THE IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY USING VISUAL-SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE STRATEGY AT MTS AL-JUMHURIYAH SEI ROTAN

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ABSTRACT

This research was aimed to find out the improving students' writing skills in descriptive text by using Visual Spatial Intelligence. in enhancing this research, the researcher applied the classroom action research, which was done through four steps. They were plan, action, observation, and reflection n. The subjects of this study were 19 students at eight grade students of MTS Al Jumhuriyah Sei Rotan in 2019/2020 Academic Year. The technique of analyzing the data of this research was applied by quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data were taken from observation sheet, interview, and documentation. The quantitative data were taken from students writing skill test. The data was taken from test result which was done in two cycles and two cycles conducted in four meetings. The test was given to the students in form of pre-test, post test in the first cycle and the post test in the second cycle. The result of the analyzing the data showed that the students' mean score was an improving on the students writing skills from each cycles. It was showed from Pre-test, there was 6 students got successful score criteria or it was (32%) and 13 students' got unsuccessful score criteria. In the Post test in cycle I, there was 10 students (47%) who got successful score criteria. In the post test in cycle II there was 16 students (84%) who got successful score criteria. In Other words, the students' writing skills in descriptive text was improved. Based on the observation sheet, interview, and documentation, it can be showed that the expression and enthusiasm of students in learning were also improve.

Keywords: *Students' Writing Skills in Descriptive Text and Visual Spatial Intelligence*

INTRODUCTION

Through In globalization era, the English teaching learning in junior high schools is required to improve the communicative skills of students to achieve standards of functional literacy. They will use language at this stage to write news, manuals, descriptions, short stories, and so on. In addition, among other language skills, they consider writing to be the most difficult and challenging skill to learn among other language skills.

However, in fact the objective above is not achieved yet. This can be proven from the fact that the students' writing skill is still low. The difficulties experienced by students in writing in the form of writing skills, to be the most difficult and challenging skill to learn among other language skills.

The reason why writing skills is still low is that the students feel reading is boring, because they do not understand the questions about what they want to write about when they get to the writing assignment. They do not understand about they get to the writing yet. They didn't know what was in it, even though the teacher decided the subject for them. It seems that they haven't maximized their creative use of imagining what things to write about. It can be seen from the fact that they have not been able to develop / maximize their creativity for what they will write. Most of the students are less interested to writing skills, because they do not have any motivation in their selves.

According to Harmer , writing is used for a variety of purposes and produced in many different forms. So, However, writing is the most constructed skill to develop.[1] Heaton state, "Writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring not only mastery of grammatical and rhetorical devices, but also logical and judgment elements".[2] Hyland also defines that, "Writing is a socio-cognitive activity that involves skills in planning and drafting, as well as knowledge of language context and audience.[3] Therefore, writing requires a long process of developing an idea / finding an idea, deciding the genre and construction of the text, producing it and exploring knowledge through that.

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[1]Harmer, J. (2004). *How to Teach Writing.* England:Pearson Education Ltd.
[2]Heaton, John Brian. (1990). *Writing English Language Tests (New Edition)*. Hongkong:Longman UK Limited.

In addition, writing is a progress activity. Oshima and Hogue argues that when someone writes something, they have thought about what will be said and how you will say it. This means that after he finishes writing, their must read what they has written and then make changes and corrections. Therefore, writing never takes a single step, but writing needs a multi-step process.[4]

The reason why researcher uses visual spatial intelligence is an option with the existence of this visual spatial can help the students' interest in reading comprehension, especially in learning English. Writing is also difficult because writers need to organize their ideas that are organized and reasonable to make the readers understand the entire information. Usually, before ultimately thinking that their writing is coherent, a writer must invest considerable time, intense and frequent focus before finally thinking that their writing is coherent. They also experienced the same event where a very difficult skill to learn was considered to be writing. This can be seen from the importance of their writing abilities, which, relative to other abilities, appear to experience low scores. Then they are generally confused in deciding / designing the subject and material they want to write about when they get to the writing assignment.

