
TEACHERS' PROBLEMS IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT TO THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 2 KANDANGAN

Aulia Ulfah, Jumariati, and Rizky Amelia,
Lambung Mangkurat University
auliaulfah866@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Writing is part of the language skills after listening, speaking and reading. Writing is a productive skill that should be mastered by the students of any education level in order to communicate their ideas and feelings with other people in written form. This research was aimed to describe the teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan. The researcher used qualitative approach with the descriptive method. The subjects of this research were two English teachers who taught at the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Kandangan. The techniques of data collection used were interview and documentation. The result of interview and documentation showed that there were some teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan, they were from the students (students' lack of vocabulary, students' incapability in composing sentence, students' difficulty in using pronoun and tenses, level or capability different of students, laziness of students) and the time to do the tasks is limited. The suggestion in this research are the teachers should: 1) give related vocabularies with the material to the students and command the students to take a notes in their book, 2) add an interesting activity in teachers' teaching procedure that suitable with topic, 3) give students motivation constantly, 4) make the process of teaching and learning writing descriptive text more varied, 5) pay more attention to the slow students, 6) give an instruction clearly to avoid the pupils request for additional time and the teachers should manage the time well.

Keywords: *problems, teaching writing, descriptive text*

INTRODUCTION

Study Background

There are several skills that should be mastered by students who learn language, and writing skills being one of them. Wardani et al (2014) categorize the skill as a productive skill which must be mastered by the learners to communicate their thoughts and feelings in written form with others. We know that language is used not only in the spoken language but also in the written language.

Teaching writing is not an easy task, teachers may encounter some problems when they teach the students in the classroom. Even more, it is taught in areas where English is foreign language, such as Indonesia. According to recent Curriculum of 2013 (K13), middle school students must be able to write text well in English. One of the students' writing activities is to write a simple sentence into a simple paragraph, and the writing genres that should be made by the second year students is a descriptive text. This type of genre is taught to students so that they know how to describe themselves and their surroundings.

Based on the previous study conducted by Windiyati (2010) on the problems faced by teachers in teaching writing, the English teachers of eighth grade face several problems. They were problems in relation to teaching preparation, techniques of teaching, and the textbook used. Putri's study (2018) about problems faced by teachers in teaching learning process of writing descriptive text, showed three problems faced by the teachers namely 1) management of classroom 2) students assumption that English is difficult

subject and 3) students lack of vocabulary that made the teachers should explain and repeat the material slowly.

Based on the above theory and previous studies, this study is intended to complement the previous studies being carried out at SMPN 2 Kandangan. In the preliminary study, the researcher found the information from the English teacher of SMPN 2 Kandangan that majority of learners score in writing related to Descriptive text material is still low or under minimal competences criteria or Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM). It can be assumed that the students faced the problem in learning writing descriptive text. The researcher also assumes that the teacher has problems in teaching descriptive writing. As it is revealed in a study by Setiawan et al (2014) that the learners' problems in learning writing are often to be the problem faced by the teachers in teaching-learning. Hence, this study aims to investigate the teachers' problems in teaching descriptive writing to the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan.

Study Problem

The study revolved around this problem: What are the teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Kandangan?"

Study Objective

The objective of the study is to describe the teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text at the eighth grade students in SMPN 2 Kandangan.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study utilized a descriptive study with the qualitative approach. It described about the teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Kandangan.

Subject of the Study

The subject chosen of this study were two English teachers who taught the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan.

Instrumentation

The main instrument of this study was interview guidelines with documentation as the secondary instrument

Interview

The interview was used to get information about teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan. The interview contained the problems in teaching writing descriptive text which could be internal or external sources which included lesson plans, teaching technique, teaching media, the material, the students' conditions, and the teachers' conditions.

Documentation

The documentation was performed to obtain data related to the materials, the syllabus, and the lesson planning documents of the teachers that the teacher used in teaching and learning writing descriptive process. The researcher prepared a checklist to record what document that has been collect.

Data Collection Technique

Interview

The interview was established by the researcher as an interviewer to the eighth grade English teachers. The interview lasted twice to the first and second English teacher. The researcher used an interview guidelines containing some questions which could be modified based on the answer of the teachers. Then, the researcher wrote the scripts of the teachers' answers.

Documentation

The documentation was obtained by collecting some documents from the teachers such as syllabus, lesson planning or teachers' document of the materials. The documentation was very useful in making the research finding more relevant.

Technique of Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher analyzed the data qualitatively. It means that the data analysis stressed on the description without using numeration and statistic.

STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Study Findings

Result of the Interview Guidelines

The result of the interviews were discussed as follow:

Teachers' Problems in Teaching Writing Descriptive Text

Based on the interviews that have been conducted by the researcher, some problems that the teacher faced in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan were found out. The problems were from the students and the time to do the tasks is limited.

