



Improving The Descriptive Writing Skill Through Outdoor Class Learning

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Abstract

In this research, the researchers used Outdoor Class Learning to overcome the students' problem in descriptive writing. It was a Classroom Action Research. The researchers designed the research problem as: (1) How the process of teaching descriptive writing through Outdoor learning in the classroom is, and (2) How the Outdoor learning can improve the students' writing skill. The researchers used mastery learning to analyze the score and the result in cycle I is 65.1%. It is still under average. So, the researchers continued the cycle II and the result of students' score is 75.5%. The result is upper of average target that is 70 %. Finally, Outdoor class learning is effective in teaching English descriptive writing. Outdoor class learning is required in teaching writing especially descriptive writing. It can improve students' writing skill on descriptive text.

Keywords: descriptive text, improving, outdoor class, writing skill

Introduction

Language is the most important tool in social communication among people in any society. Communication is the component of any human in this world. In this aspect, people adapted English language as the local language of the world. In short, English is used as an international communication in all aspects of life. Therefore, learning and mastering English for both oral and written communication have become very important. English is the first foreign language studied in Indonesia, so it must be learned by students from Elementary School up to Universities. Learning English has several reasons. One of the reasons is to imply that learning a language in this case is as a means of using it in communicating with others. So, the Ministry of Education pointed out that English has to be taught as a compulsory subject in Indonesia to transfer the knowledge for other people. For junior high school students, studying English is nothing new; nonetheless, they typically struggle with it. English is not the native tongue of Indonesia, as is well known. It is challenging for the kids to retain every English word and to comprehend when someone says it.

The two components of language function that make up the language abilities required are oral and written English as a communication me-

dium. In this instance, writing and reading are written languages, while speaking and listening are oral languages. Written language skills, however, are the hardest.

Four skills are involved in teaching English: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. One of the four language skills that junior high school students need to learn is writing. It contains paragraphs with functional and monologue content in the forms of report, narrative, procedure, recount, and descriptive text. Rahmasari and Rifa'i (Rahmasari & Rifa'i, 2022) stated that Writing is a productive skill that requires the ability to express thoughts, feelings, and imagination. Teaching students writing techniques can help them get ready to write freely.

There are some texts that need to be mastered, namely report, narrative, procedure, recount, and descriptive text. A text that serves to characterize a certain person, place, or item is known as a descriptive text. A procedure text serves to explain a process by listing the steps involved. A recount text is a type of text that is meant to be recounted, whether for educational or recreational purposes. One type of text that serves to entertain and amuse people is a narrative text. Finally, the report language describes how things are in relation to the arrangement of social phenomena in our surroundings.

Unfortunately, Indonesian students' have difficulties in studying writing especially descriptive text. The first problem is the students had difficulties in finding the idea to write. The second problem is the students found it difficult to organize their ideas. The third problem is they had low motivation since the writing activities were not varied and interesting. Based on the researchers' experience in teaching English conducted in 7th grade of Junior High School, the teaching of writing was not satisfactory. Most of students thought that writing is so difficult and boring. Besides, the students are lack of vocabulary, so the students are not able to build words into a sentence, and sentences into paragraph. It is related with the statement from Ardini et al. (Ardini et al., 2023). They claimed that in order to write correctly, a writer has to stick to certain roles. In order to create a coherent sentence structure and facilitate reader comprehension, writers need to be proficient in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and acceptability.

According to explanation above, the teachers have to find many kinds of media and strategies to make the students easier to understand the lesson especially writing skill for descriptive text. One of the strategies in teaching writing descriptive text is outdoor class strategy. In outdoor class, students will see many kinds of real object and make them imagine what they see and make it in good writing. Moreover, the students will relax and it will make their motivation in writing higher.

The aim of conducting this research is to improve students' writing skill on descriptive text. To support this study, the researchers take the title of study as follows: "Improving the Descriptive Writing Skill through Outdoor Class Learning".

