

ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT FOR SEVENTH GRADE OF SMPN 7 TANJUNG BALAI

***Nurul Sakinah Nasution**

**** Neni Afrida Sari Harahap, S.Pd., M.Hum.**

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the teachers' strategies in teaching writing descriptive text and to elaborate the procedures of teaching strategies used by the English teachers for seventh grade at SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive method used in doing this research. This study found there were two teachers as the data. The first teacher applied three strategies, they were (1) TTW (Think – Talk –Write) strategy, (2) scaffolding strategy, and (3) guided writing strategy. While the second teacher applied three strategies as well. They were (1) P.L.E.A.S.E strategy, (2) TTW (Think – Talk –Write) strategy, and (3) guided writing strategy. In teaching the topic, there are the procedures. The procedures of each strategy applied by the English teachers were: (1) Pre-teaching activity: there is no suitable steps for this procedure. (2) Whilst-teaching activity: P.L.E.A.S.E Strategy, TTW (Think-Talk-Write) strategy, and guided writing strategy. And for (3) post-teaching activity: guided writing strategy.

Key words: *Teacher's strategy, Teaching procedure*

*Graduate Status

**Lecturer Status

I. INTRODUCTION

It is essential to master four major skills in order to become a good English speaker: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Writing is one of the abilities that students must learn, teachers must successfully teach writing to their pupils. The teacher plays a role in writing instruction. Brown (2000) argues in the role of facilitator, the teacher offers guidance for students who are engaged in the writing process. So teachers need strategy to teach writing effectively. In Brown's definition, strategies are general approaches to teaching can be used to reach a range of learning objectives. Based on the problem, researcher conducted to discover the effective strategies in teaching writing descriptive text. The researcher believes that this research will be beneficial to students and teachers because it will improve the quality of descriptive text writing skills and will provide teachers with suggestions on how to apply the proper strategy or build a new strategy for teaching descriptive text writing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Writing Skill

a. The Concept of Writing

Some experts have proposed numerous definitions of writing. According to Martin (1985), writing is a process of translating experience and thought into an arbitrary system. It indicates that in order to write successfully, we must have experience and be able to communicate our thoughts in words or paragraphs.

b. Teaching Writing

According to Darayseh (2003), teaching writing no longer involves students only doing grammar exercises in writing, or having their writing be free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors; rather, the idea is to have students write about what they are interested in and what they really want to communicate to the reader, and how they reach their final writing product.

c. Descriptive Text

A descriptive text is one in which the writer or speaker informs the readers or listeners about something, person, animal, place, or event. (Gerot and Wignel, 1994; Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Identification and description are the generic structures of descriptive text, according to Sunarto et al. (2018). The goal of descriptive language is to describe a specific living, nonliving, or natural phenomenon. Thus, students should be able to make a clear description of an object that they are describing by using their senses (as cited in Iskandar, 2017).

2. English Teaching Strategies

a. Teaching Writing Strategies

Brown (2007) states that strategies are distinct approaches to a problem or task, modes of operation for accomplishing a certain goal, and deliberate designs for controlling and manipulating specific information.

From the all strategies, teacher should know what strategies which are fit to the students in learning writing and also can support the 2013

curriculum implementation. Here are the strategies for teaching writing to help the students' struggling in writing:

1) PLEASE strategy

According to Akincilar (2010:53), the PLEASE strategy is excellent for boosting pupils' writing skills. PLEASE is an acronym made up of six techniques, one for each letter, which are as follows: Pick means to choose a topic, goal, and audience. The steps in teaching writing descriptive are by using PLEASE strategy are:

- 1) Pick. The teacher asks the students to pick the topic about their writing.
- 2) List. The students are asked to list their ideas about the topic.
- 3) Evaluate. After the two steps, the students evaluate the ideas which ideas will be used and support the topic.
- 4) Activate. This step, the students are asked to write the first sentence about the topic.
- 5) Supply. The teacher asks the students to write another sentences for support the first sentence.
- 6) End. This is the last steps. The teacher reminds the students to end and evaluate their writing.

