

# **A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF MTS DARUL HIKMAH PEKANBARU IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS**

**Desi Andini, Eliwarti, Supriusman**

E-mail: desiandini090895@gmail.com, elieliwarti@gmail.com, supriusman@lecturer.unri.ac.id

Contact: +628221766088

*English Education Study Program  
Department of Language and Arts Education  
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education  
Riau University*

**Abstract:** *This study is entitled “A Study on the Ability of the Second Year Students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru in Writing Descriptive Texts. This study concerns with five aspects of writing. They are grammar, vocabulary, mechanic, organization, and fluency. The aim of this study is to find out the ability level of the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru in writing descriptive texts. The data collecting technique is using a writing test. The students’ writing results are checked and scored by the expert. The research findings are as follows: first, the ability of the second-year students in writing descriptive texts is in good level with the average score of 78.81. Second, the students’ average score in terms of Organization is 17.12, and in terms of Contents is 16.21, in terms of Mechanic is 16.27, in terms of Vocabulary is 15.30, and in terms of Grammar is 13.90. based on these findings, it is found that grammar is the most difficult problem faced by the students in writing descriptive texts. All in all, findings show that the the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru have relatively good level in writing descriptive texts. However, they need to practice more in writing a text for the betterment of the study.*

**Key Words:** *Ability, Descriptive Texts, Writing,*

# **STUDI TENTANG KEMAMPUAN SISWA KELAS II MTs DARUL HIKMAH PEKANBARU DALAM MENULIS TEKS DESKRIPTIF**

**Desi Andini, Eliwarti, Supriusman**

E-mail: desiandini090895@gmail.com, elieliwarti@gmail.com, supriusman@lecturer.unri.ac.id  
No. HP: +628221766088

Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni  
Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan  
Universitas Riau

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini berjudul “Studi tentang kemampuan siswa kelas II MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru dalam Menulis teks deskriptif. Kajian ini membahas lima aspek dalam menulis yaitu; tata Bahasa, kosa kata, mekanik, organisasi, dan kefasihan. tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui tingkat kemampuan siswa kelas dua MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan tes menulis. hasil tulisan siswa diperiksa dan dinilai oleh ahlinya. Hasil peneitian ini adalah sebagai berikut: pertama, kemampuan siswa kelas dua dalam menulis teks deskriptif berada pada tingkat yang baik denga nilai rata-rata 78.81. kedua, nilai rata-rata siswa dalam hal organisasi adalah 17,12, dan dari segi isi adalah 16,21, dari segi mekanik adalah 16,27, dalam kosa kata adalah 15,30, dan dari segi tata Bahasa adalah 13,90. Berdasarkan temuan ini, di temukan bahwa tata bahasa adalah masalah tersulit yang di hadapi siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas dua MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru memiliki tingkat yang relatif baik dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Namun, mereka perlu berlatih lebih banyak dalam menulis teks untuk kemajuan studi.

**Kata Kunci:** Kemampuan, Teks Deskriptif, Menulis

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the fair language skills that should be learnt by learners studying English at school. To express ideas, opinions, and feelings, students must learn writing. According to Rivers (1981), writing conveys information or expression of original ideas consecutively in the new language. Brown (2001) stated that writing is a thinking process. He added that writing could be planned and given with an unlimited number of revisions before its release.

We may educate others, carry out transactions, convince, and say what we feel by writing. We know, however, that writing or learning to write, especially in a second language, is not just a matter of "writing things down." It is one of the four fundamental skills that are very challenging and hard to master. According to Oshima and Hogue (1997), writing is a progressive activity. It means that when the students first write something down, they have already been thinking about what they will say and how they are going to say it.

Elbow (1973) in Brown (2001) stated that writing is a two-step process. The first process is figuring out the meaning, and the second process is putting the meaning into language. Writing represents what we think. It is because the writing process reflects things, which stay in mind. Students who are reluctant to write things down often suffer from this activity. The students find difficulties when they start looking for some reasons to write and producing written sentences.