Materials and Method

Writing

Ardini et al., (Ardini et al., 2022) stated that writing is one of students' way in expressing their ideas and feeling in a piece of paper. Yet it has to be written in a well-constructed way and following the writing rules. Because of that, writing becomes one of difficult subjects at school. Moreover, writing is not the same as speaking. Although both skills are productive skills, they share different characteristics. Nunan (Nunan, 1991) said that one of important differences between speech and writing is writing is often decontextualized. It means that when the writers share their ideas to the reader,

they are often distant in time and place. Therefore, the writers should think about whether the readers have the same primary knowledge as them or not. They should consider what information to add and what information to omit in order to make the readers have the same understanding with them.

Descriptive text

According to Priyana (Priyana et al., 2008), a descriptive text describes the characteristics of an object or person. The text that specifically explains the type of person or thing mentioned, including its good shape, properties, number, and other details. Its objective is to elucidate and unveil a specific individual, location, or object.

The Generic Structure of Descriptive Text

The structure of descriptive text is as follows:

1. Identification

It includes identifying the subject of the description.

2. Description:

It includes a description and explanation of the item or person, along with a list of its attributes.

The Language Feature of Descriptive Text

- Using attributive and identifying process.
- Using adjective and classifiers in nominal group.
- Using Simple Present Tense.

Outdoor Class Learning

Outdoor classroom is a way in learning naturally surrounded by nature. By learning outside the classroom, it is expected that the students will feel the enjoyment in learning. If the students can enjoy the process of learning, they will feel more motivated. Waite (Waite, 2011) stated that there are some evidence that enjoyment contribute in improving the learning process. One of them was stated by Erk et al. in Waite (Waite, 2011). They found that words that were stored in positive emotional context were better remembered than those in neutral or negative context. That is why bringing enjoyment in learning process is pretty essential. In addition, Nurcahyani (Nurcahyani, 2017) stated that the outdoor classroom can improve the atmosphere for learning and add enjoyment to it. For this reason, it is good to use outdoor classroom in teaching English.

The Steps of Outdoor class Learning in Teaching Writing on Descriptive Text

1. Greeting the students
2. Explaining about descriptive writing and the writing activities that the students are going to do
3. Giving topic about thing in the school and gives some question about the topic to get the students' respond
4. Inviting the students to have outdoor class learning, the students have class in the school yard.
5. Finding many words related to the thing that they see in out of class
6. Asking to the students to write the words that they have found
7. Giving some questions to the students about the words that they have written and guided the students to write the answer into sentences
8. Asking the students to arrange the sentences into one simple paragraph (Descriptive paragraph)
9. Asking to each student to exchange their works
10. Asking to revise the writing and guide in revising their writing
11. Asking the students to rewrite their paragraph
12. Asking to the students to read their paragraph
13. Asking to submit their writing
14. Reflecting about the teaching process of writing descriptive. Especially by using outdoor classroom strategy.

The Important of the Outdoor Class learning

At this moment, outdoor class is rarely used in our education. Almost all teachers in our country give the lesson just inside class, as a result, the students are unable to learn the English lesson in an interesting or innovative way. In addition, when the students are bored, they will cause trouble by being noisy, ignoring the teacher's explanation, falling asleep or making some body move. Those disturbances will influence the students' ability in learning lesson.

By holding the lesson outside, the students will be required to participate in activities and move their bodies, which will ensure that nobody remains silent. Students will learn by doing in this situation. Because they learn and practice it in a single packet of activities, it can help them recall information more readily.

Those advantages were proven by Prasetya et al. (Prasetya et al., 2020).

According to their research, social studies instruction in an outdoor classroom can enhance learning, broaden the scope of the subject matter, and help students understand more challenging material because it is relevant to real-world situations and contextualized. Piala et al. (Piala et al., 2021) research also gives result that the use of outdoor learning strategies can aid in students' comprehension of the subject matter and inspire a passion for the learning process. The last, Hadi et al. (Hadi et al., 2021) also found that the use of the outdoor learning activities to teach students' descriptive writing skills can improve students' writing skills.

