

# TEACHING WRITING REPORT TEXT THROUGH STUDENTS' FIELD EXPERIENCE AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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## Abstrak

Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan penggunaan *Students' Field Experience* sebagai strategi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis *report text* dengan cara siswa diminta untuk melakukan pengamatan dan mengumpulkan informasi terhadap objek tertentu sebagai ide untuk menulis teks report. Langkah - langkah dalam menggunakan *Students' Field Experience* ini adalah dimulai dengan membangun latar belakang pengetahuan siswa terhadap *report text* (*Pre teaching*). Guru memperkenalkan teknik yang akan digunakan serta menjelaskan bagaimana menggunakan teknik tersebut untuk membuat sebuah *report text*, membagi siswa dalam beberapa kelompok, memberikan *lembaran pengamatan* kepada siswa sebagai panduan untuk mencari dan mengembangkan informasi terhadap objek pengamatan yang dilakukan di lapangan, siswa menyusun ide berdasarkan informasi yang di kumpulkan untuk menulis *report text* (*Whilst Teaching*). Pada *Post Teaching*, guru menyimpulkan materi yang telah dipelajari.

Key Words: Strategy, students' field experience, information list sheets, writing.

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### A. Introduction

Writing is an important skill to be mastered by students who learn English as foreign language. By writing, students can express their ideas, thoughts, feelings and experiences to the reader. In other words, writing can be said as a means of communication between writer and reader. Writing is a skillful activity that involves knowledge, ideas, and critical thinking of students. Therefore, writing is considered as a complex skill for students because it requires a high level of effort and concentration.

Writing is a skill that person uses to deliver his or her ideas, feelings, thought or information to the reader through paper. According to Burnet and Stubbs (2000), writing is the way of communication of making contact between the writer and the readers. The writer actually gives something that may be valuable for the readers, the people who will read what they write. It means that there is a communication between writer and reader. Carino (1991) states that writing is a kind of social interaction where someone writes something and the other read it. It means that there is a communication between writer and reader.

Teaching writing at junior high school is a process where teachers help students to convey information communicatively in written form. In teaching writing, teachers' creativity is really needed. They should be able to teach different text of writing by using different method and different media. By using appropriate strategies like applying pre writing, whilst writing and post writing really help the teachers in teaching writing and they can help students to reach their goal in writing.

Lance (2005) explains that there are three important things that a teacher has to know when he or she teaches writing to students at junior high school. The first is purposeful writing. A research tells that students become more interested in writing and the quality of their writing improves when there are significant learning goals for writing assignments and a clear sense of purpose for writing. That is why, setting the goals before process teaching and learning began is very important, so that the students have a clear description about the achievement that they have to master at the end of the lesson. Second is a mentor. Giving a model before asking the students to do some activities can avoid students' confused. It is very important for the teacher to give some examples or models to the students so that they understand what they are going to do. The third point is direct instruction. A teacher has role to provide optimal situations to encourage writing, fostering with good mentors, and being open and accepting. That is why the teacher has to provide a direct instruction in various aspects of good writing.

Teaching writing at junior high school in Indonesia done based on curriculum. Based on curriculum 2006 (*KTSP*) junior high school students are taught several texts in learning and teaching process. They are descriptive, recount, narrative, report and procedure. Each of those texts should be taught in four skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading). The curriculum has determined the standard competency and basic competency for each English skill

that must be reached by the students during the learning process in each semester. The standard competency of writing is to express the meaning into written short functional and simple monolog text in daily life context. The basic competency is to express the meaning into simple monolog text accurately, fluently, and acceptable in any context of daily life in the text.

One of the types of text which is should be learnt for Indonesian student is report text. Report text is a kind of text which is describes the way things are, with a reference to a range of natural, manmade and social phenomenon in our environment. It belongs to genre which is called “report text” or “Information report” and the information in report text can be about science, fields and technology this text describes information about something in our environment. In other word, report text is a one of the genre which is provides factual information a topic, clarifying and describing a natural and non natural phenomenon of our world.

Gerot and Wignell (1994) who states that a report text has elements: general classification and description. General classification and description part tells about what phenomenon under discussion is. Description part tells about what phenomenon under discussion, is like term of parts, qualities and habit or behavior for living and non living things.

Because of a report text is very important to be learned, so the students are expected to produce it by using English as one of communication tools in around the world but the process of learning cannot run successfully because there are some problems faced by the students when writing a report text. There are some problems that make students find it difficult to write a report text. The first problem is lack of ideas. Most of Junior High School students have no idea when they are asked to write, so they do not know what they are going to write. As we know, idea is one of the most important aspects in writing and it is the key in writing. Without ideas, the students cannot write something or a text.

