

**THE LEXICOGRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT
WRITTEN BY SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 2 BUKITTINGGI**

THESIS

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Strata One (S1) Degree



By

GUSMA ELZA ARIF

12211/2009

Advisor

Dra.Yenni Rozimela, M. Ed., Ph. D.

Drs. Saunir Saun, M. Pd.

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG**

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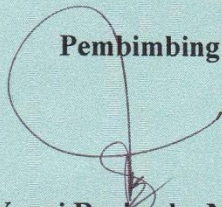
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THE LEXICOGRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITTEN BY SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 2 BUKITTINGGI

Nama : Gusma Elza Arif
NIM/BP : 12211/2009
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Juli 2015

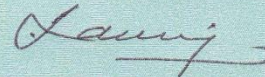
Pembimbing I



Dra. Yenni Rozmela, M.Ed., Ph.D.
NIP. 19620919 198703 2 002

Disetujui oleh:

Pembimbing II



Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd.
NIP. 19541228 197903 1 002

Mengetahui,
Ketua Jurusan



Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A.
NIP. 19540626 198203 2 001

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

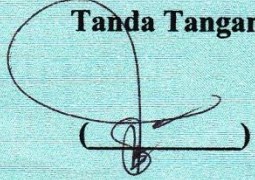
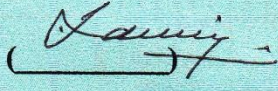
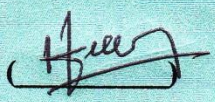
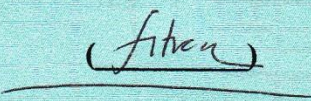
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Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni
Universitas Negeri Padang

Dengan Judul

**THE LEXICOGRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT
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Nama	: Gusma Elza Arif
NIM/TM	: 12211/2009
Program Studi	: Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan	: Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas	: Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Juli 2015

Nama	Tim Penguji	Tanda Tangan
1. Dra. Yenni Rozimela, M.Ed., Ph.D.	Ketua	
2. Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd.	Sekretaris	
3. Dr. Hamzah, M.A., M.M.	Anggota	
4. Dr. Refnaldi, M. Litt.	Anggota	
5. Fitrawati, S.S., M.Pd.	Anggota	



UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS
Jl. Belibis. Air Tawar Barat. Kampus Selatan FBS UNP, Padang.
Telp/Fax: (0751) 447347

SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Gusma Elza Arif
NIM/TM : 12211/2009
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : FBS UNP

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Diketahui oleh,

Saya yang menyatakan

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M. A
NIP. 19540626 198203 2 001



Gusma Elza Arif
NIM. 12211

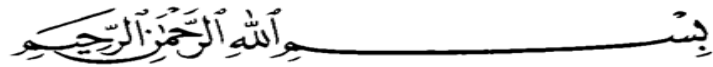
ABSTRAK

Arif, Gusma Elza. 2015. *The Lexicogrammatical Features of Descriptive Text Written By Second Year Students of SMPN 2 Bukittinggi*. Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa Dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penggunaan fitur *lexicogrammatical* dari teks deskriptif oleh siswa kelas dua Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 2 Bukittinggi. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif dengan sumber data berupa 40 orang siswa kelas dua SMPN 2 Bukittinggi tahun masuk 2013 yang dipilih secara acak. Siswa diminta untuk menulis esai deskriptif tentang pekerjaan dari anggota keluarga mereka, seperti pekerjaan ayah, ibu, paman, dan kakak. Tulisan siswa dianalisa mengenai penggunaan dari fitur *lexicogrammatical*, yaitu pemakaian kata kerja, kata keterangan, kata sifat dan kata ganti. Dari penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa penggunaan *lexicogrammatical features* oleh siswa kurang baik. Dalam penggunaan kata kerja siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam membuat kalimat verbal terutama dalam *subject-verb agreement* dan penggunaan *to be* yang tidak perlu. Dalam penggunaan kata keterangan tidak terdapat banyak masalah yang bisa diteliti karena pemakaian kata keterangan itu sendiri sangatlah sedikit yang menunjukkan siswa tidak familiar dengan penggunaan kata keterangan. Kemudian dalam penggunaan kata sifat siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam menentukan pilihan kata yang tepat. Siswa juga mengalami kesulitan dalam menentukan kata ganti yang tepat. Untuk itu, pendalaman grammar dan penguasaan kosa kata sangat penting bagi siswa untuk bisa menghasilkan tulisan yang lebih baik.

