IDENTIFYING LEARNING OUTCOMES IN STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH WRITING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to know the students' learning outcomes in writing paragraphs. There are five indicators in writing descriptive paragraphs: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Its subjects were eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo. From a total population of 80 students, 25 students were selected as the sample of the research. This research applied descriptive research design. In collecting data, the researcher gave a test of writing descriptive paragraphs to the students to find out their ability of students in writing paragraphs. In this case, the highest score of 25 students in the class, was 95 which is considered an excellent level. The lowest result gets a score of 40 which is considered the fair level. Thus, generally, the students' mean score of writing ability particularly in writing paragraphs was 63.2 and it was considered a good level of ability. Thus, from the data presentation, it can be concluded that the learning outcomes in the writing paragraph of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo were at a good level.

Keywords: *Learning Outcomes; Writing Paragraph; Descriptive paragraph*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the important skills which have to be mastered by the students. By learning writing, the students will get knowledge of how to write effectively, how to express ideas, and how to share their thoughts with anyone else through writing. "Writing is an expressive activity meaning that the learners can express their ideas and knowledge by putting them into written form" (Jayanti, 1987). From the statement above, it can be assumed that writing is a very important subject because we have to share ideas from our brains in writing. Writing can help students to think critically and deeply to build good writing, but it is not easy to choose the words and combine them into good writing, we have to pay attention to the grammatical sentence.

As a productive skill, writing is not like speaking skills or other receptive skills. Writing is the most difficult skill because not only does it need a lot of vocabulary in composing paragraphs, but also grammatically correct to be comprehensible besides other writing's rules. Richard and Renandya (2002) said that "Writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to be mastered". Writing is related to how to generate and organize ideas. It is difficult for students to generate ideas and start to write a paragraph. Sometimes, the teacher does not use an appropriate technique in teaching writing especially descriptive paragraphs that cannot encourage the students to explore their ideas. Therefore, the teacher should use a technique that can help the students to have good learning outcomes in writing a descriptive paragraph.

A paragraph is a group of closely related sentences that develop a single topic. According to Oshima & Hogue (2007), "A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develops one main idea, which is the topic of the paragraph ." Based on the statement above, the paragraph should have one main idea that will be explained in some sentences clearly so that our reader gains the message or idea. In the discussion paragraph, Oshima & Hogue (2007) state there are three major structural parts: a topic sentence, a supporting sentence, and a concluding sentence. It means that the topic sentence refers to the main ideas of the paragraph, in the topic sentence maintains a controlling idea that arranges the writer to focus on the main topic. Furthermore, the supporting sentence is used to develop the topic sentence in some sentences such as by giving reasons, facts, quotations, examples, and statistics. Then, the concluding sentences function to give the reader an important message at the end of the paragraph.

A descriptive paragraph is used to give information about an object, a place, a person, or an event. There are two generic structures of descriptive text which are identification and description. Identification means that introduces the subject of description while description means that give more details of the characteristic features of the subject such qualities, characteristics, describing the phenomenon in parts, qualities, or/and characteristics, size, physical appearance, ability, habit, daily life, etc. Besides that, it also has language features. They use the simple present tense, using action verbs, using adverbs, and using technical terms. We can find the types of paragraphs in media such as magazines, newspapers, books, encyclopedias, and other forms of written communication.

One of the purposes of writing based on the Curriculum of 2013 is that the eighth-grade students of Junior High School are able to produce recount, narrative, and descriptive text. Moreover, we have to know that there is an explicit statement of writing skills. It stated on standard competence 4.12 that the students are able to produce a short and simple descriptive text in oral and written form about people, animals, and things with regard to social functions, text structure, and linguistic elements in context. There are some texts that should be learned by junior high school students, one of the texts is descriptive text. In learning descriptive text, students are expected to be able to describe people, things, and places.

