



Junior High School Students' Difficulties in Writing Descriptive Text

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: 2022-08-11 Revised: 2022-09-22 Published: 2022-10-02 Keywords: <i>Junior High School; Writing; Descriptive Text; Difficulties.</i>	Writing is one of the skills that must be possessed by students when learning English. It is one way of expressing ideas, feelings, thoughts, even arguments and knowledge into a piece of paper. Descriptive text is a text which purpose is to describe someone, a place, or something. Students considered writing descriptive text is difficult to do because it is done in English which is a foreign language for them. This research aimed to understand students' difficulty in writing descriptive text and the causes. This research was using the narrative inquiry method in one of Junior High School in Karawang with a total of five eight-grade students as the participants. The data was collected through a structured personal interview with an interview guideline as the instruments and analyzed based on Miles & Huberman (1994): data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion/verification. The findings showed that one of the biggest factors causes students to have difficulty in writing descriptive text is their dislike of the English language itself and even though the students know about writing descriptive in general, it doesn't make them want to learn about it. Also, there are several difficulties that the students face when they are asked to write descriptive texts such as they do not understand grammar, they have very little vocabulary, they do not know the meaning of each vocabulary, and they have difficulty constructing sentences when write descriptive text which cause by their dislike on learning English, teaching techniques that make them bored, feeling lazy in learning grammar and vocabulary, and difficulty in reading and translating vocabulary due to lack of vocabulary they have.

Artikel Info	Abstrak
Sejarah Artikel Diterima: 2022-08-11 Direvisi: 2022-09-22 Dipublikasi: 2022-10-02 Kata kunci: <i>Sekolah Menengah Pertama; Menulis; Teks Deskriptif; Kesulitan.</i>	Menulis merupakan salah satu keterampilan yang harus dimiliki oleh siswa ketika belajar bahasa Inggris. Ini adalah salah satu cara untuk mengungkapkan ide, perasaan, pikiran, bahkan argumen dan pengetahuan ke dalam selembar kertas. Teks deskriptif adalah teks yang bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan seseorang, tempat, atau sesuatu. Siswa menganggap menulis teks deskriptif sulit dilakukan karena dilakukan dalam bahasa Inggris yang merupakan bahasa asing bagi mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dan penyebabnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode inkuiri naratif di salah satu SMP di Karawang dengan jumlah peserta lima siswa kelas delapan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara pribadi terstruktur dengan pedoman wawancara sebagai instrumen dan dianalisis berdasarkan Miles & Huberman (1994): reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan/verifikasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa salah satu faktor terbesar yang menyebabkan siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis teks deskriptif adalah ketidaksukaan mereka terhadap bahasa Inggris itu sendiri dan meskipun siswa mengetahui tentang menulis deskriptif secara umum, hal itu tidak membuat mereka ingin mempelajarinya. Selain itu, ada beberapa kesulitan yang dihadapi siswa ketika mereka diminta untuk menulis teks deskriptif seperti mereka tidak mengerti tata bahasa, mereka memiliki kosakata yang sangat sedikit, mereka tidak tahu arti dari setiap kosakata, dan mereka mengalami kesulitan dalam menyusun kalimat saat menulis. teks deskriptif yang disebabkan oleh ketidaksukaan mereka dalam belajar bahasa Inggris, teknik pengajaran yang membuat mereka bosan, rasa malas dalam mempelajari tata bahasa dan kosa kata, dan kesulitan dalam membaca dan menerjemahkan kosa kata karena kurangnya kosa kata yang mereka miliki.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is something that is used to express oneself, both in expressing ideas, feelings, or

even thoughts, both in spoken and written form. Humans use language when expressing themselves in order to be understood by others. Using

language orally is called speaking, understanding spoken language is called listening, gathering information from written text is called reading, and using writing to provide information is called writing (Duha, 2022). One of the languages that can be used is the international language used throughout the world, English. In Indonesia itself, English subject is one of the lessons about foreign languages that are taught starting from elementary school, junior high, senior high, even up to university level (Situmorang & Manurung, 2020). In learning English, there are 4 (four) skills that must be learned, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the skills that must be possessed by students when learning English. Not only to facilitate written communication, writing skills are also very important and are often used unconsciously in daily activities such as doing assignments, doing exercises, and when doing written exams (Kristiana, Yunita, & Syahrial, 202). Writing is one way of expressing themselves where students can express their ideas, feelings, thoughts, even arguments and knowledge into a piece of paper filled with writing (Nurfidoh & Kareviati, 2021). Writing is a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in the form of written words which will provide information for those who read them (Damayanti, 2022).