Research Method

The research designed used by the researchers in conducting this thesis is Classroom Action Research (CAR). The object of this study was to describe the real condition and the real situation where the researchers done this research. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) in the book "Action Research for Improving Practice" definition of Classroom action research refers to an investigative method used by participants in social situations to enhance the fairness and reasonedness of their own social or educational practices, as well as their comprehension of these practices and the contexts in which they are implemented. but according to Latief (Latief, 2010) Classroom Action Research English instruction was a method whereby English teachers systematically gather data, reflect on their work, and make changes to their classroom practices in order to enhance students' learning and support their professional development. This study involved planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on the action by observing teacher practice, student learning difficulties, and the classroom learning environment. The ultimate output of the action research in the classroom was a written piece that enhanced writing skills through the use of outdoor classroom strategies. Thus, the goal of this study is to learn, implement, observe, and reflect on the action by examining students' learning challenges and the classroom learning environment. The reflection's outcome provides input for the plan's enhancement in the preceding cycle. And a freshly developed instructional strategy for presenting writing material is the end result of the final action research for writing.

Research Procedure

In this Classroom Action Research, follow-

ing these steps, the researchers employed the spiral model:

Identification of the Problem Test

The process of identifying the issue began with observing and documenting the method the English teacher used to deliver the lesson. The students received an English pre-test and a questionnaire from the researchers.

Questionnaire

The findings of the researcher's observation and interview with the teacher regarding the teaching-learning process indicated that the process was ineffective because the technique did not function properly, making it unable to increase the students' learning motivation and result in a low writing comprehension score. The researchers discovered from the questionnaire that the students struggle with motivation, focus, and peer interaction. When the teacher went over the material, they got bored. They want learning to be an engaging and enjoyable process.

Planning

Based on the identification of the problem above, the researchers planned to improve the students' learning especially on descriptive text through Outdoor class Learning. The researchers prepared the learning instrument, such as lesson plan, syllabus, teaching media etc. The researchers prepared some lesson plans about descriptive text. Researchers also prepared worksheets. The procedures for teaching writing using Outdoor Class Learning were prepared by the researchers and the teacher who taught them.

Acting

In this part, the researchers started to apply and to improve the students writing skill trough Outdoor Class learning suitable with action scenario.

Observing

The researchers observed the research by collecting data. The researchers collected the data by themselves and the teacher. The kinds of data included qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative Data

For qualitative data, it showed the attitude, interest and creativity of students in learning English. The data was done by giving some questionnaire about attention question, interest

question and motivation question of students in the learning English.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data performed the result of previous students' writing comprehension. The researchers gave English pre-test for the students. The test consisted of 20 numbers multiple choices. It was the way to know the students' comprehension, intelligence, and ability on descriptive text. After the researchers gave English pre-test, the researchers gave reading material using Outdoor Class Learning.

Reflecting

These reflection activities was used to know the problem dealing with process and score that is got from action research in class. Discussion in reflection was done between researchers and observer. In this reflection if post test score research showed lower than MML (Minimum Mastery Level), the cycle should be continued to the next cycle. And, the researchers re-plan the research until the post test score was higher than MML (Minimum Mastery Level) than research finishing.

Technique of Data Analysis

A non-statistical method was employed by the researchers to analyze the test data. Both qualitative and quantitative data types were present.

Qualitative data

The researchers wrote all activity of teaching learning which were done by the English teacher and evaluated the students' problem in mastering about writing comprehension from the questionnaire.

Quantitative Data

The researchers collected the students' test, lesson plan and students' score. To get it, they analyzed the test and computed the score, which was obtained the students'. From this formula, the researchers wanted to know the average score and the result of improving reading comprehension by using Outdoor Class learning.

The Average Score (M)

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

The Percentage score (P)

$$P = \frac{x}{N} \times 100\%$$

By knowing the mean score, the researchers could make the conclusion that using of Outdoor

Class learning was very important, because it could increase or improve the students' comprehension in the teaching and learning process especially in learning descriptive text. By dividing the students into four groups, the researchers were able to determine the students' scores in a qualitative manner. They were very good, good, average, and poor. Its purpose was to assess the pupils' proficiency in a particular subject, particularly English learning. The following were the four categories:

Very Good, if the students can mastery almost all subject master well (91% to 100% or score of 91 – 100)

Good, if the students master almost all subject master (75% to 90% or score 75 – 90)

Average, if the students master the subject master only (60% to 74% or score 60 – 74)

Poor, if the students master the lesson less than (70% or score < 70)

Criteria of Success

The researchers made level of success for this research, they are:

- a. If the mean of the post tests research was higher than MML (Minimum Mastery Level) 70%, so this research was successful.
- b. If 70% of the students achieve higher than MML 70, so this research was successful.