Kata kunci: *lexicogrammatical feature, descriptive text, writing*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Teaching English as a foreign language comes with four major skills; speaking, listening, writing and reading. English teaching process at school is regulated by the national curriculum. Currently the curriculum used in junior schools in Indonesia for teaching English is 2013 Curriculum. In teaching writing at junior high school, the 2013 Curriculum instructs the teacher to teach writing based on text types. There are several types of text that should be mastered by the second year students, and one of them is descriptive text.

A descriptive text is chosen in this study because descriptive is the most common genre used in writing. This idea is proposed by Knapp and Watkins (2007:56) who state that the genre of describing is one of the fundamental functions of any language system and one of the first skill language learners should learn to control. Moreover, the ability to write a good descriptive text can help the students to improve their writing in other genre because descriptive genre not only can stand alone but also can become a part of other genre such as narrative to describe characters and places of the story. However, writing is considered as a difficult skill, as Graham (2009:564) says writing is a very demanding and complex task; even a text that looks simple requires considerable effort and expertise. Therefore, to enable the students to write a descriptive writing, descriptive text is taught at school in almost every grade of junior high school, from first grade to second grade.

A descriptive text is taught in both first grade and second grade; however the level of complexity of the students' descriptive writing required is different between the first graders and second graders. Not only the level of complexity, but theme given for the students to describe is also different in each grade. In first grade, the students are required to be able to make a very simple descriptive text describing a person, so the students' are taught to describe a person by giving them knowledge about a person's appearance and personality. Afterwards, in the second grade the students are required to be able to write a descriptive text describing a pet and a job, therefore the students are taught to describe a pet by giving them knowledge about an animal's features and how to describe a job by giving them knowledge about a job's specifications.

Learning to write descriptive text in the second grade after previously learning it in the first grade is supposed to help the students to write the descriptive text better, but unfortunately the reality is not so. After observing the students at school it was discovered that despite having learned to write a descriptive text in their first year the second year students' descriptive writing was far from satisfactory. Their problem consisted of grammatical errors, spelling errors, errors in choice of words, lack of content and generic structure. The teachers agreed that the students' writing could not be called good; their problem seemed to be both grammatical and lexical.

A good descriptive text must have a structure that follows the generic structures of a descriptive text which are having identification and description. Identification introduces the subject being described; it answers the question ‘What is the text about?’ For example, a student writes a descriptive text with the title *My Cat*. The identification of the text may tell the reader the writer’s cat’s name and how he got it. The description may tell the reader about how the cat looks like, such as the color of its fur and eyes, the shape of its ears, nose, paws, nails and tails.

A good descriptive text must also have appropriate lexicogrammatical features. The lexicogrammatical features of describing genre that should be present in a descriptive text are; the use of simple present tense to describe things from technical or factual point of view, the use of relational verbs when classifying and describing appearance or qualities and parts or functions of phenomena, the use of action verbs when describing behaviors or uses, the use of adjectives to add extra information to nouns, the use of adverbs to add extra information to verbs to provide more detailed description, and the use of pronoun to refer to information that has preceded.

