

# IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS THROUGH CONTENT BASED INSTRUCTION AT SMP TAMAN DEWASA IBU PAWIYATAN YOGYAKARTA

Marselina Yolanda Intan Larasati<sup>1)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>Perum BTN Blok A 17 RT 01/ RW 10,Langenharjo Kendal, 51314

\*Corresponding author

Email : intanmarsel97@gmail.com

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## Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh beberapa masalah yaitu siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam menuliskan gagasan, sulit mengembangkan isi karangan, dan belum dapat menggunakan tanda baca yang tepat. Tujuan penelitian yaitu, untuk mengetahui meningkatkan keterampilan menulis karangan deskripsi melalui Instruksi Berbasis Konten (CBI). Oleh karena itu, penelitian memiliki sebuah rumusan masalah yaitu "Bagaimana penerapan Instruksi Berbasis Konten (CBI) untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif di SMP Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Yogyakarta". Dalam penelitian ini, Instruksi Berbasis Konten (CBI) dapat membantu siswa lebih mudah dalam menulis. Ini adalah pendekatan dimana guru memberikan instruksi berdasarkan situasi kelas. Sesuai dengan namanya, isi materi dalam pembelajaran berbasis pada instruksi guru. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas model Kemmis dan Mc. Taggart dalam menjelaskan planning, action, observation, and reflection.

**Kata Kunci** : tulisan siswa; Content Based Instruction; PTK

## Abstract

*The background of this research is motivated by several problems such as facing difficulties by students in writing an idea, developing essay content, and using punctuation properly. The goal of this research is to improve on writing skill of description text through Content Based Instruction. Therefore, this research has a research question such as "How is the Content Based Instruction implemented to improve students' ability in writing descriptive texts at SMP Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Yogyakarta." In this research, Content Based Instruction (CBI) can help students write more easily. This is an approach where the teacher gives instructions based on classroom situations. As the name implies, the content of the material in learning is based on teacher instructions. This research is a classroom action research model of Kemmis and Mc. Taggart in explaining planning, action, observation, and reflection.*

**Keywords** : students' writing, Content Based Instruction, CAR

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Language is essential in communication. English is an important language to master. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is taught formally from elementary school to university. In mastering English, there are four skills that must be possessed, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills are classified into two categories. Listening and reading are included in receptive skills, in which language users are required to be able to accept spoken and written language. Harmer (1998) states that speaking and writing are productive skills for language users to produce spoken and written words. These skills must be well integrated including writing skills, because writing skills help students master other skills. Based on Curriculum 2013, students in grade eight learn several text genres, such as narrative, descriptive, and recount text. In writing a descriptive text, students are required to be able to make sentences in the form of simple present tense and develop their idea into descriptive text.

The students has diffulties in writing the text. Students seemed unsatisfied with their grades. In general, the texts written by students consisted of many errors in language use, including spelling, diction, sentences, and have difficulties differentiate between identification and description. Some students did not understand the description of the essay well. They had some problems when they needed to think about vocabularies, ideas, correct grammatical sentences, correct punctuations, and implementing writing mechanics. This is one of the students' sentences in the descriptive text:

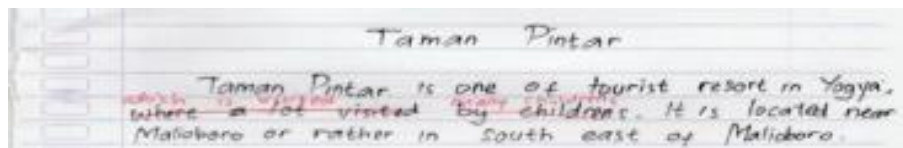


Figure 1. Student's writing in descriptive text

In the sentence, students made mistakes in using relative pronoun and passive voice. Students used the word "where", that can be changed into "which". Therefore, students did not use to be (is) before the past participle (V3). in the passive sentences. Students also made a mistake in the capitalization of the city name. The first letter of a sentence must be written in capital letter. Then, in the second sentence, students omitted the mechanical aspect. Students did not use the article "the" before the location. Besides, students also made mistakes in the spelling of "south east" that must be written without space.

Therefore, the researcher used a Content-Based Instruction, because this method focuses on the content of the material which is suitable for students to pay more attention in the learning process. When students are ready for the lesson, it is easier for the teacher to give students some materials. It is expected that students will no longer find difficulties to follow English lessons. The researcher expected that students are more interested in participating in learning English. Moreover, this researcher expected that this research helps the students in producing descriptive texts.

## METHOD

In doing this research, the researcher used classroom action research adapted from Kemmis's and Mc. Taggart's model. This method is applied by the researcher to solve the problem encountered in the teaching-learning process in the classroom and also with the solution. Kemmis and McTaggart (1992) says that classroom action research is a part of the descriptive research method which is carried out by the teacher to change the phenomenon. Furthermore, classroom action research is a process where the teacher is a volunteer to do reflection, and action to know

more about the essence of the teaching. The focus of classroom action research is the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. The general goals of this research are improvement and change.

