

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Writing skill is one of the language skills considered to be a challenging problem for learners in the English language learning process. Wahyuningsih (2015) states that grammar is the most fundamental aspect in writing. Writing in second language teaching (English) is often viewed as a secondary skill, less emphasized than listening, speaking, and reading, although it is a way for learners to express personal thoughts in written form. Palmer (2011) highlights the complexity of writing, as learners must engage in several processes such as planning, organizing, and revising. Writers need the ability to gather and organize information coherently into paragraphs that readers can easily understand. To develop good writing skills, students must have a strong grasp of grammar and the ability to organize words into well-structured paragraphs.

Descriptive writing, in particular, is essential not only for academic success but also for effective communication in various life aspects. Descriptive texts require students to describe objects, places, or events in a detailed and vivid manner. Effective descriptive writing demands a strong understanding of the text type and its appropriate application to portray physical features, atmosphere, and sensory details.

Despite its importance, many students struggle with descriptive writing. Traditional teaching models often rely on rote learning and individual tasks, which may fail to engage students or develop the skills necessary for effective

descriptive writing. This challenge has driven educators to explore alternative teaching models that better support student learning and engagement.

A learning model is a structured framework used to design, organize and implement learning in an educational setting. The model suggests a systematic approach to teaching that can assist teachers in planning and implementing various effective learning strategies. Bruce Joyce, Marsha Weil, and Emily Calhoun (2009: 104-106), suggest that every learning model has elements such as 1) Syntax; 2) Principles of reaction; 3) Social system; 4) Support system 5) Instructional impact and accompanying impact. Among these elements, syntax plays a central role as it represents the sequence of learning activities or stages that guide teachers and students through the instructional process. Syntax provides a procedural structure that ensures the model is implemented consistently and meaningfully in the classroom context.

One promising learning model is the Collaborative Learning Model. Collaborative learning is a teaching and learning process in which students work together to solve problems and complete assignments (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012). Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun (2009) define the syntax of the Collaborative Learning Model as consisting of five main stages, namely: (1) Introduction, (2) Grouping, (3) Collaborative Activities, (4) Reflection, and (5) Assessment. Each stage serves a specific pedagogical function—from motivating learners and forming effective groups, to facilitating knowledge construction, promoting reflective dialogue, and evaluating both individual and group outcomes. Understanding and realizing these syntactic stages properly is crucial for achieving the intended learning goals. An

example of this is the dictogloss procedure (Wajnryb, 1990), a collaborative and integrated skills technique (Philp, Adams, Iwashita, 2014) where students share opinions, listen, and help each other to complete tasks. This procedure involves exploring and reconstructing a short text through its language and content features by a group of students who orally interact while sharing their written notes

Nelson (1999) describes several characteristics of collaborative learning, including: (1) learners actively exchange ideas and information about a topic; (2) learners investigate matters or topics and devise various ways or solutions to problems; (3) learners can adjust the learning environment to support group learning; (4) sufficient time, space, and resources are provided for group learning; and (5) learning activities include problem-solving and project completion.

Collaborative learning involves students working together in groups to achieve common goals, share ideas, and support one another's learning. Hattie and Donoghue (2016) assert that "collaborative learning can enhance student learning outcomes by facilitating positive social interactions." This model is based on the premise that learning is a social process and that interaction with peers benefits students. Research by Volet and Mansfield (2017) shows that students engaged in collaborative learning often achieve higher academic performance, develop better social skills, and possess greater motivation compared to those learning individually. Furthermore, Dillenbourg (2019) notes that "collaborative learning not only improves academic outcomes but also helps students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills." Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (2019) emphasize that collaborative learning improves student engagement and academic

performance by fostering a supportive learning environment. Dillenbourg (2020) highlights the importance of designing collaborative experiences that promote interaction and knowledge sharing. Slavin (2021) also reinforces the significant improvements in student outcomes across subjects through collaborative learning.

A study by Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2014) confirmed the effectiveness of collaborative web-based writing in improving students' attitudes, responsibility, and performance. Incorporating collaborative learning into teaching descriptive writing can create a dynamic and engaging environment where students share ideas, receive peer feedback, and learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses. Gymnastiar and Apsari (2019) found that students taught using a collaborative approach showed significant improvement in their writing skills compared to those taught by traditional methods.

However, implementing the collaborative learning model presents challenges such as managing group dynamics, ensuring equal participation, providing adequate guidance, arranging classrooms to facilitate group work, and allocating sufficient time for activities.

Despite these challenges, the collaborative learning model offers promising benefits, particularly in teaching descriptive writing. This study aims to explore its applicability in a high school setting, specifically at HKBP SIDORAME High School, by examining its effect on students' descriptive writing abilities. Given HKBP SIDORAME High School's commitment to innovative and student-centered learning, this study will provide insights into how to effectively integrate

collaborative learning models into the teaching of descriptive text and its impact on learning outcomes.