The first teachers' problems in teaching writing descriptive text came from the students. The students caused the teachers' problem in teaching writing descriptive text. The problems from the students occurred because of students' lack of vocabulary, students' incapability in composing sentence, and the use of tenses. T1 also explained some factors that caused several problems to her in teaching writing descriptive text that were, 1) students were not interested in learning English because they thought that English is boring subject because they did not understand the meaning, 2) the students' inability to express their ideas because they were not confident enough to express it, and 3) students' limitations in expressing themselves freely in writing descriptive text. Meanwhile T2 explained that the students' became her problems in teaching writing descriptive text because students' lack of vocabulary, and students' lack of mastery in using pronoun. In addition, she also explained some factors came from students that became her problems in teaching writing descriptive text such as; 1) students' were too lazy to follow English class because they did not understand English language and 2) different level or capability of students.

Both teachers also presented the solution to overcome their problems above. There were some solutions used by the T1 such as: 1) teacher must be able to make students feel comfortable when learning English by giving some games at the begining of the lesson 2) teachers must really taught about vocabulary and grammar in detail to the students 3) teacher must built students' self-confident starting from small things until they can express themselves. Meanwhile, the solution that the second teacher used to faced her problems were 1) teacher allowed the students to open their dictionary whenever they found unfamiliar words and 2) teacher had to explain slowly and repeat the material until the students understood.

The last problem faced by the teachers in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan was the time to do the tasks is limited. The T1 explained that the English schedule in SMPN 2 Kandangan was only 4x40 minutes in a week. Even it is normal but the teacher explained that 4x40 minutes in a week was not enough for her to taught the students because the students needed several meetings to master one material. So, the time was not enough for the teacher in teaching writing descriptive text. Meanwhile, the T2 explained that the time was not enough for her because different level or capability of students. There were the students who were fast and slow learning. With limited time the English lesson could not run well.

Teachers' Method of Correcting Students Mistakes

Based on the interview to the two teachers about how the teachers corrected students' mistakes. Both of the teachers had similar way in correcting students' mistake in writing descriptive text. Based on the interview with the first teacher, the way she corrected students' mistake by checking students' writing one by one and explaining about their mistake in front of the class. On the other hand, the second teacher corrected her students' mistake by checking students' writing descriptive text and underlining the wrong part and explaining to the students the correct answer.

Teaching Material

Based on the result of interview with the teachers regarding to the sources of teaching and learning material, it was found that the sources of teaching and learning material were taken from text book that provided by the school. The school has provided teachers with enough books, so the teachers do not face the problem about teaching material.

Technique and Media in Teaching

The questions were about the technique and the media that was used. Also it was about the problem of using the technique and media itself. Based on the interview about the technique that usually used in the teaching writing descriptive text, T1 and T2 used similar technique. T1 said that she usually used complete sentence, arrange word into sentences and arrange sentence into paragraphs as the techniques. Then, both teachers also explained that the students' lack of vocabulary became their problem when they used the technique. The reason why the students' lack of vocabulary became their problem was because the students must open their dictionary when they saw a sentence in English so they could understand the meaning. In fact, there were some students who were lazy to open their dictionary. So, it made the teacher difficult when they used the techniques.

Besides using the technique in teaching writing descriptive text, both of the teachers also used the media to support the teaching and learning process. Based on the interview about the media, there were two questions to find out the media that was used and the problem of using the media. The media that were usually used by T1 and T2 were also same, that were pictures and real object. The teachers also explained that they did not face any problem when they used the media. T2 also said that using media when teaching made the students more interested in learning.

The Classroom Condition

Both of the teachers explained that they had no problem in controlling students in the class. According to the first teacher, students of SMPN 2 Kandangan could be said to be quite good, therefore controlling students in the classroom was not a problem. In addition, the researcher also asked the teacher whether the students' condition was also a problem faced by the teachers in teaching writing descriptive text. The two teachers explained that

students' condition was not a problem for them when teaching writing descriptive text because the students still could be handled properly during teaching and learning process. The number pupils of eighth grade in SMPN 2 Kandangan was only 22-24 students in each classes and this was not also a problem for the two teachers.

Lesson Plan

In this point, there were two questions to find out wheter or not the teachers always prepared a lesson plan and the implementation of lesson plan in the class. According to the teachers, they usually made a lesson plan as reference in teaching and learning process. Then, the two teachers taught the lesson as the way of the lesson plan that they had prepared.

The Teaching and Learning Facilities

According to the question about the school equipment, the teachers explained that the school has supported the teaching and learning writing process by providing some facilities such as books, library and reading corners. T1 also explained that students could develop their vocabulary by opening or reading books in library related to English.

