



## TEACHERS' DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Irma Wahyuni<sup>1\*</sup>, Ulfatun Al Muzaqiah

STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor

\* [Wahyuniirma96@gmail.com](mailto:Wahyuniirma96@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research are to know the difficulties faced by English teachers in teaching writing descriptive text and to know what strategies are used by English teachers to teach writing descriptive text using the blended learning method. This research method is a qualitative descriptive method. The population of this research is English teachers in Senior High School 1 Cigudeg. The sample consisted of 3 English teachers in 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Senior High School 1 Cigudeg. The writer conducted this research in terms of the teaching difficulties in teaching writing the descriptive text of English teachers at Senior High School 1 Cigudeg. The data in this research was collected using observation, field notes, and interviews. In teaching writing descriptive text, the teachers faced seven difficulties. Those difficulties were related to the teachers, students, and writing itself. It was also found that the teachers used strategies to overcome those difficulties.

**Keywords:** *Difficulties in Teaching, Writing Descriptive Text, Strategies, Blended Learning*



## **Introduction**

Writing is one of the four English skills that must be mastered by English learners. Writing is related to activities of making texts, such as: generating and compiling ideas and developing ideas in sentences (Merpaung, 2019; Rao, 2007). There are many definitions of writing given by experts from many resources. Harmer (1998) stated that writing is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening and reading. This provides a unique opportunity to explore ideas and obtain the information. Many types of texts also should be learned in order to elevate our writing skill, one of which is descriptive text.

Descriptive text is a text that explain or describes what someone or something looks like. Its purpose is to describe and express a particular person, place, animal, location, or thing. Therefore, we can say that descriptive text is a text that describes what kind of person or things, in terms of shape, nature, number, and other people. The purpose of descriptive text is clear, namely, to explain and describe a particular individual or object. Descriptive writing is important for students because through writing students can express the ideas. In writing descriptive text, sometimes students have difficulty, especially in organizing their ideas. In addition, the students made some mistakes due to the difficulties in building and developing their own imagination through writing.

Nowadays, teachers become the center of attention of students in the classroom where the teachers are the one who talks too much or is more active than the students (Nunan, 2003; Brown, 2007). This condition makes students less developed and more passive in writing issues or topics. Teachers will often face various kinds of challenges in teaching writing where English is still considered as a foreign language for both teachers and students. A teacher should be able to tackle any obstacle or challenge faced by the students in the classroom. In this case, students often faced difficulties when they have to write a text in English, including descriptive text. Frequently, students challenge come from the text organization, grammatical errors, developing their imagination, and word choice.

Nowadays, teaching English in a traditional approach could be boring because it is too monotonous from them who grow up in digital era. Learning English, which used to place teachers as educators/teachers and students (learners) has been placed in an equally active position, media in the learning process. they need something new for that new breakthrough or new method to be brought in teaching and learning activities. Every student has a different way of understanding the language itself. Some use textbooks and some use the latest method, namely audio-visual.

Akramovna et al., (2020) studied the problems usually faced by the teachers in writing class. The main contribution of this research is that the environment is the most challenging aspect in many ways and students because in that it influences the teacher in developing writing skills. The results of this study are expected to be a guide for administrative officials to help facilitate the teaching and learning process of writing skills at the university level. The findings of this study reveal that problems related to written learning can be overcome by various approaches. The ultimate goal of the teacher is to develop writing skills, language competence among students, which includes sociolinguistic competence, grammatical

competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. In addition, teachers may also need to have a better understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of all the major writing methods. Teachers should always apply a combination of these approaches together because problems can arise when teachers rely on only one teaching technique or strategy.

Based on the problem above, the objectives of the research is to know what are the difficulties faced in teaching writing descriptive text and to know what are strategies used by the English teacher to teach writing descriptive text by the 10th grade English teacher.

### **Literature Review**

Descriptive text is a text that aims to describe something such as people, animals, and things (Anderson and Anderson 2003). Descriptive text is a text that mostly uses simple present tense. Description in writing is the process of create communication image through words. Description is writing about how something or someone looks and uses space order. Descriptive text is a text that describes the features of someone, something, or a certain place. To teach writing of descriptive text, the teacher should have the variant methods so that the students can understand about how to write descriptive text well.

Descriptive text has generic structure, the generic structure of descriptive text are identification and description. First identification, it is to identify phenomenon to be described. In this part the writer identifies and gives some information about the ideas or the object that will be described. For example: a person, an animal, and a place. Second description, it is about describe part, qualities, characteristics, and the appearances of the object that will be described. For example: in describing a person, the writer should describe the appearances of that person, like the eyes, the hair and their characters, like kind, friendly, and easy-going person (Liza and Refaldi, 2013).

### **Research Methods**

The writers used descriptive qualitative method that focuses on the difficulties faced in teaching writing descriptive text and to know what are strategies used by the English teacher to teach writing descriptive text by the 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher. Descriptive qualitative research is a research with an approach to understand the meaning of individual or group and exploring social or human problems (Creswell, 2014). It was further explained that descriptive qualitative is a study that aims to describe and analyse a phenomenon, event, social activity, attitude, perception of each individual or in a particular group (Sutopo and Adrianus, 2010).

The participants in this study were three English teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Cigudeg, who taught the tenth grades students. The teachers were selected for this study for several reasons: first, they had experience as English teacher for several years; second, they were of different group age, which might provide different

views on the matter being studied; and finally, they were willing to fully participate as respondents in this study.

