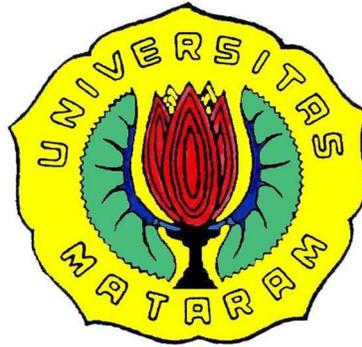


**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN WRITING
DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS: A CASE STUDY AT THE SECOND YEAR
STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 LINGSAR IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/2015**



AN ARTICLE

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By

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DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS: A CASE STUDY AT THE SECOND
YEAR STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 LINGSAR IN ACADEMIC YEAR
2014/2015”**

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with an analysis of students’ competence in writing descriptive text. It is aimed at knowing students’ competence and problems in writing descriptive text. The population of this study is the students of SMAN 1 Lingsar at the second year (150 students), and were taken as its sample only 25% out of the number of population (36 students). The data of this study were collected through written test to know students’ competence in writing descriptive text. The researcher also applied close ended questions test to investigate and identify the problems faced by the students in writing descriptive text. Then, the data were analyzed quantitatively and descriptively. Based on the data analysis, it is found that the competence of the students in writing descriptive text is in fair category. From the test result, 6 students (17%) are classified into excellent category, 11 students (31%) are classified into good category, 2 students (6%) are classified into fair category, 7 students (19%) are classified as unsatisfactory and 10 students (27%) in category of unacceptable. While the result of the close ended question test shows that the main problem faced by the students is that they are very poor or weak in vocabulary. In other words, it can be said that they have very limited number of vocabulary. Other problem faced by the students is that they are unable to write sentence structure well and unable to write organization and the content of writing descriptive text respectively.

Keyword: *analysis, competence, writing skill, descriptive text*

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Pembimbing 1



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1. Introduction

Writing is often considered as the most difficult and most crucial skill to be developed in language acquisition process along with other abilities: listening, reading and speaking. There are many people who enjoy writing and can write about everything. Through writing one can expose his/her idea, opinion, thoughts and feeling systematically and effectively in his or her own language style, so that anyone also can influence, receive and understand the writing product properly.

According to Oshima and Hogue (1999) writing is more than just using correct grammar; it is also thinking, planning, checking, and revising. Therefore, the writing process needs thinking, planning, good idea and good grammar to make a decent writing. Writing is an important part in language. Learners must realize that writing is much more difficult than speaking. Lyons and Heasley in Nunan (1998: 91) state that writing is clearly a complex process and competence. Writing is frequently accepted as the last skill acquired.

Writing skill is generally developed in class, although experienced teacher used some learning methods successively, from easy to difficult with some exercises. Even more, if someone teaches English as foreign language (i.e English teacher) he/she should have adequate knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Grammar is essential and beneficial language point for writers and teachers who are engaged in educational field to develop the learner's writing skill. English is said to be the most widely spoken language in the world. Therefore, it is normal for educated people to feel the need to learn the language; they learn it for various reasons either because of communicative or academic purpose. Some terms are used in the educational unit level curriculum of English lesson in the kind of text (genre) being used, for example: transactional/interpersonal, narrative, descriptive recount, report, anecdote, etc. The basic competency which deals with the mastery of this type of text is that the students should be able to communicate at least in written form.

In writing class, learners frequently have difficulties when they have to write a simple sentence or even to construct a simple paragraph. It is just because they tend to point out what to do first or what grammar to use. Thus in order to measure the students' mastery on writing and the implementation of the basic competency in English teaching, the researcher is motivated to discover the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Analyzing students' text is very significant to do because it may help English teacher discover the learner's ability and difficulties in writing (Lock, 1996; cited in Siahaan, 2013) and use it as reference in developing language teaching-learning methods. From the elaboration above, this study is intended to find out the learners' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text by analyzing the students' texts in terms of schematic structure and linguistic features using Systemic Functional Linguistics.

One of the texts which students must learn and produce in the second grade in senior high school is descriptive text. It is a kind of text which is aimed to describe a particular person, place, or thing. It is expected to make the readers feel, hear, see, smell, and taste things as the writer expects. It also invites the readers to enjoy and fully understand the object explained.

