

An Analysis on Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text at Senior High School during Online Learning

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Abstract: The implementation of education policies in the emergency period of the spread of coronavirus disease (Covid 19) recommends carrying out the learning process from home through online learning. Students' writing ability is still fairly low due to a lack of motivation in studying English, difficulties expressing thoughts, and difficulty arranging words due to a lack of vocabulary. The aims of this research are to find out the students' ability in writing descriptive text and the difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text during online learning in the tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Panarukan Situbondo. This research was used quantitative method with survey design. The data was taken from writing test and questionnaire. The students ability in writing descriptive text was classified into good level with mean score 78,6. While the students difficulties in writing was grammar and organizing ideas, and also students had lack of vocabulary.

Keywords: online learning; writing ability; descriptive text.

INTRODUCTION

According to Surat Edaran Mendikbud Number 4 of 2020 concerning the implementation of education policies in the emergency period of the spread of coronavirus disease (Covid 19) recommends carrying out the learning process from home through online learning. The implementation of online learning requires supporting devices such as computers, laptops, gadgets, and other tools as intermediaries which of course must be connected to an internet connection. This situation makes it difficult for students to learn, one of which is learning English. Sunardi [1] stated that students had very low motivation in online learning because teachers and students were not ready in using technology.

It is very important for students to be able to master all skills in English. These skills include listening, speaking, writing, and reading. These skills are interconnected and cannot be separated, and students must master them. One aspect of the language teaching and learning process is writing skill, which is the most difficult skill that students must master because it entails a complex system that necessitates the formulation of ideas, the organization and sequencing of points in a logical order, the selection of vocabulary, the checking of grammatical correctness, the spelling of words, punctuation, and legibility of writing, Westwood, in Zurrahmah [2]. Consequently, most of Indonesian students are still struggling hard with its complexity, Batubara, Herwanis & Safitriana [3].

Writing is a process of pouring creativity or ideas into the form of written language, which is usually called an essay. It is because the author uses writing to express the contents of his thoughts, ideas, opinions, or desires. According to Brown cited in Wahyumi [4] stated that writing is thinking process, because writing

is a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thought into words. Another meaning of writing from Nunan [5] stated that writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express ideas, and organizing the idea into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. Writing is one of the language skills in learning English that must be mastered by students even though they have difficulty. According to Novariana, Sumardi, and Tarjana [6], students' writing ability is still fairly low due to a lack of motivation in studying English, difficulties expressing thoughts, and difficulty arranging words due to a lack of vocabulary. Aside from that, students have difficulty utilizing proper grammar.

In Indonesia, students are expected to learn many types of writing text in school. Narrative text, recount text, procedure text, descriptive text, and news item are among the five categories of text taught in schools, particularly in tenth grade. However, the researcher in this study is primarily interested in descriptive text as one of the variables in this study that the researcher will investigate. The basis for selection and interest is because the one of the simple types of text is descriptive text and familiar to the students because it is related to routines, describing and some others Exdriko, Tavriyanti, & Refnita [7]. Besides that, the most prominent of language features is the use of the simple present tense, where this tense has been learned and frequently used in daily life, Sadiyah & Royani [8]. However, even from those reasons, most of students do not master descriptive text well, Purwaningsih, Hadi, & Rahayu [9]

According to Yoandita [10], descriptive text is a description that explains or describes about person, object, person, or event using appropriate details through writing, an effective description will contain sufficient and varied elaboration of detail to communicate the subject and the details used are usually sensory to describe what is seen, heard, touched, and felt by the writer. From the two statement above, it is possible to conclude that descriptive text is one that describes something or illustrates an object in the form of places, people, events that are felt, experienced, seen, heard by the author.

Students do not fully master the descriptive text well. Therefore, they still need to learn about the indicators such as word choice, organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. In addition, descriptive texts can also help students improve their communicating using language, social skills by exploring, thinking critically, and conveying ideas orally in writing, Purwaningsih, Hadi, & Rahayu [9]. They also state that there are two generic structures in descriptive text, both are identification and description. Identification is to introduce the subject of the description. In description provides details of characteristic of the related subject.