In writing, students need to master vocabulary and grammar in order to produce good sentences or texts. People are expected to be able to express their thoughts in written form by writing. In Junior High School, there are several types of text being taught. There are distinct social roles, graphical structures, and language characteristics in each text.

In the English language, there are four skills to be mastered. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is one of the four language skills which is very important to learn. As I know, writing is not easy. Among the skills, writing is the most difficult skill to be learnt, because it needs hard thinking in producing words, sentences, and paragraphs at the same time. As Jack C. Richard and Willy A. Renandya (2002), said, "writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organising ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text.

In the second year of junior high school, the basic competency that should be achieved in the writing English subject is that the students have ability to develop and produce written simple functional text in the descriptive text, recount text, and narrative text. Descriptive text is one of the functional texts which is difficult enough to be learnt by the students. Descriptive text is a text that describes the features of someone, something, or a certain place. Descriptive text consists of introduction and description. Introduction is the part of the paragraph that introduces the character, and description is the part of the paragraph that describes the character. The students can use the simple present and adjective clause in writing descriptive text. In writing the descriptive text, students often find some difficulties. The students usually feel that it is difficult to organize their ideas. Furthermore, many students made some mistakes and faced difficulties to build and develop their imagination.

Based on the writer's observation with an English teacher in MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru, students are required to communicate in both oral and written English based

on the Junior High School Competency Based on 2013 Curriculum. Students are supposed to write correctly, even sentences, essays, or paragraphs, after learning theory. For students in Indonesia, writing skills are taught using text-based genres. One of the texts taught for the second-year students in MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru is descriptive texts. The descriptive text describes a particular person, place, or things (Anderson, 2003). It means that descriptive text is designed especially about a person, a place, or things.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting research which is purposed to measure students' writing skills entitled "A Study on the Ability of the Second Year Students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru in Writing Descriptive Texts."

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

In this research, the writer uses a descriptive design. It involves collecting data to answer questions concerning the status of the subjects of the study (Gay, 2000). It is useful for examining a range of educational problems. Williams (2007) added that descriptive research is research design used to examine the situation involving identification of attributes of a particular phenomenon based on an observational basis. So, this type of research is used to describe and interpret the data being studied based on facts that are supported by accurate theories. Therefore, the aim of this research is to find out and describe the students' writing ability of the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekabaru.

For the data collection technique, the writer uses descriptive text as the instrument. The writer gives the students 60 minutes to finish the test. The procedure in collecting the data is as follows:

1. The writer will explain the descriptive text to the students.
2. The writer explains the instructions to the students.
3. After finishing the test, the students' worksheets are submitted to the writer.
4. After the data are collected, the ratters give the scores based on the scoring rubric.
5. Then the writer calculates and identifies each score that is given by the ratters.
6. The writer analyses and classifies the level of students' ability in writing descriptive text.

In order to get the real score, the writer uses the formula by Brown and Bailey (2001). In scoring the students writing, the writer asked a rater to score them. The population of this study is the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekabaru which has only 33 students.

## **FINDINGS**

The result of the research was analyzed to find out the students' writing ability of the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekabaru. There were 5 components of writing that analysed from the data, namely Organization, Content, Mechanic, Grammar, and Vocabulary. The students' writing is scored by using rubric adapted from

Brown & Bailey (2001) in finding out all writing aspects. The researcher had some steps to know the student's ability in writing descriptive texts as in the following:

1. Summing the student's scores,
2. Analysing the students' ability for each writing aspect, and
3. Interpreting the student's scores in writing ability.

The result of students' descriptive text test is tabulated as follows.

