

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT DURING ONLINE LEARNING

Endah Purwaningsih, Samsul Hadi, Dwi Rahayu

STKIP PGRI Pacitan

purwaningsihendah.1999@gmail.com, samsulhadi0702106401@gmail.com,

dwirahayu6537@gmail.com

Abstract

Online learning in the descriptive text is a challenge for the teacher and student. However, learning activities should be held to make students' understanding of material well even the condition always different and need new adaptation. In reality, the learning model influences students' ability, particularly in the learning of descriptive text. The research aims to analyze students' cases based on the source of the problem in writing descriptive text. This research includes qualitative research, particularly case study research. The analysis uses Spradley Analysis which consists of domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and theme cultural. In the domain, there are two domains such gender and distance between house and school. As a result of the research, students suffer high problems in four indicators. They consist of organization, grammar, mechanics, and word choice. In the gender category, female students have high cases. Besides, in the distance between school and house, the 6,1-10 KM students suffered the high problem. Further, it can conclude that students' ability in writing descriptive text is low.

Keywords: Online Learning, Descriptive Text, Ability, Students.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered the most difficult skill for language learners because they need to have a certain amount of L2 background knowledge about the rhetorical organizations, appropriate language use, or specific lexicon they want to communicate to their readers (Tangpermpoon, 2008). Writing is the ability to create an idea to the word, and then it combines a word becomes a sentence, paragraph, or text. Writing is not only an ability but also a skill that needs to elaborate. The writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery of grammatical and rhetorical devices and conceptual and judgment elements (Heaton, 1984).

Learning writing skills should be systematic, particularly in descriptive text. The descriptive text describes a person, place, or a thing by visual experience; it creates a visual image of people, place, even of time, days, or season (Masitoh & Suprijadi, 2015). The descriptive text aims to describe the characteristic of an object that appears or looks clearly. Not all students master well about the descriptive text. Because of the need to master these indicators well: organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and word choice. Besides, the descriptive text can also increase students' social ability by exploring around, communicating using language, critical thinking, and delivering ideas or opinions orally or in written text. Besides, there is the generic structure in the descriptive text which consists of identification and description. Identification introduces the subject of description. In description gives details of the characteristic features of the subject. Such as qualities, characteristics; they describe the phenomenon in parts, qualities, or/and characteristics, size, physical appearance, ability, habit, and daily life (Susanti, 2017). In reality, the learning process of descriptive text is complex. The understanding of the students should be conveyed. In online learning, the learning activity has a different situation. It can cause challenges during a learning activity. There are two general challenges in online learning consists of (1) Difficulty in communicating with peers in online settings; (2) the Absence of real-time feedback (Kim, Liu, & Bonk, 2005).

In learning descriptive text, some important indicators should be mastery well by the students during a learning activity. According to Schirmer & Bailey (2000), there are some rubrics on writing assessment: response to prompt/sequences, story development, organization, word choice, details, and sentence structures, mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling). Besides that, according to Hyland (2003), there are several different focuses in organizing L2 writing, such: language structure, text functions, themes or topics, creative expression, composting process, content, genre, and contexts of writing. Then, Oh (2019) research's construct of writing ability in this study was defined in the test-takers display of Content Control, Organizational Control, Vocabulary, Grammar, and Appropriateness. These were the five components of the analytic rubric that each test-taker written product was scored. According to Agdia & Syafei (2020), there are some components in writing assessment that follows content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. From the argument of some experts, the indicator in writing descriptive text consist of organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and word choice.

The research conducts in X IPS 2 SMA Negeri Tulakan Pacitan. The choice of the object of the research depends on the situation during an online learning activity. In this school, the researcher finds some problems on students during followed online learning, such as internet connection, difficulty communicating with peers, and feedback from learning activity. Besides, this grade also discusses the descriptive text, which the material is delivered during online learning. On the other hand, writing descriptive text is not only theoretical but also practical. The research aims to analyze students' cases based on the source of the problem in writing descriptive text. It is hoped that the cases can be evaluated to make the next learning activity, and students have good ability in writing descriptive text.

