

ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY AND DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis kemudahan dan kesulitan siswa dalam menulis teks deskripsi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas X di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Palu. Sedangkan sampelnya adalah 20 siswa. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan test dan interview untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil dari penelitian ini menampilkan kemudahan dan kesulitan siswa dalam menulis teks deskripsi dan faktor yang menyebabkan siswa kesulitan dalam menulis teks deskripsi. Kesulitan yang dimaksud adalah, kesulitan dalam truktur penulisan teks deskripsi, kesulitan dalam tata bahasa dan kesulitan dalam mekanik. Sementara itu, kesulitan yang menyebabkan siswa kesulitan dalam menulis teks deskripsi adalah kelemahan kemampuan dalam menghasilkan teks dan kekurangan ketertarikan dalam belajar bahasa inggris.

Kata kunci : kemampuan siswa, kesulitan siswa, teks deskripsi

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to identification and analysis students' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text. This research used qualitative descriptive methods. The research subject are X grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Palu. The research took 20 students as sample. This research used interview and test to collect the data. The result of this research shows the students' ability, the students' difficulty in writing descriptive text and the factors students' difficulties in writing descriptive texts. The difficulties are difficulties in generic structure, difficulties in grammar, and difficulties in mechanic, while the factors that cause the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text are lack of proficiency in the text production skills, and lack of interest in learning English.

Keywords : students' ability, students' difficulties, descriptive text

INTRODUCTION

Based on K-13 syllabus of senior high school learning English writing is important role in learning among other skills; listening, reading and speaking. In learning English, students should be able to write some kinds of genre in writing. There are several types of text that should be mastered by the student in senior high school, which are narrative, descriptive, report, procedure, and recount. Writing skill can give benefit for training and encouraging students to express themselves freely in writing.

According to Robbin (2011), ability is an individual capacity for conducting task in certain work. John. M. Echols and Hasan Shadily in an English Indonesia Dictionary, ability is *kecakapan, bakat dan kemampuan*. It means ability is students' special skills, knowledge, capacity and strength. Difficulty is something that hard to do. Based on Merriam Webster, the word difficult means "hard to do or make something". It means difficulty is a problem which faced by the students..

According to Coulmas (2003:1), there are three meanings of writing can be distinguished. First, writing is a system of recording language by means of visible or tactile marks mean the writer can see the product of their writing by using their eyes. Second, writing is an activity of putting the ideas are very needed in writing. Ideas can add knowledge or information for the reader. Third, the result of writings' activities is text.

Writing is a complex intellectual activity that comprises several necessary skills, some of which our learners may lack, some of which they acquire partially. These are skills include Reading comprehension; Writing mechanics: spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; Grammar; Analytical skills; Organizing ideas effectively; Communication ideas concisely

According to the definition above, writing is a way to express the idea or opinion by making hand writing which is form in writing on a piece of paper or other area.

Generally there are four types of writing, though normally these types are mixed together. There are : **Expository**. Expository writing explains or informs. It talks about a subject without giving opinions. **Descriptive**. Descriptive writing focuses on communicating the details of a character, event, or place. **Persuasive**. Persuasive writing tries to bring other people around to your point of view. **Narrative**. A narrative tells a story. There will usually be characters and dialogue.

Although the writing process has been analyzed different way, most of teachers would agree in recognize least of following five general components, they are Developing Ideas; Organizing ideas; Vocabulary; Mechanics.

There are several characteristics of descriptive text. First of all, it focuses on what will be described, for instance, place, thing or people. The second, descriptive text uses simple present tense as grammatical rule in writing itself. Third, for its title descriptive

text uses noun phrase, for example in describing motorcycle. The title which is used not only motorcycle but also with its label or mark. Fourth, usually adjective is used to explain noun or the object in the descriptive text. The last one is that the description of the object is written from general to specific. (Sudarwati, 2007).

METHOD

In this study the researchers used qualitative research. According to Creswell (2012, p. 169), qualitative research is a research which explore the phenomenon of study. Arikunto (2010) add, qualitative research is conducted in natural setting and in normal situation in which the conditional is not manipulated. For this research, researchers used qualitative descriptive as a research design because the aim of this research is to analysis the student' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text especially focusing on how their using generic structure and simple present tense properly, and the mechanic. It is means that the researchers described the data. The population of this research was X grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Palu. Researchers took 20 students as a sample.

In this research the researchers used test and interview as a technique of collecting the data.