2) TTW (Think – Talk – Write)

According to Zulkarnaini (2011), Huinker and Laughlin pioneered the Think Talk Write (TTW) technique. Thinking, speaking, and writing are all part of this method.

The procedure of TTW (Think-Talk-Write) are:

- 1) First, the teachers divided the class into several groups.
Each group consisted of 4-6 students.
- 2) Second, Teacher explains what a descriptive paragraph is (basic structure and language features).
- 3) Third, a teacher divides the picture relating to students' everyday lives.
- 4) Fourth, individually, students describe the picture in their imagination and make notes.
- 5) Fifth, they discuss the note they made with their friends in groups (talk).
- 6) Sixth, after students have collected and discussed any ideas they have. Each student creates a paragraph summary based on the results of their ideas and determines where the generic structure of the paragraph should be (write).
- 7) Seventh, as a final activity, the students write down their paragraph descriptions and their answers from each group presentation on a piece of paper.

3) Scaffolding Strategy

Scaffolding is defined as the ability to assume the role of an expert in constructing insight environments to aid students (Hammond,

2001, as cited in Widianana & As Sabiq, 2021). Scaffolding strategy used to develop students' critical thinking. There are four curriculum cycles in Scaffolding instruction.

- First, building the field. It is a crucial factor in improving students' writing background.
- Second, modeling. This is the step for describing, analyzing, and discussing the next model.
- Third is collaborative construction step in which students and teachers construct a specific text together.
- Fourth, independent writing.

4) Guided Writing Strategy

A Guided Writing Strategy allows teachers to introduce writing more effectively by guiding writers of all abilities through several steps: Identifying examples, modeling, shared writing, and guided writing. Ontario Education (2005) states that there are four steps for running this strategy.

1. Students are immersed in the focus skill through the examination and discussion of models in the first part of the lesson.
2. The students create a text using the focus skill as a group.
3. Teacher guides students in writing their own text independently, applying the focus skill.
4. Student shares his or her writing with the class, with a partner, or with the teacher.

b. Procedure in Teaching Writing Descriptive Text

Harmenita & Tiarina (2013) mention the teaching procedures are divided into three parts. They are Pre-teaching, Whilst-teaching and Post-teaching.

a) Pre-teaching

The teacher employs brainstorming activities to engage pupils' prior understanding of descriptive texts. This section consists of asking a few questions regarding the class condition and clarifying what descriptive text means.

b) Whilst-teaching

During the whilst-teaching exercise, students learn and practice writing skills. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in topic-related discussions. The instructor allows students to think and act creatively. The activity of whilst-teaching is separated into three parts:

1) Exploration activity

The teacher improves students' knowledge of descriptive text during the exploration exercise. The teacher defines descriptive text, as well as its social function, generic structure, and language features. In addition, the teacher provides students with a text example.

2) Elaboration activity

In this part, teacher uses some media to explain descriptive text. For example using picture as a media. Giving the explanation about what should the students do with the picture.

3) Confirmation activity

During the confirmation activity, the teacher instructs the pupils to create descriptive language based on the picture's description.

c) Post-teaching

After the pupils finish their description paragraph, the teacher inquires about the challenges they encountered while writing it. The teacher will learn about the students' writing challenges by inquiring about them, and the teacher will be able to solve them for the next learning material. The final action in post-teaching is to wrap up the day's teaching and learning. The teacher also wraps up the definitions of descriptive text, social function, language aspects, and generic structure.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research designs with descriptive qualitative research. This study was conducted in qualitative research. Taking this design, the researcher attempt to describe the strategies used and how the strategies used by English teachers to teach writing descriptive text at grade seventh Junior High School. This study was conducted at SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai. The subject of this study were two english teachers at SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai. to obtain the data, the researcher used observation, interview, and recording.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The describing of teaching strategies for writing descriptive text used by the English teachers for seventh grade in SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai.

The observation was done with two meetings for each teachers on seventh grade of SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai. The researcher collected the data by observation, interview the teachers and recording the teacher when

taught writing descriptive text at the class. Following the analysis of the data, the research question from the previous chapter was addressed as follows.

