



## Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text

Sri Rahmadhani Siregar<sup>\*1</sup>, Nursahara Dongoran<sup>2</sup>

Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Padangsidimpuan

email: [sriahmadani@iain-padangsidimpuan.ac.id](mailto:sriahmadani@iain-padangsidimpuan.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [nursahara@gmail.com](mailto:nursahara@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract** The aim of this research was to find out the students' ability in writing descriptive text at grade VII SMP N 11 Padangsidimpuan. This research was descriptive quantitative method that was conducted at SMP N 11 Padangsidimpuan. The population of this research was the grade VII students of SMPN 11 Padangsidimpuan consist of 70 students from 3 classes as the sample of the research. The data were collected from students' writing test. In writing test, there are generic structure and language features. The indicators divided into some sub indicators, generic structure is divided into identification and description. While language features is divided into some sub indicators, there are: the usage of simple present tense, specific participant, using attributive and identifying process, using adjective, and using classifier in nominal group. The mean score of the students' writing descriptive text mastery was 78.5. The result of this research showed the students writing descriptive text mastery in good category.

**Keywords:** Writing Skill; Descriptive Text; Students' Mastery; Writing Category; Text Structures.

**Abstrak** Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif di kelas tujuh SMP N 11 Padangsidimpuan. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif yang dilaksanakan di SMP N 11 Padangsidimpuan. Jumlah populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh siswa kelas 7 SMP N 11 Padangsidimpuan yang terdiri dari 70 siswa dari tiga kelas yang digunakan sebagai sampel. Data dikumpulkan dari tes menulis siswa. Dalam tes menulis, ada struktur generik dan fitur bahasa. Indikator dibagi kedalam beberapa sub indikator, struktur generik dibagi menjadi identifikasi dan deskripsi. Sedangkan fitur bahasa dibagi kedalam beberapa sub indicator, yaitu penggunaan simple present tense, peserta tertentu, menggunakan atributif, proses identifikasi, penggunaan adjective, dan penggunaan classifier dalam bentuk nominal. Hasil tersebut dapat dilihat dari mean score kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif yaitu 78.5. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dalam kategori baik.

**Kata Kunci:** Keahlian Menulis; Teks Deskriptif; Kemampuan Siswa; Kategori Menulis, Struktur Teks.

## **INTRODUCTION**

English as a foreign language has an important position in all levels of school in Indonesia as stated in 2013 curriculum. It is considered as one of compulsory subject that should be studied up to university. English is also one of subjects that must be based on educational curriculum. Based on 2013 curriculum, English has central position in developing technology and information. The curriculum displayed into students' centre that is students search materials themselves more than teachers. The changes of curriculum give influence on the way teachers and students understand English learning from previously traditional into based learning to modern pedagogical dimension (Puspitasari et al., 2020), adjust the trend needs (Suryani et al., 2020), and challenge educators to improve students' skill becoming competence individuals (Banez et al., 2019).

Line with the curriculum, teaching English in junior high school level is presented to improve students' language skill. English materials are presented through genre based whether written or oral communication in teaching learning process (H. Karimah et al., 2017) and (Aunurrahman et al., 2020). The students are emphasized to understand various types of genre. Based on 2013 curriculum, there are some materials of teaching English that must be mastered by students. There are four language skills that must be taught to junior high school students, those are reading, listening, speaking, and writing (Anggraini, 2019). Writing is a good support for the other skills and also the activity that can be usefully be prepared for by work (Hastuti, 2020).

The basic competency that should be achieved in writing English subject is the students have an ability to develop and produce simply functional written text. The seventh grades of junior high school students are taught some types of English text. One of the requirements for junior high school students based on the English competence is to be able to compose proper written descriptive text (Tamba et al., 2020).

Descriptive text is the basic material in increasing students' ability in writing. It is believed that descriptive text is the way to learn English at the seventh grade and that is worth for the beginner level. Descriptive text is a piece of writing that is intended to convey meaning to the reader through sensory details and provides image to the reader. Additionally, descriptive text is a paragraph that is defined as a group of sentence that are closely related in thought and which serve one comment process often used to describe what a person looks like and acts like, what a place looks like, and what an object looks like (Asih, 2013). Furthermore, that descriptive paragraph is a type written

text paragraph, in which has the specific function to describe about an object and it has the aim that is giving description of the object to reader clearly.

Descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information. The context of this kind of text is the description of particular thing, animal, person, or other. It is a text that describes about particular thing such as a scene, an animal, person or something that happen in nature (Winch, 2005), (Panjaitan & Elga, 2020). Writing descriptive text is a process to gather our ideas, information or thoughts become a text that describe a particular person, place or thing. It explains about a person, place or thing which can make the readers imagine what is described clearly. Descriptive text is a text aims to describe person, thing or place that is purposed to inform or persuade the reader.

In writing descriptive text, students get the difficulties although the students have been guided by the teacher. Students' difficulties in writing descriptive text such as developing ideas, organizing the ideas into descriptive text, difficulties in grammar and lack of vocabulary (Apriliana et al., 2020). Based on interviewed with English Teacher of SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan, there are some efforts have done by the teacher to improve writing descriptive text such as provide the classroom to be quiet before start the learning process. Giving the materials (students' handbook), explain tenses, grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, giving tasks or assignments individually or group which are commonly taken from students' worksheet, until the headmaster provides various of media in teaching English such as in focus. In fact, the students still get difficulties in writing descriptive text.

Writing descriptive text has some parts that should be mastered by the students before start to write a paragraph descriptive. The part of descriptive paragraph was divided in to three parts, they are; 1) Social Function to describe a particular person, place, or thing, 2) Generic Structure consists of identification to identifies phenomenon to be described and description: describes parts, qualities, characteristics, 3) Language Features consists of grammatical aspects of use simple present tense, focus on specific participant, use of attributive and identifying process, using adjective, using classifier in nominal group (Mursyid, 2005).

There are many factors in writing descriptive text mastery. According to Barnet in F. Fauzi, he says" Influencing writing to be a good one such as vocabulary mastery, grammatical mastery, punctuation and spelling knowledge which must be integrated to be a paragraph (Alawi, 2011). In writing descriptive text, the students need to develop the ideas into one paragraph, organizing the ideas by identifying the topic and give the descriptions about the topic, students must be able write it in multiple issues such as

content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabularies and mechanics such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization (Karimah, 2016), (Fitri et al., 2017) and (Husna, 2017). So, to be able in writing descriptive text students need to master grammatical rules, punctuation, spelling, also develop and organizing the ideas into a paragraph.

In summary, descriptive text is among the texts that students should be learned and understood. This text is specifically used to describe person, animal, or other things by clarifying their physical characteristics. Writing descriptive or description used in writing whose aim is to describe physical items or objects of which features are concrete or touchable, and it may be attained through using the sensory language or five senses consisting of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In writing a descriptive text, the students need to understand the grammatical rules, punctuation, and spelling is also be able to develop and organizing the ideas.

Current analysis of students' ability in writing descriptive text at grade VII SMP N 11 Padangsidempuan wanted to find out students' understanding and ability in writing descriptive text. The findings become evaluation for students and teacher success in teaching English in term of writing.

## **METHOD**

The research was done at SMP Negeri 11 Padangsidempuan, that is located in Jl. Sm. Raja Gg. Air Bersih, Sitamiang Baru, Padangsidempuan, North Sumatera. The research was done from 23<sup>th</sup> July 2019 up to finish. This research is categorized into quantitative research. The population of this research is the grade VII students of SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan. The researcher used total sampling technique. It means that the sample of this research is 70 students or all the population from 3 classes of VII - 1, VII - 2, and VII - 3. The data was collected from students writing descriptive test. The researcher asked the students to write a text in descriptive based on topic given. The indicators of writing descriptive text are 1) Generic Structures that consists of identification, description, 2) Language Features that consists of use simple present, specific participant, using attributive and identifying process, using adjective, and using classifier in nominal group.

The validity of writing descriptive text used construct validity. The researcher used free writing test. To make it sure, the researcher consulted to the English teacher of SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan. The data collected analyzed by quantitative statistical process. The results of mean score are used to categorize students' mastery by using scale interpretation.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research that was conducted to the seventh grade of SMP N 11 Padangsidempuan, the research aims to find out the students' writing descriptive text mastery. The data was collected by giving writing descriptive test to the students based on the topic given. The score resume of students' Writing Descriptive Text mastery of the grade VII students of SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan has been gotten as table 2.

