Enhancing Students’ Ability in Writing Descriptive Text through Graphic Organizers

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ABSTRACT
Graphic organizers are visual displays of key content information designed to benefit learners who have difficulty organizing information and it could help the students to build and generate ideas. The study was aimed at finding the answers to the following research questions: (1) How is the implementation of graphic organizers to enhance students’ ability in writing descriptive text? (2) How is the enhancement of students’ ability in writing descriptive text through graphic organizers? This study was a classroom action research. The data were obtained through documentation, observation and test. It was conducted in three cycles with the 24 eighth grade students of MTs Nurul Islam Juwangi in the academic year of 2016/2017. The result of this research showed that students’ ability was improved in each cycle after they were taught using graphic organizers. They were better in their descriptive text writing in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanic.

Key words: writing ability, descriptive text, graphic organizers.

1. Introduction
Writing is one of four skills in English. Writing is skill that expresses feeling using written. Writing is included in productive skill. Productive skill is developing ideas through knowledge and vocabulary that had by writer. In this skill, Students actually can produce language themselves based on their ideas through their knowledge and vocabulary. When students write a text, they can write based on their knowledge, idea or what is in their mind. The other skill in productive skill is speaking. Speaking is the way to express feeling using oral. Students can develop their ideas in oral.1

Learning to write is not only writing thing down. In fact, writing takes more than 45 minutes to compose a paragraph, because writing considers the process of writing and the cohesion every sentence. The researcher observed the teaching learning process in eight grade at MTs Nurul Islam Juwangi. The English language teacher only explained and wrote the material on the black board. It made students feel difficult to write, because there were some problems when they would write. They feel difficult to express ideas, develop the idea related to the topic, they also get problem in using adjective, and present tense. They do not arrange the words in a good sentence. So, the result of writing text is not optimal.

In teaching process, teachers play important role to facilitate students’ learning through appropriate choice of media and methods, besides the mastery of teaching materials. They should be creative to draw student’s interest and motivation in learning. There are some media usually used in teaching learning process. They consist of visual media, audio media, and audio-visual media. Visual media are can be seen and have the function to distribute the message from the sources to the receiver. Audio media are connected with one of the five senses, that is ears that can hear something produced by sound. Audio-visual are media that combine both of sound and pictures.\(^2\) The teachers are demanded to choose the appropriate ones to make the class fresh and interesting. Hopefully, the students will be happy and will not be bored of learning English.

Graphic organizers are visual displays of key content information designed to benefit learners who have difficulty organizing information. They may be implemented in various kinds of activities and forms, i.e. story map, fishbone Ishikawa diagram, Venn diagram, cause and effect web, KWL table, concept map, mind map, etc.\(^3\) Graphic organizers are meant to help students clearly visualize how ideas are organized within a text or surrounding a concept. Graphic organizers provide students with a structure for abstract ideas. Graphic organizers present material through the visual and spatial modalities (and reinforce what is taught in the classroom), the use of graphic organizers helps students internalize what they are learning.

\(^2\) Prof. Dr. Azhar Arsyad, *Media Pembelajaran*, (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2003), p.30
Graphic organizer is one of visual media because it can be seen and performs a meaningful description. It makes students more interested in writing descriptive text. They will make a text more easily because they can develop ideas on the graphic which they create. It will help them creating a good descriptive text.

2. Methods

This work is a classroom action research. According Suharsimi arikunto and Suyadi there are four steps in conducting the research. They are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. This action research was carried out at the eighth grade of MTs Nurul Islam JuwangiBoyolali-Indonesia. The data were taken through documentation, observation, and test.

Documentation was aimed at getting information about students’ name and teacher’s schedule. This study used observation and test to get its primary data. According to Mustafa, primary data are data which are collected directly by the researcher from the subject of the research. Whereas secondary data are collected and documented so that the researcher copied the data for the research necessety.\(^4\) Observation was conducted to know the students’ activities during teaching learning process and to identify problems of learning in order to look for the appropriate solution to solve the problem gathered by the collaborator. Test was used to measure the students’ ability in writing descriptive text that had been taught in the teaching learning process through graphic organizers.

