

THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMP NEGERI 7 LUBUKLINGGAU

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Abstract

The problem in this research was “How was the ability of students in writing descriptive text?” and “What were the difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text?” The objective of this research was to describe the ability of students in writing descriptive text and to describe the difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text. This research used quantitative method to and data collected in write descriptive text. The population in this research was all the eighth grade students of SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau. The sample of this research was VIII.2 considered 27 students who taken class by using random sampling. Based on the result of the writing descriptive text at the eighth grade students of SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau was in (failed category). The mean score of students was 61. There were 5 students(18%) on Very Good category, 5 students on (18%) Good category, 1 student (4%) on Nearly Good category, 8 students on (30%) Sufficient category, and the last 8 students on (30%) Nearly Sufficient category. It means that the ability of students in writing descriptive text was categorized into *Nearly Good*, and their ability was categorized into *failed* (the students' score were lower than KKM $61 < 68$). In conclusion, the biggest difficulties faced by students were about grammar, and organizing the ideas.

Keywords: *Descriptive Text, Difficulties in writing, Students' Ability.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a process of pouring ideas, ideas or opinions into a form of words, sentences, or paragraphs. In writing, the mind and heart as much as possible are in a better state, because feelings and atmosphere greatly influence the expression of creativity. The purpose of writing is not only to express the ideas, feeling or thought in written symbol but it has also specific purposes such as to entertain, to inform and to persuade the readers must concern and consider about the important aspect in writing. Writing is one of the competency standards that must be mastered by students. According to Miftah (2015:9) writing is considered the most difficult and complicated language skill to learn compared to other language skills. Muhtar et. al (2020:1) stated that writing is a way for people to express their ideas or assumptions in sentences or paragraphs. Huy (2015:54) wrote that writing is a complex metacognitive activity that refers to knowledge, basic skills,

strategies, and the individual's ability to coordinate various processes. Irawati (2015:6) claimed that writing is an activity that is often done by someone beside speaking activity because this activity is very important for everybody to convey their messages. Writing is very important for everyday human life, because writing can convey information through writing, without having to speak, it is also used for someone with a disability. Writing also important because in writing can give some information, make transactions, persuade also, and tell how we feel. Muslim (2014:102) wrote that students nowadays have very little interest in writing which is so important to fulfill the education requirements. Even though writing is important for students, many students have little interest in writing.

Heaton (1990:135) said that writing skill is complex and something difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgemental elements. In other words, writing is complicated because it requires broad ideas. Writing also requires special skill which when writing must pay attention to vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and other provisions. Writing is easy if we read and practice often, then writing also requires full concentration so that the reader does not get bored when reading. Darmawan (2019:54) claimed that writing being the most difficult skill for not only it needs a lot of vocabularies for composing paragraph, but also the writer should have a good grammar, a broader knowledge, emotion and even the precious time.

Yoandita (2019:11) supposed that the difficulties in writing is developing idea and organizing idea. It is because all students write few paragraphs. In grammar and vocabulary there are also errors, but the errors are not many. The difficulty is because students do not have ideas for writing so they have difficulty in arranging words and students' lack of understanding of the use of grammar. Students in high school assume that writing looks very difficult because students lack knowledge of vocabulary and they do not have ideas for writing, they do not understand English Grammar and they also lack practice. Then, they have to express their ideas in English, of course they will have a hard time.

Pratiwi (2012: 3-4) wrote that in writing, we have to choose the good and right words and phrases, and must follow the proper structure. In mastering writing, students need to practice and counseling from the teachers. In writing, the students try to use English in oral form as well. Writing can be satisfying if we master vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and idiom. From the discussion above, it can be concluded that writing is a process of pouring ideas or opinions into words, sentences, or paragraphs. Based on the existing literature, it is known that there have been many studies on students' writing skills in descriptive texts, but there has been no research that discusses students' abilities and difficulties in writing descriptive texts.

One of the problems obtained in the student learning system is that students have difficulty in multiplying vocabulary because students lack reading and practice to increase vocabulary, and students have difficulty carrying out conversations in English, it can be said because students lack practice to communicate in English, every student has a problem in learning a foreign language, especially in English. In this research, the researcher examined the students' ability to write. Students' ability in writing is closely related to the vocabulary they master. It can be concluded that in this research, students must increase their vocabulary in order to understand writing in English well.

