

**TEACHING WRITING A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT  
TO THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BY USING  
“ NEARBY OBJECTS: PEOPLE, PLACE, AND THING” AS A MODEL**

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**Abstrak**

Artikel ini di tulis bertujuan untuk membantu guru dalam proses pengajaran teks deskriptif terutama dalam penggunaan media serta menolong siswa dalam mengembangkan ide-ide dalam proses menulis. Media yang digunakan adalah *A Near by Object; People, Place, and Thing* atau yang biasa juga disebut dengan benda-benda yang ada disekitar siswa seperti ruangan, sekolah, teman, guru dan lain sebagainya. Menggunakan media ini dalam pengajaran teks deskriptif mempunyai banyak manfaat baik bagi guru maupun bagi siswa itu sendiri, yaitu menghemat waktu dan biaya. Selain itu, juga dapat meningkatkan motivasi siswa dalam belajar dan memahami text yang akan dipelajari.

*Key words: Teaching Writing, Descriptive Text, Media, Nearby Objects: People, Place, and Thing.*

**A. Introduction**

Nowadays, the English curriculum used is School Based Curriculum (KTSP) which has been used since 2006 for the elementary, junior, and senior high schools. Based on KTSP, the standard competencies for Junior High School level are to enable the students to have communicative competences in both spoken and written forms for achieving the functional literacy level. It means that students are expected to be able to use English language in their life in both spoken and written. In order to achieve the standard competencies and basic competencies above, the government suggests to use the Genre Based Approach in teaching English lesson.

The genre based approach was introduced to 2004. In the genre based approach, there are four steps that should be done by teacher in teaching English as a foreign language. They are Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF),

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Modeling of the Text (MOT), Join Construction of Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICOT). Each step of the stages will help the learners to understand the cultural and social context of the text, the structure of the text, the content of the text, and the linguistic features of the text. So that following all stages of the systemic teaching and learning cycle are very important to increase students' competence.

Generally, the genre-based approach emphasizes more on the students' mastery in various genres of the target language both in the forms of oral and written language. There are twelve types of text to teach in English. One of them is the descriptive text. The descriptive text is a kind of text to describe something or someone. It can be people, place or thing. Reep (in Fertesa, 2012:2) says that a descriptive text gives details about physical features, appearance, or composition of subject. This text gives details description about an object which can be people, thing or place. Gerot and Wignell (1994:208) say that the social function of a descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place and thing. It means that a descriptive text is text which is usually used to describe something specifically. Depdiknas (2004) supports the idea that the social function of a descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place and event or object.

The generic structure of a descriptive text consists of two parts; the identification and the description. The identification gives information about things, places and people which will be discussed. It refers to identifying phenomenon to be described (Depdiknas 2004). The description gives information in more details to support the identification. It might describe parts, qualities, and characteristics (Gerot and Wignell, 1994). Gerot and Wignell (1994), mention other versions about lexicogrammatical features of descriptive text. They are; *first* focus on specific participants, *second*, use of attributive and identifying processes, *third*, use of the simple present tense.

A descriptive text is taught in English through the four basic skills. One of them is writing. Writing is a productive skill in which the students can express their ideas and also their feelings. It is supported by Hyland (2002:7), says that writing is meaning from personal experience and context that transferred into the text. In addition writing is the way of writer to contribute their thought to produce meaningful sentences. According to Nunan (2003:88), writing is a process of delivering ideas and thinking into sentences and paragraphs that will be clear to the readers. So writing is very important for the students to communicate with other people.

In order to help students make a good writing, there are two things that should be considered. First, the students have to know the component of the text such as the generic structure, language features, and social function of the text. Second, the teaching of writing process itself in the classroom. If the two aspects run well, of course, the difficulties of writing will reduce. However, in fact, according to Nufus (20012:3) most of junior high school students get problems in

making a good writing. Those problems can be caused by the two factors. They are student's factor and teacher's factor.

Students' factors are the students' lack of motivation in writing which influence their practice in writing, lack of knowledge about the components of the text such as generic structure, language features, and social function of the text, and students get difficulties in generating and expressing ideas in English writing. Nufus (2012) states it is hard for the students to make a written text because of lack motivation, failure to generate their ideas and lack knowledge about language itself. As a result students get difficulties in producing a good text.