Considering the phenomena above, the writer will conduct a study on the second grade of student of SMAN 1 Lingsar. The writer would like to know the students competence in writing descriptive text by asking the students to write something to describe a particular person in her/his life. One of the texts which students must learn and produce in the second

grade of senior high school is descriptive text. It is a kind of text which is aimed to describe a particular person, place, or thing. It is expected to make the readers feel, hear, see, smell, and taste things as the writer expects. It also invites the readers to enjoy and fully understand the object explained.

In this study, the researcher would like to investigate the student of SMAN 1 Lingsar at the second grade competence in writing descriptive text. Although writing descriptive text is taught by English teacher to the students since they were in junior high school until they were in senior high school, but only few researches that have been conducted writing skill particular in writing descriptive text. That is the reason why the writer tries to investigate the student's principle problem and their competence in writing descriptive text.

A study of text as English teaching material made writer interested in analyzing students' competence in writing a text. In this research, the writer focuses on students' competence in writing descriptive text. Students may have problem in writing descriptive text. Through this study the writer tries to analyze students' competence in writing descriptive text at SMAN 1 Lingsar.

The result of this study is expected to explain: i) What level of competence do the students have in descriptive writing skill?; and ii) What are the problems of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 face in writing descriptive text ?;

Based on the research questions, this study aims to:

- a. Find out the level of student's SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 competence in writing descriptive text.
- b. Find out the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar academic year 2014/2015 problem in writing descriptive text.

The results of this study are expected to:

- 1) Give information about the importance of outlines in teaching writing composition.
- 2) Give the students an interesting technique of presenting materials in order to improve their stability to the writing composition, development and organization.
- 3) Give much information about students' difficulties, so in the future the students will be more careful in writing and English teachers can help the students solve the difficulties they face.

2. Review of Related Literature

Writing skill is one of the four language skills that has an important part in human life. According to Harmer (2006), writing skill by far is the most important lesson for teaching writing. Of course, it is a basic language skill, just an important speaking, and reading students need to know how to write a letter, how to put written report together, how to reply advertisement and increasingly, how to write by facilitating them with electronic media, they need to know some writing special convention (functional paragraph construction) just as they need to know how to pronounce spoken English appropriately part of teacher job to give that skill.

Writing skill requires students to have enough knowledge in some specific subject in teaching learning process. The students must have a wide range of knowledge in order to obtain good writing product. According to Harmer (2006) in

teaching the teacher focuses on the product of that writing or on the writing process itself. The students should be given question in order to be interested in the topic of reading material. Reading and writing are only mastered by educated people or learners to write or record, to convince, to report information and to influence. Robert Lado (1979) defined about writing, he said : “writing foreign language requires the writer to use the vocabularies and the grammar target language well it requires knowledge of acceptable English rhetoric such as using sign posts to make paragraph unified and coherent one”.

3. Research Methods

It has been stated that the purpose of this study is to analyze the competence of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015. In analyzing the data, the writer used descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive method is the effort to observe, notify, analyze, and interpret the condition happening. Ainin (2007) notified that the purpose of descriptive method is to make description about the fact, characteristics and relation of current cases systematically, factually, and accurately. Then to get the data, the writer used descriptive quantitative design. This study is aimed to define the level of competence of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015.

Population and Sample

Population of this investigation were the students of SMAN 1 Lingsar. The population of this research is all of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015.

The total numbers of students at the second year of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 is 150 students. The students were divided into 6 classes. So, each class consists of 25 students.

Yusra (2006) sample is smaller group of population that is the source of information because represent the population. It impossible to observes all of the population because of the facilities, time limit, finances and other factors. If researchers had hundreds or great amount of subjects in population, it would be better for them to take 25-30% from the total number of the subjects. But, it can be reduced depending on the sampling technique and researchers' readiness (Arikunto, 2010:95). Here by, the writer needs to take 25% from the total numbers of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar.

The sample which is taken in this research is a group of students at the second grade of SMAN 1 Lingsar. The sample is taken randomly by using simple random sampling technique. The writer takes 25% from the accessible population based on the statement of Arikunto above. In that, the writer takes 6 students from each class and only 36 students were taken randomly as the sample from those 150 students. So sample were taken randomly by using simple random sampling technique. I served 25 rolled-papers for each class in which from the 25 papers, there are 6 papers containing number 1-6. The students who got papers containing the numbers were taken as the sample. This quantity is enough to investigate. So, the writer will be able to handle all of the students easily.