William uses test term as measurement. It is a process of assigning numerals according to the rules. The numerals are assigned to events or objects, such as responses to items or to certain observed behaviors.\(^5\) In this research, the researcher examined the students’ writing ability of descriptive text by giving an essay test. It means that students have to write descriptive text based on the graphic organizers.

The data were analyzed through this formula

\[ \text{Formula} \]


$\sum x$ : Score got

$S_{\text{max}}$ : Score maximum

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Description of The Implementation of Graphic Organizers

According to Katherine, Graphic organizers are teaching and learning tools that students better be able to understand new material. Creating a strong visual picture, graphic organizer support students by enabling them to literally see connections and relationships between facts, information and term.

A graphic organizer is a visual display that demonstrates relationships between facts, concepts or ideas. A graphic organizer guides the learner’s thinking as they fill in and build upon a visual map or diagram. They are also informally used as a term to describe all visual learning strategies such as concept mapping, webbing, mind mapping, and more.

Graphic organizers guide learners’ thinking as they fill in and build upon a visual map or diagram. Graphic organizers are some of the most effective visual learning strategies for students and are applied across the curriculum to enhance learning and understanding of subject matter content.

This study was called classroom action research. The activities could be seen as the following.

a. Planning

The researcher designed a lesson plan as a guidance in teaching learning of descriptive text, arranged observation checklist to observe the students’ activities during teaching and learning process, prepared graphic organizer sheets as media of learning, prepared test instruments covering test paper, and score table.

b. Acting

In this stage, the researcher started to take a role as a teacher by employing graphic organizers as media in teaching learning process. Teacher started the class by greeting the students, asking them to recite *basmalah* and checking their attendance. Before explaining the material of descriptive text, the teacher stimulated them by giving questions what did they know about descriptive text. But most of them shake their head and just kept silent. After that the teacher gave more information about descriptive text in front of the class. For giving more comprehension about the material, the students were given graphic organizers as a medium to explore their ideas in writing text. Before starting to write their idea, teacher gave
more explanation about graphic organizers and example on how use it in writing activities.

After getting clear on how to use graphic organizers in writing activities, the students, then, filled a story map with key words representing their idea. There were some students that answered directly, because they knew the vocabulary. Some other students looked for the vocabulary in their book or dictionary. Based on the key words, the students, then, wrote a descriptive text related to the topic. Few students made it correctly. Others wrote it correctly after the teacher gave correction.

The next step was to divide them into six groups. They were twenty four, so that one of groups consisted on four members. Each group was distributed a graphic organizer. The teacher gave instructions how to use and what they had to do. Each group discussed vocabulary needed to be written in the graphic. After they found the suitable words, they wrote the description using the words. Teacher monitored and checked the group work. After they had finished, the representative of each group shared their work in front of the class. Teacher and students gave correction to the work together. Before giving test, teacher reviewed and concluded the material. To know their comprehension of the materials, teacher gave test to get the students’ achievement. The collaborator who helped the teacher gave worksheet of test. Finally, teacher and students end the lesson by reciting *hamdalah*.

The information of the students’ writing ability of descriptive text was gotten through test. The students’ average score was 68.13. It is known that half students got problem in writing. Students felt difficult to develop their idea regarding the given topic because their vocabulary was limited. It made the content of their writing insufficient. Almost all of students understood the sentences pattern and grammar, but they still need to enhance their vocabulary. All of students knew the punctuation, but their mistake was they did not write the capital letter in the beginning of sentences. Some of them did not use point in the last sentence, but they used coma. Because of those problems, the students score was still low and some of them did not reach the standard of minimum score.

c. Observing

During the teaching learning process was running, the researcher observed the students’ activities and the collaborator observed the teachers’ activities based on the observation checklist.

d. Reflecting

The researcher and the collaborator analyzed the result of test and observation, concluded the students’ writing ability, and planning
intervention for the next cycle. Students who had low score were ascertained to need opportunity to improve their writing ability.