Table 1. Students' Individual Score

Students	Organization	Contents	Mechanic	Grammar	Vocabulary	Total
S1	20	19	20	16	15	90
S2	17	17	15	15	14	78
S3	17	15	15	13	15	75
S4	15	15	15	15	15	75
S5	16	17	17	15	15	80
S6	18	18	17	15	19	87
S7	19	18	17	18	18	90
S8	18	17	17	16	17	85
S9	16	17	16	12	16	77
S10	20	18	19	16	19	92
S11	17	17	16	15	15	80
S12	15	15	15	15	15	75
S13	18	17	17	13	16	81
S14	20	19	20	16	16	91
S15	17	17	16	12	15	77
S16	17	15	15	14	14	75
S17	18	18	19	17	18	90
S18	15	15	15	15	15	75
S19	18	17	17	13	17	82
S20	19	18	18	14	17	86
S21	17	15	15	10	12	69
S22	16	13	15	15	14	73
S23	18	17	17	17	16	85
S24	17	15	14	15	14	75
S25	15	11	15	10	15	66
S26	17	16	16	12	15	76
S27	17	17	16	15	15	80
S28	16	16	15	10	12	69
S29	17	16	16	13	15	77
S30	14	13	12	12	12	63
S31	18	17	17	12	16	80
S32	17	16	16	15	15	79
S33	15	12	14	10	12	63
X	565	535	537	459	505	2601

Students	Organization	Contents	Mechanic	Grammar	Vocabulary	Total
Mean	17.12	16.21	16.27	13.90	15.30	78.81
Category level	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Good

The table above describes the finding of students' descriptive text tests based on five aspects. The result revealed that There was only one student who got the highest score, and the score was 91. However, there were two students who got the lowest score, and the score was 63. This research found that each student has a different ability in writing a descriptive text. All in all, the students had a major problem in terms of grammar. It is proven that the mean score of grammar is the lowest, which is 13.90.

Table 2. The Students' Scores in Terms of Organization

No	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1	18 – 20	12	36.36%	Excellent
2	15 – 17	21	63.64%	Good
3	12 – 14	0	0	Fair
4	6 – 11	0	0	Poor
5	1 – 5	0	0	Fail
Total means: 17.12		N=33	100%	Good

Table 2 shows the students' score in terms of organization. There are 33 students who took a writing test, 12 students (36.36%) are at an excellent level, and 21 students (63.64%) are at a good level. In general, students' writing ability in terms of organization is at a good level with the mean score of 17.12. It means that students' writing has an adequate title, introduction, and conclusion, the body of the essay is acceptable, but some evidence may be lacking, some ideas are not fully developed, and sequence is logical but transitional expression may be absent or misused. Thus, the students should learn more about organizing the descriptive text of connectives.

Table 3. The Students' Scores in Terms of Contents

No	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1	18 – 20	7	21.21%	Excellent
2	15 – 17	25	75.76%	Good
3	12 – 14	1	3.03	Fair
4	6 – 11	0	0	Poor
5	1 – 5	0	0	Fail
Total means: 16.21		N=33	100%	Good

Table 3 shows the students' writing ability in terms of content. There result shows that 7 students (21.21%) are at an excellent level, and 25 students (75.76%) are at a good level. However, 1 student (3.03%) is at fair level and none of them is at poor level. In general, students' writing ability in terms of content is at a good level with the mean score of 16.21. It means that the students' writing ability still addresses the issues but misses some points, ideas could be more fully developed, and some extraneous material is present.

Table 4. The Students' Scores in Terms of Mechanics

No	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1	18 – 20	5	15.15%	Excellent
2	15 – 17	26	78.79%	Good
3	12 – 14	2	6.06%	Fair
4	6 – 11	0	0	Poor
5	1 – 5	0	0	Fail
Total means: 16.27		N=33	100%	Good

Table 4 shows the students' writing ability in terms of mechanics. There result shows that 5 students (15.15%) are at excellent level, 26 students (78.79%) at good level, and only 2 students (6.06%) are at fair level. However, none of them is at a poor level and failed level. In general students' writing ability in terms of mechanics is at a good level with a mean score of 16.27. Thus, it can be concluded that students should be more aware of using capitalization and punctuation to make better writing about descriptive text.

Table 5. The Students' Scores in Terms of Grammar

No	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1	18 – 20	5	15.15%	Excellent
2	15 – 17	22	66.67%	Good
3	12 – 14	6	18.18%	Fair
4	6 – 11	0	0	Poor
5	1 – 5	0	0	Fail
Total means: 13.90		N=33	100%	Fair

Table 5 shows the students' writing ability in terms of grammar. There result shows that 5 students (15.15%) are at an excellent level, and 22 students (66.67%) are at a good level. Surprisingly, there are 6 students (18.18%) are at fair level and none of them is at a poor level. In general, students' writing ability in terms of grammar is at a fair level with the mean score of 13.90. It means that the students' writing ability addresses some issues such as Ideas are getting through to the reader, but grammar problems are apparent and have a negative effect on communication and run on sentences or fragments present.

