

LEARNING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING WITH LOCAL TOURISM DESTINATION PICTURES

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Abstract

English is international language that used by people in around the world in any levels. So it is studied start from elementary school until college, but they found difficult to study English. It becomes a problem for the students or learners because English is foreign language. Moreover, in our country English is not first or second language but it is as a foreign language.

Teacher should find the better ways to improve students' English mastery or skill. Making a teaching material, teacher could do anything to improve students' English skill include using a Local Tourism Destination Pictures to improve students' English skills especially in descriptive writing.

By using a tool like a picture is make easy for the students to make a hand writing and improve it become a good English writing skill, so using a teaching media like a picture is very effective to improve students' writing English mastery.

Key Word: Descriptive, Writing, and Picture

INTRODUCTION

Human needs interaction with one another as social life or just asking for information in sharing. So they have to use a tool to make it work. For many centuries people did it with a thing what we know as language by sound, symbol, graffiti and etc. That is why Language is become a tool or device for communication which is used by all people in the world. With language people will know and understand each other while they are making both verbal and non verbal communication. There are many ways and styles of using language in their daily activity, such as the way and style of writing, and the way or style of speaking. Language is a system of communication, a medium for thought, a vehicle for literary expression, a social institution, a matter for political controversy, and a factor in the national building. It indicates that language has an important role in our life. Because of that people can interact and transfer information to other people.¹

In the international communication context, people need an international language to communicate globally. People around the world agree that English is an international language. Therefore, English is very important to be known because English as international language which is play an important role in international communication. Furthermore, English is used the science and

¹ O'Grady, William and Michael Dobrovolsky *Contemporary Linguistic an Introduction*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

technology. Thereby, English can be used as a tool to communicate with people from other country, to express their information, ideas, feelings and to develop science and technology. From that reason, we recognize that English has played an important role in the international world.²

Since our independence day, English has been chosen as a foreign language to be taught in Indonesian schools. English in Indonesia is still a the foreign language not a second language like other countries such as Malaysia, India, etc. It means that English is a compulsory subject at Elementary School (SD), Junior High School (SMP), Senior/Vocational High School (SMA/SMK), and even University in Indonesia (Curriculum 2004).

In learning English, there are four English skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.³ These four skills are related each other. English learner should have proficiency in the four skills above in order to achieve good mastery in English.

As one of the English skills, writing is very important to be known because with writing students are able to communicate each other in different

² Ramelan. *Introduction to Linguistic Analysis*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Press, 1992).

³ Ramelan. *Introduction to Linguistic Analysis*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Press, 1992)

places. Writing is not only for communication each other but also for expressing ideas and feelings.

Kane (2000:5) state that;

“Don't be afraid to express your own opinions and feelings. You are a vital part of the subject. No matter what the topic, you are really writing about how *you* understand it, how *you* feel about it. Good writing has personality. Readers enjoy sensing a mind at work, hearing a clear voice, responding to an unusual sensibility. If you have chosen a topic that is of general concern, and if genuine feeling and intelligence come through, you will be interesting. Interest lies not so much in a topic as in what a writer has made of it.”

Based on Curriculum of Diknas 2006, in the first year of senior high school, the basic competency that should be achieved in English writing that is the students have the ability to develop and produce written simple functional texts like recount texts, narrative texts, news items, procedures, and descriptive texts. They can use right diction, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and organization.

Writing is also known as one of the media communication. Writing is a primary means of recording speech, even though it must be acknowledged as a secondary medium of communication.⁴ It means writing is very important as one of media communication, that can helps us to have a good

⁴ Byrne, Donn. *Teaching Writing Skills*. (London: Longman Group. Ltd, 1980).

socialization, can express our idea, feeling, and our opinion so that we can have a good interaction with our society.

Learning to write will take a longer time than learning to speak, because writing requires greater accuracy and variation. Many students feel hard to learn to write because writing is not only needs good vocabulary building and grammatical function but also needs good arrangement of the word and the sentences to make a good paragraph, and after that the learners have to correlate one paragraph to another for arranging a good descriptive text.

Writing skill is not easy because the writing skill is more complex and sometimes difficult to teach, it requires not only of grammar and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements.⁵ He also mentions that there are five general components or main areas, namely;

1. Language use: the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences
2. Mechanical skills: the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language-e.g., punctuation, spelling
3. Treatment of content: the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information

⁵ Heaton .J.B (1988:135), Writing English Language Test. (United State of America, Longman, Inc, 1988), p.135.