Table 4.1 The strategies applied by teachers (AZ)

Strategy Used By AZ	Tallies	Total
a. P.L.E.A.S.E Strategy		
1) Pick. The teacher asks the students to pick the topic about their writing	-	
2) List. The students are asked to list their ideas about the topic.	-	
3) Evaluate. After the two steps, the students evaluate the ideas which ideas will be used and support the topic.	-	-
4) Activate. This step, the students are asked to write the first sentence about the topic.	-	
5) Supply. The teacher asks the students to write another sentences for support the first sentence.	-	
6) End. This is the last steps. The teacher reminds the students to end and evaluate their writing	-	
b. TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy		
First, the teachers divided the class into several groups. Each group consisted of 4-6 students.	✓	
Second, Teacher explains what a descriptive paragraph is (basic structure and language features).	-	
Third, a teacher divides the picture relating to students' everyday lives.	✓	
Fourth, individually, students describe the picture in their imagination and make notes.	✓	✓
Fifth, they discuss the note they made with their friends in groups (talk).	✓	
Sixth, after students have collected and discussed any ideas they have. Each student creates a paragraph summary based on the results of their ideas and determines where the generic structure of the paragraph should be (write).	✓	
Seventh, as a final activity, the students write down their paragraph	-	

descriptions and their answers from each group presentation on a piece of paper.		
c. Scaffolding Strategy		
First, building the field. It is a crucial factor in improving students' writing background.	✓	
Second, modeling. This is the step for describing, analyzing, and discussing the next model.	✓	✓
Third is collaborative construction step in which students and teachers construct a specific text together.	✓	
Fourth, independent writing.	-	
d. Guided Writing Strategy		
1) Students are immersed in the focus skill through the examination and discussion of models in the first part of the lesson.	✓	
2) The students create a text using the focus skill as a group.	✓	✓
3) Teacher guides students in writing their own text independently, applying the focus skill.	✓	
4) Student shares his or her writing with the class, with a partner, or with the teacher.	✓	
		3 strategies

Table 4.2 The strategies applied by teachers (EM)

Strategy Used By EM	Tallies	Total
a. P.L.E.A.S.E Strategy		
1) Pick. The teacher asks the students to pick the topic about their writing	✓	
2) List. The students are asked to list their ideas about the topic.	✓	
3) Evaluate. After the two steps, the students evaluate the ideas which ideas will be used and support the topic.	✓	✓
4) Activate. This step, the students are asked to write the first sentence about the topic.	✓	
5) Supply. The teacher asks the students to write another sentences for support the first sentence.	✓	

6) End. This is the last steps. The teacher reminds the students to end and evaluate their writing	-	
b. TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy		
First, the teachers divided the class into several groups. Each group consisted of 4-6 students.	✓	
Second, Teacher explains what a descriptive paragraph is (basic structure and language features).	-	
Third, a teacher divides the picture relating to students' everyday lives.	✓	
Fourth, individually, students describe the picture in their imagination and make notes.	✓	
Fifth, they discuss the note they made with their friends in groups (talk).	✓	✓
Sixth, after students have collected and discussed any ideas they have. Each student creates a paragraph summary based on the results of their ideas and determines where the generic structure of the paragraph should be (write).	✓	
Seventh, as a final activity, the students write down their paragraph descriptions and their answers from each group presentation on a piece of paper.	-	
c. Scaffolding Strategy		
First, building the field. It is a crucial factor in improving students' writing background.	-	
Second, modeling. This is the step for describing, analyzing, and discussing the next model.	-	-
Third is collaborative construction step in which students and teachers construct a specific text together.	-	
Fourth, independent writing.	-	
d. Guided Writing Strategy		
1) Students are immersed in the focus skill through the examination and discussion of models in the first part of the lesson.	-	
2) The students create a text using the focus skill as a group.	✓	✓
3) Teacher guides students in writing their own text independently, applying the focus skill.	✓	

4) Student shares his or her writing with the class, with a partner, or with the teacher. ✓

3 strategies

Based on the tables, the first teacher applied three strategies in teaching writing descriptive text, namely (1) TTW (Think – Talk –Write) strategy, (2) scaffolding strategy, and (3) guided writing strategy. While the second teacher applied three strategies as well. They were (1) P.L.E.A.S.E strategy, (2) TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy, and (3) guided writing strategy.