**Table 2**

**The Score Resume of Students' Writing Descriptive Text Mastery**

No	Statistic	Score
1.	High score	88
2.	Low score	68
3.	Range	20
4	Interval	3
5.	Mean score	<b>78.5</b>

The students score resulted from calculation their correct answer based on some indicators mention early. The researcher counted the 70 samples score and got totally 5502. Based on Table 4, the researcher has gotten high score was 88, low score was 68 and mean score 78.5. The calculation of mean score at students' writing descriptive text mastery was in good category because it lies on 70-79 in score interpretation.

To know the revelation of data was done to group the variable score of writing descriptive text mastery which the total classes 7 and interval 3. Then, the computed of the frequency distribution of the student's score of group can be applied in to table frequency distribution as follows:

**Table 3**

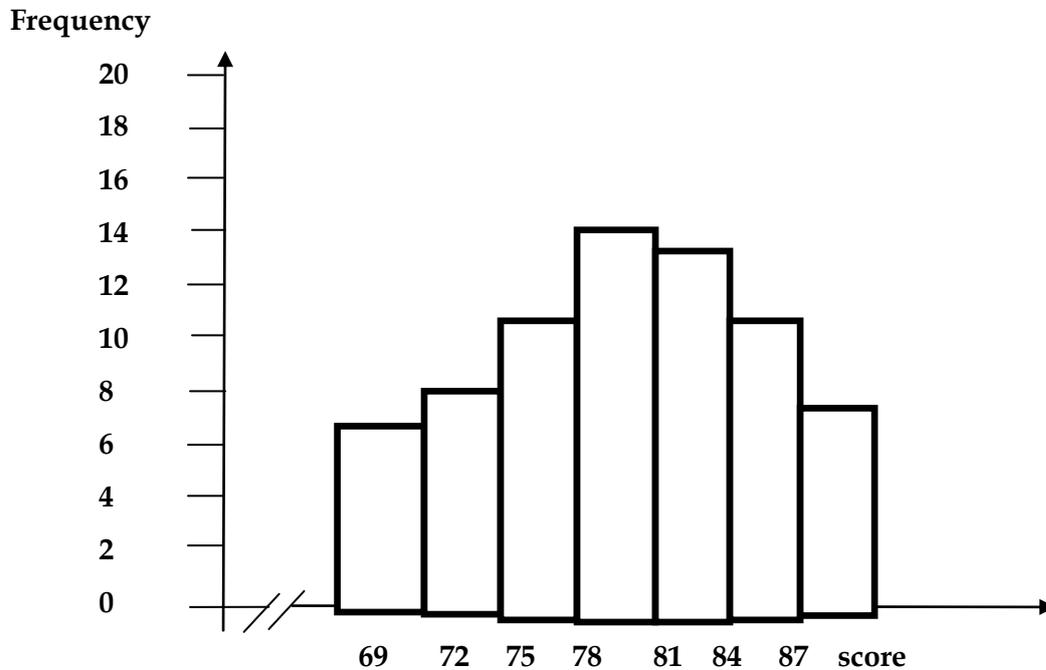
**The Frequency Distribution of Students' Writing Descriptive Text Mastery**

Interval	Mid Point	Frequency	Percentages
68 - 70	69	7	10.0%
71 - 73	72	8	11.4%
74 - 76	75	10	14.2%
77 - 79	78	<b>14</b>	20.0%
80 - 82	81	13	14.2%
83 - 85	84	10	18.5%
86 - 88	87	8	11.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the Table 3, it was known that the variable revelation of students' writing descriptive text mastery showed that the respondent at interval 68 - 70 were 7 students (10.%), interval 71 - 73 were 8 students (11.4%), interval 74 - 76 were 10

students (14.2%), interval 77 - 79 were 14 students (20.0%), interval 80 - 82 were 13 students (14.2%) and the last interval 83 - 85 were 10 students (18.5%) and the last 86-88 were 8 students (11.4%).

In order to get a description of the data clearly and completely, the researcher presents them in the histogram on the following figure:



**Figure 1: The Histogram of Writing Descriptive Text Mastery**

The histogram showed the total score from respondents. The result from analysis has found that students' ability in writing descriptive categorized into good category. Some studies line with the result of this research has found different category after analysis. The students' writing skill in descriptive text in poor level (Fitri et al., 2017). It can be seen from the mean score of the result research was 51.87.