The next factor comes from the teacher side. Some of the teachers are lack of ways in teaching writing in the classroom such as using an appropriate media. The teacher brings the media to the classroom but it is not use maximally as media. Based on the Genre Based Approach, the teacher must give a model to the students about the text that will be learned. According to Handayani (2009:13) modeling is a process in giving model about something. Handayani (2009:3), also says that a teacher gets the difficulties in applying the modeling step because lack of knowledge. So, it is hard for the teacher to find the appropriate media in applying modeling text to the students in teaching writing text.

Based on the fact above, it is suggested to use nearby objects: people, place, and thing as a model to help teacher in applying modeling of the text in teaching writing a descriptive text and also help the students in writing. Nearby objects is a kind of media that using the object around the students. It can be people, place and thing.

Templeton (1995:5) says that the term of context to refer to whatever surrounds us. One kind of context is physical that is the context is *where* we are, for example, in the classroom. In the same line with Templeton, Hadley (2001:93) states that the term of context relates to classroom learning which the student's personal context can be determined by the material and the classroom situation. So, context refers to everything around the students that can be used for learning.

Joyce and Marsha (2009:24) say that the teacher can use students' environment to create and to design the media to model the teaching including the teacher behavior. Model of teaching is a description of learning environment. By this, it is understood that people, place and any things around the students are parts of the environment. It also means that the environment can ease the students in their learning such as in learning English. Students learn from their environment in order to make them easy in understanding of the study.

The main purpose of this paper is to explain how nearby objects: people, place, and thing are used as a media in modeling text in teaching writing a descriptive text.

## **B. Discussion**

One of media that can be used by the teacher in teaching the English language, especially in writing skill, is a nearby object: people, place, and thing. This media is appropriate and helpful for the teacher in teaching because it can help the teacher in giving a model to the students in order to make it easy for them to understand how to write a text, especially in a descriptive text.

By using an object near or close to the students in teaching a descriptive text, the teacher can discuss about the object through a question and answer activity about the characteristics of the object. The teacher should write all the words or phrases describing the characteristics of the objects on the board. From this activity, the students can know or understand the meaning of characteristics in English.

Using Nearby objects: people, place, and thing are a kind of media that makes use of the object around the students such as classroom, their friends and so on. It can be easy for the students to understand what the teacher says or describes because they know more about the characteristics of the objects directly. For example in introducing a descriptive text the teacher gives a model to the students about their classroom. It can be about physical appearance of the classroom like the size, condition, and etc. So, it is easy for students to understand the model that can help them to produce their own text later. In addition, by using or making use of the nearby objects, it is also easy for the teacher to model the text.

Based on the genre-based approach there are four stages that should be followed by the teacher in teaching descriptive text in teaching and learning process in the classroom. They are Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT).

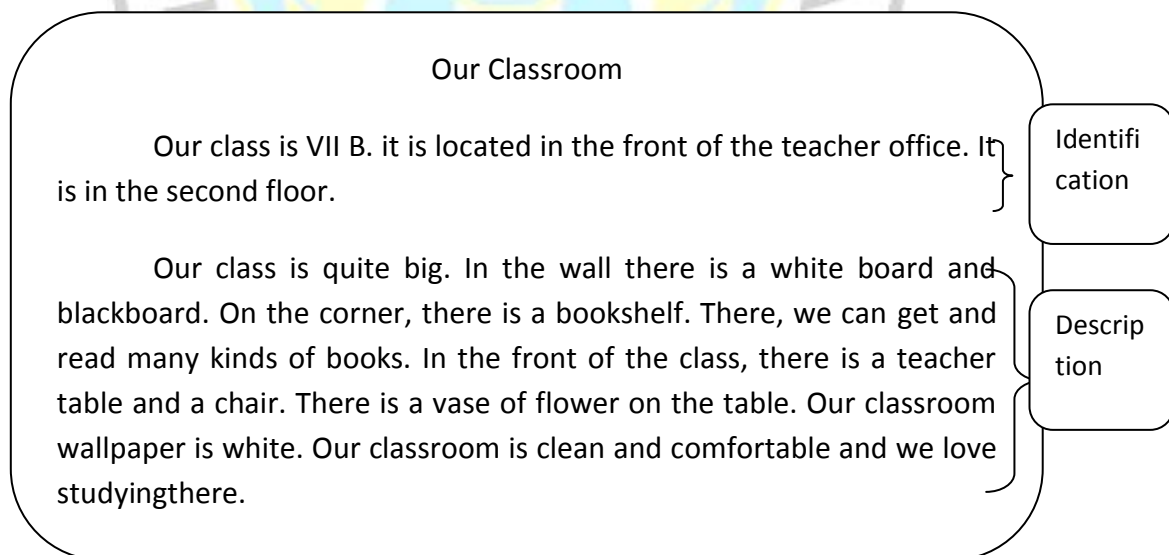
### **1. Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF)**