Based on the results of interview conducted by researcher with one of the English teacher at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau, it was found out that many students still had insufficient writing skills. Moreover, students had lack of vocabulary. Then, the grammar used was still error, especially in writing English which is different between spelling and meaning. In line with the explanation, the researcher was totally interested to conduct a research

entitled “The Students’ Ability in Writing Descriptive Text at SMP Negeri 7 Lubuklinggau”.

The researcher will describe several works that are relevant to this thesis to facilitate the preparation of the thesis. Thesis entitled “Analysis of Students' Ability and Difficulty in Writing Descriptive Texts” by Puri EkaYoandita from Suryakencana University 2019. He studied students' abilities and difficulties in writing descriptive texts and how to know the teacher was teaching descriptive texts. This research has differences in object, location and method. The object of this research is students of class X Vocational High School in Cianjur.

The second research was previously conducted by Afza Himmaturrijal Ismail (2018) entitled "Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Texts: A Case Study of Class VIII Students of SMPN 2 Selong in the 2017-2018 Academic Year. Knowing the Strengths and Weaknesses of Students. The similarity is the purpose of the study that finds out the students' abilities and difficulties in writing descriptive text. This study has a difference in location, the location of this research is SMPN 2 Selong.

The third research was conducted by Sri Rahmadhani Siregar and Nursahara Dongoran (2020) entitled ”Students’ Ability in Writing Descriptive Text”. This research was to find out the students’ ability in writing descriptive text at grade VII SMP N 11 Padangsidempuan. The similarity is the purpose and the method use (quantitative descriptive) and the difficulties is the subject of the research, this research use class VII for the sample.

II. METHOD

The research method of “The Ability and Difficulties Faced by students in Writing Descriptive Text” is descriptive quantitative. Creswell (2009:17) stated that quantitative methods involve the process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study. Quantitative are techniques that uses to gather quantitative data, data that can be sorted, classified, meanwhile, the research method use is descriptive method. According to Fraenkle and Wallen (1993:23) cited in Chandra (2016) descriptive method is a method uses to explain, analyze, and clasify something through. The researcher believed the descriptive method is appropriate to achieve the aims of this research.

The population in this study is eighth grade students of SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau. It consists of nine classes. The total of nine classes is 206 students. Sugiyono (2013:80) said that population is defined as a generalization area consisting of: objects/subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and then draw conclusions.

Sugiyono (2013:81) wrote that the sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. This research used cluster random sampling. Priyono (2008:115) supposed that this technique is used if we have limitations due to the sample frame (list of names of all members of the population), but we have complete data about the group). The steps of cluster random sampling: (1) write the five classes in small of pieces paper, (2) rolling them up, (3) putting them in a glass, and, (4) taking one of them to be chosen as the sample. The result was VIII. 2 as the sample with the total number of 27 students.

To collect the data, the researcher use observation, interview, and written test in collecting the data.

1) Written Test

Putri, et.al., (2013:2) claimed that test is administered to get information about the student's improvement and to measure the result of the teaching learning process. In this test, the researcher will asked the students to write a Descriptive Text with 100- 150 words on the topic choosen. The students have to write the paragraph in 60 minutes.

2) Interview

According to Gulo (2002:81) Interviews are a form of direct communication between researchers and respondents. The researcher interview the students for having their difficulties faced in writing descriptive text based on their experience to take the written test before.

After the data are collected, the researcher uses techniques to analyze the data. They are:

1. Data Processing

In this research, the researcher do steps as follow:

a. Collecting

The researcher collects all the data.

b. Analyzing

The researcher used the techniques to analyzing the data.

2. Data Analysis

To make conclusion the data, the researcher should analyze the data collected.

3. Analyzing students score

In analyzing the data related to the students test of writing ability, the researcher uses analytical scoring rubic adapted from Heaton (1990:146)

III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

In this study, the researcher found the ability to write descriptive texts for eighth grade students of SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau. The research was conducted on Saturday, July 23, 2022 and the samples taken in this study were students of class VIII.2. The researcher used random sampling method to take the sample of this research. When obtaining and collecting data from students at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau, the researcher gave a written test as an instrument so that the students understood the process of doing the given task.