4. Stylistic skills: the ability to manipulate sentence and paragraphs, and use language effectively
5. Judgment skills: the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information.

If the students have mastered English writing components, they will write descriptive text easily. By mastering writing components the students will not find out difficulties to arrange the descriptive text which consists of ideas, body and conclusion. For advanced students, they will find a pleasure in making creative writings, Harmer (2001: 259) states:

“Creative writing as journey of self discovery, and self discovery promotes effective learning. When teachers set up imaginative writing task, So that their students are throughout engaged, those students frequently strive harder than usual to produce a greater variety of correct and appropriate language than they might for more routine assignment”

In learning English writing the students find out difficulties because of linguistic and non linguistic aspects. In the context of the linguistic aspects, the English writing difficulties among students can appear from the language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary. Grammar as the role of language must be obeyed by students in order to make a good writing. It is necessary for them to master grammar which is can speed up the language learning, especially English writing. For instance, the students are afraid to make grammatical mistakes in expressing their ideas,

especially in writing. Meanwhile, every language has its own system. The English system is very different from the students' native language. That is the reason why Indonesian students have lack of the ability in mastering and applying grammar even in speaking or writing skills in day-to-day activity.

Another problem faced by the students in making descriptive text is vocabulary. Less vocabulary mastery will be less understanding in English language learning. Students will have difficulties in expressing their ideas because they do not have enough vocabulary. To master vocabulary, students must be able to increase their vocabulary regularly.

In the context of the non-linguistic aspects, the students' difficulties in descriptive writing can be from media, techniques, methods, teachers, and students. In study English, media has an important role in the teaching-learning process, especially descriptive writing. Devices help the teacher to transfer some information from teachers to students. Teachers introduce new vocabulary in the descriptive writing to the students by using media will be effective and efficient rather than who use traditional method (translation mode) for instance.

The process of the teaching – learning English is related tightly the method or technique used by the teachers to explain the lesson. Sometimes, in the real classroom activities teaching writing usage is not reflect daily life. In fact, writing class proficiencies as one of the four skills must be taught in

accordance with daily life to enhance English skill ability. However, the curriculum emphasizes only a certain language introductory aspect that has only limited material. In fact, producing English word or sentences are not such easy things to do because someone should have achieving English fluently. Hence, the main goal of English teaching is to improve the students' ability in using the English language in real communication.

Furthermore, the next non linguistic aspect is students' motivation. Students find out difficult to study English writing because they have not high motivation. Most of students feel that English writing is harder than other subject because English writing has many components such as mechanic, grammar, vocabulary, and content. Achievement of English writing skill is not only depends on students' motivation but also students' background, ability and students' interest because every single students have their own strength and weakness. That condition makes the obstacle of teaching learning process and the situation makes students' feel not enjoy and demotivated to learn English writing.

Based on 2011 curriculum, description text has a purpose to describe a situation and condition, a particular person, and place or thing. This text is very important for the students to improve their skill especially in writing skill. With writing description text which is using picture as visual media, the students

could stimulus and be able to describe something related with the pictures that are available.

Pictures are regarded to be affective to help teachers present (teach) the teaching materials because picture talk more than words.⁶ If a person wants to tell about a camel by using words she/he will need a long explanation. In contrast, if she/he uses a picture of camel she/he will be able to make the listener grasp the idea (of a camel) more quickly and clearly. It means, using pictures in language teaching will make the teaching-learning more communicative and meaningful.

Teacher as guides and facilitators for the students should have some certain skills in teaching – learning English based on situation, condition and student needs. As we know, process of teaching writing is not easy, so that the teacher should have used an interesting media in order to motivate and give guidance to the students in writing descriptive texts by using pictures for example. The teacher may also pay attention to the four language skills in teaching English in order to the students can advance their English proficiency in the same time.

⁶ Subhan, Bustami, Prof. Dr. M,S. English Language Teaching and Learning. (Debut Press, 2011), p.1-2.

Using pictures as visual media in writing text, is very useful for the students in teaching-learning process. The students can create their sentences and develop the sentences by seeing pictures. For example, students show a local tourism destination in sentences. Pictures were given by the instructor and then ask them to write down descriptive text by looking pictures which were distributed. Then they will imagine and describe how the local tourism destination is in sentences.

