

**IMPROVING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITING SKILL OF
THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 17
PALEMBANG THROUGH OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
ACTIVITIES**

A Thesis by

THESSA PRATAMA GURNITA

Student Number: 06011281419042

English Education Study Program

Language and Arts Education Department



FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

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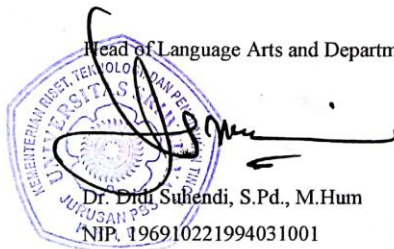


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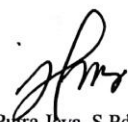
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CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

A Thesis

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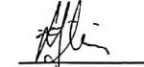
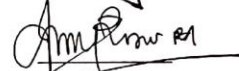
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This thesis is dedicated especially for...

My Father (Cecep Gurnita)

*For earning an honest living for us, and for supporting and
encouraging me to believe in myself*

My Mother (Anita Theresia)

*A strong and gentle soul who taught me to trust in myself,
believe in hard work and that so much could be done with little*

My Grandmother

*For being with me as I still trying to be a better human being
and protect my family*

My Siblings (Reza Dwitama G and Ocha Lana G)

*Whose affection, love, encouragement and pray of day and night
make me able to get such success and honor*

Along with all hard working and respected

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Palembang, March 28th, 2018

The Writer,



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IMPROVING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITING SKILL OF THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 17 PALEMBANG THROUGH OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

ABSTRACT

This study was aimed to find out: whether or not (1) there was a significant difference in descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang before and after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activity strategy, and (2) there was a significant improvement in each aspect of descriptive text of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activities strategy. The sample of this study was 34 seventh graders of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang which was chosen by using purposive sampling. To collect the data, pretest and posttest were given to the experimental group. The data were analyzed by using paired sample t-test in SPSS version 23. The results of paired sample t-test showed that there was a significant difference in descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activity strategy as the p -value was lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). The results of paired sample t-test in each aspect of descriptive text showed that there was a significant improvement in each aspect of descriptive text of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activity strategy as the p -value was lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). The contribution of each aspect of descriptive text was improved in the posttest. In brief, Outdoor Classroom Activities strategy is helpful in enhancing students' writing skill of descriptive text of the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang.

Keywords: *descriptive text, writing skill, outdoor classroom activities*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1) background, (2) the problems of the study, (3) the objectives of the study, and (4) significance of the study

1.1 Background of the Study

English is one of the most important languages and becomes an international language. Blake (1996, p.1) states that English is used widely as a lingua franca for purposes of commerce and science, because English has virtually achieved the status of a world language. In Indonesia, junior high school students are expected to master the functional level of literacy skills which requires them to be able to communicate in written forms or orally to fulfill their needs (BSNP, 2006). It is necessary for Indonesian students to learn English since it will be tested in the national examination which has certain standard to pass which is 75. Yunizar (2011) revealed that about 1.676 state and private junior high school students in South Sumatera failed in National Examination in 2010. It means that in South Sumatera, junior high schools were unable to reach even the minimum standard score which was 5.5. According to EF EPI 2016 (Education First English Proficiency Index), the World Leader in International Education, Indonesian's English proficiency was in the 32nd ranks out of 72 countries, 8th ranks out of 19 countries in Asian and occupied the 5th place in ASEAN with a moderate score of EF EPI was 52,94.

English has four language skills to be completed, there are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. These four skills are related to one another. Every skill has the purposes and usefulness. In writing skill, the teacher must have a good way to enhance the students' writing achievement. To make the students enjoy and understand the lesson that the teacher gave easily, the teacher must know what difficulties that the students have and the teacher must know some strategies that make it easier. One of the best strategies is Outdoor Classroom Activities. Outdoor Classroom Activities is an effective strategy that helps the

students when they want to write something. Broda (2011) states that outdoor activity is any educational activities that take place outside the classroom. In general, outdoor classroom activities is believed to improve students' learning and enrich students' vocabularies of both oral and written materials. "Children who regularly play outdoor tend to be fitter and leaner, develop stronger immune, systems, play more creatively, have more active imaginations, report lower stress levels and demonstrate greater respect for themselves and others." (Fjortoft 2004; Burdette and Whittaker 2005). There are three benefits of outdoor classroom activity. First, students explore, absorb the basic knowledge of environment. Second, students have opportunity to discover, increase and enrich new vocabularies outside the classroom by seeing the object directly. Third, students feel motivated in teaching and learning process by looking at the object directly. Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001, p. 48) note "provide students with tools for identifying and understanding the most important aspects of what they are learning". This strategy makes the students feel enjoy and easy when they write, because sometimes the students feel lazy if the teacher asks them to write something and it sometimes difficult for students to develop the given topic.

This research was focusing on writing because writing is one of the four language skills that plays a very important role in the second language learning. Writing also must be mastered by students even though it is difficult to be learned. Tangpermpoon (2008, p. 1) states that when compared with other fundamental skills such as listening, speaking and reading, writing is the most difficult skill because it requires writers to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as principles of organization in L2 to produce a good writing. Writing is one of the skills taught in the English module in the Indonesian high school curriculum. The newest version of syllabus in curriculum 2013 highlights that students of junior high school, grade seven, should be able to write a Descriptive text. Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Permendikbud) 2016 determine that the students in Indonesia will have to pass the Content Standards as certain level of graduation requirements as written in the regulation No. 13 Thn.