Results and Discussion

Research Finding

The steps that the researchers took during the classroom research action process were explained in detail in this section. It covered the planning, acting, observing, and reflecting action. Two cycles of this research were carried out, and each cycle's stages were described in detail by the researchers.

Identification of the Problem

Qualitative Data

Before the researchers did the research and applied the teaching method in cycle 1, the researchers did the pre-observation study. To gather information regarding the teaching and learning process of writing classes, the researchers conducted interviews with the seventh-grade English teacher. It was discovered from the interview that the teacher had encountered a few issues during the teaching and learning process.

The researchers interviewed the English teacher of the first grade to get information about the teaching learning process of writing class. From the interview, it was found that there were some

problems which were faced by the teacher in the learning process. After the researchers did the interview with the teacher, the researchers gave questionnaires to the students. The questionnaires were used to get the data about the students' factual perception in learning English.

Quantitative Data

After giving the questionnaire, the researchers gave English pre-test. The purpose of the pre-test was to assess the students' proficiency in learning English, particularly in writing. From the result of the pre-test, the researchers got the data about the students' writing comprehension. And the students' score has reached yet; they got score that was under minimum mastery level.

Due to the issue, the researchers made the decision to use outdoor classroom learning to address the issue and raise students' writing comprehension of descriptive texts.

Cycle I Planning

Based on the identification of the problems above, the researchers made a planning to do classroom action research by using Outdoor class learning for the seventh-grade students. The material which has given was about descriptive text. The researchers also made syllabus and lesson plan to optimize the students' activities.

Acting

The first cycle's teaching and learning activities were covered in this section. Two meetings made up the study's first cycle. The first meeting described about introduced Outdoor Class Learning and explanation of material. The second meeting is giving post-test. Every meeting had 60 minutes.

Observing Qualitative Data

In cycle I, the researchers observed the classroom record. The condition of the students was very crowded. It could be done because the students still felt confused with the step of Outdoor Class Learning. It was their first time to do their assignment using the Outdoor Class learning. But they tried to understand the researchers' explanation well. They looked very enjoy to do the assignment with their pairs. But, they did not have good concentration when learning process. They felt

confused when they find difficult word.

Quantitative Data

In cycle I, the method of teaching and learning was observed by the researchers. The researchers analyzed the result of the students' learning achievement on post test I. It is recognized that the students received an average of 65.1% on the post-test I. It was still out of the target wanted. The target was upper 70 %.

Reflecting

Some students may not be actively participating in the teaching and learning processes. They simply cracked a joke among themselves. The researchers' application of outdoor classroom learning was not yet ready. The students were also unable to fully absorb the information. Many students struggled with writing comprehension, particularly when it came to writing descriptive texts, so they were unable to understand the text that the researchers provided. Although the students' scores seemed to improve in this cycle, the researchers were not pleased. When the learning process took place, the researchers aimed to engage every student. The outcome did not turn out well. Thus, they proceeded with cycle II.

Cycle II

Re-planning

The researchers planned two meetings in cycle II. First meeting is for explaining the material using Outdoor Class Learning and second meeting for post-test. On cycle II, the researchers tried to prepare the material well. Based on the lesson plans they had created prior to beginning this research, the researchers carried out the action. Simultaneously, the researchers set up the success criteria (writing tests) and the research instruments (descriptive text, the outdoor class learning step, students' presence, and evaluation sheet).

Acting

The second cycle's teaching and learning activities were covered in this section. In cycle II, the researchers made a new planning to do in Classroom Action Research using the Outdoor Class Learning for the seventh-grade students on descriptive text. Two meetings made up the second cycle of this study. Every meeting lasted for sixty minutes.

Observing

Qualitative Data

In cycle II, the researchers observed the classroom record. The students began can follow the step of Outdoor Class Learning. They began can share their idea in pair. The researchers did not satisfy with the result because they could not active yet. They

should make practice again. They should study hard to have good improvement in their vocabulary. It was needed for learning process. They could not understand the text well.

Quantitative Data

The teaching-learning process was observed by the researchers in cycle II. The findings of the students' post-test II learning achievement were examined by the researchers. It is known that the students' average score in post test II was 75.5 %.Considering the aforementioned data, the researchers were content. with the classroom action research which had done for about 1 month. The result was successful.