The second problem is grammar. In writing, grammar takes an important role because to arrange each sentence and develop it to become a good text, the students have to use correct grammar. However, most of the students never concern about grammar when they write a text. They think idea is more important in writing whereas to form the text and arrange every idea, grammar is really needed. Therefore, when they write a text, their writing is full with grammatical mistakes.

The next problem is lack of vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary in writing is important to develop the text, and it also helps the students to support their idea and convey it in writing. However, most of the students do not really pay attention to the vocabulary. In the teaching and learning process, they are careless to look up the meaning of a word in the dictionary and seldom use new vocabulary that they just know. That is why they just have a little vocabulary. When they write a text, they do not know what the appropriate words that they have to write are.

Media that is used by the teacher also become a problem for the students. The teachers tend not to use media in teaching. In teaching English, the teachers should use various kinds of media that can make the students interested in learning especially in teaching writing. It is expected that they choose a media that is suitable to use in the classroom.

According to Cimcoz (1999), there are other reasons why writing is so difficult for junior high school students. They are not able to write, feel foolish when they could not find the most suitable words and want to keep themselves away from experience of having a topic and blank paper. That is why the students considered writing, especially in English as a difficult task.

Due to reasons above, the teachers have to find good solution and make the students interested in writing English and change the opinion that says writing is the hardest skill to be acquired. There are some ways to solve this problem. It can be started from applying various strategies and using various kinds of technique in the teaching. The writer would like to offer one interesting strategy in teaching writing report text in junior high school that is by using *Students' Field Experienced*.

Butt (2000) states that teacher must give a chance to the students to learn naturally by findings the relation academic lesson with their daily life. Capraro and Helfeldt (2010) states that field experiences are defined as a variety of Classroom act -based opportunities in which teacher and students may observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Generally, this activity occurs in schools they may also take place in other settings such as community.

Douglas (2005) states that field activity also called by the outside classroom learning experience, is a type of experiential learning which get students away from the traditional classroom setting and into a new environment occur in off-school settings such as parks, outdoor education centre, provincial parks, protective wet lands, science centre, museums, zoos, grocery stores, fire stations, veterinary clinics, agricultural operations, natural resource operations. Commonly, field activity can give the students new insight into various subjects and stimulate their interest in various topics.

By using students' field experience the teacher makes an opportunity for the students to gain a new experiences and information. In the field, students can observe a lot of things that can enrich their knowledge. Field experience stimulates and challenges students think in a different way. Environment can help the student to learn and think accurately. It can be done by doing observation through observation the students or writer tend to be minded and think of description mainly in term of what they see, they hear, smell and also what they fell about the object at ease. As the result the student become more creative in learning process because they can find the ideas in order to create a good writing, especially in writing a report text easily.

## **B. How to use students' field experience in learning process?**

In order to use Student Field Experience as a strategy in teaching writing report text at Junior High School. Below are some stages in using students' field experience as a strategy in teaching writing a report text to junior high school students:

### **Teacher preparation**

Preparation is important to do for the teacher before starting an activity. The teacher may prepare the material, media and lesson plan that will be used to support learning process. There are several important things that must be prepared before teaching the lesson. They are:

#### **1. Material**

The teacher has to prepare the material that is going to be taught because material is basic component in teaching. The material should be appropriate with students' level, knowledge and situation. It should motivate student and suitable with curriculum. In this case, report text is used as the material in teaching learning. Based on curriculum in Indonesia, this text is one of the texts that should be taught in junior high school. Through this paper, the writer chooses a report of animal as the example of the text.

#### **2. Media**

Using media in teaching and learning process really helps the teachers. The media should be appropriate with material and interesting for the students. Through this paper, the writer uses an information list as teaching media they can facilitate learning, attracts student's attention and make the teaching learning process run well.

#### **3. Lesson plan**

The teachers need to make lesson plan after preparing material and media in order to guide them during teaching and learning process. When creating the lesson plan, teachers should write subject, school, class and semester, the skills to be taught, topic and time. The lesson plan should also include standard competence and basic competence. Furthermore, there are three stages in teaching activities: pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching.

### **Teaching Procedure**

Teaching writing a report text by using research based writing in this paper is applied by using three phases technique. They are pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching.

#### **a. Pre- teaching activity**

In pre teaching activity, the teacher prepares the students' readiness for learning process. The learning process will not run well if the students are not ready to be involved in learning activity. So, it is best if the teacher greets them

first to ask their condition and checking the students' attendance, the teacher has to make a good atmosphere in the class by creating a class become fun and enjoyable to study. Then, teacher prepares the students in teaching and learning process by preparing some questions and pictures that relates to the students knowledge with the material to be learnt. The purpose of this activity is to make the students ready to learn about report text.

