

An Analysis of Students Problems in Writing Descriptive Text of the Third Grade Students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the students' problems and the factors that cause students' problems in writing descriptive text. The method used in this research is descriptive quantitative. The researcher used written tests and questionnaires as instruments. The population in this study were third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. School year 2022/2023. The sample was class IX.4 consisting of 29 students selected using cluster random sampling. The findings showed that students' problems in writing descriptive texts were based on 5 assessment components in writing descriptive texts. First, the content component with a score of 46,5 or including very poor criteria, second, the organization component with a score of 46,5 or including very poor criteria, third, the grammar component with a score of 50 or including very poor criteria, fourth, the mechanical component with a score of 53,5 or including poor criteria and the last component of vocabulary with a score of 60,25 or including poor components. From the results of these data, only 2 components are classified as less good and there are 3 components that are classified as very poor. This proves that students' problems in writing descriptive texts are academically classified as very poor. The factors that caused students' problems in writing descriptive text are first, trouble putting ideas together (65.52%). Second, have not learned and do not know how to use simple present tense (34.48%). And third, unwilling to look for text examples to help demonstrate ideas when writing (27.59%).

Keywords: Student Problems, Writing, Descriptive Text



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INTRODUCTION

English is a universal language that helps people communicate across borders and enhance scientific progress. That's because most scientific books are imported (Izzan and Mahfuddin, 2007). In Indonesia, English is taught from primary school to grade twelve, with writing, speaking, listening and reading skills being essential competencies. In this case, the focus is on writing skills. Writing is an important language skill for students, as it involves communication through written language. It is an indirect communication activity, conveying ideas freely in the form of an essay (Dalman, 2014). Mastering vocabulary and tenses is key to producing good writing, which involves critical thinking and making others understand. Writing is a compound cognitive activity that requires a higher level of expertise in productive language. Although difficult, writing is essential for students to master and engage in critical thinking.

In Indonesian schools, students learn different types of texts, including descriptive texts, which are the first texts learned in English lessons in Junior High School. Descriptive texts are the first to be learned, starting from grade seven and continuing through grade nine. This text provides information about the details of a particular object, making the reader feel or experience the object (Dalman, 2014). This type of text can describe places, objects, people, animals or personality traits. The important thing about descriptive text is that it must describe what it sees, not just the speaker's opinion (Amelia, 2017). Many students at SMP N 1 Tebing

Tinggi have difficulty in descriptive writing due to lack of vocabulary, difficulty choosing the right words, and difficulty finding important topics. They spend time thinking but struggle to start writing, often finding no ideas or even having no ideas at all.

Therefore, students need supporting factors to write descriptive texts that can be read well, including proficiency in stringing words into sentences, understanding text structure and language characteristics, and knowledge of objects related to the topic. According to Fareed et al. (2016), students experience various problems in writing especially in writing descriptive texts. These problems vary and are different among each student as well as the factors that cause the problem. To overcome these problems, a more in-depth analysis of student problems and the factors that cause student problems is needed. Emilia (2005) also stated that the importance of analyzing students' texts to help teachers in overcoming students' writing problems. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study with the title "An Analysis of Students' Problems in Writing Descriptive Text of the Third Grade Students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi".

RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive quantitative was used in this study. According to Arikunto (2010), quantitative method is a research method conducted in typical conditions that are not changed and in a natural situation. Quantitative descriptive research is a type of research that deals with investigation using existing data (Slinger and Shohamy, 1989). The object of this research is a writing test and a questionnaire that will be filled in and answered by third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of writing tests on third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi found that students experienced problems in writing descriptive texts based on five components and each component was classified as very poor as evidenced by the results of students' writing assessments as follows:

Table 1. The Written Test Results

	Content	Organization	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Score
Total Score	54	54	58	70	62	327
Mean Score	1,86	1,86	2	2,41	2,14	11,27
Score (1-100)	46,5	46,5	50	60,25	53,5	

