

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMPN 1 BAYU PESISIR SELATAN

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ABSTRACT

Writing is one of the skills that is very important especially for students who learn English as a foreign language in process of language acquisition. The purpose of this study was to know the students' ability at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in writing descriptive text. The population of this research was the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan. The number of population was 72 students. The researcher used cluster random sampling technique to get sample of this thesis, the students are homogeneous. The researcher took one class of three classes. The sample was 20 students of VIII.1 class. The data of this study were students' ability in writing descriptive text. The data were collected by using writing test. Before giving test to the sample, the test was tried out. To know the reliability of the test the researcher used inter-rater technique and content validity, based on teaching material and syllabus. It was found that the coefficient correlation was high (0.67). The result of the data showed that the students' ability in writing descriptive text at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan was moderate. Based on findings above, it could be concluded that the ability of the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan was moderate. The researcher suggests the students to practice their writing especially in descriptive text to increase their ability in writing descriptive text.

Key Words : Ability, Writing, Descriptive Text

Introduction

English is an international language and also an important subject in Indonesian education. Most of the Indonesian students have gotten English lesson, from elementary level until University level. Students have to master English orally and in written form.

There are four skills in English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. One of language skills is writing. Students can express what they listen, speak, and read in writing. According to Lewis (<http://educators.About.com/is/language/a>

<http://educators.About.com/is/language/a> journal writing.html) by writing, the student will get a chance to practice important punctuation, spelling, and style skills in context. In addition, Lance (2005) states that it will be easier for the students to get appropriate purposes when they write using their own topic.

Writing is taught to the students at junior high school. They have to know kinds of texts and how to write them. The second grade students learn about narrative text, recount text, procedure text, and

descriptive text. The goal of this teaching is to make students able to write kinds of texts that they have studied.

Based on the informal interview with the English teachers at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan on April, 24 2013, they told that the students at SMP N 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in writing descriptive text still got difficulties. The students were confused and still had mistaken, in writing generic structures, language features, vocabulary and mechanics.

As the result above, the researcher is interested in doing her research on the analysis of the second grade students of SMP N 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in writing descriptive text. The researcher is interested to conduct this research to find whether students are able to write a descriptive text or not.

Writing is to produce something in written form. The writers can express their own ideas freely by writing. There are several kinds of writing, such as: narrative, exposition, recount, argumentation, and descriptive, etc. In writing, the writers have to focus on grammar, generic structure of the text, content, diction (choice of word), punctuation and capitalization. In descriptive texts there are three parts that we discuss: things, places and person.

In writing descriptive text students have to understand write generic structures, generic structures deal with

identification and description. Identification is identifying the phenomenon to be described, description is describing the phenomenon in parts, qualities, or/and characteristics. Language features in writing descriptive text includes simple present tense, action verbs. Appropriate words deals with choosing of word or vocabulary. Mechanics includes punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

The general purpose of this research was to describe the second grade students' ability in writing descriptive text at SMP N 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan. In addition, the specific purposes of this research were as follows:

1. To describe the second grade students' ability in writing generic structures of descriptive text describing Person at SMPN 1 BayuPesisir Selatan.
 - a. To describe the second grade students' ability in writing identification of descriptive text describing Person at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan.
 - b. To describe the second grade students' ability in writing description of descriptive text describing Person at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan.

2. To describe the second grade students' ability to use language features (simple present tense, action verbs and adjective) of descriptive text describing Person at SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan.
3. To describe the second grade students' ability in using appropriate words (vocabulary) in writing descriptive texts describing Person at SMPN 1 BayuPesisir Selatan.
4. To describe the second grade students' ability in using mechanics (punctuation and spelling) in writing descriptive text describing Person at SMPN 1 BayuPesisir Selatan.

Methodology

This research used descriptive method to describe the student ability of second grade at junior high school in writing descriptive text. Gay (1987:10) expresses that a descriptive research involved collect data in order to test hypothesis or answer question concerning the current status of the study. It mean that research design was used to describe and collecting data in order to answer the questions concerning the natural phenomenon that occur in the community as a subject of study.

According to Gay (1987:102) population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she would like the results of the study to be generalizable. The population of this research was the second grade students of SMP N 1 Bayu Pesisir. The researcher chose them because they have learned about descriptive text. All of students were treated similarly in learning English. They had same books and materials, and they were taught by same teacher.

The total number of population was 71 students. They were distributed into three classes that are VIII.1, VIII.2, and VIII.3. It can be seen on the following Table:

Table 3.1

The Distribution of Population

No	Class	Number of The Students
1	VIII.1	20
2	VIII.2	26
3	VIII.3	25
	Total	71

Source: The Administration of SMPN 1 BayuPesisir Selatan

The sample was taken by using cluster random sampling technique. According to Gay (1987:110), cluster random sampling is sampling technique in which the sample in group and not individual are randomly selected, and all members of selected group have similar

characteristics. There are three classes of the second grade students of SMP N 1 BAYU (table 3.1). To select the sample, the researcher wrote the name of each class with VIII.1, VIII.2 and VIII.3 and put them into the box and shake the box, the researcher closed her eyes and took one of the paper in the box. So, one class was the class sample and all members of the selected class became the sample of this research.