Technique in collecting the data in this research as follows:

1. The data in this research collected by asking the students to have a writing test. Then, analyzed the data to answer the question of the researchers, two rater analyze each aspect of the students writing and giving score based on the scoring rubric and the criteria for achievement in writing descriptive text.
2. The students choose one of their interesting topics.
3. Students write descriptive text and give 90minutes to do their writing.
4. The researchers collected students' writing.

In this research, researchers used unstructured interview without use an interview guide. The researchers used this interview method to get more information about students' difficulties in writing descriptive text because the questions can be developed base on the participant's answers and their current situation.

This research focused on analyzing the writing ability and difficulties at tenth grade students of MAN 1 Palu by using test and interview technique. The aspects which were: generic structure, grammar, and mechanics. The researchers analyzed the data based on the generic structures, grammar, mechanics (punctuation, spelling and capitalization) and explain students' difficulties in writing descriptive text. To know the mean of students' score in writing evaluation, the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum f}{n}$$

Where:

M = The mean of the students.

$\sum f$ = Total score

N = The number of the students.

In the text analysis, the researchers used descriptive text. Then, the topic of the test is based on students interesting topic. The components of writing analyzed by researchers are generic structure, grammar, and mechanics. In terms of mechanics, researchers analyzed punctuation and capitalization of the students' text. The researchers gave the score based on particular criteria. The result of assessment categorized into five aspect based on the degree of students' ability. The researchers used the four point scale of Nurgiantoro (1988), It shown in figure 3.1. figure 3.1, shows five level of the students' writing ability encompassing poor, fair, average, good, and excellent which range from 0 – 100. Figure 3.2 shows the descriptions of the students' scoring rubric consist of generic structure of descriptive text, simple present tense, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

Figure 3.1 the students' score skills level

Testscore	Level
86-100	Excellent
75-85	Very Good
60-71	Good

Testscore	Level
50-59	Fair
0-49	Poor

Table 3.2 the descriptions of the students' scoring rubric

No	Aspect	Criteria				
1	Generic Structure; Identification and Description	Identification and description is unclear	Identification part consist of 1 sentence, and description part, 1 sentence.	Identification part consist of 1 sentence, and description part, 2 sentences	Identification part consist of 1 sentence, and description part, 3 sentences.	Identification part consist of 1 sentence, and description part, 4 sentences
	Score test	5	8	10	20	30
2	Content	Not clear at all	The content is clear	The content is clear and arranging well.	The content is clear and arranging well, coherence enough	The content is clear, arranging well, coherence and unity.
	Score test	2	6	10	20	30
3	Using Simple Present Tense	There is 1 thing about detail of the object.	It has 8-10 mistakes	It has 4-7 mistakes	It has 1-3 mistakes	Correct
	Score test	5	8	10	15	20
4	Spelling and Punctuation	It has 12 or more mistakes	It has 9-12 mistakes	It has 5-8 mistakes	It has 1-4 mistakes	Correct
	Score test	4	6	8	10	20

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

According to the result of the data, the mean score of the students test in writing descriptive text is 52,1. This means that students' ability in writing descriptive text was low and need more improvement. Within 20 students only 2 students got excellent score. It means that most of the students have difficulties in writing descriptive text. The students got problem while to arranged the word into sentences.

The result of the test showed that there are some difficulties in writing descriptive text for students. The difficulties were faced by the students is generic

structure of descriptive text. The generic structure of descriptive text consisted of identification and description. The other difficulties students faced in writing description text is grammar. In the grammar students had difficulties in using simple present tense rules. The last, the difficulties students faced in writing descriptive text in mechanic.

The result of interview, the researchers showed that factor caused students' difficulties in writing descriptive text, such as, lack of proficiency in production skills. Students got problem to arrange the good sentences in English. Another factor is lack of interesting in learning English. Some students did not like English because they think that English is difficult to learn. The test was conducted to measure students' grammar mastery particularly in simple present tense mastery. The instrument of grammar mastery used multiple choice which was consisted of 30 items. The result of grammar mastery test can be described as follows:

CONCLUSION

Based on the result, the researchers concluded students' ability in writing descriptive text still low. Based on the interview the researchers concluded that students had some difficulties in writing descriptive text. The students difficulties in writing descriptive text are :Difficulties in generic structure, The difficulties in grammar, and The difficulties in spelling and lack of vocabulary. In arranging the sentences there are some factor that caused the students' difficulties in writing descriptive text at tenth grade students of MAN 1 Palu are: Lack of proficiency in the text production skills, Lack of interest in learning English.

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