After analyzing the data obtained from writing descriptive texts to students at SMPN Lubuklinggau where each student was distributed one sheet of paper consisting of three topics to each student to describe and develop ideas from the topic that had been given, the researchers found student performance from the results of the descriptive text written by the students.

1. Research Finding

The research findings in the form of field data were obtained through descriptive quantitative research. This is very necessary as a result of consideration between the results of research findings in the field with theories related to the research discussion. In this case, the researcher collects data and after the data is collected from the research sample, the data will be described. In describing the data, analysis is needed.

2. The Descriptive of the Data

In addition to collecting data, the researcher conducted a written test. The test given is to write descriptive text. The test score consists of five aspects. The aspects measured

were the organization of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics in writing descriptive texts by students. Measurement of descriptive text based on Heaton's theory. After the test the results of student scores are as follows:

a. The Result of the Students' Score in Writing Descriptive Text

The researcher presented the result of students' scores from two raters in writing descriptive texts to find out the highest score and lowest score. Here are the students scores in writing descriptive text:

Table 4.1
The students' Score R1 and R2

No	Students	R1	R2	Students Score	The Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text Based on Passing Grade
1	ATA	79	77	78	Good
2	BB	47	46	46	Nearly Sufficient
3	RSP	48	43	45	Nearly Sufficient
4	MIS	51	58	54	Sufficient
5	PML	87	88	87	Very Good
6	AS	45	56	50	Nearly Sufficient
7	AA	76	78	77	Good
8	AE	67	45	56	Sufficient
9	RW	89	66	77	Good
10	AAI	51	89	70	Good
11	CZ	92	69	80	Very Good
12	AFF	64	43	53	Sufficient
13	BP	57	50	53	Sufficient
14	AGZN	49	43	46	Nearly Sufficient
15	AA	76	42	59	Sufficient
16	BKN	48	42	45	Nearly Sufficient
17	MZU	89	78	83	Very Good
18	AP	79	70	74	Good
19	JA	77	88	82	Very Good
20	DO	73	46	59	Sufficient
21	PML	57	42	49	Nearly Sufficient
22	SWAP	49	50	49	Nearly Sufficient
23	MF	62	41	51	Sufficient
24	MIS	53	34	43	Nearly Sufficient
25	DPJ	57	45	51	Sufficient
26	AFK	81	47	64	Nearly Good
27	RF	79	83	81	Very Good
	N=27	1782	1559	1662	
	Average Score	66	57	61	Nearly Good
	The Highest score				87
	The Lowest score				43

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the mean scores of students' ability from two raters in writing descriptive text was 61. The researcher explained that in the results of the students analysis there were 5 students (18%) is in "Very Good category", 5 students (18%) is in "Good category", 1 student (4%) is in "Nearly Good" category, 8 students (30%) is in "Sufficient category", and the last 8 students (30%) is in "Nearly Sufficient category". Based on the mean scores of rater 1 and rater 2 the ability in writing descriptive text at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau is 61 ("Nearly Good") category.

b. The Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text Based on the Passing Grade

The researcher found that the average score of students' ability in writing descriptive texts from rater 1 was 66, and that the score of rater 2 was 57 and the total average score of students' ability in writing descriptive texts was from rater 1 and rater 2 is 61. There are 10 students who passed based on passing grade and 17 students who do not pass.

Based on the analysis above, the researcher found that the mean score of the ability of class eighth grade students in writing descriptive texts at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau was 61. This score was categorized into failed, it was because at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau was 68. Whereas the students' average were lower than KKM $61 < 68$.

c. The Difficulties Faced by Students in Writing Descriptive Text

There are the difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text, the researcher collected the data by interview the students. The results of interview will be describe by the researcher based on the the theory of Fitri, et., al., (2017:2), there are five components the difficulties that students face during writing the descriptive text :

1. Developing the Idea

Many students are confused about developing ideas, they have difficulty developing ideas when writing, the students said that "*saat menulis kehilangan akal*" and the other student said that "*bingung untuk kata selanjutnya*".