2. The procedures of teaching strategies used by the English teachers in teaching writing descriptive text for seventh grade in SMPN 7 Tanjung Balai

The steps in each strategy that have been implemented by the two teachers are grouped according to the teaching strategies procedure according to Harmenita & Tiarina (2013) mention the teaching procedures are divided into three parts, they are Pre-teaching, Whilst-teaching and Post-teaching. The following are the details of grouping procedures in teaching writing descriptive text based on each teacher:

Table 4.3 The steps of strategies applied by teachers (AZ)

The steps of Strategies Used By AZ	Procedures in Teaching Writing Descriptive Text		
	Pre-Teaching	Whilst-Teaching	Post-Teaching
a. TTW (Think – Talk – Write)			
First, the teachers divided the class into several groups. Each group consisted of 4-6 students.		✓	
Third, a teacher divides the picture relating to		✓	

students' everyday lives.

Fourth, individually, students describe the picture in their imagination and make notes.	✓
--	---

Fifth, they discuss the note they made with their friends in groups (talk).	✓
---	---

Sixth, after students have collected and discussed any ideas they have. Each student creates a paragraph summary based on the results of their ideas and determines where the generic structure of the paragraph should be (write).	✓
---	---

b. Scaffolding Strategy

First, building the field. It is a crucial factor in improving students' writing background.	✓
--	---

Second, modeling. This is the step for describing, analyzing, and discussing the next model.	✓
--	---

Third is collaborative construction step in which students and teachers construct a specific text together.	✓
---	---

c. Guided Writing Strategy

1) Students are immersed in the focus skill through the examination and discussion of models in the first part of the lesson.	✓
---	---

2) The students create a text using the focus skill as a group.	✓
---	---

3) Teacher guides students in writing their own text independently, applying the focus skill.	✓
---	---

4) Student shares his or her writing with the class, with a partner, or with the teacher.	✓
---	---

Table 4.4 The steps of strategies applied by teachers (EM)

The steps of Strategies Used By EM	Procedures in Teaching Writing Descriptive Text
---	--

	Pre-Teaching	Whilst-Teaching	Post-Teaching
a. P.L.E.A.S.E Strategy			
1) Pick. The teacher asks the students to pick the topic about their writing		✓	
2) List. The students are asked to list their ideas about the topic.		✓	
3) Evaluate. After the two steps, the students evaluate the ideas which ideas will be used and support the topic.		✓	
4) Activate. This step, the students are asked to write the first sentence about the topic.		✓	
5) Supply. The teacher asks the students to write another sentences for support the first sentence.		✓	
b. TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy			
First, the teachers divided the class into several groups. Each group consisted of 4-6 students.		✓	
Second, Teacher explains what a descriptive paragraph is (basic structure and language features).		✓	
Third, a teacher divides the picture relating to students' everyday lives.		✓	
Fourth, individually, students describe the picture in their imagination and make notes.		✓	
Fifth, they discuss the note they made with their friends in groups (talk).		✓	
Sixth, after students have collected and discussed any ideas they have. Each student creates a paragraph summary based on the results of their ideas and determines where the generic structure of the paragraph should be (write).		✓	
c. Guided Writing Strategy			
2) The students create a text using the focus skill as a group.		✓	
3) Teacher guides students in writing their own text independently, applying the focus skill.		✓	

4) Student shares his or her writing with the class, with a partner, or with the teacher.