In this stage, the teacher tries to explore the background knowledge of the students by asking questions which relate to the topic being learned. Several questions can help the teacher to build the background knowledge of the students. For example, if the topic is about describing a place. The teacher can ask the students to imagine their house or their own bedroom. After that, the teacher asks some of the students to tell about their house or bedroom to the other students through questions from the teacher. The students may say about the condition in their bedroom and physical appearance of bedroom such as size, colour, etc. So this activity can help students to build and explore their background knowledge in order to guide them into the text.

## 2. Modeling of the Text (MOT)

This is the second stage in the teaching and learning cycle. This stage is important for the students to lead them into making a good text. In this stage, the teacher's role is to give a model or an example of the text to the students based on the ideas gotten from the questions. The teacher can do several activities to get a model for the text, as follows:

- a. The teacher guides the students to see the object to be described. The object may be the classroom itself. The teacher asks the students to pay attention to their classroom.
- b. The teacher asks several students to give their opinion about the object to be described based on their own knowledge and understanding. The teacher's ability in leading the students to give the answers about the object plays a very important role here because not all of the students may know the words the teacher means about the object. The question can be like this "*what do you think about our classroom? how about the size?, is it small or big? what is the color of the wall? what is in the corner? how many book in the bookshelf? How many chair and table here? Does our class clean and confort?.*" Teacher should write the students' answers on the white board.
- c. The teacher arranges the students' answers into a short descriptive text in the white board. The model of text can be seen as a follows:

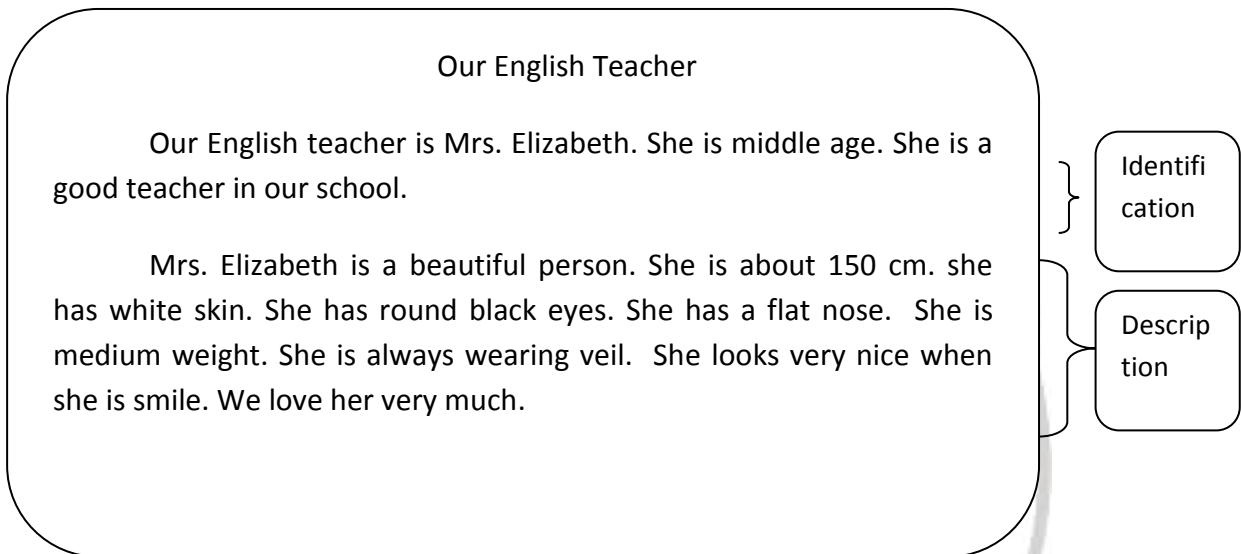


In describing someone or people, the model can be the teacher itself. The activities that should a teacher do in doing this step are:

- a. The teacher asks the students to pay attention to herself.
- b. The teacher asks students several questions about herself. The questions can be like this: *what do you think about me, beautiful or not? How about*

*my posture? How tall am I? How about my face? Does my eyes is round? What color of my eyes? What about my nose, flat or pointed? Do I look very nice when smile? What about my skin? Is it white or not? Do you think I am fat or slim?*

- c. The teacher writes all of the students’ answer in the white board. Then teacher arrange those answer into good paragraph. This paragraph becomes a model text to the students. The paragraph can be seen as a follow:



Actually the students can also be described as a model in teaching a descriptive text. But the teacher should be very careful about the qualities and characteristics of the students because mentioning the weaknesses of the students my insult her psychologically. If this happens, the students may not be motivated in learning anymore.

In describing a thing, the teacher can also use students’ possessions to help them understand about the topic. The teacher can ask the students to use one of their handphones as a model to make a simple descriptive text. By asking the stdents several questions related to the characteristics of the handphome, a teacher can create or write the model of text. The questions to ask for this may be as follows (among others): *How is Rudy’s handphome? Is it a famous brand or not? How about the size? Is it small or big? What is the color? Is it touch screen or not? Does it provide a lot of applications? Can you mention some? Do you think Rudy like it?* The teacher can write students’ answer in the white board. Then arrange it into a good descriptive text. The text can be seen as a follows:

**Rudy's Handphone**

Rudy has a nice handphone. It is one of the famous brands and it is very useful for him.

Rudy's handphone is a quite big. The color is black and it is touch screen. There a lots of application in it such as sending a message, listen to the music, take a picture, and also chatting with someone. Rudy like his handphone and he will keep it better.

Identifi  
cation

Descrip  
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- d. After that, the teacher explains to the students about the structural pattern (generic structure), language features and social function of the text.
- e. The teacher can also ask the students to read the text to check students' pronunciation and intonation.

### **3. Join Construction of the Text (JCOT)**

After giving a model, the teacher asks the students to sit in groups or in pairs to make a simple descriptive text. The topic may be about the description of their school for describing place, their friends to describing people, and their bag to describing thing. They will have a class discussion and the teacher will lead them. After that, the teacher and the groups discuss the texts that are made by the groups.

### **4. Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT).**

This is the last stage which is concerning with the ability of each student in producing a descriptive text. For instance, the students make her/his own descriptive text. The topic comes from their environment or objects around them such as their wallet, pencil box, shoes and etc for describing thing, their favorite place or their own house for describing place and use their idol, father, mother, sister, brother and etc for describing people. In this stage, students produce or write their own text.

## **C. Conclusion and Suggestion**

### **1. Conclusion**

Using Nearby objects: people, place and thing are one of the media that can be used in teaching writing a descriptive text. This media is very useful for the both teachers and students because this media use the students' environment as a

model in teaching. It is easy for the students to understand the material because students know much about their environment. For example, in describing a place, the teacher may use the classroom as a model to generate the students' ideas. This media also gives a lot of advantages to both the teachers and the students. It is time saving, relatively cheap, efficient and make the classroom enjoyable. This media also help the students to explore their ideas for writing and encourage them to speak in the language.

## 2. Suggestion

Based on conclusion, in teaching writing a descriptive text, it is suggested that the junior high school English language teachers use nearby objects: people, place and thing as a media in modeling text step because it can make students feel easy to understand the material.

**Notes:** artikel ini disusun berdasarkan makalah penulis dengan Pembimbing Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd.

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