In reality, many students still need improvement in writing even though they are already in junior high school including the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo. The students generally have difficulties in writing. First, most of the students are weak in vocabulary. It is hard for them to use correct words in order to make correct sentences. Second, the use of grammar is not suitable for the tense. They are supposed to use past tense to tell about an event occurring in the duration of time in the past. Instead, they use the present tense. The other reasons is that the students just memorize the pattern of the tense without having an opportunity to practice their writing skills. Therefore, to address the gap is necessary to do research to identify learning outcomes in writing paragraphs of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo. Based on the statement above, the researchers formulate a research question as follows: "*How is the students' learning outcomes of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo in writing paragraph?*"

METHOD

In conducting this research, the researchers used a quantitative method with a descriptive approach. Sugiyono (2017) defines quantitative research as a research method based on the philosophy of positivism that is used to research on a specific population or sample, data collection using research instruments, data analysis quantitative or statistical, with the aim to test hypotheses that have been set. This method allows the researcher to ask all the respondents the same questions with predetermined responses, which allows objective data to be collected. The purpose of this descriptive method was to identify the students' learning outcomes by observing certain aspects specifically in order to obtain data that is in accordance with the existing problem. In taking sample, the researchers applied the purposive sampling technique. The researchers used this sampling technique because the researchers felt that it is suitable for this research design. Furthermore, from three classes of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo. The researchers chooses VIII A consist of 25 students as a sample.

The researchers used an essay test to collect the data of the students. The researchers asked the students to write a descriptive paragraph based on a given topic. The descriptive paragraph that the students wrote consisted of seven sentences. Before the students answer the test, the researchers gave instructions about the test, and they had 60 minutes to answer the test. The

researchers developed the instrument test from Heaton (1988), consisting of five indicators: content, which consist of topic and detail, organization consist of identification and description, grammar which uses present tense. Vocabulary, consisting of how to choose word and mechanics, consist of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. In this research, the researchers used the test for instrument to support in collecting data about students' learning outcomes in writing descriptive paragraph. It is very important to make sure the tests which going to be tested are valid and reliable. To know whether r_{xy} is valid or not, the researcher used rtable of Product Moment, with the significance level 5% is 0.41 (df = N-2 = 23). If rxy > rtable, it means rxy is valid but if rxy < rtable, it means rxy is invalid.

a. Validity of writing test

To analyze the validity of writing paragraph test, the writer conducted a try out to 25 students who are not included in the research sample. From the results of the calculations, the researcher found r value was 0,9. The researchers compared r observed to r table at the significant level of 5% is 0,41 (df = N-2 =23). The r observed of the item should be higher than the r table to be considered as a valid question. The results of the analysis showed that the item was valid, because the r observed higher than r table.

b. Reliability of writing test

The researchers analyzed the reliability coefficient of the writing test using the Spearman Brown formula. After the reliability coefficient number is obtained, the next step is to consult or compare with the critical rate or minimum reliability limits. The minimum reliability limit of an instrument acording to Lim & Kaplan is 0.7. From the results of the calculation of the reliability of the writing test is 0.9. The value is higher than the standard Lim and Kaplan, which is 0.7. So by looking at table 3.2, the level of reliability is very high category which means that the rating given to the instrument had very high consistency. It can be concluded that the instrument is reliable.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
FINDINGS

The finding of this research presents the analysis of English descriptive paragraph using writing test. Furthermore, each category of students' writing skills of four English descriptive paragraph indicators is presented in each category.

1. The result of writing paragraph

The writing test is in the form of writing descriptive paragraph. In writing paragraph, there are three major structural parts: a topic sentence, supporting sentence, and a concluding sentence. The data from students' descriptive paragraph test was analyzed using scoring rubric of writing. The researcher analyzed English descriptive paragraph into 5 indicators, namely content, organization,

grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. After conducting the test the result in form of students' scores are tabulated as follows:

Table 1- Students' writing descriptive text score at five indicators

Students	C	O	G	V	M	Score
ATA	4	4	3	4	4	19
AA	3	3	3	3	4	16
AAAS	1	1	2	2	3	9
F	2	2	2	2	3	11
FAP	3	3	4	4	4	18
GPP	2	1	2	2	1	8
H	3	3	4	4	3	17
I	2	3	2	2	2	11
IGWD	3	2	3	3	2	13
IKADA	2	2	2	2	2	10
IKDS	2	2	3	2	3	12
INAS	3	3	3	3	3	15
IPEP	3	2	2	2	2	11
IPGW	2	2	3	3	2	12
KAD	2	2	1	2	3	10
K	3	3	3	3	3	15
MF	2	2	1	2	3	10
NK	3	3	3	4	4	17
N	2	2	3	2	2	11
NEA	2	2	2	2	2	10
R	3	2	3	2	3	13
RM	2	2	3	3	2	12
SH	3	2	3	3	3	14
VH	2	2	2	2	2	10
W	2	2	2	3	3	12
Total	**61**	**57**	**64**	**66**	**68**	**316**

The table showed the score from aspect to measure the students' writing skill. The aspet were content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Content is the first indicators in English descritpive text. This part consists of the topic and the details in write text descriptive. The content of writing, the student' total score was 61 it can be classified into the good level. Organization is the second indicator in English descriptive text. the organization consists of the identification and the description of English descriptive text. In the organization of writing, students' score 57 it can be classified into the average level.

Next, grammar is the third indicator in English descriptive text. This part focus on made a sentence with the correct grammar. The grammar used in the descriptive text is simple present tense.

In the grammar of writing, students' total score was 64 it can be classified into good level. Vocabulary is the fourth indicator in English descriptive text. Vocabulary is an essential part of writing descriptive text. In this case, the writer can make the reader understand and get the text's main point from the vocabulary used in write text descriptive. In the vocabulary, students' total score was 66 it can be classified into the good level. The last indicator is mechanics. The mechanics concern the use of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. In the mechanics, students' total score was 68 and it can be classified into the good level.

2. The Students Score

The researcher analyzed the data to find out the individual score of students which score are high and which score are low. The researcher analyzed the students' score by several steps. First, the researcher computed the individual score by using the formula from (Arikunto, 2019) as follows:

$$\Sigma X = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

After having the individual score, the researcher calculated the mean score of the students by using the formula proposed by (Heaton, 1975) below:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$

The analysis of students score distributed in form of table as follows:

Table 2- Students Writing Score

No	Initial	Raw Score	Maximum Score	Individual Score	Category	Qualification
1	ATA	19	20	95	Excellent	Successful
2	AA	16	20	80	Good	Successful
3	AAAS	9	20	45	Very poor	Failed
4	F	11	20	55	Poor	Failed
5	FAP	18	20	90	Excellent	Successful
6	GPP	8	20	40	Very poor	Failed
7	H	17	20	85	Excellent	Successful
8	I	11	20	55	Very poor	Failed
9	IGWD	13	20	65	Very poor	Failed
10	IKADA	10	20	50	Very poor	Failed
11	IKDS	12	20	60	Poor	Failed
12	INAS	15	20	75	Excellent	Successful
13	IPEP	11	20	55	Very poor	Failed
14	IPGW	12	20	60	Poor	Failed
15	KAD	10	20	50	Very poor	Failed

16	K	15	20	75	Enough	Successful
17	MF	10	20	50	Poor	Failed
18	NK	17	20	85	Excellent	Successful
19	N	11	20	55	Poor	Failed
20	NEA	10	20	50	Very poor	Failed
21	R	13	20	65	Enough	Successful
22	RM	12	20	60	Very poor	Failed
23	SH	14	20	70	Enough	Successful
24	VH	10	20	50	Poor	Failed
25	W	12	20	60	Enough	Successful
Total		316		1580		
Mean				63,2		

