



STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS: A CASE STUDY AT THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 14 MATARAM IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the ability of students at SMPN 14 Mataram in writing descriptive text, where the indicators in the descriptive text are content, grammar, organization, vocabulary and mechanics. The method that will be used in this research is qualitative descriptive, The researcher will analyze class VIII which amounted 295 students, and the sample of this research there are 35 students. In order to collect the data the writer will use written test. The students will be required to write a descriptive text in english with minimum lenght of 100 words. The researchers draws conclusion that the eighth grade students of SMPN 14 Mataram academic year 2022/2023 have difficulties in all aspects of writing descriptive text such as content, grammar, organization, mechanic and vocabulary. The prominent difficulty in writing descriptive text research on students is found in the vocabulary component. It is proven by the percentage result of 71.43%. Students tend to find it difficult to choose the right words in sentences. Supported by finding inappropriate word choices, word choices that change the meaning of a sentence so that it does not form a coherent paragraph. And the lack of vocabulary mastery in students. The second highest difficulty found in this study was found in the grammar component. It is proven by the percentage result of 65.71%. More than half of the students had difficulty in forming the correct sentence structure. It is proven by the finding of several tense errors, and the placement of sentence structures with the wrong choice of words to form different meanings

Key Word: *Students', Writing In Descriptive Text, Skills*

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one skill in language learning including English. Writing is used to inform ideas or feeling to others in written form. The skill to write could make people are able to gather or obtain information, to see connections between ideas, to organize ideas into an

explainable concept, to absorb and process information, to learn actively particularly in written form (Hairston, 1986).

Rass (2001:30) states, "writing is difficult skill for native speakers and non-native speakers; because writer should be able to write in multiple issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary and mechanics as well as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization". In writing there are aspects that should have to be understood such as, the rule of grammar and the components of good writing but also should notice about the pronouns and the punctuation marks.

Nowadays, writing skill is becoming increasingly important in the global community particularly in education both in second- and foreign- language learning (Weigle, 2002:1). There might be students' weaknesses in writing, it is a significant problem that affects students in learning English, such as they lack of vocabulary and capability in applying the English grammar and also about the mechanical problems, they still need more improvement because they still made a lot of mistakes in writing descriptive text, they are still confused in identifying the schematic structure of descriptive text.

Regarding the importance of this subject especially in language learning, the government has arranged it in the curriculum 2013. Based on the curriculum 2013 that the second year students of junior high school level are expected to be able to express their ideas in written form in various kinds of text.

Descriptive text refers to a text which focuses on describing particular things, items or individuals and it specifies some of their characteristics (Emilia and Christie, 2013:36). In other words, it is assumed that at the end of the learning process, the second students of junior high school need to be able to write descriptive text.

In accordance with this case, the writer needs to pay attention to the students' skill in writing. Reflecting the observation and the writer's experience in teaching English at SMP 14 Mataram, many students also still had difficulties in the writing process. The first one is due to their weakness in vocabulary and grammar. It is difficult for the students to express their ideas about the topic. Besides, most of the students only translated their thoughts from their native language into English. There are many weaknesses by the students, it is a significant problem that affects students in learning English, such as they lack of vocabulary and the lack of capability in applying the English grammar and also about the mechanical problems the students have problems such as; composing indefinite paragraphs, complex sentences problems, and making grammatical slips and also according to the student, they still need more improvement because they still made a lot of mistakes in writing descriptive text, they are still confused in identifying the schematic structure of descriptive text. (Wigati 2014, Siahaan 2013). Then, they often select the appropriate choice of word. Based on the consideration of the importance of writing skill, mainly in form of descriptive text for junior high school level, the writer is interested to conduct a research to serve the aim to analyze weaknesses of students' writing skill in descriptive text of the eighth grade students' at SMP 14 Mataram.

The focus issues in this study is limited on the analysis of students' writing skill in descriptive text at SMP 14 Mataram especially by the eight grade students. Moreover, there are some kinds of texts that are taught in juniorhigh school level based on the curriculum 2013. They are narrative, descriptive, procedure, and etc. However, In this study the writer only focuses on the competences of students' writing skill in descriptive text as an indicator to determine the students' writing skill.