METHOD

The research includes qualitative research. The philosophical nature of the inquiry defines qualitative research, that is, the ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies that researchers adopt during the design of their research projects and the associated assumptions they make when collecting, analyzing, and interpreting their data (Moon, Brewer, Januchowsk-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). The data source in the research is students of tenth grade IPS 2 SMA Negeri Tulakan academic year 2020/2021. Eighteen participants follow the research. Reader's indicator in the assessment of writing the descriptive text was through construction some theory from the experts. The research analysis uses Spradley Analysis, which consists of domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and theme culture (Spradley, 1980). Domain analysis in this research is gender and distance between school and house. There are six indicators in the taxonomy analysis: organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and word choice. In the componential analysis, the data will analyze depending on the domain and taxonomy analysis. The result of the research will know by writing a conclusion or theme culture.

FINDING

Table 1 Students' ability in writing based on gender category

Domain Analysis (Gender)	Taxonomy Analysis						Total
	Organization	Content	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Word Choice	
Male	5	1	3	1	6	3	19
Female	8	2	7	0	10	10	37
Total	13	3	10	1	16	13	56

Here were the cases viewed from the sources of the problem, namely in the gender category. The data in the table above took from the writing test. According to the result of the data, the cases suffered by the male students consist of 19 cases and the female students 37 cases. According to the gender category, female students suffered higher cases than male

students, with the largest number of cases, namely mechanics and word choices. Besides, the high cases of females were influenced by the number of participants in the descriptive writing text, which was higher than male participants. The numbers of female students consist of 10, and the male students consist of 8. Besides, there are many indicators in mechanics, word choice, organization, and grammar.

Tabel 2. Students' ability in writing based on the distance between een house and school category

Domain Analysis (Distance between house and school)	Taxonomy Analysis						Total
	Organization	Content	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Word Choice	
1-3 KM	4	1	3	0	5	5	18
3,1-6 KM	4	1	4	0	3	2	14
6,1-10 KM	5	1	3	1	8	6	24
Total	13	3	10	1	16	13	56

Here are the cases viewed from the sources of the case. The data in the table above took from the writing test. According to the distance between house and the school, there are three categories: 1-3 KM, 3,1-6 KM, and 6,1-10 KM. The high cases based on this category namely students in 6,1-10 KM by the total of cases 24 cases. Then, it followed by students in 1-3 KM by the total of cases 18 cases. The last, students in 3,1-6 KM by the cases were 14 cases. The higher cases in indicator were in mechanics, word choice, organization, and grammar. All total of cases suffered by the students in this category 56 cases.

From the result of the test above, it could conclude that students' ability in writing descriptive text during online learning in low category. Almost all students had cases in each indicator. The high cases suffered by the female students and students in 6,1-10 KM. This research also related to other researches, Wahyumi (2019) in her research entitled students' ability in writing descriptive text was very poor (Wahyumi, 2019). The next research is Jayanti (2019) in her research, students' writing ability of SMPN 33 Padang in Writing English Descriptive Text is fair to poor (Jayanti, 2019)

DISCUSSION

a. Organization

Organization is presentation of ideas is logical; clear beginning, middle, and end; connections between ideas are drawn; transitions are smooth (Schirmer & Bailey, 2000). During the analysis of the data the number of the problems in organization consisted of transition, did not clear beginning, there was no connection between idea. Most of the problems that suffered by the participants did not clear in the beginning. Most of the problems where the participants did not show the right structure of descriptive text in the beginning of paragraph. The second problems suffered by the participants were transition. The transition in the sentence did not smooth. Most of the participants wrote the sentence which did not correlate with the previous sentence. Then, the sentence was difficult to understand. The last problem suffered in organization, there was no connection between ideas. The participants wrote two main problems in a paragraph. It was difficult to connect the idea because it influenced the understanding of the text. The explanation of students' problems is as follow:

- 1) The problem in organization was the transition word so hard.

While urbanization sprawls, Yogyakarta-Magelang and Surakarta are being agglomerated in a few years. *The Dutch name of the city is Jogjakarta.*

The sentence above did not correlate with previous sentence. The previous sentence explained about the location of the city but the next sentence explained about name's history of the city. The best solution to make the sentence clearly to understand was deleted the underline sentence. Here was the right sentence:

While urbanization sprawls, Yogyakarta-Magelang and Surakarta are being agglomerated in a few years.

- 2) The problem in the sentence was the sentence did not correlate with the previous sentence.

Borobudur temple was built by Syailendra Dynasty during the eighth century. It needed more than two million river stones. *It is the biggest temple in the world.*

The sentence "It is the biggest temple in the world" did not correlate with previous sentence. This sentence needed dependent word or transition word. Besides that, it could add a sentence to make both of sentence correlate and can understand well. Here was the right sentence:

Borobudur temple was built by Syailendra Dynasty during the eighth century. It needed more than two million river stones. It makes Borobudur as a biggest temple in the world.