Based on the research that was conducted to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo, the research aims to find out the students learning outcomes. The students score result from calculation their correct answer based on some indicators mention early. The researcher counted 25 samples score and got totally 1580. Based on the table, the researcher has gotten high score was 95, low score was 40 and mean score was 63.2. The calculation of mean score at students writing descriptive paragraph was in good category because it lies on 61 – 70 in score interpretation.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the researchers would like to discuss the result of the data analysis which are expected mainly to relate with the description of this research. The purpose of this research was to find out the learning outcomes in writing paragraph because writing is difficult skill for students. It was supported by (Richard and Renandya, 2002) who said that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to be mastered. So, it is difficult for students to generate ideas and start to write especially in writing paragraph. So, that is why the researchers wants to know the students' learning outcomes in writing descriptive paragraph based on 5 indicator of English writing.

Content is the first indicator in English descriptive text. This part consist of the topic and the details in write text descriptive. The content of writing, the student' total score was 61 it can be classified into the good level. Students still face difficulties developing the topic provided and the details in writing English descriptive text. According to Barnet & Stubbs (1990), "A good paragraph has unity (it makes one point, or it indicates where one unit of the topic begins and ends)". The students should write the text suitable between the topic and the detail of the text understandable.

The second indicator is organization in English descriptiptive text. The organization consist of the identification and the description of English descriptive text. In identification, the learner introduces or identifies the subject. Next description, and this part consists of a detailed explanation of the subject described In the organization of writing, students' score 57 it can be classified into the average level. The students do not use identification and description process on writing appropriately.

They do not follow the order of writing process. Reep (2009) states that, a paragraph achieves coherence when the sentences proced in a sequence that supports one point at a time.

The third indicator is the use of grammar in writing descriptve paragraph. This part focus on made the sentence with the correct grammar. The grammar used in the descriptive text is simple present tense. In the grammar of writing, students' total score was 64 it can be classified into good level. The students face difficulties using grammar that might be caused by their not knowing the basic structure of simple present tense. It supported by indriyani (2013), who found that the students' tense mistakes in writing descriptive text were 9.8%. Besides that, they are still confused about the use of verbs and adjectives in a sentence.

The fourth indicator is vocabulary. In the vocabulary, students' total score was 66 it can be classified into the good level. Johnson (2013) mentions that, the vocabulary used should have an effective choice to represent the subject and correctly use the world and words. In this case, the students use vocabulary that was not related to the topic, and most of the vocabulary they write was unclear. It makes the reader do not get the main point and information from the text. Therefore, students need to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

The last indicator is mechanics in English descriptive text. The mechanics concern the use of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. In the mechanics, students' total score was 68 and it can be classified into the good level. Their mistakes caused they have lack of knowledge about the mechanism in writing skill. The students put a comma at the end of the of the sentence, and the students forgot to use capital letters after the point. On the other hand, the students write mispeling words in writing descriptive paragraph. Graham (2002) state that, all the words have meaning, and the use of miss-spelling of the words makes it has a different meaning or makes the word have no meaning. Therefore, to make the reader understand the text, it is important to write the mechanics correctly.

Therefore, the result of this research showed the mean score of the students' writing paragraph was 63.2 it was gotten from 25 participants. So, the students learning outcomes in writing descriptive paragraph of the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo is categorized in good category. This is similar to the results of research conducted by Zulaikah, Agustina, & Muklas (2018) where the students' mean score of writing ability particularly in writing descriptive text was 60 and it was considered as the average level. Writing descriptive paragraph should be learned by the students to improve students' language skill especially in writing skill. It is line with the 2013 curriculum in junior high school which makes English in one of the compulsory subjects.

CONCLUSION

The students' writing ability in writing paragraph was analyzed based on score classification. In this case, the highest score of 25 students in this class, get score 95 which it considered the as in excellent level. While the lowest result get score 40 which it considered the as in fair level. Thus, generally, the students' mean score of writing ability particularly in writing paragraph was 63.2 and it

was considered as the good level of ability. Thus, from the data presentation, it can be concluded that the writing paragraph of the eighth students of SMP Negeri 2 Ampibabo was in good level.

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