The instruments of this research are observation and interview to collect the data. We did the observation by joining the English class to investigate the students' and teachers' behaviour. In conducting the interview, we adapted the interview guide published by Bela (2020). Here is the interview guide!

**Table 2. The list of Interview guide**

No.	Interview Guide
1.	How do you teach writing skill to your students?
2.	How do you administer writing test to the students?
3.	What are the difficulties faced by English teachers when teaching descriptive text through offline and online learning?
4.	Does the school provide special training for teachers when carrying out online learning?
5.	Are the facilities provided by the school sufficient to support online learning activities?
6.	What are the online platforms that are commonly used to teach online learning?
7.	What strategies do you use when teaching offline and also online learning?
8.	What are the advantages of the strategies that you use when teaching?

We analysed the data qualitatively to find out our research objectives. All the data collected were coded before being analysed.

## **Discussion**

We joined the English classes twice to observe the way teachers delivered the material and how they set the learning activities. We identified that the teachers made such preparation before delivering the material to their students. Besides, they also utilized learning media to support their teaching activities. The media helped to support teaching and learning process since it helps teachers to activate students' background knowledge, increase students' attention and motivate the students to be more participative.

After doing the observation, we had a structured interview with the classroom English teachers and here is the results:

**Table 1.** The Results of The Interview

No.	Questions	T1	T2	T3
1	How do you teach writing skill to your students especially Writing Descriptive Text?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovery Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovery Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovery Learning</li> </ul>
2	How do you administer writing test to your students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving a thematic test item to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Test items</li> <li>Presentation Video</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation of surrounding objects</li> <li>Team work</li> </ul>
3	What are the difficulties faced by English teachers when teaching descriptive text through offline and online learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' Lack Motivation</li> <li>Internet Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' Lack Vocabulary</li> <li>Choose suitable media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing lessons plan</li> <li>Lack of professional experience</li> </ul>
4	Does the school provided special training for teachers when carrying out online learning?	Providing training and workshop to improve teachers development	Providing training and workshop to improve teachers development	Providing training and workshop to improve teachers development
5	Are the facilities provided by the school sufficient to support online	Chrome Book Wi-Fi	Chrome Book Wi-Fi	Chrome Book Wi-Fi

	learning activities?			
6	What are the online platforms that are commonly used to teach online learning?	Zoom Meeting	Google Classroom, Google Meeting	Google Meeting, Google Classroom, WhatsApp
7	What strategies do you use when teaching offline and online learning?	Direct Instruction	Indirect Instruction	Interactive
8	What are the advantages of the strategies that you use when teaching writing descriptive text?	The teacher controls the content of the material and the order in which the information is received by the students.	makes it possible to develop students' creativity as well as their interpersonal skills.	students can improve their social skills and develop rational arguments.

According to the results of interviews conducted with 10th grade English teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Cigudeg, teaching writing has become difficult because of the challenges faced by the teacher in learning writing skill. Each teachers faced different difficulties in teaching writing descriptive text material both online and offline learning. Some of the difficulties that teachers faced in teaching writing are students' attention, students' lack of vocabulary. Students Lack Motivation, Choosing suitable of media, Designing lessons plan, Lack of professional experience. Teaching writing used technology in the current 4.0 era becomes very important while easily accessible and more varied, which means by using media to teach writing, well-known one way to minimize the teachers' difficulties in teaching writing can be achieved by bringing video into the class.

Other problems faced by the teacher was the lack of learning media. Teaching digital native students requires the teachers to be able to adapt with how fast the technology grows. Using traditional yet monotonous media potentially made students be demotivated in learning English. To make it worse, this may gradually decrease students learning achievements.

## Conclusion

The research findings showed that teaching writing became difficult because of the challenges faced by the teachers in delivering the materials and setting the classroom activities. Each teachers faces different difficulties in teaching writing descriptive text material both online and offline learning. Some of the challenges that teachers faced in teaching writing were students' writing skills and their motivation. To anticipate this challenge, the classroom teachers should design an interactive yet fun learning activities.

## Bibliography

- Akramovna, M. S., Djurakulovna, F. N., & Alimovna, T. A. (2020). Difficulties in teaching writing. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(12).
- Anderson, M and Anderson. (2003). Text Types in English 1-2. Australia: Macmillan Education Australia.
- Bela, Shyndia. 2020. Analysis of Teacher's Difficulty in Teaching Writing and Students Ability in Writing Narrative Text at Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 01 Jember in 2019/2020 Academic Year.
- Brown, D. (2007). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Fourth Edition ed.). America: SAGE publications.
- Harmer, J. (1998). *How to teach English*. Longman.
- Liza, Mona and Refnaldi. (2013). Using please strategy in teaching writing a descriptive text. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 1(2).
- Marpaung, D. A. (2019). The Effect of Using Pictures Media in Students' Writing Ability. *Jurnal Ilmiah Dalam Pendidikan Dasar*, 02, 76–84. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JJPGSD/article/view/5069>
- Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching* (First Edit). Singapore: Mc.Graw-Hill Education.
- Rao, T. (2007). Training in Brainstorming and Developing Writing Skills. *ELT Journal*, 61(2), 100–106
- Sutopo, Ariesto Hadi and Arif Adrianus. ( 2010). *Terampil Mengolah Data Kualitatif*. Jakarta : Prenada Media Group.