Study English especially descriptive writing subject the students' must be find out difficulties while teaching and learning process is behold because most of them are lack of writing knowledge and component of writing such as vocabulary, content, mechanic, and grammar. To minimize of that the teachers should give a treatment as soon as possible. The first thing to do is to find out the factors of writing difficulties and identify those difficulties.

The students' difficulties in descriptive writing can emerge because of linguistic and non linguistic aspects. In the context of the linguistic aspects, the writing difficulties among students can appear from the language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary. Grammar as the role of language must be obeyed by students in order to make a good writing. It is necessary for them to master grammar as it can speed up the language learning, especially writing. For instance, the students are afraid to make grammatical mistakes in expressing their ideas, especially in

writing. Meanwhile, every language has its own system. The English system is very different from that of the students' native language. That is the reason why Indonesian students lack of the ability in mastering and applying the grammar both in conversation and writing in day-to-day activity.

Another problem that is faced by the students in descriptive writing is vocabulary. Less vocabulary mastery will be less understanding in English language learning. Students will have difficulties in expressing ideas because they have not enough stock of vocabulary. To master good vocabulary, students should be exposed not only to the daily vocabulary but also new vocabulary. Meanwhile, mastering of the English vocabulary is influenced by two mainly factors, namely: (a) Students motivation: students have low achievement to memorize English vocabulary and (b) The materials: there are too many varieties of vocabulary and there are many tenses for verbs, gander, irregular and regular verbs, pronunciation, etc. Therefore, students are find out difficult to master of English vocabulary.

In the context of the non-linguistic aspects, the students' difficulties in descriptive writing can be caused by some factors such as media, techniques, methods, teachers, and students. In study English, Media has an important role in the teaching-learning process, especially vocabulary. Devices help the teacher to transfer some information from teachers to students. Teachers introduce new vocabulary to the students by using media will be effective and efficient rather than who use traditional method (translation

mode). The use of teaching media is considered as benefit factor to help the students to learn English, especially vocabulary in writing lesson. By using creative teaching media, the teachers as a central factor in the class are able to create and arrange meaningful tasks for students. Students will have opportunities to be active in teaching and learning process. Technique can provide learning experiences for students. The use of technique in the English instructional process is helpful to create an effective and efficient process. In some schools are still facing difficulties to provide facilities that can support the teaching-learning process. One of technique that can be used in teaching descriptive writing is using local tourism destination pictures. The use of local tourism destination pictures in teaching descriptive writing can influence the students' interest and motivation.

The other problem of the students' difficulties in descriptive writing is method. Each method has its own strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the teacher should be able to select and combine some appropriate methods for an instructional process. The teachers should use a suitable method in conducting the teaching- learning process in order to make them attentive. Choosing a good method will make easy the teaching – learning English process in the classroom.

The next component of the English teaching-learning process is teacher. Many people say that teacher is a core resource of learning. It means

teacher must have well knowledge while teach the students in the classroom. A teacher is one of the important things in the classroom, but not the only one factor in English teaching-learning process. A teacher has plays an important role in the instructional process. A teacher can manage and control the class to get a pleasant situation during the process of learning. He/she can direct and give good instruction to the students to reach the learning objectives. It is important for him/her to avoid the students' boredom, especially in teaching writing.

The last factor of the students' difficulties in descriptive writing is the students themselves. Every single student has their own strength and weakness. That condition makes the obstacle of teaching learning process. This condition depends on the background, motivation, ability and interest.

That is why the teacher needs some thing to make them interest in lerning English to immprove students' writing skill, one of the solution is picture. What kinds picture that suitable for them? to make easy for the students achieve the lesson so thepicture should be proper, interesting and familiar like lokal toirism destination pictures. Local tourism destination pictures as the simple illustrated media to facilitate students in learning descriptive writing, in other that by using pictures will make teaching and learning process more

interesting and effective and help the students to easy in understanding and comprehend the lesson.

Based on the identification above, this study focuses on applying pictures as a technique to teach descriptive writing texts because pictures is a great media in language teaching technique. This technique not only make the students interested but also stimulate the students in learning descriptive writing in the classroom. Therefore, the using media in teaching descriptive writing is effective to improve students' writing ability.

A. Writing

a. Definition of writing

Writing is one of the four basic skills, that has a complex process, especially writing descriptive text. Writing is important for students or advanced people because writing is as tool for communicate an ideas, that uses written or printed symbol, as found in books, newspaper, magazines and letters. Writing is a representation or symbols. Writing is also an action – a process of discovering and organizing your ideas, putting them or paper, and reshaping and revising them.⁷

⁷ Ramelan. *Introduction to Linguistic Analysis*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Press, 1992).