2. Organizing the Ideas

In organizing ideas, many students have difficulty, when interviewed, students answered that they were "*bingung menyusun kata yang akan ditulis*" they were also confused about "*bingung dalam memilih kata*" to use.

3. Grammar

The language they use when writing is very irregular, they also seem confused in using to be, the addition of e/es in writing descriptive text. This also happened when the researcher interviewed them, they said "*tidak tahu tenses yang digunakan*" then they also said "*bingung yang harus ditulis is, am, atau are Miss...*"

4. Choosing the Correct Words

When students were instructed to write descriptive texts, most of the students asked the researchers about vocabulary, it turned out that their vocabulary was very minimal, many of them do not understand the use of English in writing and do not understand the meaning of a sentence in English. When the researcher interviewed them, they said "*bingung dalam memilih kata yang ditulis*" and "*bingung arti dari kalimat yang ditulis*".

5. Spelling, Punctuation, and Capitalization

When the researcher examined the results of his writing, the researcher found that many students did not use capital letters at the beginning of the paragraph, as well as for the names of people, cities and so on. Many of them also have difficulty with punctuation, capitalization and spelling. during the interview the researcher asked "*apakah kamu menggunakan huruf besar diawal kalimat, menggunakan titik, koma, seperti pengejaan,*

apakah kanumenulis kata dalam Bahasa Inggris dengan benar?" they answered "tidak mengerti penggunaan huruf besar, titik koma, dan pengejaan masih bingung".

2. Discussion

Based on the results of the research, the researcher used written tests and interviews in collecting data, then in analyzing the written text data (descriptive text) the researcher used 5 aspects namely, content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

Based on the result there were 5 students (18%) in the "Very Good category" because the use of vocabulary was good, extensive knowledge and use of grammar well and the use of punctuations, capitals, and spelling very well. Even though there were still many mistakes, 5 students (18%) are in the "Good category" because of the use of vocabulary pretty good, but not as good as students with very good category, 1 student (4%) is in the "Nearly Good" because the students' grammar is still mistaken, but in vocabulary good, 8 students (30%) are in the "Sufficient category" because the students frequently repeated the sentences and the use of grammar, punctuation, and spelling enough, and the last 8 students (30%) are in the "Nearly Sufficient category" because the students' minimum in organizing the ideas and the use of grammar, punctuation, and spelling is still mistaken.

The difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text based on the interview are, (1) difficult in developing ideas, many students find it difficult when developing an idea in writing because the students are confused to write the next paragraph, (2) in organizing the ideas, the students find it difficult because the students do not know what they will write, the students usually write the content which is not suitable with the theme, (3) the students do not understand about the grammar used in writing descriptive text, the students are confused by the use of *is*, *am*, *are*, and *s/es*, (4) the students are still ambiguous to choose the correct word, because the students do not know about the vocabulary, and also the students do not know the meaning of a word in English or vice versa, the last one, (5) the students do not know the use of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, because the students are confused to use it in writing descriptive text.

Based on the discussion above, the difficulties students face when writing descriptive text in line with Yoandita (2019: 7-8) it found that the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text are developing an idea and organizing an idea, because the students write few paragraphs. For the second difficulties in line with Wahyumi (2019:13) stated that the problem usually faced by students in writing composition is about how to organize the idea into a sentence. Third difficulties are the same in line with Nunan (2003:18) claimed that grammar is generally thought to be a set of rules specifying the correct use of words at the sentence level.

Fourth difficulties in line with Pratiwi (2012: 3-4) wrote that in writing, we have to choose the good and right words and phrases, and must follow the proper structure. The last difficulties in line with Fitri, et.al., (2017:2) said that spelling, punctuation, and capitalization difficulties can also affect the meaning of the sentences in a paragraph; they made the reader confused on the contiguity meaning of the sentences even of the paragraph.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is the ability in writing descriptive text at SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau is "Nearly Good" category, there are 10 students who passed based on passing grade, and 17 students who do not pass the passing grade. Based on the analysis, the students' writing ability in SMPN 7 Lubuklinggau was "failed".

Therefore, the difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text are developing the ideas when write the next paragraph, students usually write the content suitable with the title, students still ambiguous the used of grammar, students confused to choose the correct word, and students do not know the used of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

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