Previous researchers have conducted a study on writing ability. The first researcher is Rianda [11], he investigated the ability of the 8th class students in junior high school in writing descriptive text. The result in his study, Rianda also stated that there are still a lot of error features written in their assignments. Students still make mistakes in grammatical and vocabulary management; students' mistakes are the relationship between verbs and plural nouns. Then the use of capital letters and punctuation marks which are part of mechanics. The majority of the students mixed languages in one sentence, there are two languages: Indonesian and English. He also explained the difficulties of students in his research. The majority of the students expressed strong agreement and agreed to the statement about the problem encountered, such as generating ideas, vocabulary, grammar, and a lack of English language skill. This study is similar to my research in that the goal is to determine how students' ability to write descriptive text differs. However, the sample consisted of junior high school students who received face-to-face or offline instruction. The second is from Purwaningsih, Hadi, and Rahayu [9] which also analyzed students' abilities in writing descriptive text. The data source is students of tenth grade IPS 2 SMA Negeri Tulakan academic year 2020/2021. As a result, students had limited ability to write descriptive text. During her research there were two domain in analyzing the writ-

ing data based on gender and distance between house and school. Based on gender, female students have more problems than male students, because there are more female students than male.

From the two studies above, which both analyzed students' writing abilities in descriptive text, even though it is from Rianda's study in which the research took the subjects who got the material directly at school or who did offline learning. While from Purwaningsih, although the subjects came from students who did online learning, she focused more on comparing students' writing abilities based on gender and distance. From those two studies, they employed qualitative and mixed method methodology. Moreover, several studies have focus on several indicators in organizing second language (L2) writing, such as structure, text functions, themes or topics, creative expression, composing process, content, genre, contexts of writing, and many others. However, to fill the gap of those studies, quantitative method will be used in this study, which more focus on several organizing L2 writing like; content, organizing ideas, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The purpose of this study is to examine the writing abilities and difficulties encountered by tenth grade science senior high school students when writing descriptive text during online learning. This study focuses on students who learned descriptive text online or without interacting with teachers directly at school. The researcher wants to know about the students' abilities and difficulties during online learning.

METHOD

The research design in this thesis is survey research design. According to Creswell [12] state that survey research design are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. The data in this study will be presented in numerical and descriptive form. In this study researcher attempts to analyze students' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text during online learning, where students frequently struggle to understand English text, especially in descriptive text.

The population in this study are students of tenth grade science at SMAN 1 Panarukan Situbondo. There were two classes: X IPS 1 consists of 29 students in and X IPS 2 consists of 25 students.. So, the total of population is 54 students.

Table 1 The Population of Research

No	Class	Students
1.	X IPS 1	29
2.	X IPS 2	25
Total		54

There are the procedure of this study, the first is preparing, the researcher will ask for permission to the headmaster and English teacher of SMAN 1 Panarukan Situbondo. The second is collecting the data. The researcher will collect the data from writing test and questionnaire, the procedure are follows:

1. The researcher gives the instrument to students about descriptive text.
2. The researcher explains how to conduct the writing test.
3. The researcher gives and asks students to do the writing test to students.
4. The researcher collects the students' writing test.
5. The researcher explains filling out the questionnaire.
6. The researcher gives and asks students to fill out the questionnaire.

7. The researcher collects the questionnaire from students.
8. The researcher then analyze the students' writing tests and the questionnaire.

The Instrument in this study in accordance with the aims of this study which focus on the analysis of students' writing ability and the difficulties in writing descriptive text during online learning, research instrument which is used in this study are writing test and questionnaire. The test in this study is the material related to descriptive text which is material in tenth grade syllabus that is studied in the 1st semester which the activities are carried out in online learning. The questionnaire is an enclosed questionnaire that included both positive and negative statements. A Likert-Scale is used as the measurement scale model. Sugiyono (2016, p.93) states that Likert-Scale is used to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people about social phenomena.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the writing test

To collect the data, the researcher gave the students a writing test in which they created descriptive text with the theme "Tourist Destination in Situbondo." This study enlisted the participation of 36 students, 22 from class X IPS 1 and 14 from class X IPS 2. The following factors were used to assess the test: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The following are the results of the students' writing tests:

Table 2 Students' scores of writing test

Class X IPS 1 and X IPS 2						
Name	Components					Scores
	Content	Organization	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanic	
S1	9	6	6	6	3	75
S2	12	8	8	6	3	92.5
S3	12	6	4	3	3	70
S4	12	8	6	4.5	4.5	87.5
S5	12	6	4	4.5	4.5	77.5
S6	12	6	6	4.5	4.5	82.5
S7	6	2	4	3	3	45
S8	12	8	6	6	4.5	91.3
S9	12	6	6	4.5	3	78.8
S10	9	4	6	4.5	3	66.3
S11	9	4	6	3	3	62.5
S12	9	6	4	3	3	62.5
S13	12	6	6	4.5	4.5	82.5
S14	9	6	4	3	3	62.5
S15	12	8	6	4.5	4.5	87.5
S16	12	6	4	3	3	70
S17	9	4	4	3	4.5	61.3
S18	12	8	6	4.5	3	83.8
S19	12	6	4	3	4.5	73.8