The instrumentation used in this research was writing test. The researcher asked the students to write a descriptive text consisting of two paragraphs based on the topic given. They were allowed to choose one topic of five topics provided below:

1. My Father
2. My Mother
3. My Sister
4. My Brother
5. My Teacher

The students gave 60 minutes to do the test. Before giving the real test, the researcher tried out the test. The function of try out was to ensure whether the students understand the instruction or not, and to see whether the time allocation was enough or not. The criteria of good instrument are valid and reliable. Arikunto (2012:80) state that a test is valid if it

measured what is supposed to be measured. To see the validity of the test, the researcher used content validity in which the test materials were constructed based on the curriculum and syllabus. It mean that the researcher constructed the test based on curriculum, and the teaching materials.

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever to be measured (Gay, 1987: 135). To find out the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique. It meant that there were two scorers (scorer 1 and scorer 2). The first scorer was the researcher and the second scorer the researcher chose was the teacher of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir;Mr. JamaludinS.Pd. The researcher chose him as a second scorer because he has good ability in writing and he has more experiences in teaching writing. To analyze the consistency of two scorers, the researcher correlated the scores identified by scorer 1 and scorer 2 by using Product moment formula (Arikunto 2009:78) as follow:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where: r_{xy} = The coefficient correlation between variable X and variable Y

N = The number of the students who follow the test

x = The first score from the first scorer

y = The second score from the second scorer

Finally, the researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation based on Arikunto's idea (2012:89):

0.81 – 1.00 : Very high

0.61 – 0.80 : High

0.41 – 0.60 : Enough

0.21 – 0.40 : Low

0.00 – 0.20 : Very low

Coefficient correlation of this test was 0,67 high correlation.

The data of this research were students' scores on writing descriptive text. It was collected through the following steps:

1. The researcher distributed test to the students.
2. The researcher copied the entire answer sheets of students. The original one is for the first scorer and the other one is for the second scorer.
3. The criteria of giving score were given for both scorers.

4. The first and the second scorer read students' writing one by one.

5. The first and the second scorer gave the score based on criteria in Table below:

Table 3.3 Criteria of Scoring Writing

Aspects	Criteria of each Item	Score
Generic structure Identification & Description	1.Excellent to very good: phenomenon to be described (thing) is clear.	30 – 25
	2.Good to average: phenomenon to describe (thing) is clear enough.	24 – 20
	3.Fair to poor: if there is no phenomenon to be described (thing).	19 – 12
Language features	1.Excellent to very good: Effective in using simple present tense, action verb and adjective	30 – 25
	2.Good to average: effective but the contraction is simple and there are simple mistake.	24 – 20
	3.Fair to poor: there are major problem in using simple present, adjective, and action verb.	19 – 12
Vocabulary	1.Excellent to	20 – 15

(word choice)	very good: effective word and using appropriate vocabulary. 2. Good to average: occasional errors of word, choosing words, usage but meaning obscured. 3. Fair to poor: frequent errors of word choice.	14 – 10 9 – 2
Mechanic	1. Excellent to very good: correct punctuation and spelling.	20 – 15
	2. Good to average: mistake few punctuation and spelling.	14 – 10
	3. Fair to poor: errors spelling and punctuation to make comprehension virtually impossible.	9 – 2

Total score	100– 28
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Modified by Heaton (1988)

Based on the criteria above, total score for all items is 100, so the highest score is 100 and the possible lowest score is 28.

Data of this research were students' scores in writing descriptive text. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the following procedures:

1. Presenting the raw scores

The formula used to count the students' scores from two scorers:

$$\text{student's score} = \frac{\text{first scorer's score} + \text{second scorer's score}}{2}$$

2. Calculating Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD)

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum x^2}{n}\right) - \left(\frac{\sum x}{n}\right)^2}$$

Where

M = Mean

$\sum x$ = Total score of students

$\sum x^2$ = The total of x^2

N = Number of students

SD = Standard Deviation

3. Classifying the student's ability into high, moderate, low ability by using the following categories (Arikunto, 2012 : 299)

$>M + SD$ = High

$(M - SD) - (M + SD)$ = Moderate

$>M - SD$ = Low

4. Calculating the percentage of the students who got high, moderate, and low ability by using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = percentage of students score.

R = the sum of the students who get high, moderate and low ability.

T = the sum of the student.