The aim of conducting this classroom action research is to improve students' writing ability in the descriptive text by using Content Based Instruction (CBI). CBI was used as the method to improve students' writing skills in descriptive text. The research gives a positive effect to the education of eighth-grade students of Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Yogyakarta Junior High School by giving a new method in teaching writing. The action of classroom action research is taken to improve the better of learning process in the classroom. Kemmis and McTaggart (1992) states that the researcher used spiral reflection that consists of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning as the basis for a problem solving the problem. In this research, the writer investigated the problem of research to solve the student's problem in the class. The following is a research action spiral from Kemmis and McTaggart (1992).

The model by Kemmis & Taggart (1992) is essentially a device consisting of four components, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The strands are seen as a cycle. Therefore, it can be seen as a cycle of activities consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. There were two cycles used in the classroom and each cycle had two meetings. First, the planning stage is a step to plan a program of action carried out to improve students' achievement. Second, the action stage is a learning step conducted by the researcher as an effort to increase students learning achievement. Third, the observing stage is a step which observes students during the learning process. Last but not least, the reflection stage is a step which reviews and considers the results obtained from the observation. In this case, revisions can be made to prepare the next learning

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research was carried out in two cycles. The procedure of this study included four stages such as preliminary observation, planning, action, and reflection. Before presenting procedures of the classroom action research, it is started by presenting preliminary study. The preliminary study was done before classroom action research conducted. It was done to know the students' problems in the process of teaching and learning writing in the English subject. A preliminary observation was conducted to get the information regarding the real condition in eighth grade students of Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Junior High School Yogyakarta related to the English teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the researcher used the written test to measure how well the students' understanding of a descriptive text. The researcher noted that the students appeared to be confused and were afraid of getting a bad score. The students often ask researcher the meaning of the word, especially on how to construct sentences and some words. In this preliminary stage, the researcher gained the data showing the students' difficulty in writing a descriptive text. With the score taken from the preliminary test, the students who could pass on the preliminary test were 3 students or roughly 14% of the total students who were examined. In addition, there were also 18 students or 86% of the total students who were unsuccessful. The following table is the students' scores during the preliminary test.

**Table 1.** The Students Score in the Preliminary Test

No	Score	Total Students	Precentage (%)
1.	35	4	19%
2.	40	1	4%
3.	45	7	33%
4.	50	2	10%
5.	55	2	10%
6.	60	2	10%
7.	75	3	14%
8.	80	0	0%
9.	95	0	0%
10.	100	0	0%

From the students' score in the preliminary text can be seen that the number of students were 21 students, but only 3 students got 75. They were classified as successful subjects. Then, there were 18 students who failed. There were 4 students who got 35, 1 student got 40, 7, students got 45, 2 students got 50, 2 students got 55, and 2 students got 60. The students' average score was 50,00. Based on the data in Table 4.1, the researcher formulated several elements, such as the disability to understand descriptive texts due to the lacking of teaching media, students' passive interaction on talking with their peers (since the students were not actively involved in the learning process), and the lacking of students' understanding in descriptive texts (especially in action verb and sentence construction). From the results of the data, it is necessary to take action in the learning process, so that students' learning outcomes can increase.

In cycle I, the writer taught descriptive text through content-based instruction by forming groups and it was guided by the teacher to improve students' writing skills. The first cycle was conducted on May 14, 2019. It was conducted in class VIII B at 07.00 a.m. There were 21 students in the class. The purpose of the first cycle was to enable students to write a descriptive text. On the other hand, based on the learning action carried out in cycle I, it can also be seen that several aspects had been achieved well, such as the capability of the teacher to carry out the learning process and implement the plan well. The teacher could implement the methods in writing descriptive text well and students, with the guidance of the teacher, could rewrite the corrected answers given by the teacher well. The weaknesses that occurred in cycle I were (1) the teacher did not provided the students with motivations; (2) the teacher did not explained the learning objectives so that students could be more interested in participating in learning; (3) the teacher did not provide opportunities to students to give an impression about the learning that had been done. Therefore, the steps for the next learning process in cycle II were (1) the teacher should provide perceptions or motivation to students so that students will be more enthusiastic about learning, (2) the teacher should explain the learning objectives so that students will be more interested in participating in learning, (3) class mastery needs to be improved by giving penalties to misbehaved students. In fact, at the time when the class group discussion began, students made a noise because those students competed with each other when giving their opinions in one group, some gave different opinions, causing the class to be ineffective. Besides, it was seen that some students were busy chatting, playing with their cell-phones, and sleeping. In this activity, it is claimed that the teacher had difficulty in conditioning the class although class management is very important and greatly influences the level of learning during the learning process in class. Lastly, (4) the teacher should allow students to give an impression of the learning that had been done.