- 3) The problem in the sentence was organization.

The cendani mountains maybe a faint name because there is no such thing as the other tourist destination in paces. This is my favorite place because it is nice and green.

There was no explanation of identification or introduction to the object of description in the sentence. The writer wrote the text without introduce the main topic which described. There was no explanation about location of the object. The writer wrote the text incompletely. Here was the right sentence:

The cendani mountains maybe a faint name because there is no such thing as the other tourist destination in paces. It is located in Tulakan Subdistrict, Pacitan Regency. This is my favorite place because it is nice and green.

- 4) The problem in the sentence was organization:

I bought the watch in a shop when my vacation arrived. I was interested in a watch, because it was very cool

The beginning of the text did not indicate as a descriptive text. The beginning of the text explains the writer's experience in their vacation. All of the text told about watch. The writer should introduce the watch from the beginning of the sentence clearly. The text would indicate descriptive text if it added a sentence before the first sentence in the correction text above. Here was the right sentence:

My favorite thing is watch. I bought the watch in a shop when my vacation arrived. I was interested in a watch, because it was very cool

b. Content

Content included of good balance between central ideas and details; anecdotes and details enrich the central theme or storyline; details and examples fit in well; ideas are clear, complete, and well-developed (Schirmer & Bailey, 2000). The first problem in the content was the writer did not write the sentence completely. The sentence was far from complete sentence. It made the sentence difficult to understand well. Then, the problem also less on elaborated the sentence. The sentence could be divided into some sentences but the participants just wrote it in one sentence. The explanation of the mistakes as followed:

- 1) The problem in the sentence was content.

The item that I like, namely Chess is a two-person strategy board game played on a checkered board consisting of 64 squares.

This sentence could be divided into two sentence or more. At the first sentence, the writer could write their favorite thing. In the second sentence, the writer could explain about the thing.

I like Chess. Chess is a board game for two people. It needs more strategy to play. It consists of 64 squares in the board.”

- 2) The problem in the sentence was content, as follows:

On vacation i went to one of the shops,there i was interested in a watch, because it qas very cool

In the sentence, it did not elaborate systematically. The sentence was still difficult to understand. There was some point which explained in difficult way. There was no clearly explanation which easy to understand.

On vacation, I went to one of the shops. I was interested in a watch because it was very cool.

- 3) The problem in the sentence was content.

I have a favorite item that is a black-shaped, rectangular hammer has multiple functions for game playing, and for learning how to have a very sophisticated camera that has a slightly repository

The writer did not elaborate the text clearly. The writer wrote the text in a single sentence. It was complicated to understand. There was no main idea and supporting idea. Here was the right sentence:

I have a favorite item. It is a black-shaped. The rectangular hammer has multiple functions such as for playing game and learning. it has e a very sophisticated and slightly repository

c. Grammar

Grammar included of effective complex construction, agreement, tense number, word order/function, articles, pronoun, preposition, fragments, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused (Jacob, 1981). The problem suffered by the participants in the test consisted of tenses, run on, word order, fragment, singular and plural, pronoun, also paralelisme. The problems in the tenses some participants used present tense to express past time and vice versa. The using of tenses was fatal because present and past were too much different. The problem in the run on, the participants wrote some sentences which could stand alone in one sentence. It could cause lack of understanding also the meaning. The next problem was in the word order. The participants applied some word in wrong way. It also could cause lack of understandings particularly in the structure and the meaning. The next problem was fragment. Some of the participants did not understand about the structure of sentence, and differentiate between independent and dependent sentence. Most of them had lack understanding on dependent and independent sentence. The next problems were singular and plural. The participants still did not understand about singular and plural word in the sentence. The lack of understanding plural and singular influenced on understanding the using grammar in the sentence. The next problem was pronoun. Some participants were still wrong in the using proper pronoun. The last was paralelisme. There were participants wrote the sentence were not balance. The example, the left side used simple present tense and the right side used simple past tense. The explanation of problems in the grammar as followed:

- 1) The problem in this sentence was grammar namely verb agreement.

The Dutch name of the city *is* Jogjakarta

In the sentence the using word “is” in the sentence was improper. It happened in the past time. It proved by Dutch. Dutch colonized Indonesia many years ago. In this sentence, the word “is” should be changed to the word “was” to emphasize that it happened in the past time. Here was the right sentence:

The Dutch name of the city was Jogjakarta

- 2) The problem in the sentence was grammar namely run ons.