Based on the background above, the researcher assumes that writing skills become a problem if not overcome soon. For this assumption, the researcher is interested to do descriptive research. By doing this research, the researcher expected that this research with title " *Improving Students' Writing Skills in Descriptive Text by Using Visual-Spatial Intelligence Strategy at MTS Al- Jumhuriyah Sei Rotan in Academic Year 2020/2021".*

LITERATURE REVIEW
Writing Skill of Descriptive Text
According to Abbas Saleh, writing skills are the ability to express idea, opinions, and feelings to other parties through written language.[5] Writing skills are the consistency of expressing the ideas the accuracy of the words used, vocabulary and grammar, and the use of spelling must follow that. It implies that writing skills are the abilities that a person has through written language to expressing their ideas.

According to Tarigan, Writing skills are one of the active and expressive language skills used to engage with other parties implicitly and not face to face. [6] It can be assumed that writing skills are skills that are used without having to deal directly with others as a means to communicate by written language with others.

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[3] Hyland. (2004). *Genre and Second Language Writing.* Ann Arbor, MI:The University of Michigan Press.

[4] Oshima, Aliceand Ann Hogue, 1997.*Writing Academic English..* (New York: Addison Wesley Publishing Company), p

As explained above, writing is additional complex activities. Kane mentions the definition of writing as a process that involves and learns how to return words and sentences and paragraphs into good writing.[7] Jhon Langan argue that how to create ideas and ways to communicate with others, find what they want to write and try to understand them.[8]

Writing is an attempt to transfer spoken language into written form. Mastering language skills is an instrument for expressing ideas, ideas or reasons in written form.[9] Then, according to Utami Dewi, writing is a language expression in the form of letters, symbols or words. The main purpose of writing is communication.[10]

It can be inferred that writing is an activity, based on the explanation above. In which words and ideas are translated into sentences and paragraphs that are used to communicate with others. You can speak and receive the message from the author by writing.

Writing is a basic language skill, as important as speaking, listening and reading, according to Harmer. This means learners need to learn how to write. There are four elements: (1) Planning, the writer must start preparing. To begin writing, We need a good strategy. Three key points are concerned with planning: intent, audience, and structure of content, (2) Drafting, a set of techniques designed to coordinate and create a continuous piece of writing, (3) editing, reflecting and revising. Describe revising as a way to strengthen the draft or to correct it. After competing in the final draft, the draft itself will be re-examined and re-evaluated, and (4) Final Drafting, will be accompanied by a written text ready to conclude with its intended audience. The final draft in writing, the final result of the text. They may be short stories, essays, books, magazines, journals, and other texts.

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[5] Abbas Saleh, *Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia yang Efektif di Sekolah Dasar,* Jakarta: Dirjen Dikti Depdiknas, 2006, p.125 e.

[6] Henry Guntur Tarigan, *Menulis Sebagai Suatu Keterampilan berbahasa,* Bandung:angkasa, 2008, p.3

[7] Thomas S. Kane, (2000), *Essential Guide to Writing*, (New York: Oxford University Press), p.17

[8] John Langan, (2011), *College Writing Skills,*(United States of America: McGraw Hill), p.12 p.135

[9] JB.Heaton, (1988), *Writing English Language Test*, (Consultant Editors: New York)

Visual Spatial Intelligence

In Armstrong, according to Gardner, knowledge has much to do with the ability to (1) solve problems and (2) create products and works in a rich context and naturalistic circumstances.[11]

According to Bandler and Grinder in Depotter, intelligence is an expression of a person's way of thinking which can be used as a learning modality, almost everyone tends to one of the learning modalities that plays a role in filters for learning, processing and communication. The researcher may conclude that, intelligence is some of the skills an individual has to be able to solve problems that will be faced in life by producing something useful both in the society.

This intelligence includes attention to the lines, forms, spaces, and interactions between these components. This requires the ability to visualize, graphically represent visual or spatial concepts, and correctly orient themselves in a spatial matrix.