Writing is an act of communication; it is an act of making marks on a certain surface, in a form of graphic representation, to make meaning. Writing according to Halliday (1989:140) is apart a language more specifically. It is one of the expressions in language. Its meaning is created by a particular set of symbols.

Writing involves the movement of only one member of the body, but the forces of one's whole being become involved in this movement (Steiner, 2000:121). Meanwhile, Jane Medwell . David Wray, et al states that;

“Should be taught to write with confidence, fluency and accuracy. They should be taught to differentiate between print and pictures, to understand the connections between speech and writing, and to learn about the different purposes and functions of written language. Pupils should be introduced to the alphabetic nature of writing and be taught to discriminate between letters, learning to write their own name. Pupils early experiments and independent attempts at communicating in writing, using letters and known words, should be encouraged”

b. Purpose of Writing

The purpose of writing is to express an idea or feeling. Talking about the purpose of writing, it means thinking to motivate people to write. In learning process students often think that the purpose of writing is to fulfill the assignment of the class, but the concept of writing purposes means more one of them is what the writing seeks to achieve.

When a person writes something, he or she has purposes for writing. The writer may have motivation in which he or she is unaware. The writer

may also have mixed, and even contradictory, motivations for writing. For instance, a student writing an essay for a class may wish to please the teacher and to amuse his or her classmates. Unfortunately, what might amuse classmates the teacher could find unacceptable.

In general, people write either because they are required to or because they choose to write for their own reasons. Required writing happens on the job and in school. Self-chosen writing happens in many circumstances. Both required and self-chosen writing can be of many kinds. In either case, reflection on different purposes for writing can help one produce the most effective piece of writing.

c. Types of Writing

There are some writings that can be used as the basic for conveying the meaning of writing. Those act of writing are in line with the development of learning to write though a students should pass. They consist of four writing as by Rivers in his book entitled *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*:

a. Notation

It is the simplest of writing. It is an act of putting down in a conventional graphic from something, which has been spoken.

b. Spelling

The act involves specific sound symbols conventions to discriminate among various sounds.

c. Writing practice

In involve a graphic form, according to the system accepted by educated native, speaker combinations of words, which may be spoken to convey meaning in a specific circumstance.

d. Composition

It is the most highly development form. The ultimate aim of writer of his stage is to be able to express him in polished literary form, which requires the utilization of a special vocabulary and certain refinement of structure.

B. Descriptive Text

Descriptive writing is intended to the understanding its appeals to the senses, it tells something looks, feels, smiles, taster, or sound. A good description is like a “word picture” it can imagine the person, place or thing. Description is strategy for presenting a verbal portrait of a person, place, or thing.⁸

Description can also do more than conveying a sense impression. If someone is describing city, for example, he or she might describe the kind of living there, including their life styles, their background or their attitudes. Jaya, Alexander Mongot, and all (2007 : 33) states :

⁸ Jaya, Alexander Mongot, and all. *English Revolutioner*. (Jepara: Mawas Press, 2007)

“Descriptive essay may or may not have a thesis. People can describe person, place, or thing for its own sake, simply to share their sensory observations with their readers. People can also use description to support an implied or explicit thesis. Whether or not their descriptions have a thesis, its details should be tailored to create particular dominant impression”

a. Generic structure of descriptive text

Generic structures of descriptive text are introduction/identification (content) and conclusion.⁹

a. Introduction / identification (thesis)

It tells or identifies phenomena to be described. In other words, reading the introduction of the text, the readers will understand beforehand what it wants to describe in the text issue. When we are going to write descriptive text, we should attend these words : who, where, which means who will be described, what will be described, where it can be found, etc.

b. Description (the content of text)

It contains the description of an object which will be described. It describes parts, qualities, and characteristics. The description may begin from the general description of an object being described and then move

⁹ idem

to the specific one. On the contrary, it may move from a specific description of an object to a general description of other thing around it. The content of the text could be arranged from more than discussion. For example:

- 1) Describing people in detail we can organize the text by attending these questions: what they look like, what they do, how they act, what they like or dislike, and what mark them special.
- 2) Describing something in detail we can organization text by answering these questions: how it looks like, how it sounds like what it does, where it can be seen or found, how it is used and what make it special.
- 3) Places: How places look, smell, and sound is important. Here are some ways to judge description of places. Are impressions other than sight induced? Is the pictures caught at a single moment in time? Are the details arranged in logical order? Is the same point of view kept throughout? Are the adjectives vivid, and are the nouns and verbs specific and descriptive?