The researcher used some aspects to measure the students' writing skill. The aspects were content, organization, grammatical rules, vocabulary and mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization). The content of writing, the students' average score was 53.72 it can be classified into the poor level. In the organization of writing, students' average score was 50.47 it can be classified into the poor or less level. In the grammar of writing, students' average score was 53.31 it can be classified into the poor level. In the vocabulary, students' average score was 52.87 it can be classified into the poor level. In the mechanics, students' average score was 52.72 and it can be classified into the poor level (Fitri, 2017). In sum the students' writing skill in descriptive text in this research can be categorized in poor level with the mean score was 51.87.

The second, performed by Afza Himmaturrijal Ismail the result of the research showed the students' ability in writing descriptive text was categorized in average level with the mean score 54. The researcher analysed the students' writing result referring to the five aspects. They were organization idea, developed idea, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Refers to the calculation of the mean scores of each aspects, it could be defined that the students' weakness in writing descriptive text belonged to the grammar aspect with the mean score 37 which was categorized as a fair level while the students' strength in writing descriptive text belonged to the organizing ideas aspect with the mean score 63 which was categorized as the average level classification (Ismail, 2018).

Then Lina Fiatun Nikmah points the students' writing ability in descriptive text in average category, the mean score was 54. To get the data, the researcher analysed some aspects in writing descriptive. The aspects in writing descriptive text were developing idea, organizing idea, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The data was analyzed in general, each aspect also being analyzed. The mean score in developing ideas aspect was 60 and categorized as average. The finding shows that the mean score in organizing idea aspect is 66 and categorized as good level. The third aspect is grammar. The mean score in grammar aspect is 54 and categorized as average. The next aspect is vocabulary. The mean score in vocabulary aspect is 64 and categorized as good. The last aspect is mechanic. The mean score in mechanic aspect was 46 and categorized as average (Lina Fiatun Nikmah, 2016). It means that he mean score from these aspects was 54 in average category.

Next is performed by Cut Santi Novita with the research result showed the students' writing descriptive text in fair level. Mean score of students' writing descriptive text was 54.67. It means that the students' ability is still low and need more efforts to improve. Within 31 students, only one student got excellent score that is 89. It means, almost students have the difficulties in writing descriptive text. In this research, the students face the difficulties in generic structure of descriptive text. The students faced difficulty in description of the text and grammar rules, vocabulary, and spelling (Novita, 2017).

The last is the research by Umami Rasyidah showed the students' writing descriptive text in average level. This study was aimed to analyze the students' writing skill in descriptive text. The result of this research showed that the students' mean score in identification and description were considered in average level. In terms of identification, the students' mean score was 55.75 while in terms of description was 50.25. From the description above, the researcher calculated the students' mean score in

writing descriptive text in which the result score was 56. This study showed that the students writing ability in descriptive text was considered as average level (Rasyidah, 2015).

In this research, the researcher analyzed the students' writing descriptive text based on some indicators. There are generic structure and language features. The indicators divided into some sub indicators, generic structure is divided into identification and description. While language features is divided into some sub indicators, there are: the usage of simple present tense, specific participant, using attributive and identifying process, using adjective, and using classifier in nominal group. The result of this research showed the students writing descriptive text mastery in good category. This research is measured by using category. It can be seen from the mean score of the students' writing descriptive text mastery at seventh grade SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan was 78.5. The researcher has gotten high score was 88, low score was 68. It was gotten from the 70 samples score and got totally 5502. So, the students' writing descriptive text mastery at seventh grade students of SMP N 11 Padangsidempuan is categorized in good category. In other hand, writing descriptive text should be learned by the students to improve students' language skill especially in writing skill. It is line with the 2013 curriculum in junior high school which makes English is one of the compulsory subjects.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the students' ability in writing descriptive text done by five researchers was different and category among the five researchers above. The mean score is measured by different rates, categories and levels. In sum, students' ability writing descriptive text needs to be improved.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the research, the conclusions of this research is the students' writing descriptive text mastery of the grade VII students SMPN 11 Padangsidempuan was "Good" by getting mean score was 78.5. It was gotten from some indicators in writing test, there are generic structure and language features. The indicators divided into some sub indicators, generic structure is divided into identification and description. While language features is divided into some sub indicators, there are: the usage of simple present tense, specific participant, using attributive and identifying process, using adjective, and using classifier in nominal group.

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