivation and writing skills, but also show that the context and stage of education can influence their specific needs.

Based on previous research, students' needs for teaching materials for writing skills vary greatly depending on their level of

education and learning environment. This research will provide a more specific picture of the needs of students at the junior high school level. By understanding the specific teaching material needs for junior high school students, teachers can develop more appropriate and effective teaching materials. This will help increase students' interest and writing skills, as well as prepare them to face future challenges.

From the description above, the author is interested in conducting research with the title “Mapping the Needs for English Teaching Materials on Writing Skills at SMPN 2 Ciruas”. It is hoped that this research can help teachers map the teaching and learning needs at SMPN 2 Ciruas, so that they can improve the quality of learning and students' interest in writing.

B. Identification of Problem

Based on the research background provided, the identified problems are:

1. In the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers have the freedom to adapt teaching materials to class conditions or individual student needs.

2. Students face various difficulties in the process of learning writing skills.
3. Students' needs for learning materials for writing skills vary greatly.

C. Research Question

Based on the description provided regarding the background of the problem, the identification of the problem, and the limitations of the problem, the research problems that can be formulated are as follows:

1. How do students perceive the teaching materials they are currently using?
2. What is the quality and relevance of the writing skills teaching materials currently used at SMPN 2 Ciruas?
3. What are the obstacles faced by teachers in teaching writing skills at SMPN 2 Ciruas?
4. What are the specific needs of SMPN 2 Ciruas students in teaching materials in writing skills lessons?
5. What are the recommendations for teaching materials for more effective writing skills at SMPN 2 Ciruas?

D. Objective of The Study

The researcher determines the research objective based on the formulation of problem as follows:

1. To know students' perceptions of the teaching materials they are currently using.
2. To evaluate the quality and relevance of writing skills teaching materials that are currently used at SMPN 2 Ciruas.
3. To discover the obstacles faced by teachers in teaching writing skills at SMPN 2 Ciruas.
4. To identify the specific needs of SMPN 2 Ciruas students in the teaching materials in writing skills lessons.
5. To providing recommendations for teaching materials for more effective writing skills at SMPN 2 Ciruas.

E. Significant of The Study

In line with the implementation of the new curriculum, namely the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes teacher freedom in designing learning materials according to students' needs and abilities and the discovery of research which states that writing skills are often considered a challenge for students because it requires them to convey ideas, thoughts and feelings in writing well. Therefore, this research has important significance for teachers and

students. This research will help teachers evaluate the effectiveness of teaching writing skills and the extent to which the teaching is concrete, so that students can master it. Apart from that, this research will also help in knowing students' needs so that learning materials can be adapted to their needs appropriately.

For researchers who are prospective educators, the results of this research will provide new understanding, especially in the educational context, regarding the problems that students often face in learning to write, as well as their needs for writing skills. This will enable researchers to develop more effective and relevant teaching strategies, which can meet students' individual needs in improving their writing skills. With a deeper understanding of the challenges students face and their needs, researchers can become more empowered educators, able to provide better guidance and support the holistic development of students' writing skills.

For researchers who plan to conduct similar research, the results of this study will be a valuable reference and source of additional information. By studying the findings and methodology of this study, future researchers can expand understanding of the same problem and further explore possible solutions. In addition,

this research can also provide insight into effective approaches in overcoming the challenges of teaching writing and meeting student needs in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum. Thus, future researchers can utilize these findings to design more in-depth and relevant research, and contribute new knowledge to the field of writing education.

F. Previous of Study

There have been several previous studies related to this research topic. The first research was conducted by Ilham (2020), with the title "Exploring Students' Learning Needs for Academic Writing Skills as a Basis for Designing Learning Materials". This research aims to analyze the learning needs of fifth semester students majoring in English in academic writing skills. The research method used included the use of a closed checklist questionnaire and interviews with lecturers to collect data from 20 students. The research results show that students prefer material that has a schematic structure of text types, discourse, grammar, and graphic features to help them write articles, essays, and theses.

The second previous study was conducted by Sumarsono (2017), entitled "Students Need to Develop English Writing

Materials," focuses on exploring the needs of second year students at the Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP Mataram, in learning to write English. This research shows that students at this level have basic proficiency in English and need improvement in various writing sub-skills such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and use of cohesive devices.

Based on the previous research above, there are similarities and differences between this research and previous research. The similarity is that both discuss students' needs regarding teaching materials for writing skills. However, the difference lies in the location of the research carried out. Previous research was conducted in a university environment, while this research was conducted in a junior high school environment.

Thus, although both focus on students' needs for writing skills teaching materials, differences in context or research environment (university vs junior high school) can influence student characteristics, the types of needs that arise, and the approaches used in designing appropriate teaching materials.

G. Novelty

Research on the needs in developing English teaching materials, especially writing skills, has become an important area of study in the field of language education. Based on literature mapping using the VOSviewer application, four major themes were found to dominate, namely needs analysis, teaching materials development, writing skills, and student-centered learning.

First, needs analysis is the main foundation in designing effective and relevant teaching materials. Hutchinson and Waters stated that needs analysis is the cornerstone of designing effective teaching materials that are relevant to learners' goals and contexts.⁶ By understanding learning needs and target needs, teachers can develop materials that are more meaningful to students.

Second, in terms of teaching materials development, Tomlinson emphasized that good teaching materials must be adaptive, relevant to the local context, and support the development of students' language skills.⁷ In Indonesia, in line with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers are given the

⁶ Hutchinson, T., and Waters, A.

⁷ Tomlinson, B., *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 3.

freedom to adjust materials based on the specific needs of students in their respective classes.

Third, research on writing skills shows that writing skills require special attention in the development of teaching materials. Hyland argues that effective writing instruction must consider genre, writing strategies, and students' academic or social needs.⁸

Fourth, the trend of student-centered learning shows that students need to be given space to express their own needs in the learning process. Thus, questionnaires or other instruments for mapping needs are important steps to support a student-based learning approach.

Although many studies have discussed needs analysis and materials development in general, studies that specifically map the needs of junior high school students in certain areas for writing skills are still relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by mapping the needs of students at SMPN 2 Ciruas in more detail, so that it can be a reference in developing more effective, relevant, and contextual writing teaching materials.

⁸ Hyland, K., *Second Language Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 23.

H. Organization of Writing

To enhance comprehension, the researcher has structured this study into five distinct chapters:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION In this chapter, the researcher delineates several key points: Background of The study, Identification of Problem, Research Question, Objective of the Study, Significant of The Study, Previous of Study, Novelty, Organization of Writing.

CHAPTER II : THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK In this chapter, the researcher delineates several key points: Needs Analysis, Teaching Materials, and Writing.

CHAPTER III : METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH this chapter encompasses Research Design, Place of Research, Participant of Research, Data Collection, The Technique of Data Analyzing.

CHAPTER IV : RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION The researcher concludes the study and offers suggestions for future research directions, as well as recommendations for teachers, students, and schools.