Even so, writing is a skill that is not easy to master, especially if you write in a foreign language that is not yet fluent. Students consider writing in English to be difficult because they are worried about using punctuation, spelling, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, structure, and other factors that influence it (Irine & Misrita, 2020). This also makes writing in English sometimes difficult for students. To make good writing, there are 4 (four) steps that must be considered, namely planning, drafting, editing, and final version (Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020). In the planning step, students decide what they want to write by taking into account the purpose of writing, the target audience, as well as the content and structure of the writing. In drafting, they write down the ideas that come up roughly. In the editing step, they edit the ideas into better paragraphs or writings. Then in the final version, they can finalize their writing from all aspects until it becomes good writing and is ready to be read. The students find it difficult to come up with ideas when they write. Most of them write sentences that are not precise because of their lack of knowledge about grammar. Some students can't even finish their writing because they

run out of time due to lack of vocabulary and ideas that must be poured (Yoandita, 2018). To write well, students need to have ability, effort, and a strong desire. Students must also understand in advance the type of text they will write (Duha, 2022). According to the 2006 BNSP, there are five types of English text that are taught in schools (especially at the junior high school level), namely descriptive, narrative, procedure, recount, and report. What will be discussed in this paper is writing descriptive text.

Descriptive text is a text which purpose is to describe someone, a place, or something. There are two schematic structures of descriptive text, namely identification and description (Siahaan, 2013). By learning to write descriptive text, students can learn to describe something. Writing that describes something such as a person, a place, or an object must be done carefully but in detail to provide an amazing reading experience for its readers (Agustine, 2022). In writing descriptive text, students must at least be able to describe the object so that it can make the reader imagine the object, whether its shape, smell, surface, or even the taste of the object being described (Yoandita, 2018). Writing descriptive text should be an easy task, but usually students find it difficult to do it because it is done in English which is a foreign language for them. Descriptive text is written using simple present tense which makes the writing contains general, repetitional, and habitual activities. Even so, having a lot of vocabulary is very important when writing descriptive text to avoid words being used repeatedly (Johannes, 2021). Students must also have a lot of English vocabulary so that they can describe the object well (Afiani, 2022). Some researchers have been investigated the same matter regarding the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text. Yoandita (2018) conducted a research that focused on students' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text. The results showed that students faced difficulties in developing ideas on the text they wrote and difficult in choosing appropriate vocabulary. Ismayanti & Kholiq (2020) finished a research on describing students' difficulties in writing descriptive text and find out the causes. The results showed that students' difficulties in writing descriptive text were in generic structure, grammar, and spelling. The causes were due to lack of text production skills, lack of knowledge relating the subject, and lack of interest in learning English. Duha (2022) also completed a research on find out students'

difficulties in writing descriptive text and its causes. The results showed that students' difficulties in writing descriptive text were on the generic features, textual language, syntactical language, spelling, capitalization, and finding and organizing ideas. The causes of those difficulties were due to less motivation, less practice, less interest, less confidence, lack of grammar, and lack of vocabulary mastery. Thus, since the writing descriptive text is considering difficult subject for the students, this research was conducted to understand students' difficulty in writing descriptive text and what causes this difficulty to the eight-graded students at junior high school.

II. METHOD

To investigate difficulties faced by junior high school students in writing descriptive text, the researcher used the narrative inquiry method where it studies someone's experiences as story in narrative form (Kim, 2016). With this method, the researcher investigates the participants' experiences regarding their difficulty in writing descriptive text and write it down in the form of narrative. This research was carried out in one of Junior High School in Karawang, West Java, with a total of five eight-grade students as the participants. The data collection technique for this research was a structured personal interview where the researcher interviewed each participant one by one. An interview guideline was written with a total of nine open-ended questions. The data collected was analyzed based on data analysis by Miles & Huberman (1994) where it consists of 3 (three) steps: data reduction (deleting unnecessary parts), data display (organizing the information), and drawing conclusion/verification.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

1. Students' dislike towards learning English

Based on interviews that have been conducted with the participants, 60% stated that they did not like learning English, 20% stated that they were neutral, and 20% stated that they liked learning English. The students who did not like English said that the reason they did not like English was due to difficult writing and pronunciation, not understanding a lot of vocabulary, and different pronunciation and writing of vocabulary.

Saya tidak suka menulis bahasa inggris, karena dalam menulis menggunakan bahasa inggris membuat saya pusing karena tidak mengerti kosakata dalam bahasa inggris. [I do not like writing in English, because writing in English makes me dizzy and also I do not understand English vocabulary.]