According to Gardner, visual-spatial intelligence is a personal skills to create a mindset about the spatial world, use it and manipulate this mindset in solving every problem related to the spatial world. Visual-spatial intelligence is closely related to learning geometry. There is a cause of low understanding and ability of students to solve geometry problems generally caused by geometric objects that are quite abstract and the visual spatial ability of students is still low. Therefore, it is very important to improve students 'visual-spatial ability to increase the percentage of students' understanding in learning geometry.

There are many advantages that students get in studying visual spatial intelligence. Firstly, Visual spatial intelligence is a very simple strategy, so that it is easy to apply to students, The degree of visual intelligence enables learners not only to gain information through static images, but also to engage their imagination, to visualize objects from different angles. Visual spatial intelligence plays a major role in the development of visual images, memorizing them by means of images, and should therefore be established to a greater degree.

Spatial Visual also have disadvantages, including this technique is a strategy they have never heard of and practiced. For readers who are not familiar with writing skills, they will not be able to understand what they are going to write and explain the object, from an image that is visually what is seen in the image. Visual spatial intelligence strategy is a difficult technique for them because its a new strategy in teaching learning process.

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[11] Gardner, H., (2013), *Multiple Intelegences: Memaksimalkan Potensi dan Kecerdasan Individu dari Masa Kanak-Kanak Hingga Dewasa*, Daras: Jakarta.

RESEARCH METHOD

This analysis was part of Classroom Action Research (CAR). The aim of this study was to improve students to writing skill in descriptive text by using visual spatial intelligence strategy at Grade VIII students of MTS.s Al-Jumhuriyah Sei Rotan. Suwarsih Madya stated that action research was research that was directly related to field practice in natural situations. The scope of research was very limited and action research was more aimed at making changes to all participants and changes in the situation of the research site.[12]

According to Kemmis & Mc Taggart, the ction research requires four broad phases in a research cycle. The method of this analysis of action is as follows:

Cycle 1

1. Planning

    There are some plans prepared as follows by the writer related to the action:
    a) The teacher prepared a syllabus.

    b) The teacher prepared learning materials that are in accordance with syllabus.
    c) The teacher prepared the lesson plan.

    d) The teacher prepared list of students' name and scoring.

    e) The teacher prepared a classroom observation sheet. When the methodology is applied, the teaching-learning process would be capable of understanding it.
    f) Preparing for the test

2. Action

    a) The teacher prepared reminded students to learn in groups.

    b) The teacher prepared the teaching learning activity of writing descriptive text using the lesson plan-based visual spatial approach was introduced.
    c) The teacher prepared gave The prepared instructor gave students the opportunity to ask questions about the materials, as well as the learning system that has been implemented.
    d) The teacher prepared continued to accompany and direct students throughout the process learning take place.
    e) Learning closed with prayer.

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[12] Madya, S., (2007),*Teori dan Praktik Penelitian Tindakan*, (Bandung:Alfabeta), p. 55

1. Observation
   In this step, the English teacher checks the observation sheet as an observer. During the learning process, observers track student behaviors. In writing and the learning process, observation will do all the processes. The observation process will be carried out by the state of the observer, the learning teaching process, the activity and skill of the teacher and student.
2. Reflection

   The researcher reflected some things in this step, as follows: a) Reflected the evaluation of teaching learning process. b) Reflected and evaluated of what have done.

2. Cycle II

Based on the result of the reflection from the first cycle, the second cycle was performed. If the outcomes of findings are still low in classroom action study, more action is required to increase the quality of the content in the next cycle. During give the treatment, writing skills tests were given to students. Students are given assignments to complete writing skills in descriptive texts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Preliminary Study

Before conducting the first cycle, the researcher did the preliminary study to find out the students' writing skills on descriptive text. In this preliminary data, the researcher gave the reading test and also interview. The used of reading test is to know the students' writing skills on descriptive text. The researcher noted the score which passed of 75 was success depending on minimum mastery criteria – Kriteria ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) from the school.