Table 6. The Students' Scores in Terms of Vocabulary

No	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1	18 – 20	6	18.18%	Excellent
2	15 – 17	21	63.64%	Good
3	12 – 14	6	18.18%	Fair
4	6 – 11	0	0	Poor
5	1 – 5	0	0	Fail
Total means: 15.30		N=33	100%	Good

Table 6 shows the students' writing ability in terms of vocabulary. There result shows that 21 students (63.64%) are at a good level. Surprisingly, there are 6 students



(18.18%) at excellent level and fair level. However, none of them is at a poor level and failed level. In general students' writing ability in terms of vocabulary is at a good level with the mean score of 15.30. Thus, it can be assumed that the students must increase their vocabulary mastery by memorizing it. The student's vocabulary mastery will help them avoid misunderstanding the meaning.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the result of the analysis, it indicated that the student's ability in writing a descriptive text is in a "good category" with a mean score of 78,8. as for each component, the highest mean score is organisation (17,12), followed by mechanics (16.27), contents (16.21), vocabulary (15.30) and the lowest is grammar (13,90).

In the aspect of grammar, there were many error features found in their task. The students' mistakes were verb agreement and plural nouns. Then the grammar mistake that students did was capitalization and punctuation which was part of mechanics. They did not know about the punctuation that they had written so it changed the meaning. However, a few of them miss the capitalization related to name, location, and the word after the full stop symbol. This finding is in line with Rianda (2020). He also found that the problem mostly faced by students in writing descriptive text is the grammar aspect.

The vocabulary was the most important feature in descriptive text. It is because the student would be asked to describe more about something, therefore, knowing a lot of vocabulary are needed. In addition, it found that most students mix the language in one sentence so there were 2 languages: Bahasa and English. One of the reasons why they mix the language is that they have limited vocabulary mastery. Thus, having a lot of vocabulary at hand is a must when ones are going to write a text. The result of this research is in contrast with Ni'mah (2016). She found that students' weakness in writing descriptive text is in mechanic aspect. However, in organizing the idea, this result is in line with Ni'mah (2016) which is good.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

After conducting research entitled "A Study on the Second Year Students of MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru in Writing Descriptive Texts", some conclusions can be drawn. Based on the result of the analysis, Among the five components of writing, the highest mean score is in organisation aspect with the mean score of 17,12. However, the lowest mean score is in grammar aspect with a mean score of 13.90. It indicates that students have a problem with grammar. Based on the findings, students face grammatical and agreement inaccuracies. However, it did not affect the meaning. For the other components, such as contents, mechanics, and vocabulary are at good level with the mean score of 16.21; 16.27; and 15.30. Overall, it could be concluded that the students' writing ability of the second-year students of MTs Darul Hikmah is categorized as a good level with the mean score of 78.81. It indicates that students' writing ability is good.



## Recommendations

Regarding to the research findings, students at MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru are already familiar with writing descriptive text. Even though these research findings show that students' ability in writing descriptive text is at good level, the writer cannot draw a generalization whether all students are already good at writing descriptive text. Therefore, the writer would like to give some suggestions to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive texts. First, Students should pay more attention to the generic structure and grammatical patterns of descriptive text to be able to write a good descriptive text. Second, the teacher should be able to encourage the students to be more active during the writing class for the students to be able to express their ideas in writing English text. Third, the students should improve their writing ability in writing English text especially descriptive text.

In addition, the writer also gives recommendations to the next researcher. It says that since the writer only took data information from one class, it is hoped that future research will observe the class at least two classes to get more information about students' problems in writing a descriptive text. Furthermore, since the data presented above only have one Raters, it is hoped that the next researcher will have at least two or three Raters in assessing students' work.

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