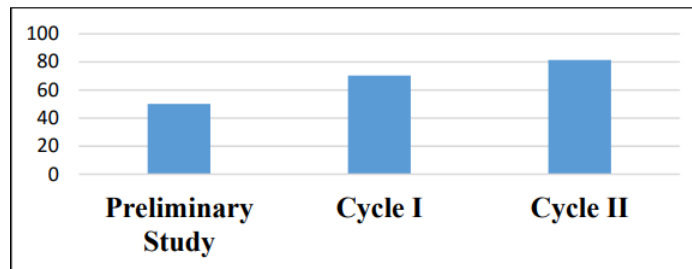
From the result, the researcher revealed that among those 17 students, 4 students had the highest score, which was equal to 100, 4 students got 95, 5 students got 80, and 5 students got 75. All of them were classified to successful students. Then, 2 students got 60 and 2 others got 50. They were classified to failed students. The students' average score was 81. Based on the

data above, it can be concluded that the writing skill mastery from the content-based instruction had improved. Therefore, the researcher did not continue it with any further cycle. The implementation of content based instruction encouraged the students to write a descriptive text. Below is the table which shows study development in both cycle I and cycle II.

**Table 2.** The Average of the Students' Score

No	Preliminary Test	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	35	80	80
2	40	45	55
3	35	55	75
4	50	80	80
5	35	55	75
6	50	50	80
7	35	60	75
8	45	75	80
9	55	60	75
10	45	75	80
11	55	60	60
12	45	50	55
13	60	50	60
14	45	95	95
15	60	75	100
16	45	95	95
17	75	75	100
18	45	95	95
19	75	75	100
20	45	75	95
21	75	95	100
<b>Average</b>	50	70	81

From the result, students who succeeded in the writing tests of the preliminary test were 3 people, whereas the other 18 were unsuccessful. This means that 14% of total students had a good mastery in writing. Then, there was also an improvement in students' writing from the preliminary test in cycle I. In cycle I, there were 12 students who passed the test, while the other 9 students failed. In cycle II, the result of the study showed that students who passed the test altered. In cycle II there were 17 students passed the test, while the other 4 students failed. Therefore, the implementation of content based instruction could also gain the students' interest and motivation in the learning process. The improvement from preliminary until cycle two can be seen in the following:



**Figure 2.** The Average of the Students' Score

In the Figure 4.4, the average score in the preliminary test was 50. The result of the cycle I displays that the students' average score was 70 and in cycle II, the students' average score has increased to 81,00. It is claimed that content words could help students to finish writing tests and improve students' writing mastery. Based on the results of the reflection above, it can be considered that the overall teacher's activity in cycle II had reached all the indicators that had been constructed in the observation sheet. However, learning by applying this problem-based learning needs to be improved and maintained. The next learning process excluded in this research is an effort to improve the above weaknesses, such as the teacher being able to pay attention to small things like the mastery of the material and classroom conditions.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study aims to answer the research questions contained in Chapter I. The research question that was formulated by the researcher was: "How is ContentBased Instruction implemented to improve students' ability in writing descriptive texts at SMP Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Yogyakarta?" After researching to improve students' skills in writing descriptive texts, the researcher discovered several findings. All findings were acquired from the data in this research. The research finding is the improvement of students' skills in writing descriptive texts. From the results of the preliminary study, the researchers found out that their achievement in writing descriptive texts was low. This can be seen from the average rate of completeness in the preliminary study was only by 3 students or 14%, while those who were unsuccessful were 18% or 86%. From the first cycle, the researcher found out that the completeness of the students in writing descriptive texts had increased, the researcher revealed that 12 students or 58% of students could passed and only 9 students or roughly 42% failed. They had difficulty choosing vocabulary and writing simple descriptive text. Compared with the results of preliminary learning, it is clear that students who completed the preliminary cycle to the cycle II have increased. However, this initial cycle one did not work and needed to be fixed in the second cycle.

By analyzing the problem in cycle I, particularly elaboration stage, the students misbehaved by chatting with their peers. Even only one student within a group of four students did the task. Then, the researcher revised the plan and implemented it in cycle II. The differences were on the game in the elaboration phase. In cycle II, the researcher employed a game called throwing a ball to improve their ability in writing. The students who reached the criteria of success increased to 17 students or approximately 81% students passed in cycle II. From this research, the researcher concluded that the application of content-based learning increased students' abilities in writing descriptive texts. The results of the observations showed that students' participation was more interested in writing descriptive through content-based instruction. This showed that student achievement was satisfactory. It is seen that content-based learning in the learning process is more attractive to students.

The material used by the teacher in learning to write descriptive texts was taken from the English textbook Ring a Bells by Siti Wachidah (2017). The media used by the teacher in teaching writing descriptive text were LCD projectors, blackboards, textbooks, dictionaries, and blackboard markers. The method used by the English teacher in teaching writing at Taman Dewasa Ibu Pawiyatan Junior High School Yogyakarta was executed in two cycles. The problems met by teachers in teaching writing descriptive texts were (1) classroom management; (2) students' assumptions that English is difficult; (3) the teacher must be slower in explaining and repeating material because students have low vocabulary mastery. The problems faced by students in the learning process of writing descriptive texts were inadequate vocabulary and incorrect and unclear writing. The solutions to overcome these are (1) always provide motivation to students in English Language Learning; (2) always control the class by monitoring the classroom to check students' engagement; (3) always give students the opportunity to ask about material they do not understand.

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