The number of students who took the test was 19 students. After the test conducted, it was found that all of the students could not passed the minimum score 75. The total of the students' score from the pre – test was 1184. So, the mean score was 62,32.

Based on the result above, it can be seen that the students' writing skills on descriptive text and the students' score was still low. It can be seen from the mean score was 62,32. The percentage of the students who passed the test was

32%. The students who passed the test were 6, and there were 13 students did not passed the standard minimum criteria on English lesson.

The result of the interview from qualitative data before conducting the first cycle were the teacher's problem in making learning process. Moreover, the students' did not understand about descriptive text and still confused distinguish the text to other. It was shown from the result of the interview with the English teacher, as follows:

To support the quantitative data, it can be seen from the qualitative data that was taken by using observation and interview. The observation was conducted by the researcher before the visual spatial strategy was applied by the researcher in learning process. The result of observation can be seen from the following data. When the researcher observed some students, the

researcher found the students had difficulty to answer the question of the descriptive text. This data showed that the students' writing skills in using descriptive text was still low. It can be seen from their score of pre-test. The interview also informed that the students' ability in using the descriptive text was still low. I interviewed the students 1. It can be proven from the following data:

"Saya tidak suka menulis dalam bentuk bahasa inggris Miss, karena tulisan dengan pengucapannya berbeda miss" (I don't like writing in English Miss, because the writing is different in pronunciation Miss). Another student said that: *"Ketika menulis dalam teks bahasa inggris saya kurang mengerti tentang grammar Miss".* (When writing in English text I do not understand the grammar Miss). Another student: *"Saya kurang tertarik menulis dalam bentuk bahasa inggris dikarenakan pengucapan dan penulisannya berbeda dan kurangnya kosakata saya Miss".* (I'm not interested in writing in English because the pronunciation and writing are different and my vocabulary is lacking Miss.)

From the result of the interview above, it can be conclude that the students' students' writing skills in using descriptive text was still low. The students got some problems in reading. Therefore, the researcher continued the preliminary data to the first cycle.

2. **Cycle I**

   The researcher have done some steps in the first cycle, they were:

planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Here the activities that have done in every steps:

a. Planning

   The researcher planned the lesson in the planning step, which consists of the main competencies and basic competencies that were seen in the syllabus based on teaching materials. In order to clarify the activities of students during the teaching and learning process, the researcher then prepared the teaching and learning process tools, such as observation sheets, test evaluations, and attendance lists.
   In this step, such activities were done by the researcher, and they were:

   a) Making lesson plan

   b) Preparing the requisite media in action

   c) The preparation of observation sheets, interview sheets and diary notes.

   b. Action
   The teacher tasks in this process according to the schedule that was planned in the planning phase. The teacher begins the class. The teacher did the appreciation by welcoming students, checking the student attendance list, and asking them to pray together.
   When doing the research in the second cycle, there were so many activities. There were:

a) The teacher explained the procedures of the learning visual-spatial strategy.
b) The topic was given by teachers and the pictures shared

c) The teacher ask the students to write a list of question related to the picture.
d) The teacher asked students to form a discussion group.
e) The teacher provides an example with a picture that has been explained in front of the class.
f) Each student must write down the answer from the picture that the teacher has given in the form of descriptive text.
g) The teacher closed the meeting and collected the results of the answers from the students and encouraged students to be more interested in learning.

c. Observation

The observation was focused on the teaching learning situation in which the behaviors of students and the writing skills and interaction between teacher and students were applied in the visual-spatial strategy.

The researcher helps students to be inspired to be express good ideas on the basis of the observation sheet. In addition, students listen to and Pay attention to the teacher's interpretation, and follow the instructions of the teacher. After given the post test I, the number of students who passed the KKM was 9 from 19 students. The total of the students score was 1313. So, the mean of the students score was 69,1. From the result, it can be seen that the students in post – test I was improving higher than the students' score in pre – test. The percentage of the students' score of the test who passed the KKM was 47%.