The topic of each cycle is provided in table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Topic of Descriptive Text</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Teacher didn’t give more explanation how to write a good text Some of students didn’t pay attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Teacher used GO and gave more explantion how to write a good text Teacher couldn’t manage the time well Students confused to explore their idea through GO without picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Teachers’ performance was good enough Teachers completed GO with picture Teacher could manage the class well Students could deliver their idea through GO in a written text Students had mistake in grammar (presents tense) and mechanics (punctuation and capitalization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Teacher gave explanation more about grammar and mechanics Students reached the standart of minimum score.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 Topic and Result of Test of each Cycle

3.2 The Enhancement of Students’Participation and Ability in Writing Descriptive Text

This classroom action research was conducted in three cycles since through the cycles sufficient improvement had been made. The improvement of students’ participation in the teaching learning process and their writing ability is listed in table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Students’ Participation</th>
<th>Students Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>56,67</td>
<td>62,08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68,13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2 Students’ Participation and Writing Ability

Based on students’ participation and students’ score in every cycle Graphic Organizers could enhance the students’ ability in writing descriptive text. It could be seen that the implementation of graphic organizers in the teaching writing of descriptive text helped the students develop their idea. They also paid more attention and were more enthusiastic in the learning process. They could answer the teachers’ question confidently because they knew the answer after seeing the picture in the graphic organizers. In fact, before they had taught using graphic organizers they were not confident.

Using graphic organizers in the teaching of writing descriptive text helped students expressed their ideas and opinion. Graphic organizers gave contribution to students to generate ideas through clear visualization. They had made them enjoy their activity to convey their idea more. It could make passive students to be active. They asked question, shared their idea, gave correction to their friend in group and presented their work confidently.

It showed that after being taught using graphic organizers, students ability in writing descriptive textregarding content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic were improvedin every cycle. Finally they reached the standard of minimum score.

The significant enhancement of students’ participation and ability in writing descriptive text after being taught using Graphic organizers as the media may also be put in the following figure.

![Graph showing increasing students' participation and mean score](image-url)

**Figure 3.1 Increasing Students’ Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre Cycle</td>
<td>56.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Cycle</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Cycle</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Cycle</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the data above, the students’ participation whole teaching learning process get improvement in every cycle. The lowest score of students participation is 56.67%. It is the pre cycle score. The highest score of students participation is 80.00%, which is the third cycle score. The students’ participation in teaching learning process get improvement and it is followed by improving the students’ score in writing Descriptive text from cycle one to cycle two and three. The recapitulation of students’ score from pre cycle until third cycle can be drawn in the following figure.

![Mean Score Chart]

**Figure 3.2 Students’ Improvement Based on the Mean Score**

The success of enhancing students’ ability in writing descriptive text through graphic organizers can be clearly seen from the chart above. The conventional way that was used in pre cycle shows the mean of pre cycle was 62.08. It means the score is lower than 70, as the minimum criterion of passing score. In the first cycle, the mean of the students’ score is 68.13. Then in the second cycle the mean of the students’ score is 72.50. Meanwhile, the result of the third cycle shows the better improvement that reaches 75.29 as the mean. Students can reach the minimum criterion of passing score 70.

From the explanations above, it could be concluded that the implementation of graphic organizers to teach writing could enhance students’ ability in writing descriptive text. For that reason, the researcher stopped the research, because the students’ score had reached the standard of minimum score and students’ ability in writing descriptive text could be enhanced through graphic organizers.

**4. Conclusion**

The research conclusion is drawn according to the data which had been analyzed. From all the data analysis about
enhancing students’ ability through graphic organizers in writing descriptive text, it can be concluded that:

1. Graphic organizers were variedly implemented to teach writing of descriptive text. Firstly, students collected the words and answered some questions about the graphic. Their answers was arranged in sentences by using words that they had collected. After that, students wrote descriptive text in paragraph through the answers. Secondly, students wrote their ideas on the graphic then organize them into paragraph. Thirdly, graphic supported by picture and vocabulary were organized into paragraph.

2. The improvement of students’ ability in writing descriptive text trough graphic organizers was proven by the improvement of students’ score in each cycle. Through graphic organizers they could express about what they felt and what’s in their mind in the form of written text. In the first cycle, the mean of the students’ score was 68.08. Then the result of second cycle showed that the mean of students’ score was 72.50. Then in third cycle the mean of students’ score was 75.29. Using graphic organizers in teaching of writing descriptive text helped students express their ideas and opinion. Graphic organizers could made passive students to be active.
**Reference**