In teaching writing descriptive text in seventh grade, AZ and EM applied three strategies. In each strategy, the steps implemented are grouped according to the procedure of teaching strategies by Harmenita & Tiarina (2013). Based on the tables, AZ applied whilst – teaching activity and post- teaching activity in using strategies for teaching writing descriptive text and EM applied whilst – teaching activity and post- teaching activity in using strategies for teaching writing descriptive text.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

Based on the research's findings, here are the conclusion of the data:

1. There were two teachers as the data. The first teacher applied three strategies, they were (1) TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy, Scaffolding strategy, Guided writing strategy. Meanwhile, the second teacher applied another three strategies; they were (1) Please strategy, TTW (Think – Talk – Write) strategy, guided writing strategy.
2. The procedures of each strategies used by the English teachers were:
 - (1) Pre-teaching activity: there is no suitable steps for this procedure.
 - (2) Whilst-teaching activity: P.L.E.A.S.E Strategy, TTW (Think-Talk-Write) strategy, and guided writing strategy.
 - (3) Post-teaching activity: guided writing strategy.

B. Suggestion

In relation to the conclusion, some suggestions related to this study were present as follows:

1. For the English teachers

It is proposed that English teachers choose acceptable teaching strategies and develop numerous strategies for teaching writing that can be implemented in order to achieve students' learning objectives.

2. For students

Students should be more self-assured while writing in English and participate more actively in the teaching-learning process.

3. For government

Conduct training for teachers in the selection and implementation of appropriate strategies in the implementation of teaching and learning.

4. For further researcher

This research can be as reference for further researcher who wants to conduct the similar strategy as in this research. It would be better to apply response writing strategy in different subject and location. Besides, further researcher can research about the response of the students after the application of writing strategy.

REFERENCES

- Akincilar, Vildan. (2010). *The effect of "PLEASE" Strategy Training Through The Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) Model on Fifth Grade EFL Students' Descriptive Writing: Strategy Training on Planning*. Middle East Technical University.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Teaching by Principles (2nd Edition ed.)*. San Francisco: Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy (2nd ed.)*. New York: Longman
- Darayseh, A. (2003). *The Effect of a Proposed Program Based on Semantic Mapping and Brainstorming Strategies on Developing the English Writing Ability and Attitudes of the First Scientific Secondary Students*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies. Amman. Jordan.
- Eggen, P., & Kauchak, D. (2006). *Strategies for teachers: Teaching content and thinking skills*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Gerot, L., & Wignell, P. (1994). *Making sense of functional grammar: An introductory workbook*. Queensland: Antipodean Educational Enterprises.
- Harmenita, R. Y., & Tiarina, Y. (2013). Teaching writing a descriptive text by using environmental observation strategy. *Journal of English Language Teaching, 1*(2), 29-38.
- Iskandar, J. (2017). Teaching descriptive writing by using cubing strategy to the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 22 Palembang, *Edukasi Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, 4*(1), p. 52-66
- Knapp, P., & Watkins, M. (2005). *Genre, text, grammar: Technologies for teaching and assessing writing*. Unsw Press.
- Martin, C. (1985). *Exploring American English*. London: Collier Macmillan.
- Neubert, G. A., & McNelis, S. J. (1986). Improving Writing in the Disciplines. *Educational Leadership*.
- Ontario Education. (2005). *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Writing*. Ontario: Ontario Education.
- Reiser, L. J. (2002). Professional development and other factors that contribute to the ability to integrate technology into curriculum. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems, 30*(4), 437-460.
- Sunarto, E., Mukarto, F.X., Bismoko, J., & Dewi, N. (2018). Trilingual textualization to deliver Indonesian local cultures to high school students. *Language and Language Teaching Journal 1*(2).

- Widiana, & As Sabiq, A. H. (2021). Scaffolding Strategy In Teaching Writing And Its Challenges. *Jurnal Education and development Institut Pendidikan Tapanuli Selatan*, 30-38.
- Zemach, D. E., & Islam, C. (2005). *Paragraph Writing: From Sentence to Paragraph*. Macmillan: Macmillan Limited.
- Zulkarnaini. (2011). *Model Kooperatif Tipe Think Talk Write (TTW) untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Menulis Karangan Deskriptif dan Berpikir Kritis*. Bandung: UPI Press.