Research Instrument

The writer used a test to collect the data in this study. The students were asked to make an English paragraph of descriptive text under the theme “My Best Friend”.

Data Collection

In this study, data means all information that are directly gathered from the subjects. The data are also called the items obtained from the students after doing the test (the instruments given to them). These data are obtained through test pertaining the students' competence in writing English descriptive paragraph. The data are also bits of information (number of facts). A piece of data is also called a score or an observation which conveys a piece of information about topics or events which is called variable.

Furthermore, in order to find out the results of students' writing of English descriptive paragraph, writing test is conducted. In this respect, the students are required to write a certain topic that is not beyond their knowledge of words. The time allocated for the writing test will be 90 minutes.

In collecting the data the writer uses the following techniques.

- **Written Test**

In this study, before the researcher asking the students to write a descriptive text, firstly the researcher explained about descriptive itself generally to remain them about what descriptive text is. After that, the students were asked to write a descriptive text. In this case the writer gave a task to write what the students have to write. The purpose of giving test was to make students write shorter and suitable with what the writer expected.

- **Close ended question**

In this study, the researcher tried to find student's problems in writing by giving them close ended question sheet to be answered. The question of this test was only related to the problems that possible faced by the students and it was provided by using Indonesian language in order that the students understood the purpose of the question. Then, the student's answer presented descriptively by making conclusion of the student's answer.

Data Analysis

Analyzing data of a study is considered as one of the most principle work of the researcher, as the veracity and objectivity of the scholar are truly desired.

After grading the data, the writer continues to the next step of analyzing the data. In data analysis, the writer used descriptive method. Firstly, the writing test were corrected to get the scores whether the students writing ability in Excellence, Good, Fair, Unsatisfactory or Unacceptable level. In correcting the writing test, the researcher focused on correcting four aspects of writing. They were content, organization, vocabulary and sentence structure. Then, all of those aspects would be corrected according to the criteria in measuring the students' scores in writing skills (see appendix 1).

Furthermore, the students' score were taken according above scale. In scoring the writer uses five scales scoring guide that follow the following steps:

1. Find out the students' maximum scores.

- Maximum scores:	
Content	= 30
Vocabulary	= 25
Organization	= 25
Sentence structure	= 20+
	100

2. Find out the average scores (individually) by the formula below:

$$X_i = \frac{1}{2} \times \text{score maximum}$$

$$X_i = \frac{1}{2} \times 100 = 50$$

3. Find out the standard deviation (σ)

$$\sigma = \frac{1}{3} \times X_i$$

$$\sigma = \frac{1}{3} \times 50 = 16.67$$

4. Make a table of conversion

- $X_i + (1.5 \times \sigma) \rightarrow 50 + (1.5 \times 16.67) = 75$
- $X_i + (0.5 \times \sigma) \rightarrow 50 + (0.5 \times 16.67) = 58.33$
- $X_i - (0.5 \times \sigma) \rightarrow 50 - (0.5 \times 16.67) = 41.65$
- $X_i - (1.5 \times \sigma) \rightarrow 50 - (1.5 \times 16.67) = 24.95$
 $\quad \quad \quad < 24.95 \quad \quad = \text{(fail)}$

(Soewarin, 1995 :67) cited in (Hayatunnufus, 2006)

Table 3.4.2 Table of the category and its scores range in writing

No	Category	Score ranges
1.	Excellent	75 – 100
2.	Good	58.35 – 75
3.	Fair	41.65 – 58.35
4.	Unsatisfactory	24.95 – 41.65
5.	Unacceptable	0 – 24.95

From the table above, the students' achievement in writing can be categorized as excellent in score range between 75 – 100, 58.35 – 75 as good, 41.65 – 58.35 as fair, 24.95 – 41.65 as unsatisfactory and below 24.95 are fail in constructing descriptive text.

After finding out the students' individual score, then the mean score were figured out by dividing the students' total scores (Σx) with the total of the samples or the students (Σn) as seen in the following formula:

$$\frac{\Sigma x}{\Sigma n} = \text{students' mean score}$$

Furthermore, to find the percentage of each category of students' score, the following formula is employed:

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

n = number of students on each category

N = number of samples

Then, the answer of close ended question (Yes/No question) which has proposed earlier. The majority of student's answer of close ended question sheet concluded as the principal problem of the students.