2015 about Standar Isi Untuk Satuan Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah which states that:

“(1) Standar Isi untuk Satuan Pendidikan dasar dan Menengah yang selanjutnya disebut Standar Isi mencakup lingkup materi minimal dan tingkat kompetensi minimal untuk mencapai kompetensi lulusan minimal pada jenjang dan jenis pendidikan tertentu.”(p. 3)

(The Content standards for both primary and secondary education units here in after are called as Content Standards that covers the scope of the minimum materials and level of competence to achieve the minimum competency in the certain level and education)

The Content Standards covers the Competency Standards and Basic Competence as written in syllabus in curriculum 2013 that according to the regulation, one of the text genres that must be learned by seventh graders students in Indonesia is descriptive text as stated in Competency Standards:

“4.7.2 Menyusun teks deskriptif lisan dan tulis, sangat pendek dan sederhana tentang orang, binatang, dan benda, dengan memperhatikan tujuan, struktur teks, dan unsur kebahasaan, secara benar dan sesuai dengan konteks.”(p. 71)

(Construct descriptive oral and written text, in a short and simple paragraph about people, animals, and things, with calculating the purpose, structure of the text, and the linguistic element, correctly and appropriately to context).

Descriptive text is one of the written texts that has social function to describe a set of feature of a particular person, place, thing or phenomenon (Feez and Joyce, 1998: 120; Zemach and Rumisek, 2005:25). It is one of most widely used types across all of the learning areas. It serves providing a comprehensive background to any essential elements of one’s subject of writing. The understanding about how the subject looks like is an essential part that should be

comprehended by the writer before writing a descriptive text. The purpose of descriptive text is to make the readers see, feel, and imagine what they have seen, felt and heard. Therefore, the students have to be encouraged and motivated to express what they have in mind about the objects and write it in a descriptive text. Several studies which investigate teaching writing descriptive text by using several different methods (Utami, 2008: Alawi, 2012) show that the students often have difficulty in developing the given topic clearly and vividly. The other difficulties are the use of grammar, lack of vocabulary, how to combine the words become a sentence and ideas finding. There are many types of genre of writing such as descriptive text, narrative, recount, spoof, reports, news item, procedure, anecdote, and hortatory exposition review. Each type of text has its own unique language features that make the students in Indonesia are producing many errors in their compositions. A research by Mustafa, Kirana, Bahri (2017, p. 49) revealed that based on linguistic category taxonomy, the most common errors that were found in writing descriptive text are in word forms (16%), followed by articles (10%), non-finite verbs (4%), verb tenses (26%), plurality (5%), and prepositions (12%), whilst the others are less than 25% of the attempts.

SMP Negeri 17 Palembang is one of the national standard schools (SSN) in Palembang. This school has 23 classes with 757 students. This information was acquired by the writer from one of the English teachers on Tuesday September 19th, 2017 when the writer visited that school as a pre-observation and did the try-out before doing this research. In addition, the writer also asked her about the students' score of English. She said that many students still had score under the passing grade (KKM) of English which is 78. Another problem that the writer got from the English teacher was that many students had problems in writing. It is difficult for them to start to write and develop the text. As a result, in the tryout the writer also found that most of the students did not know how to develop the text, had many errors and the students did lack of vocabularies. Based on 2013 SMP English Curriculum, students of the seventh grade must be able to describe the characteristics, personality of a particular person, place, animal, thing in detail. One of the solutions to support it is the students write descriptive text. In this case,

they must comprehend how to write the descriptive text correctly and properly. But unfortunately, the seventh grade students of this school still lack of knowledge, writing ability especially for descriptive text. After seeing those phenomena, the writer thought it will be better to improve the students' writing achievement on the descriptive text by using outdoor classroom activities because it is very useful for their English proficiency to improve their grammar and vocabularies especially in writing. So, based on the usefulness of the Outdoor Classroom Activities, the writer chose Outdoor Classroom Activities as a medium to improve writing descriptive text.

Based on the explanation above, the writer was interested in conducting a research to improve students writing achievement in descriptive text. Therefore, this study entitles "Improving Descriptive Text Writing Skill of the Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang through Outdoor Classroom Activities".

1.2 Problems of the Study

The problems of this study were formulated in the following questions:

- (1) Was there any significant difference in descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activities strategy?
- (2) Was there any significant improvement in each aspect of descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activities strategy?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the study is to find out whether or not:

- (1) There was a significant difference in descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activity strategy.
- (2) There was a significant improvement in each aspect of descriptive text writing skill of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang after being taught by using Outdoor Classroom Activities strategy.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be useful for the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Palembang and their English teachers and give fine contribution to improve students writing skill in English especially in each aspect of descriptive text. For the students, they can apply this technique to improve their English proficiency especially for their writing achievement. For the teacher, this technique can be applied by them to develop the students' writing ability. It is hoped that having outdoor classroom activity strategy can be applied as teaching writing descriptive method which motivates the students to write and enrich their vocabularies in writing. At the end of research, it is also expected that this research can be good examples for the further research or teacher to encourage, improve, and motivate students to write well in English.

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