There is also an amphitheater in this building called Ruang Kemerdekaan, it is located in the “cup” part of Monas and it can be reached by using spiral stairs at the north and south doors.

In a sentence consisted of two independent sentences and both of the sentence can stand alone. The sentence should be separated by colon (:) not comma (,). It was because each as an independent sentence. Both of sentences also had subject and verb. Here was the right sentence:

There is also an amphitheater in this building called *Ruang Kemerdekaan*. It is located in the “cup” part of Monas and it can be reached by using spiral stairs at the north and south doors.”

- 3) The problem in the sentence is grammar namely in fragment

Which is located in Lorok, Pacitan, East Java.

In this sentence, there was no subject and the sentence became a fragment. Fragment could be a sentence if adding a subject to the sentence or change some word become sentence if it was possible. The sentence was begun by “which”, the word “which” was not a subject. When this word applied in the sentence even in the beginning of the sentence, it made the sentence as a fragment. The best way to make this sentence correct was change the word “which” to the others word which proper if applied in the sentence.

It is located in Lorok, Pacitan, East Java.

- 4) The problem in the sentence was pronoun “him”.

In front of *him*, there are several cages of monkeys and orangutans which stare at the visitors as if they are saying welcome

It should be changed to “its” because “its” for things and animals but him was pronoun for male, boy, or man. The right sentence as follow:

In front of its, there are several cages of monkeys and orangutans which stare at the visitors as if they are saying welcome

- 5) The problem in the sentence was grammar as follow:

Every visitor will not be bored with animals and events held by this zoo.

The problem in the sentence was parallelism (grammar). In the left side was positive sentence but in the right side was negative sentence. When the writer wrote a parallel sentence, it should be balance between left and right side. If the sentence was impossible to make it balance it should be separated or make it in two sentences. Here was the right sentence:

Every visitor will not be bored with animals and events in this this zoo.

- 6) The problem in the sentence was grammar.

If you visit in the afternoon, you can see that it is so charming by capturing each moment *become* a memory.

There were lack of the using “each” and also “of these moments”. Each indicated to the singular and these indicated to the plural noun. The previous sentence explained singular noun, then the word “these” should be deleted and the letter “s” in the words “moments” also deleted. Word “to become” should be changed to the word “becoming”.

Here was the right sentence:

If you visit in the afternoon, you can see that it is so charming by capturing each moment becomes a memory.

d. Vocabulary

Vocabulary included of sophisticated range, effective word or idiom choice and usage word from mastery, appropriate register (Jacob, 1981). The problem on vocabulary in this case was the using of word need to elaborate. The participants still limited on the idea, it made the participants wrote the sentence incompletely and unclearly. The explanation of problems in the vocabulary as followed:

The problem in the text was vocabulary.

I have a favorite item that is a black-shaped, rectangular hammer has multiple functions for game playing, and for learning how to have a very sophisticated camera that has a slightly repository

The writer did not elaborate the sentence completely. The sentence needed more explanation in vocabulary. The sentence above consisted of one sentence in a text. It is less to explain thing clearly because it needs more word to make it easy to understand.

e. Mechanics

The problems in the mechanics include of errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing are so few and so minor that the reader barely notices them; they do not interfere with the reading flow, and they do not draw the reader's attention away from the ideas being presented (Schirmer & Bailey, 2000). During process of analysis of the data there were many problems in mechanics that suffered by students. The numbers of the problems in mechanics were punctuation, capitalization, and italic word. The most problem in the mechanics were punctuation particularly in the using of comma. Most of the participant did not use comma in proper way. Besides, after preposition, if clause, and pararelism in punctuation also did not use comma. The second problem that suffered by the participants were capitalization. The participants did not use capital letter in some words such as in the beginning sentence, on the particular word that needed to use capital letter. The last problems in mechanics were the using italic word. Most of the participants did not use italic word in the different language in the text. The explanation of problems in mechanics as followed:

1) The problem was in mechanics.

Yogyakarta also Jogja or Jogjakarta, is a city and the capital of Yogyakarta Special Region in Java, Indonesia.

After word Jogjakarta did not need a comma, because Yogyakarta was the subject of the sentence. Besides, after the word Yogyakarta needed a comma then the right sentence:

Yogyakarta also Jogja or Jogjakarta is a city and the capital of Yogyakarta, Special Region in Java, Indonesia.

2) The problem in the sentence was mechanics.