To support the quantitative data, it can be seen from the qualitative data that was taken by using observation sheet and interview. The observation sheet was done to observe how students' attitude and problem in teaching and learning process. The students were enjoyable and enthusiastic about the topic and they were able to read in descriptive text, and the students can develop their idea about the object because they can exchange ideas with their friend about the object. The result of the teacher's and students' interview can be seen from the interview of English teacher about the students' reading comprehension in narrative text, as follows: *"Menurut pendapat saya, saya merasa siswa sangat tertarik dengan adanya metode visual-spatial ini dalam pembelajaran bahasa inggris. Karena dengan adanya metode ini siswa dapat hanya melihat gambar (visual) yang membuat ide/imajinasi mereka itu dikembangkan dengan baik".* It was strengthened by the result of students' interview as follows: *"Menurut saya miss, menulis teks deskriptif jauh lebih mudah dengan menggunakan strategi visual spatial ini Miss karena dengan melihat gambar kami dapat mengembangkan semua ide kami dengan baik dan benar".*

The another student said that:*"Kemampuan writing saya meningkat karena penggunaan grammarnya tidak sesulit yang saya pikirkan dan saya lebih mudah membuat sebuah teks/ paragraf hanya dengan melihat sebuah gambar yang jelas".*

The researcher could improve the students' writing skills on descriptive text, and the students more understood about descriptive text because the researcher gave the example with objects in the form of images. The form, the sentence and the words can be read and understood better than in preliminary

research. Otherwise, when the teacher gave them description and instruction, they paid attention. The researcher stated, from the score of the students and the response of the students above, to proceed in cycle II in hopes of being the highest. The second cycle was held to obtain the students' score and improvement score.

d. Reflecting

At the end of the first cycle, the researched evaluated the teaching and learning process. As a teacher, the researcher asked students about their challenges and concerns in following the lessons in the course of teaching and learning.

The students' writing skills in the post test cycle I, the result it was showed the total score of the students' was 1313 and there were 19 students' who took the test. So, the mean that the researcher got was 55.74. The percentage of the students' score in post test cycle I was 9 students passed the score 75 or up 75 was
47%.

From the students' score and the students' response above, the students' writing skills in post test cycle I was still low. Because the students' writing skills on descriptive text in post test I was categorized not success. In hoping for the right one, the researcher chose to continue in cycle II

2) Cycle II

The cycle II was done based on the result of cycle I. If the results of the observations indicated that the score was still low, further action was therefore required in order to make some quality changes in the next cycle. So, the steps were: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting The steps that were done by the researcher in the cycle II were:

a. Planning
   Based on the teaching material, the researcher prepared the lesson plan in the planning, improved the teaching media, prepared the teaching aid, and prepared the observation sheets.

b. Action

   In the first step, all aspects were better prepared by the study during the first cycle. When doing the research in the second cycle, there some activities. There were:
   a. Giving instructions on how to explain the picture based on it.
       b. The topic was given by teachers and the pictures shared

   c. The teacher ask the students to write a list of picture- related questions.
       d. The teacher asked students to form a discussion group.

   e. The teacher provides an example with a picture that has been explained in front of the class.
   f. Each student must write down the answer from the picture that the teacher has given in the form of descriptive text.
   g. The teacher closed the meeting, and collected the results of the students' answer and motivated students to be more
       active in learning.

c. Observing

In this step , like the previous meeting, the researcher also observed the learning process assisted by the English teacher as the collaborator. The researcher can tackle the class easily and effectively based on the observation sheet. The researchers concentrated on the teaching and learning process, and student behaviors were observed. The result of observation was collected as the data.

The students' score in the post – test II was improving. There were 16 students passed the KKM and 3 students that failed the test. The total score of the students was 1586. So, the mean score was 83,4. By the total and the mean score, it can be concluded that the score of the students' improved higher than the pre – test and the post – test I. The percentage of the students who passed the KKM was 84%.