Based on the previous research above, it is important to get an in-depth review of the students' writing text descriptive. Therefore, the researcher wants to know the students' writing skills in write text descriptive. The researcher in determining their writing skills followed their writing component rubric guide by Weir, Cyril J. in Asrofin. The focus study is to analyze the English descriptive text test of students based on the five indicators.

Writing

Writing skill are specific abilities which help writer put their thoughts into words in meaningful form and to mentally interact with messages. Writing is used not only in academic purpose even daily affairs, such as make a note, diary and schedule.

There are some different definitions of writing explained by some different linguists. Writing is the nature of the composing process of writing. Written products are often the result of thinking, drafting and revising procedures that require specialized skills, skills that not every native speaker develops naturally (Brown, 2003 : 335). Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the definition of writing is a process of inviting ideas, gathering ideas, thinking about how to express them and organizing them into statements and paragraphs which the purpose is used to communicate something with other people indirectly, students get effort to express mind through language in writing.

Widdowson (1978) states that writing is the act of creating correct sentences and communicating them through the visual medium on paper. Troyka (1996) states that writing is a process of transmitting a message to a reader for a purpose. The purposes of writing are to voice own self, to deliver information for reader, to convince reader, and to create a literary work.

Descriptive text

Pardiyono, M. (2007:33-34) states that description is a type of written text which has the specific function to give description about an object (human or non human).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research study used a qualitative descriptive. The purpose of this research study was to investigate the students' writing skills in descriptive text. This research study focused on analyzing the five indicators in English descriptive text by Weir, Cyril J. in Asrofin (2010:56) such as: Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Grammar and Mechanical accuracy (punctuation

and spelling). The participants of this research study were the eighth-grade students of SMPN 14 Mataram. There are 35 students in class eight.

The research instrument of this research was the English descriptive text test of the students. In this case, the students were asked to write an English descriptive text. Furthermore, the students' writing English descriptive text test was analyzed using Weir, Cyril J. in Asrofin theory in writing testing score.

C. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The finding of this study presents the analysis of English descriptive text using Weir, Cyril J. in Asrofin theory. Furthermore, each category of students' writing skills of five English Descriptive text indicators is presented in each category.

The data from students' descriptive text test was analyzed using Weir, Cyril J. in Asrofin Theory. After that, the researchers analyzed English descriptive text into indicators, namely content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Then, the researchers analyzed the problems for each indicator in writing English descriptive text.

No .	Name of Students	Component					Score
		Grammar	Mechanic	Content	Organization	Vocabulary	
1	AL	4	1	4	3	2	14
2	DN	3	3	4	3	2	15
3	DA	1	1	2	2	1	5
4	FL	1	1	1	1	1	5
5	FR	1	1	1	1	1	5
6	ELS	1	1	4	3	1	10
7	GS	1	2	4	3	1	11
8	HK	1	1	3	2	1	8
9	HM	1	1	4	3	1	10
10	HS	3	3	4	4	1	16
11	IMA	1	1	3	2	2	9
12	IT	2	3	4	4	2	16
13	KL	2	3	4	3	1	13
14	KK	1	2	4	3	1	11
15	SF	3	3	4	4	3	17
16	SR	3	1	4	4	3	15
17	LL	3	2	4	3	2	14
18	MN	4	3	4	4	3	18
19	TJ	3	3	4	3	3	13
20	RE	1	2	3	2	2	10
21	RR	1	2	3	2	2	10
22	DD	2	3	3	2	4	15
23	VF	2	3	3	2	2	11
24	BT	4	2	3	2	2	13

25	WA	2	3	3	3	4	15
26	AA	2	3	3	3	2	13
27	AJ	2	2	3	2	1	10
28	RY	3	2	2	2	3	12
29	OGS	2	3	2	2	3	12
30	QN	2	2	3	2	2	12
31	MM	3	2	2	3	2	12
32	LF	2	3	2	2	2	11
33	DD	2	2	3	3	3	13
34	IK	2	3	4	3	2	14
35	NJ	3	3	3	2	2	13
Total		74	76	111	93	72	421
Mean Score		2.11	2.17	3.17	2.66	2.06	12.03
Score (0-100)		52.86	54.29	79.29	66.43	51.43	