Based on the analysis of writing tests on third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi, it was found that the most problems were done by students in writing descriptive texts, namely in the content component with a score of 46.5 which is classified as very poor, then in the organizational component also with a score of 46.5 which is classified as very poor, in the grammar component with a score of 50 which is classified as very poor, then in the vocabulary component with a score of 60.25 which is classified as poor and finally in the mechanics component with a score of 53.5 which is classified as poor. The results of the questionnaire analysis on third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi found several factors that caused students to experience problems in writing descriptive texts. One of them is because most students have difficulty in expressing ideas. This is evidenced by the results of the students' questionnaire answers as follows:

Table 2. The Questionnaire Results

No	Items	Choices of Answers	Frequency of Answers	Percentage (%)
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1	How about learning English, do you like it?	Yes	22	75,58
		No	7	24,14
2	How about writing, do you like it?	Yes	20	68,97
		No	9	31,03
3	How about descriptive text, do you understand?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
4	Do you enjoy learning to write about descriptive text?	Yes	20	68,97
		No	9	31,03
5	What about the general structure of descriptive text, do you know?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
6	Do you comprehend the general structure of descriptive text?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
7	What about the language features of descriptive text, do you know?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
8	Do you comprehend the languages feature of descriptive text?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
9	Have you studied the simple present tense?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
10	Do you know how to use the simple present tense?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
11	When your teacher gave you the task of writing descriptive text, did you respond with enthusiasm?	Yes	20	68,97
		No	9	31,03
12	When you have trouble writing descriptive text, do you ask for the help of teachers?	Yes	20	68,97
		No	9	31,03
13	Do you have trouble in putting ideas into words when writing descriptive text?	Yes	19	65,52
		No	10	34,48
14	When writing descriptive text, are you looking for examples of text to assist you demonstrate your ideas?	Yes	21	72,41
		No	8	27,59
15	Is the teacher's teaching in writing descriptive text clear and effective?	Yes	23	79,31
		No	6	20,69

Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis on third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi, it was found that the factors that cause students' problems in writing descriptive texts are first because students have difficulty in expressing ideas into words when writing with a percentage of 65.52%. Second, because students have not learned simple present tense and do not know how to use simple present tense with a percentage of 34.48%. And third, because students do not look for sample texts to help them demonstrate their ideas when writing with a percentage of 27.59%.

Discussion

Third grade students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi experienced problems in writing descriptive texts. The content, organization and grammar components are the most common problems with scores of 46.5 and 50 respectively which means very poor. These problems occur due to students' inability to write logical, clear and complete paragraphs. In addition, due to students' inability to master grammar and confusion in the use of subjects and verbs. Vocabulary and mechanics components are also a problem for students in writing descriptive texts with scores of 60.25 and 53.5 respectively which means poor. This problem occurs due to poor vocabulary mastery and errors in the use of capitalization, spelling and punctuation. The factors that cause students' problems in writing descriptive texts are first due to difficulties in expressing ideas with a percentage of 65.52%. This happens because most students cannot pour their ideas when writing even some of these students have no ideas at all and they spend a lot of time looking for ideas. Second, because they have not learned and are confused about using simple present tense with a percentage of 34.48%. This happens because most students

have not learned simple present tense which causes many mistakes in vocabulary and grammar when they write. And third, because they did not see the sample text with a percentage of 27.59%. This happens because most students are reluctant and do not want to see sample texts that can help them in pouring their ideas when writing so that their writing is not good.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results on the writing test, it was found that students' problems in writing descriptive text based on five components were categorized as very poor. With a content and organization component score of 46.5 this means very poor. Then the grammar component score is 50 this means very bad. Furthermore, the mechanics component score is 53.5 this means poor. And finally, the vocabulary component score is 60.25, which means poor. Based on the results of the research on the questionnaire, it was found that the factors that cause students to experience problems in writing descriptive texts are due to difficulties in expressing ideas (65.52%), have not learned and do not know how to use simple present tense (34.48%), and do not want to look for text examples to help express ideas when writing (27.59%).

Recommendation: Based on the above conclusions, the researcher would like to provide three recommendations related to this study. First, teachers can use the results of this study to understand student problems and improve learning. Second, students can use the results of this study as a self-reflection tool to recognize and understand their shortcomings and motivate themselves to overcome the problems they face. And third, for future researchers can use the results of this study as an additional reference.

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