Table 1.1 Preliminary Data

No	Students Name	KKM Score	Daily assignment score
1	AS	75	65
2	AH	75	75
3	BS	75	90
4	DS	75	95
5	ES	75	65
6	ES	75	80
7	FL	75	70
8	GM	75	70
9	JD	75	75
10	MS	75	65
11	MH	75	65
12	NS	75	90
13	RS	75	70
14	SS	75	75
15	ES	75	90
16	VK	75	70

The table of students' daily assignment scores on the narrative writing material shows that some students did not achieve the set Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) score of 75. Of the 16 students enrolled, there were 6 students who scored below the KKM, with the lowest score being 65. Although the teacher has implemented the collaborative learning model, these results show that there are still challenges that need to be overcome in the learning process.

Some students, such as AS, ES, and MRS, scored low, even though they were involved in collaborative learning. This shows that the application the syntax of collaborative learning models does not always guarantee improved learning outcomes. It is possible that the every stages of the syntax of the collaborative

model applied by teachers are not fully effective or have not been implemented properly.

The urgency of this research arises from the need to explore the Syntax of the collaborative learning model that has been applied by teachers. This research aims to analyze how these syntax are realized in teaching students' writing skills. For example, are students really given the opportunity to actively collaborate, share ideas, and provide feedback to each other? Or are there challenges in managing group dynamics that hinder student participation?

In conclusion, the collaborative learning model represents a significant shift from traditional teacher-centered teaching to a more student-centered approach, particularly in the context of teaching descriptive writing at HKBP SIDORAME High School. Although preliminary findings show that some students did not meet the Minimum Completion Criteria (MCQ) score of 75, highlighting the challenges that still exist in the learning process, it is imperative to recognize the potential benefits that this model can offer. The urgency of this research lies in its aim to dissect the syntax stages of the collaborative learning model implemented by the teachers, assessing whether the students actually engage in active collaboration, idea sharing and constructive feedback. By investigating these dynamics, this study seeks to provide insights into how collaborative learning models can be effectively integrated into the teaching of descriptive texts, ultimately improving student engagement, motivation and learning outcomes. As educators continue to explore innovative strategies to support student learning, the findings of this study will serve as a valuable resource to refine teaching practices and ensure that the

implementation of collaborative learning truly fosters an enriching educational experience for all students at HKBP SIDORAME High School.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the syntax of the collaborative learning model teacher use for teaching descriptive writing at SMAS HKBP Sidorame?
2. How do teachers implement the syntax of the collaborative learning model in teaching descriptive writing at SMAS HKBP Sidorame?

C. The Objectives of the Study

Related to the problem of the study, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the syntax of collaborative learning model in teaching descriptive writing at SMAS HKBP SIDORAME.
2. To investigate the process of realizing the syntax of collaborative learning model in teaching descriptive writing at SMAS HKBP SIDORAME.

D. The Scopes of the Study

This study focuses on the identification and analysis of the syntax of the collaborative learning model used in teaching descriptive writing at SMA HKBP SIDORAME. This study aims to specifically explore the syntax of the collaborative learning model integrated into the teaching process of descriptive writing.

Additionally, this study investigates how teachers implement and apply the syntax of collaborative learning in their teaching practices. The study observes the implementation process of the syntax in the classroom, including how teachers manage group interactions, encourage student participation, and support peer feedback during descriptive writing activities.

This study is limited to evaluating the use and implementation of the five stages of syntax of the collaborative learning model of Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun (2009) used by two teachers in the practice of teaching descriptive writing at SMAS HKBP SIDORAME. This study aims to provide insight into the effectiveness of implementing the collaborative learning model based on its syntax and its impact on students' writing performance.

E. The Significances of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the field of educational pedagogy by providing insights into effective teaching models for descriptive writing. By exploring the application of collaborative learning models, this study aims to enhance our understanding of how collaborative models can improve student engagement, motivation, and writing skills. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical implications for various stakeholders, including students, teachers, and future researchers.

1. Students

For Students, this study aims to improve their descriptive writing skills by applying a collaborative learning model. This model can help students to engage more actively in the learning process, encourage peer interaction, and provide

opportunities to receive constructive feedback. This supportive environment is expected to increase their confidence and ability to convey ideas clearly and effectively in writing.

2. Teachers

For teachers, this study provides practical insights into how the syntax of the collaborative learning model can be effectively applied in teaching descriptive writing. These insights can guide teachers in designing more engaging lessons, managing group dynamics effectively, and improving student participation and overall learning outcomes

3. Future research

For Future Research, this study lays the foundation for further investigation of collaborative learning models in different subjects, age groups, or educational contexts. This study highlights potential challenges and areas for improvement, encouraging researchers to explore innovative strategies to optimize collaborative learning and extend its positive impact on student achievement and motivation.