It is renowned as a center of education (Kota Pelajar), classical Javanese fine art and culture such as batik, ballet, drama, music, poetry, and puppet show.

There was another language in the sentence. It should be written in italic word. The most language in the sentence was English and there were two Indonesian words. It should be written by italic. Here was the right sentence:

It is renowned as a center of education (*Kota Pelajar*), classical Javanese fine art and culture such as batik, ballet, drama, music, poetry, and puppet show.

3) The problem in the sentence was mechanics particularly in spelling.

It is located in Lorok, *Pacitam*, and East Java.

The writer wrote the word "Pacitan" still incorrect. Besides, the writing of the area should be written systematically, from small area to the large area. The case in the sentence, "Lorok" was a part of the Pacitan regency. Then, the correct witting of area should be begun from "Lorok" and then followed by "Pacitan". Here was the right sentence

It is located in Lorok, Pacitan, and East Java.

4) The problem in the sentence was mechanics.

Soge beach is a tourist attraction in the Lorok, Pacitan.

The word "L" in the word lorok should be written by using capital letter. Lorok was the name of the place. Every name of the place should be begun by capital letter. Besides, the

written of area should be systematically from specific to the general area. Here was the right sentence:

Soge beach is a tourist attraction in the Lorok, Pacitan.

f. Word Choice

There were some indicators in word choice such as chosen carefully; fresh and vivid; conveys just the right meaning; imagery is strong; little or no use of clichés or jargon; appropriate use of colorful or technical language (Schirmer & Bailey, 2000). The problems in the word choice were the use improper word to explain. Most of the participants used the word that had improper use to express something in the sentence. When the reader read the text, it looked bizarre and difficult to understand. Sometimes, it also caused lack of the meaning in the sentence. The using proper word in the sentence was important to maintain the meaning of the sentence. Meaning had important role on understanding text, lack on the meaning also could lack understanding of the sentence. The explanation of mistakes in the word choice as followed:

- 1) The problem in this sentence was word choice. The writer chose improper word. It made the sentence difficult to understand well.

Because of its proximity to the Borobudur and Prambanan temples, *and because of the* Javanese court Kraton culture of Kraton Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta has become an important tourist destination in Indonesia

This sentence was difficult to understand. There was over on the using word “and, because of, and the”. This word could be deleted to make the sentence easy to understand. Here was the right sentence:

Because of its proximity to the Borobudur temple, Prambanan temple, and Javanese Court Keraton culture of Keraton Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta has become an important tourist destination in Indonesia.

- 2) The problem in the sentence was word choice.

Borobudur temple is one of the most beautiful tourist resorts in Indonesia.

The using word “resorts” could be replaced to other words such as destination. Here was the right sentence:

Borobudur temple is one of the most beautiful tourist destinations in Indonesia.

- 3) The problem in the sentence was word choice

So I tried it on my left hand. It fitted and I decided to buy it. In my opinion this is amazing *form* and *material* I really like it *so it suits me very well, it turns out that this watch uses glass, so that after used it safe and strong.*

The using word “so” in the beginning of the sentence was improper. The word “so” could be deleted. The using word “form” and “material” were also improper both of word could be changed to the word “watch” because could vice both of words. The word “so it suits me very well” could be changed to the word “it looks beautiful in my hand”. Then, the sentence “*it turns out that this watch uses glass, so that after used it safe and strong.*” should be changed to the sentence “it shows that the watch uses glass. It made the watch strong.” Here was the sentence after revising:

I tried it on my left hand, it fitted and I decided to buy it. In my opinion this is amazing watch, I really like it, it looks beautiful in my hand, it shows that the watch uses glass. It makes the watch strong.

- 4) The problem in the sentence was word choice.

Then, next to the elephant cage there is a very large fish aquarium

The word then and next had same functions. It should be choosing one of them. Avoiding the using two or more words which has same meaning, it would cause ambiguity and

difficult to understand. Sometimes, it also caused different meaning between the writer and the reader. Here was the right sentence

Next to the elephant cage, there is a very large fish aquarium.

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded that students had low ability in writing of descriptive text. There were two categories in identifying the writing data based on the gender and distance between house and school. Based on the gender, female students had many problems than male students. It was because the female participants were more than male participants. Based on the distance between school and house, it had been analyzed the high cases suffered by the students in 6-10 KM. the high cases in both of categories almost same consists of mechanics, organization, word choice, and grammar. In the test, the high case suffered by students was mechanics.

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