Qualitative and quantitative result, they were two results in the cycle II that found by the researcher. From the qualitative result it can be seen that using visual spatil strategy in learning process became more interesting and enjoyable, it can make the students' more understand and more active how to read well in descriptive text because they can exchange their ideas. From observation sheet, the researcher explained the generic structure and example of descriptive text, the students could follow the researcher's instruction well. So, the post – test cycle II was categorized successful.

It can be concluded from the above data that visual spatial strategy could improve the students writing skill on descriptive text. Until cycle II, the research stopped the research.

d. Reflection

In this stage, the researcher could reflect the data weather the action, which could enhance the writing skill of students. The researcher could be concluded as follow:

The score of the students' in cycle II, and quantitatively, the score of the students' in cycle II, it can be seen that the students who took the test were 19 students. The total score of the students' was 1586. So, the mean of the students' score was 83,4. The percentage of the students' score of the post test cycle II was 19 students who reached the score up 75 was 84%. It can be conclude that post test cycle II was successful.

Based on the explanation above, it can be conclude that the researcher felt the cycle could be stopped. Most of the students' score improve from the cycle I to cycle II. Because the students' writing skills on descriptive text was improve by using visual spatial intelligence.

B. Discussion

This research was conducted to find out by using the strategy of visual- spatial intelligence to improve students' skill to write descriptive text in English to improve the skill of students' to write descriptive text in English learning. The results of research conducted by researchers suggest that the visual-spatial strategy is effective or may be used to write descriptive texts in learning. This strategy is also intended to prevent student boredom, that can reduce interest in learning English.

In the learning process, the impact of learning visual-spatial strategies was easier for the students, and the students were able to write descriptive

text correctly. There was an increase in the teaching and learning process between cycle I and cycle II from these results. The results of the research showed hat by using visual-spatial intelligence strategy, the student scores were improved in writing descriptive text. It could be seen from the data that showed that the mean score of the students improved at each meeting. It could be seen from the data which showed that the mean of the students in the second cycle (83,4) was higher than the first cycle (69,1) and also in test before done cycles (63,32). The results of the research, it could be seen from the table of the improvement of the student scores got better in the post-test I than the pre-test, and the post test II got better than post test I.

Based on the explanation above, it shows that using visual-spatial strategy to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text got a good improvement. Therefore, the use of the visual-spatial learning strategy on the writing skill of the students' in descriptive text was significant.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
a. Conclusions

Based on the results of the research that aims to improve the students' skills in writing descriptive texts by using a visual-spatial strategy. The conclusions were obtained through real phenomena as researcher did during observation. The researcher draws the following conclusions:

1. The students' writing skill in descriptive text before using visual spatial strategy was very low. From the data can be seen that the students' mean score on the Pre-Test was 62,32. Then, it can be conclude that the students skill have difficulties when answering the test.
2. After analyzing the data, the researcher found that the students' writing skills in descriptive text after using visual spatial strategy was improved. It could be seen from the results of the pre-test and post-test in cycles I and II. Based on the students' score in the Post-Test cycle I, the mean score was 69,1 and then the mean score in the Post-Test Cycle II was 83,4. Therefore, the students' score after applying visual spatial strategy was higher than before applying visual spatial strategy.
3. The students' writing skill in descriptive text after using visual spatial strategy was improved. The students can answer the test easily, and they can find the correct answer. By using a visual-spatial intelligence strategy, the students can explained what's on their mind based on the picture an other visualization. They also can sort their writing being more organized and optimal. From the interview, visual spatial strategy was helping the students in learning descriptive text to improve their writing skill at the second grade students of MTS Swasta Al-Jumhuriyah Sei Rotan.

b. Suggestion

The following idea is offered to be considered, having seen the results of the research:

1. For the teacher should created all alternative, such as media in teaching English especial in writing skill. They should create good conditions for the classroom by using visual-spatial intelligence strategies and make the more responsive and enthusiastic during the method of teaching and learning.

2. English learn should learn by students through practice and experience. Students should pay attention to guidance during the teaching and learning process and students should learn the material until it is challenging for the teacher in the class
3. The other researchers who want to develop all information and knowledge in the form of visual-spatial intelligence strategies that subject of the study.

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