S20	12	6	4	4.5	4.5	77.5
S21	12	6	8	3	4.5	83.8
S22	9	4	6	4.5	3	66.3
S23	12	8	6	4.5	3	83.8
S24	12	8	6	6	3	87.5
S25	12	8	6	6	4.5	91.3
S26	12	8	6	6	4.5	91.3
S27	12	8	6	6	4.5	91.3
S28	12	8	6	3	6	87.5
S29	12	6	6	6	4.5	86.3
S30	12	6	6	6	3	82.5
S31	9	4	6	6	3	70
S32	12	8	6	4.5	4.5	87.5
S33	12	6	6	4.5	6	86.3
S34	12	4	6	4.5	3	73.8
S35	12	6	6	4.5	4.5	82.5
S36	12	8	6	6	3	87.5
Total Score	402	226	202	163.5	138	2828.75
Mean	11.2	6.3	5.6	4.5	3.8	78.6

Based on the score in the table 2, there were 20 students got excellent score, 15 students got good score, and 1 student got fair score. The researcher used the criteria of the score, includes excellent with a score of 81-100, good with a score of 61-80, average with a score of 41-60, fair with a score 21-40, and poor with a score of 0-20 to determine students' ability in writing descriptive text.

The mean of the score explain the students' average score in writing descriptive text, the score was 78,6. The students' ability in writing descriptive text is based on the score criteria where a score of 61-80 indicates a good level. It means, the students have fairly good writing skills and still need to be improved in writing descriptive text.

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After the reseracher got the mean score of students in writing descriptive text, in the next step is the researcher analyzed in each components to find out the students' ability in content, organizing ideas, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The analysis of each components will explained bellow:

1. Content

Before students took the writing test, the researcher instructed them on how to write a descriptive text about a tourist destination in Situbondo. The results of the students' writing tests revealed that almost all of

them understood the topic. There were 27 students who received a score of 12, and they created a descriptive text about a tourist destination in Situbondo city that was complete, clear, and the details were relevant to the topic. Aside from that, 8 students received a score of 9, indicating that the topic was made complete and clear, and the details were nearly related to the topic. Only one student received a score of 6, indicating that the student's topic was complete and clear, but the details were unrelated to the topic.

2. Organization

There were 13 students who received an score 8 in this component, which means the student did very well in organizing descriptive text, the identification was complete, and the description was arranged with proper connectives. Furthermore, 16 students received a score of 6 and understood how to organize descriptive text. The identification was complete, and the description was organized with nearly correct connectives. Then there were six students who received a 4 and their identification was complete, but their descriptions were arranged with a few misspellings of connectives. The last one is that only one student received a low score, that was score 2, because the identification was incomplete and the description was arranged with a few incorrect connectives. As a result, this student should practice organizing ideas in descriptive text more.

3. Grammar

According to the results of the writing test, almost all of the students struggled with grammar, and there were 25 students who had minor grammatical or agreement errors but had no effect on meaning. It indicates that they used the correct tenses and agreement in their text. Aside from that, only two students received a score of 8, indicating that they understood the grammar. Furthermore, 9 students received a score of 4. It means that students had difficulty using the correct tenses and agreement. They contained numerous grammatical or agreement errors. As a result, students should learn more about tenses and their applications.

4. Vocabulary

The most difficult problem that the students encountered was translating the word from Bahasa to English. There were 15 students who had a few misuses of vocabulary word forms but did not change the meaning. Furthermore, 11 students received the highest score of 6, indicating that the students made effective use of words and word forms. Ten students received the lowest score of 3, indicating a limited range of confusing words and word forms. They had a very poor knowledge of words, word forms, and words that were not understandable, which could have an impact on the meaning of the sentence. As a result, the students must improve their vocabulary by memorizing it.

5. Mechanics

This section includes spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. This was the most difficult component for students to master because most students still make mistakes with punctuation and capitalization. The lowest score was obtained by 18 students, and it was 3. It means that students must learn proper punctuation and capitalization. Aside from that, only two students received score 6, indicating that they used proper spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Furthermore, 16 students received a score 4,5, indicating that they made occasional spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors. To improve their writing skills, students should be aware of how to spell words, use punctuation, and capitalize.

The five aspects that were used as a measure of students' ability to write descriptive texts (i.e., content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic), it was found that the students' writing, in terms of content showed a highest score among other aspects' score, with the mean score 11.2, which is relatively good. [12] defines content as the presentation of the substance of the writing and the experience of the main idea. That is, a group of related statements presented by the author as a unit of topic development. In other words, as this study focus on describing a tourism place, the students were able to describe the topic they chose and

generating it in details that closely or fully related to the topic. From the students' writing, it was clear and related with the object that they described, This is in line with the concept of descriptive text according to [13] in which students are asked to "list the characteristics of something and usually relate to the physical appearance of the thing being described. In other words, certain people, places, or things are described in detail in this composition. The description tells the object as it is without being influenced by the author's personal opinion. This finding is contrast with several previous studies, where mostly the results of the previous studies revealed that the students had difficulty in generating or developing the idea, and describing the object in details [14] & [9].