The teacher should builds up the students' background knowledge by asking some questions in order to make the students ready to learn the topic and make them easier to explore more about the topic in the next stages. For example: the teacher explains the purpose of the lesson. Based on those questions, the teacher can explore the students' background knowledge about the topic.

**b. Whilst teaching activity**

In this phase, the teacher leads the students to the main activity in teaching writing. This activity involves introducing the students to a model of the genre that they will write (report text). It focuses on analyzing the genre through a model related to the topic. The purpose of this step is to build up students' understanding about social function, generic structure, and language features of report text.

The teacher tells the students that they are going to discuss about report text. Then, the teacher explains about report text and the social function of report text and then the teacher introduces the topic about a report of animal by giving a model of a report text, for example the report text is about Cat:

**Figure 1: Example of the report text**

<p><b>CAT</b></p> <p>Cat is one of carnivore animals; it is vertebrate animal and takes a place in class of mammal. In scientist name, cat also called by <i>Felix Catus</i>. Cat is viviparous and can birth 2-5 young in once birth process. Cats can be refers to tiger, lion, cheetah and leopard.</p> <p>Cat is a cute and friendly animal. But even like that it can be nimble when facing its prey. It has soft fur and various colors like white, yellowish, dark black and black-white spot. The kitty can be 15 cm and the female/male can be 30 cm. It has small head, moustache, and tail complete its cute body. The people believe that cat has 7-9 soul. This flat-nose can be a keeper of a house.</p> <p><a href="http://biohazard117.blogspot.com/2010/11/report-text-about-cat.html">http://biohazard117.blogspot.com/2010/11/report-text-about-cat.html</a></p>
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Based on the text the teacher tells generic structure and lexicogramatical of the report text. First paragraph is called general classification; it contains with a general statement which is introduces the topic which is cats. Second paragraph is called description. It is completed with supporting information about facts; parts, qualities, habits and behaviors of the cats. The social function of report text which is to describe the way things are, with reference to a range of natural, manmade and social phenomena in our environment. Lexicogramatical features which is Focus on generic participant: *cat*, using the relational process to state what is and which it is : *It has soft fur and various colors like white, yellowish, dark black and black-white spot, and using the simple present tense form: Cat is a cute and friendly animal.*

Teacher explains the students about how to applied student field experience strategy in learning report text and divided the students into group consist of five students. This pairing is purposeful for the low level of students to motivate them in giving their ideas. Teacher show a complete list information sheet as an example for the student as guidance for the student in order to find out the information.

**Figure 2**

<b>List of Information</b>	
<b>Animal : Cat</b>	
Parts	Head, sharp teeth, four legs, tail, moustache, claw, ears, nose, eyes, fur, and mouth.
Color	White, yellowish, Dark black, Black-White Spot
Size	15-30 cm
Food	Fish, Lizard, butterfly, mouse
Habit	clamber, eat, sleep, play, scratch,
About Parts	short, long, sharp, small, soft
Character	attractive, lively, responsive

After that Teacher gives the information list to each group leads the student to out of the classroom to observe one animal that they can find in their surrounding in a limited time. Student will be free to choose the topic of their

writing object which can be an animal and the groups should fill out the list based on the information that they get when doing students' field activity and teacher leads the students back to the class and discuss together about the information they got while doing a students' field activity. Teacher asks the selected student of each group to present the information so the others group could collect a new information from them and if there are some difficult word they got, it will be discussed together. Last, students will write a report text in group based on the information they got into the form of paragraph

**c. Post teaching activity (5 minutes)**

This is the final and individual activity. In this activity the teacher checks the students understanding about the lesson by asking some questions. The questions that appear are *what is the function of the report text? What are the generic structures of the report text? What is the language feature in the report text?* Then the teacher concludes or summarizes the lesson with the students together. The teacher reviews the activities that have been done and teacher asks the students to observe one kind of animal and write a report text based on the information that they found at home and their surrounding into paragraph and collect it in the next meeting

**C. Conclusion**

*Based on the discussion in the previous chapters Writing is an activity which includes through mental efforts through writing. People give information to the reader in order to make the students interested in writing. The teachers should pay more attention to media and activities in the class. The teachers are expected to be a good teacher in facilitating the learning process. Teachers should be able to create and make some activities that can help the students write easily and be able to use an attractive media. Teacher should facilitate them by using interesting technique of learning; one of the activities is field experience which is the teacher asked the student to observe an object outside school.*

*Field experience can help junior high school students to generate their ideas in writing report text, because when doing this activity the students can see and observe the object directly. The students can find the source of their ideas by taking a note in order to help them in writing a report (descriptive animals or plants) and also this activity will help the teacher to teach the student in fun ways.*

**Note:** This article is compiled based on the writer's paper with her advisor **Drs. Sunaryo**

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