b. Linguistic features

- a. Focus on specific vocabulary, which is mean related to tourism
- b. Use of attributive and identifying processes of descriptive writing
- c. Use of simple present tense

C. Picture

a. Definition of picture

Picture means a visual representation or image painted, down, photographed, or otherwise rendered on a flat surface.¹⁰

Picture means a drawing, painting, or photograph, and sketch of something especially as work of art. It means those pictures are:

- a. The process of painting or drawing is being painted or the art of painting pictorial representation.
- b. The concrete outcome of that process;
 - 1) Painting
 - 2) An individual painting, drawing or presentation on a surface of an object. From definition above, it can be concluded that picture and art to draw a certain object for certain purpose based on what the painter wish.

b. The functions and the benefits of using picture

Picture is one of media for the students in primary stage. In primary stage, students need real objects to support them to know anything. Using pictures as example can help the students to memorize all words given by

¹⁰ Rivai and Sudjana. *Teknologi Pengajaran.* (Bandung: Sinar Baru, 1991).

the teacher. They can guess the meaning of each word picture by looking at those pictures.

Gerlach and Elly (1980:277) states the benefits and functions of using pictures as follows:

- a. Pictures are in – expensive and widely available.

Teacher can find pictures easily for in books, magazine newspaper, and any other.

- b. Pictures provide common experience for an entire group of students; it means by using pictures, teacher can involve all of students in his or her class.

- c. Pictures give experiences to study vocabulary about recount text. It means that students can understand vocabulary in recount text easily by looking at the pictures.

- d. Pictures can prevent misunderstanding, it means by using pictures, and teacher can explain the new vocabularies to his or her students easily. It prevents misunderstanding between students' perception and teacher's perception.

- e. Pictures help the students to focus attention and to develop critical judgment. It means that pictures can help students raise the attention in focusing a a subject and to make them active in learning process.

In line with the statement above, Gerlach and Elly also say that pictures are all right for beginners and for young children. There are also five criteria of using pictures in the purpose of reaching the learning process.

They are:

- a. Easy to prepare
- b. Easy to organize
- c. Interesting
- d. Meaningful and authentic
- e. Sufficient amount of language

Natawijaya (1978:69) states that the functions of picture are as follows:

- a. To stimulate interest

Pictures often attract attention and sometimes. A picture is used to stimulate discussions which shape a course of study.

- b. To explain something that is difficult to describe in word.
- c. To aid learning.

Pictures are used in various ways to encourage learning. A picture can illustrate a fact that is difficult to understand.

- d. To remind

A picture can make the student catch the lesson material easily, so it will stay longer in the students' mind.

e. To variety

Where studying is taken place over extended time, learners need variety to help hold their interest

c. Picture as visual media in teaching descriptive texts

Pictures are examples of printed media. The advantages of printed media are :¹¹

- a. Student can study and advance depends on each speed.
- b. Beside the students can repeat the material in the printed media, the student will follow ideas order logically.
- c. The combination of text and picture can interest the student attention.
- d. The material can be reproduced economically and can be distributed easily.

A picture is an illustration of picture that can be used as a two dimensional visual representation of person, place, or things (Rivai and Sudjana : 12).¹² By describing pictures the students can express their ability, idea, feeling as possible as freely in writing and spoken.

¹¹ Arsyad, Azhar, Prof. Dr. *Media Pembelajaran*. (Jakarta: Depdiknas, 2002)

¹² Rivai and Sudjana. *Teknologi Pengajaran*. (Bandung: Sinar Baru, 1992).

Finocchiaro (1974:100-102) states that the uses of picture as media in teaching are:

- a. The students can be interested in explaining from teacher.
- b. The situational pictures are excellent for eliciting “real language”. By asking students “What do you see? The teacher has question again” are picture A and B the same?
- c. It would be possible to practice complex sentences. The pictures could show individuals have done something.

All the explanation above it brings a solution for the student in learning writing English by using picture. Using a picture learner can imagine about the place, situation, atmosphere and condition which what picture they are watched. Not only imagine but also students can creat and develop they own sentences. Surely using teaching media like local tourism destination picture is very useful for helping teachers to teach their students especialy for improving students’ writing skills.

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