Reflecting

Based on the evaluation above, it was concluded that the revision of the outdoor class as the learning in teaching writing had positive effect. In Cycle 2, the researchers made an effort to improve the students' comprehension of the subject matter. When the students found some problems concerning content, organization and vocabulary, they could correct it directly. Thus, the students understood whether their content or vocabulary was correct or wrong. Moreover, the classroom management could be handled easily. The implementation of outdoor class learning in Cycle 2 had improved better than the previous Cycle. It was proved by the result of the criteria of success. From the result Outdoor Class learning was running well and helping the students to create their ideas about descriptive text. In Cycle 2 above, the researchers considered that the Cycles had to be stopped because the criteria of success were reached successfully and satisfying.

Discussion

Cycle I's outcome demonstrated that the implementation of Outdoor Class Learning could not run well. During the teaching and learning process, the researchers discovered a few issues. First, some students were unable to participate fully in the teaching and learning process. It can be show, when the researchers explained the material there are only some students who paid attention during the lesson. Because they believed the teacher did not notice them and that only the students seated in the front received the teacher's attention, some of the students who were seated in the back talked among themselves and even made jokes about one another. Second, there were many students

who had bad pronunciation. They also had little vocabularies, so they got difficulties in produced sentences. Because of those problems, the students could not comprehend the material well in cycle I. it could be proved from the students average score in cycle I that is still out the target wanted. It was still the same with the previous score before.

But, in the cycle II, the implementation of Outdoor Class Learning process could run well. The problem that the researchers got from cycle I was little bit less. The students gave their attention more, because there was a session that needed attention. The students who like chatting in the class were less. Although it was still a little bit crowded, many students paid attention when the researchers give the material. Their pronunciation also got better than before, because they did not repeat their mistakes in cycle I. Moreover, the results of their description text showed that they had comprehended the material well. The technique was running well and helping the students to create their ideas about descriptive text.

Based on all observations, the mean score of the students improved from the previous lesson to cycles I and II, as observed by the researchers. The students' mean score from the previous lesson was only 49.8. In the cycle I, the students average score is 65.1 so, it is a little bit increase but still out of target. Then, in the cycle II, the students' average score is 75.5. Here, it is evident that there has been a 25.7 improvement in the students' average from the previous lesson to cycles I and II. 25.7 improvement in the students' average from the previous lesson to cycles I and II.

Conclusion

Outdoor Class learning success to improve students' writing comprehension. Students are better able to actively participate in the learning process. Outdoor Class learning can increase the students' score in writing comprehension.

Suggestion

The suggestion for the Teacher

Good teacher is a teacher who understands the students' willing. Teacher must have capability to explain the materials clearly. When teaching the subject especially English, the teacher have to make it more interesting so the class will alive and the students will enjoy the teaching and learning process. Besides, the teacher must have many strategies in teaching with the aim to make the students able to understand the materials easily. Therefore, in order to teach English, especially writing skills, it is advised that teachers use this knowledge as one of many different teaching strategies because through this learning, the students is very interest-

ed and able to enjoy in teaching the writing class.

In this case, the teacher should consider the students' interest and suggest that by using the outdoor class learning will attract and influence of the students' motivation in teaching and learning English especially in writing.

The suggestion for the students

It is anticipated that students will be more determined to learn English, particularly writing, because if they do not have good motivation, their capability about English will never change. Besides, the teacher strategies in teaching, students' motivation are also important in improving their English knowledge. So, the students are suggested to be more active in English class especially in writing class. They have to practice to write in English more and more, without afraid of making mistakes and it will enrich their knowledge. Outdoor class learning can be one of some effective strategies which can help them to improve their writing skill especially descriptive text.

The suggestion for the future researchers

The implementation of outdoor class learning has improved the students' motivation and achievement in writing skill of seventh-grade dents. The future researchers can make the improvements in order to make a better research. The next researchers hoped to be more creative in using some learning in teaching English. The researchers are also suggested to conduct the same study on other skill such as listening, speaking, and reading at other level of students in improving of teaching English. It is advisable to make good preparation in planning before carrying out the research, and using interesting strategy in teaching and learning English.

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