Figure 1. The Students' Score of Writing Skill in Descriptive Text

Students' Writing Skill in Write the Content of the Descriptive text

Content is the first indicator in English descriptive text. This part consists of the topic and the details in write text descriptive. the results of the tests given to 35 students, by calculating the overall score of students getting a total score of 111, then the average value obtained from the total score divided by the number of samples (35 students) then the average result is 3.17 (score range 1 to 4). This means that only a few students have difficulty with the content indicator, with details of 7 people having difficulty in the content category because they got the lowest score. Among them there are 5 students who get a value of 2 and 2 students get a value of 1 (below average). Students are less able to write coherent and coherent paragraphs, students are less able to write the specified topic completely and clearly and the details provided are less related to the topic.

Students' Writing Skill in Write the Organization of the Descriptive Text

Next organization is the second indicator in English descriptive text. The organization consists of the identification and the description of English descriptive text. The students' writing skill in the organization was described on Figure 1 above. In the organization indicator, the total score of 35 students is 93, then the average value is calculated by dividing the total score (93) by the number of samples (35 students) obtained an average of 2.66 (based on a score range of 1 to 4). With details where 15 students experienced difficulties based on the results obtained. Consisting of 13 students who got a score of 2 and 2 students got a score of 1. They were not able to adequately describe the contents of each paragraph about themselves, there was incomplete identification and very few descriptions that did not describe part of the sentence cluster.

Students' Writing Skill in Write the Grammar of the Descriptive text

Grammar is the third indicator in English descriptive text. This part focuses on arranged the sentence with the correct grammar. The grammar used in the descriptive text is simple present tense, adjective, action verb, and agreement. Furthermore, the students' writing skill in writing grammar was described on the figure 1 above. It is evident from the results of the assessment calculations of the students studied that the total score of 35 students is 74. Then the total score (74) is divided by the number of samples of 35 students to obtain an average score of 2.11 (from a score range of 1 to 4). Based on the calculation of the value, it can be seen that quite a lot of students have difficulty in grammar indicators; this is evidenced by the discovery of 23 getting the lowest score, consisting of 12 students getting a score of 2 and 11 students getting a score of 1.

Students' Writing Skill in Write the Vocabulary of Descriptive text

Next, the fourth indicator is using vocabulary in write text descriptive. The student's vocabulary in writing skills was described based on Figure 1 above. This is based on the calculation of student assessment calculations from 35 samples obtained a total score of 72, then to calculate the average overall score, the total score (72) is divided by the number of samples (35 students) obtained an average score of 2.06, to find the assessment criteria, the average score of 2.06 (score range 1 to 4). It is evident from 35 students who took the test there were 25 students who had difficulty in this category by obtaining the lowest score of them, 15 students got a value of 2 and 10 students got a value of 1. This is because students have difficulty in choosing the right words in sentences supported by good vocabulary mastery.

Students' Writing Skill in Write the Mechanics of Descriptive Text

Next, Mechanics is the five indicators in English descriptive text. The mechanics concern the use of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. The student's writing skill was described in Figure 1 above. first the total score of the entire sample (35 students) is 76, then to determine the average value of the overall indicators, namely the total score (76) divided by the total sample (35 students) an average score of 2.17 is obtained. This indicator shows that the level of difficulty experienced by students is still high from the 35 students who took the test. 20 students experienced difficulties consisting of 11 students scored 2 and 9 students scored 1. Students did not master conventions, dominated by spelling errors, punctuation marks and the use of capital letters, especially the use of capital letters.

Discussion

First, the component of descriptive text writing skill that has the lowest difficulty is content. Based on the data obtained from the test in finding students' difficulties in writing descriptive texts the students were not able to write coherent and coherent paragraphs. Seen from the large percentage of errors found in student tests of 20%. Exactly 14.29% had difficulty in integrating details with the topic. For example, about 5 students were unable to write down the specified topic completely and clearly and the details provided barely contained a paragraph (too few). Then as many as 5.71% or about 2 students had difficulty in explaining the topic and in detail and supported by the details provided almost did not contain a paragraph. The written text has paragraphs that are less related to each other and difficult to understand, lastly there is still poor word development.