The Teachers' Method of Motivating Students

In this part, the teachers also explained how they motivated their students in learning English, especially writing. According to the T1, she motivated her students by 1) making reading habits among students 2) giving freedom for the students to imagine as widely as possible 3) facilitating the students with writing facilities (e.g school wall magazines) 4) always supporting students' writing result even though their writing were still not perfect 5) teaching the students the easy grammar first. Meanwhile, the T2 motivated her students with a contextual approach.

Result of Documentation

The documentation which had been collected from the teachers' were syllabus and lesson plan. The syllabus is used as reference of designing lesson plan.

In syllabus, it was found that there were basic competence, standart competence, indicators competencies achievement, learning material, learning activities, time allocation and sources and evaluation. A syllabus must arranged systematically in order to contain all those components that have roles in achieving the learning objectives.

In lesson plan, it was found that there were components such as teaching aim, teaching material, teaching method, learning sources and evaluation of result learning. As usual lesson plan is used by the teacher as a plan which describes procedure of teaching in the classroom.

Learning material were also collected, because it is such an important thing that the teachers should prepared before teaching. In this documentation, The material of descriptive text was taken from text book entitled "When English Rings a Bell" published by "Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2017" and written by Siti Wachidah, Asep Gunawan, Diyantary and Yuli Pulani Khatimah". Other text book entitled "Bahasa Inggris" written by Intan Pariwara.

Discussion

Based on findings of the research above, the researcher found that findings could answer the question of this study as follow:

“What are the teachers’ problems in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan?”

The research result showed that there were some problems that found from interview to both teachers, they were from the students (students’ lack of vocabulary, students’ incapability in composing sentence, students’ difficulty in using pronoun and tenses, level or capability differences of students, students’ inability in expressing their ideas, students’ limitation in expressing themselves freely, laziness of students) and the time to do the tasks is limited. Some of the findings were in line with Wicaksono (2016) who stated that the teachers faced some problems in teaching writing such as: classroom management, insufficient time, students’ different capability, and students’ unstable motivation.

The first teachers’ problem in teaching writing descriptive text was from the students. Most of the students had deficiency of vocabulary, they were not interested in learning English because they did not understand the meaning. According to Misbah et al (2017) said that deficiency of vocabulary has caused the learners to face challenges in mastering writing skills. Vocabulary is the fundamental element in building sentences that was the core of effective writing skills. If the learners do not know the meaning of the vocabulary, how they can success in learning a language. The students also get trouble in composing sentence, using tenses and using pronoun. Utari (2019) explained that sentence is the key to creating a good paragraph of text. Each sentence plays its important roles to the overall message, especially for the written text. She also stated that grammar and sentence structure are the imperative problems faced by the students. In addition, the next problems were the students’ inability to express their ideas because they were not confident enough to express their ideas, students’ limitations in expressing themselves freely in writing descriptive text and level or capability differences of students were also became the teachers’ problems in teaching writing descriptive text.

The last problem was the time to do the tasks is limited. Both teachers had difficulty in time, because the English schedule in SMPN 2 Kandangan was only 4x40 minutes in a week. The first teacher said the time was not enough for her to teach writing descriptive text in one meeting because students needed several meetings to master just for one material. Meanwhile, the second teacher explained that the time was not enough for her because of level differences of students. Pupils from different levels were placed in the same classroom. Each pupils has a different capability in accepting the material. Some of them could learn the material fast and the others learned slowly. As the result, the teaching and learning process did not run well. Baggott (2012) stated that teachers needed sufficient time in teaching writing skills to students and students needed time to practice the skills they have learned. Gilbert and Graham (2010) also argued that it was necessary to spent more time on writing because learning to write needed time and efficient instruction.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

From the result of this study, the researcher can conclude several problems that the teachers faced in teaching writing descriptive text to the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Kandangan are; (1) the lack of students’ vocabulary, (2) students’ incapability in composing sentence, (3) students’ difficulty in using pronoun and tenses, (4) level or capability different of students, (5) laziness of students to follow English class because they thought that English is boring subject, and (6) the time to do the tasks is limited.

Suggestions

There are some suggestions to the teachers related to the result of the study, as follows:

1. The teachers should give related vocabularies with the material to the students and command the students to take a notes in their book.
2. The teachers could add an interesting activities in her teaching-learning process that support the students' vocabulary, like playing word games. Through that word games the students could learn vocabulary in more fun ways.
3. The teachers should give learners motivation in order to make the students always have spirit to learn English.
4. The teachers also should make the process of teaching and learning more varied such as use another teaching techniques like mind mapping or free writing.
5. The teachers should pay more attention to the slow learners and more often asked them to answer the questions in teaching and learning process.
6. The teachers should give an instruction that clearly to avoid the learners request for additional time and the teacher should manage the time well.

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