Finding and Discussions

Students' Ability to Write Descriptive Text

The result of data analysis showed that the highest score based on students answer sheet was 82.5 and the lowest was 0. The researcher got that mean was 61.75 and standard deviation was 8.51. The result of analysis showed that 6 students (30%) had high ability, 12 students (60%) had moderate ability and 2 students (10%) had low ability. To make sure see Table 4.1

Table 4.1

The Classification of Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
High	6	30%
Moderate	12	60%
Low	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Students' Ability in Writing Identification and Description

To find out the students' ability in writing identification and description of descriptive text the researcher counted the students score. The result of data analysis showed that the highest score of students' ability in writing identification and description of descriptive text was 27.5 and the lowest score was 6. Having calculated mean and standard deviation, it was found that the mean was 21.65 and standard

deviation was 2.16. The result of data analysis showed that 13 students (65%) had high ability, 4 students (20%) had moderate ability and 3 students (15%) had low ability (see appendix 16). To make sure see Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2

The Classification of Students' Ability in Writing Identification and Description of Descriptive Text

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
High	13	65%
Moderate	4	20%
Low	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Students' Ability in Using Language Features

The result of the data analysis demonstrated that the highest score of students' ability in using language features of descriptive text was 28.5 and the lowest score was 0. It was also found that the mean was 20.07 and standard deviation was 2.77. The result of data analysis showed that 9 students (45%) had high ability, 8 students (40%) had moderate

ability and 3 students (15%) had low ability. To make sure see Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.3

The classification of students' ability in using language feature of descriptive text

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
High	9	45%
Moderate	8	40%
Low	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Students' Ability in Using Vocabulary

The result of the data analysis demonstrated that the highest score of students' ability in using vocabulary of descriptive text was 20.05 and the lowest score was 0. It was also found that the mean was 11.62 and standard deviation was 1.60. The result of data analysis showed that 9 students (45%) had high ability, 3 students (15%) had moderate

ability and 8 students (40%) had low ability. To make sure see Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.4

The classification of students' ability in using vocabulary

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
High	9	45%
Moderate	3	15%
Low	8	40%
Total	20	100%

Students' Ability in Using Mechanics

The result of the data analysis demonstrated that the highest score of students' ability in using mechanics of descriptive text was 12.5 and the lowest score was 0. It was also found that the mean was 8.85 and standard deviation was 1.21. The result of data analysis showed that 5 students (25%) had high ability, 13 students (65%) had moderate ability and 2 students (10%) had low ability. To make sure see Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.5

The classification of students' ability in using mechanics

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
High	5	25%
Moderate	13	65%
Low	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Discussions

In this part the researcher presented the discussion about the result of the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Students' Ability to Write Descriptive Text

As already discussed, from the data analysis the students' ability to write descriptive text was moderate. The data showed most of the students still had problems in writing components of descriptive text. The components analyzed in this research are: their ability in writing identification and description, using language features, using vocabulary and using mechanics. The result of data analysis showed most of the students had moderate ability in writing identification and description, using language features, vocabulary and mechanics.

Students' Ability in Writing Identification and Description

Another finding of this research was the ability of most students in writing identification was high. It was indicated by number of student (65%) whose ability in high level. Generally they can write identification and description easily. Students tended to write a very simple identification. For example:

Student's writing: Matius is my father

The complete one: Matius is my father, he is a teacher at junior high school

Students tended to write a very simple description. For example:

Student's writing: My father a farmer, he good farmer

The correct one: My father is a farmer, he is discipline, he always wakes up at 5 o'clock, he wakes me up and we pray subuh, then he goes to our field.

Students' Ability in Using Language

Features

In using language features, the students' ability was high. This finding indicated that all of students understand enough to use language feature. Students tended to write language features. For example:

Student's writing: His hair black

The correct one: His hair is black

Students' Ability in Using Vocabulary

In using language features, the students' ability was high and low. This finding indicated that same students understand enough to use vocabulary and others no. Students tended to write a vocabulary. For example:

Student's writing: His eyes is chocolate

The correct one: His eyes are brown.

Students' Ability in Using Mechanics

In using language features, the students' was ability moderate. This finding indicated that some students mistakes in using punctuation and spelling.

Students tended to write a mechanics. For example:

Student's writing: His eyes is chocolate.

my father is handsome

The correct one: His eye are brown and my father is handsome.

Discusions

From the finding and discussion, it can be concluded that the ability of the second grade students' ability of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in writing descriptive text was moderate. It is supported by the fact that 12 students (60%) had moderate ability.

1. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in writing identification and description of descriptive text was high. It was showed from the data there were 12 students (60%) had high ability.
2. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in using language features of descriptive text was high. It was showed

- from the data there were 13 students (65%) had high ability.
3. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in using vocabulary of descriptive text was high. It was showed from the data there were 9 students (45%) had high ability.
 4. The ability of the second grade students of SMPN 1 Bayu Pesisir Selatan in using mechanics of descriptive text was moderate. It was showed from the data there were 13 students (65%) had moderate ability.

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