Second, in the organization component there are 2 parts, namely the identification paragraph and the description paragraph. Many students have difficulty compared to the previous component. It was found that 42.86% had difficulty in organizing a paragraph which was divided into 37.14% or about 13 students could not identify the contents of the paragraph and describe it according to the given topic, while 5.71% or about 2 students could not significantly distinguish between paragraphs. Identification and description as well as the paragraphs made do not meet the components of either identification or description.

Third, the difficulties in the mechanical components are divided in terms of punctuation, capitalization and spelling. It was found that 57.14% had difficulty writing descriptive text. 31.43% have difficulty in writing spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, or about 11 students have 3 difficulties in each part of the mechanical component. Students find it difficult to write punctuation of the size of the first letters such as names, class writing, punctuation at the end of sentences, and spelling. Then 25.71% or about 9 students have more difficulty understanding the mechanical component parts, this is evidenced by the more errors found in the use of capital letters in words, placement of punctuation marks and also spelling.

Fourth, it was found that the difficulty was quite high in the grammar component, 65.71% containing more than half the number of students experiencing difficulties in the grammar component. There are 34.29% 23 or about 12 students have difficulty making complete sentence structures, as evidenced by the finding of many grammatical errors or agreement and 31.43% or about 11 students more often write grammatical errors or agreements that cause students' difficulties.

Finally, it was found that the highest students difficulty was in the vocabulary component. 71.43% or about 25 students have difficulties to choosing the right words in a sentence, about 42.86% or about 15 students have difficulty choosing the right words in forming sentences. Found some limited range of confusing words. And 28.57% or about 10 students with poor knowledge or words, tenses, and cannot be understood.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the students' writing skill of English descriptive text was average to poor. The prominent difficulty in writing descriptive text research on students is found in the vocabulary component. It is proven by the percentage result of 71.43%. Students tend to find it difficult to choose the right words in sentences. Supported by finding inappropriate word choices, word choices that change the meaning of a sentence so that it does not form a coherent paragraph. And the lack of vocabulary mastery in students. The second highest difficulty found in this study was found in the grammar component. It is proven by the percentage result of 65.71%. More than half of the students had difficulty in forming the correct sentence structure. It is proven by the finding of several tense errors, and the placement of sentence structures with the wrong choice of words to form different meanings. Finally, the major difficulty found in this study is the mechanical component. As many as 57.14% have difficulty in using uppercase letters of a word, using capital letters and spelling. This is evidenced by the discovery of writing errors in terms of mechanics. Many students do not understand the use of each.

According to the discussion above, the difficulties encountered when writing descriptive text are as follows: first, when writing the descriptive text's content, students encountered difficulties determining the appropriate content and providing an insufficient explanation of detail. Second, the students are unable to develop their ideas and have a limited understanding of the subject being discussed. As a result, they are unable to adequately describe the object. Thirdly, they struggle with the simple present tense. Fourth, students struggle with selecting appropriate vocabulary when writing descriptive text. Finally, they made an error in their mechanics because they misspelt words and were unsure of proper punctuation.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusion presented above, the researcher gave some suggestions for the teacher, students, and future researcher about the English teaching especially in teaching writing descriptive text. First for the teachers, the teachers are suggested to develop their method in teaching writing especially teaching writing descriptive text. Analyzing students' work is one of methods that they can apply to find out the students' strength and weakness in writing ability especially in descriptive text because it is important to acknowledge the students' strength and weakness so that the teacher can teach effectively. Second for the students, the students are suggested to improve their ability in constructing a descriptive paragraph with the right content component. Somehow they still have to keep developing their writing ability especially in descriptive text in other aspects that support their writing so that their achievement also can be enhanced. Third for further researchers, the result of this study hopefully able to give input for them who want to conduct developmental research on the topic of teaching writing descriptive text. The result of this study hopefully able to give input for them who want to conduct developmental research especially on analyzing students' ability in writing or other English skill. The researcher also suggests the further researcher conduct a research about analyzing students' writing in different genre even in different level of students.

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