Student 01

Tidak suka belajar bahasa inggris, pe-lafalan dan penulisannya itu sulit sekali. [Don't like learning English, pronunciation and writing are very difficult.]

Student 02

2. Students were not enthusiastic to learn it

When the students were asked about descriptive texts, they could generally answer that descriptive texts were texts that described something. However, they also said that they were not enthusiastic to learn about writing descriptive texts because the explanations were difficult to understand, the teaching methods were boring, and they felt confused when practicing them.

Respon saya saat belajar descriptive text itu sulit karena bingung dan kurang memahami penjelasan dari guru pada waktu belajar descriptive text. [My response when learning descriptive text was difficult because I was confused and did not understand the explanation from the teacher.]

Student 01

Membosankan dan mengantuk karena cara mengajar guru yang kurang kreatif. [Boring and sleepy because of the teacher's less creative way of teaching.]

Student 02

Saya kurang begitu antusias kak, karena menurut saya teks deskripsi membingungkan. [My response is not that enthusiastic, because I think the description text is confusing.]

Student 04

3. Students' difficulties in writing descriptive text

When interviewed, the students stated that writing descriptive text was difficult because they did not understand grammar, did not know the meaning of vocabulary, did not understand how to write it, lacked

vocabulary, and found it difficult to compose sentences.

Kesulitan yang saya alami saat menulis paragraph descriptive adalah tidak mengerti grammar yang digunakan dan suka tidak tahu arti kosakatanya. [The difficulty I experienced when writing a descriptive paragraph was that I did not understand the grammar and the vocabulary.]

Student 01

Kesulitannya belum paham cara menyusun kalimatnya dan belum mengetahui kosa kata yang cukup. [The difficulty is not understanding how to compose sentences and not knowing enough vocabulary.]

Student 03

Kata-katanya yang sulit di tulis kak [The words are difficult to write.]

Student 05

4. The causes of students' difficulties in writing descriptive text.

The students also stated that the previously mentioned difficulties caused by their dislike of learning English, the boring teaching method of the teacher, laziness in learning grammar and vocabulary, and difficulty reading and translating the vocabulary they wanted to use.

Saya mengalami kesulitan tersebut karena saya memang tidak suka bahasa inggris dan guru mengajar sangat membosankan. [I have this difficulty because I really don't like English and the teacher's teaching method is very boring.]

Student 02

Saya malas untuk belajar grammar dan menghafal kosakata. [I am lazy to learn grammar and memorize vocabulary.]

Student 04

Karena ketika menulis saya tidak bisa membaca dan menerjemahkan kosakata. [Because when I write I cannot read and translate vocabulary.]

Student 05

B. Discussion

Based on the findings mentioned in the previous section, several conclusions can be drawn regarding students' difficulty in writing descriptive text. First, one of the biggest factors that causes students to have difficulty in writing descriptive text is their dislike of

the English language itself (Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020). Disliking the English language will certainly greatly affect when they want to write descriptive text using English. Second, even though the students know about writing descriptive in general, it doesn't make them want to learn about it. The students openly stated that they did not have the enthusiasm to learn how to write descriptive texts since they had difficulty understanding the material about descriptive texts because the teacher's teaching methods bore them (Duha, 2022). In the end, it makes the students confused when they asked to practice writing descriptive text. Third, there are several difficulties that the students face when they are asked to write descriptive texts: 1) they do not understand grammar, 2) they have very little vocabulary, 3) they do not know the meaning of each vocabulary, and 4) they have difficulty constructing sentences when write descriptive text (Yoandita, 2018). Fourth, the last one was an explanation that showed the reasons for the difficulties the students had when writing descriptive text. The reasons were: 1) they don't like the English itself, 2) teaching techniques that make them bored, 3) feeling lazy in learning grammar and vocabulary, and 4) difficulty in reading and translating vocabulary due to lack of vocabulary they have (Afiani, 2022; Irine & Misrita, 2020; and Johannes, 2021).

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Conclusion

After reading the explanations that have been presented previously, it can be concluded that the difficulties faced by the students when writing descriptive texts such as they do not understand grammar, have very little vocabulary, do not know the meaning of each vocabulary, and have difficulty constructing sentences was caused by their dislike toward English, boring teaching technique, laziness in learning grammar and vocabulary, their lack of vocabulary.

B. Recommendation

Future researchers can research on strategies that can be used by English teachers to teach descriptive text writing classes without making students feel bored quickly or find it difficult to understand the material about writing descriptive texts. The future researchers also can try to investigate strategies to make students like to learn English, so they

will be a little bit more enthusiast while learning English.

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