4. Findings and Discussions

From the total of four speeches, two speeches for each candidate and containing 14,330 words, a total 492 hedges in various types were found. Raw data those hedges are as followed:

The presentation of the result answered the research questions in chapter I. To find out the solution of the problems the researcher analyzed the data obtained from the students' test result. In this case, the researcher determines the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph, the analysis of the data is one part, that is the one about wheter the students have competence in writing descriptive text.

To get useful data on the students' writing paragraph of descriptive text, the writer conducted research or observation on April 2015. The students wrote out descriptive text entitled "My Best Friend".

In this particular chapter, the statistical analysis of students' ability in writing descriptive text and the discussion about the students' problems in writing descriptive text, based on close ended question text result are presented.

- Students' Competence in Writing Descriptive Text

To find out the answer of students' competence in writing descriptive text which has been proposed earlier in chapter I, the data obtained from the students' written test result have been analyzed. Based on the result of students' written test scores, the students' score individually are presented as follows:

Table 4.1.1 Table of students' individual score in writing descriptive text written by students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015

No	Name	Content	Organization	Vocabulary	SS	Score
1	Z	21	18	16	14	69
2	LFH	21	16	15	10	62
3	SA	6	6	6	6	24
4	W	26	20	22	16	84
5	SM	8	5	5	5	23
6	DA	10	5	6	5	26
7	ABH	5	5	5	5	20
8	R	24	18	10	11	63

9	IF	5	5	5	5	20
10	JU	21	16	18	12	67
11	BF	10	10	10	8	38
12	IP	6	6	6	6	24
13	BS	18	12	16	12	58
14	AJT	6	6	6	6	24
15	AR	18	10	10	9	47
16	AJ	10	10	8	5	33
17	LFH	24	18	17	14	73
18	LIP	20	16	10	13	59
19	AD	26	17	12	13	68
20	A	26	19	19	15	79
21	NM	30	24	25	18	97
22	UF	6	6	6	6	24
23	N	18	16	16	13	63
24	PR	6	6	6	6	24
25	RH	5	5	5	5	20
26	DN	18	9	15	12	54
27	LJ	6	6	6	6	24
28	R	8	8	10	8	34
29	N	6	7	6	7	26
30	HNA	26	16	19	15	76
31	TK	25	19	18	16	78

32	YU	26	18	17	15	76
33	NAD	10	9	10	8	37
34	AZMF	8	8	10	8	34
35	R	24	15	16	17	72
36	RP	19	19	15	13	66
	Total	552	429	422	363	1766
	Mean Score	15.33		11.72	10.08	49.05

From the table of students' individual scores above, then the mean score of the students is figured out by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\sum x}{\sum n} = \text{students' mean score}$$

$$\frac{1766}{36} = 49.05$$

According to value gained, it was obtained that the students' mean score was between 49.05-58.35 (see table 4.1.2). It means that the mean score of the students is in fair category. The table of the category and its scores range in writing can be seen as follow:

Table 4.1.2 Table of the category and its scores range in writing

No	Category	Score ranges
1	Excellent	75 – 100
2	Good	58.35 - 75
3	Fair	41.65 – 58.35
4	Unsatisfactory	24.95 – 41.65
5	Unacceptable	0 – 24.95

5. Conclusions

Arriving at the last chapter the writer would like to draw some conclusion based on finding on previous chapter. The most general conclusion which can be drawn is that the competence of the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 in writing descriptive text is fair.

Based on the result of analysis of students' competence in writing descriptive text percentage showed that 17% of the students are in excellent category, which meant that 6 students at the second year students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 got excellent score category, 31% of the students are in good category or 11 students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 in good category, 6% of the students are in fair score category, which means that 2 students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 in fair score category, 19% of the students are in unsatisfactory category or 7 students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 in unsatisfactory category, and the last is 27% of the students are in unacceptable category or 10 students of SMAN 1 Lingsar in academic year 2014/2015 in unacceptable score category.

From this investigation. It can be inferred that the students' competence in writing descriptive text is fair, the students are fair to describe their opinion by using their own words into a descriptive text. Although the vocabularies that they know are limited in number, but the students try to make a paragraph descriptive at least more than 50 words, and in this case, the students got some problems, such as they cannot understand how to make a simple text based on the rule of grammar, and relevance. It was portrayed by the description of their ability in each of the aspects of writing on the table 4.2.1 – 4.2.4.

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