When students do the writing test, almost all students used Indonesian to English translator. This had effect on the result of high students test score. It is different from previous study from [10], who also analyzed the students' ability in writing descriptive text. The participants of his study were from students in junior high school. The result of his study was found in the document analysis, the mean score was 57,25. It can be concluded that students' ability in writing the descriptive text was low.

The Result of Questionnaire

The researcher conducted questionnaire in order to find out the students' difficulties faced in writing descriptive text during online learning.

The result is presented below:

Table 3 The Result of Questionnaire

Number of Statement	Statements	Mean
S1	I feel hard to organize my idea properly in descriptive text during online learning.	2,81
S2	I have difficulty writing clearly, relevant content in descriptive text during online learning.	2,31
S3	I have a lot of vocabulary and able to use it properly when writing descriptive text during online learning.	2,81
S4	I have difficulty in using grammar when I write a descriptive text during online learning.	3,28
S5	I have difficulty using punctuation and capitalization during online learning.	2,69

Based on the table above, the most difficulties faced by students is difficult in using grammar when students write a descriptive text during online learning, the mean of this statement was 3,28, all of the students answered strongly agree to that statement. The second difficulties faced by the students are statement number 1 and 3 with mean score for both statement is 2,81. Statement number 1 is students feel hard in organizing the idea in descriptive text, all of the students answered agree on this statement. Whereas statement number 2 is most of the students answered disagree to this statement, which mean they have limited vocabulary and may not be able to use it properly. The fifth statement inquired about their ability to use punctuation and capitalization. There were 18 students who agreed with this statement, indicating that the majority of students struggled with punctuation and capitalization when writing descriptive text during online learning. The final statement is statement number 2, which was asked about students' difficulties in writing clearly, relevant content in descriptive text during online learning. This statement's mean was lower than that of the

other statements. This statement was answered negatively by 17 students. It means that during online learning, students had no trouble writing clearly and relevant content in descriptive text.

Based on the second research question of this study, it can be answered through the questionnaire which consist of five statements that given to students. Based on the result of the questionnaire, the researcher finds out the most difficulties faced by students in writing descriptive text was grammar, and the second most difficulties was in organizing ideas and vocabulary. The first student problem was students had difficulty using grammar when writing descriptive text. [12] defines grammar is the use of correct grammatical forms and synthetic patterns to separate, combine, and group ideas for words, phrases, clauses, and sentences to emphasize logical relationships when writing paragraphs. From the result of the students' questionnaire responses, the students agree that they still have difficulty in using grammar when writing descriptive text. It is also proven by their writing which errors are frequently found. This finding is in line with several previous studies, such as a study from [15] and [8] revealed that the students' ability in terms of grammar was very poor.

The second difficulty was in organizing ideas. According to [12], Organization is simply referring to the logical organization of the content. From the results of the students' writing and questionnaire response, the students are still confused when organizing ideas based on the descriptive text structure, where they still find it is difficult to fill in the identification and description part. The last problem was students had lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary refers to the selection of words the match the content [12]. Because of the lack of vocabulary, students had no idea to write and it took much time while doing writing test. Not only that, in writing they still used google translate, it was because the students do not know the word in English. This difficulty finding is in line with the previous study from [15] and [9], where students' ability in terms of organizing ideas and vocabulary mastery was fair to poor.

Furthermore, The result of this study is line with [10] who also analyzed students difficulties in writing descriptive text. His study result showed that the major students' problem in the descriptive text was vocabulary and grammar. it can be concluded that the students had problem in grammar, generating ideas and vocabulary. Thus, students need to increase their motivation to learn about descriptive text and also practice in using correct grammar and don't forget finding out new words to increase their vocabulary in order to write descriptive text well.

CONCLUSION

The students' ability in writing descriptive text during online learning was on good level. When writing descriptive text, students use google translate because they don't know words in English and they had a lack of vocabulary. From the writing test, it was found that the students' writing, in terms of content showed a highest score among other aspects' score. Meanwhile. the students' difficulties faced in writing descriptive text during online learning was grammar, and the second difficulties in organizing ideas and vocabulary. Students problem were students had difficult used grammar when writing descriptive text. Students still don't understood how to use verb agreement and plural noun. Students still confused when compiling ideas according to the descriptive text. The last problem was students had lack of vocabulary.

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