The ability to write an appropriate descriptive text is essential in the students’ success in learning English at school. However, depending on proficiency level the more content rich and creative the text the higher the possibility that the students’ make mistakes. This is a common thing faced by English as foreign language learners who might have a lot of ideas but not enough knowledge about the language to express it in an appropriate way. It is proven by

the preliminary observation which showed that the students' descriptive writing was less than satisfying because of grammatical and lexical problems. To identify what lexicogrammatical problems that the students faced in writing a descriptive text there was a need to analyze the students' descriptive writing. This analysis was made by using descriptive grammar approach, so it made no judgments about the goodness or badness of the language used by the students. The goal of this analysis was not labeling some usages as 'wrong', but explaining the constraints on the use of such non-standard forms. A statement and assessment were made not about good or bad, right or wrong, but about appropriacy or inappropriacy. Because of all the reasons and considerations above, a study was done to analyze the second year students' use of lexicogrammatical features in writing a descriptive text which was conducted at second grade in SMPN 2 Bukittinggi.

B. Identification of the Problem

When constructing a chosen text type, there will be variation in the overall structure and the grammatical and lexical features it contains. Meaning is gained at the different levels of a written text: the lexical, grammatical and overall text levels. However, this study only discusses about the grammatical features and lexical features of the descriptive text written by the students.

Based on the opinions of Knapp and Watkins (2007:6), there are several features of descriptive text that must appear in all descriptive writings which are the predominant use of simple present tense to describe things from technical or factual point which can be seen by the use of verbs; the use of relational verbs

when classifying and describing appearance or qualities and parts or functions of phenomena; the use of action verbs when describing behaviors or uses; the use of adjectives to add extra information to nouns; the use of adverbs to add extra information to verbs or adjectives to provide more detailed description; sentences and paragraphs are thematically linked to the topic of description by using pronoun. Therefore, this study discussed how the lexicogrammatical features were used by the second year students in writing a descriptive text. This study was conducted at SMPN 2 Bukittinggi.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Among many aspects of writing, the problem of this study is limited to the analysis of lexicogrammatical features used by the second year students in writing a descriptive text at SMP 2 Bukittinggi.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this study is formulated as follows:

“How are the lexicogrammatical features used by the second year students of SMPN 2 Bukittinggi in writing a descriptive text?”

E. Research Questions

Referring to the formulation of the problem above, the research questions are as the following:

1. How well do the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi use verbs in writing a descriptive text?
2. How well do the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi use adverbs in writing a descriptive text?
3. How well do the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi use adjectives in writing a descriptive text?
4. How well do the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi use pronoun in writing a descriptive text?

F. Purpose of the Research

Considering the research questions above, the purposes of the research were generalized as follows:

1. To describe the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi' use of verbs in writing a descriptive text
2. To describe the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi' use of adverbs in writing a descriptive text
3. To describe the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi' use of adjectives in writing a descriptive text
4. To describe the second grade students at SMP 2 Bukittinggi' use of pronoun in writing a descriptive text

G. Significance of the Research

This study is proposed to gather information about the students' use of appropriate and inappropriate use of lexicogrammatical features of a descriptive text and the result of this study is expected to enrich the literature on English teaching in writing. This study is also expected to provide beneficial reference for further research on the students' ability in writing a descriptive text. For the teachers, this study is expected to help them to realize their students' ability and to help them finding the best way to make the students capable of producing a better writing.

H. Definition of Key Term

1. grammatical features : a set of features that must appear in a certain type of text, in this study they are verbs, adverbs, adjectives and pronoun
2. descriptive text : a type of text that describe a specific subject
3. verbs : the dynamic element in a clause or a sentence which can denote actions, record events or refer to states, in this study they are used in present tense
4. verbs be : verbs that links the subject to another element following the verb
5. adverbs : modifiers that indicate or limit the meaning of a verb or an adjective
6. adjectives : words that modify, add to, or qualify the meaning of a noun or pronoun
7. pronoun : a major subclass of nouns that replaces a noun

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Based on the finding of this study there are some conclusions that can be made. First, the students seem to have difficulties in making verbal sentences. They find it difficult to make verbal sentences with appropriate subject-verb agreement, and they also find it difficult to avoid using forbidden *verb-be* in making verbal sentences. Second, the students hardly use any adverbs; they do not seem to be familiar with using adverbs. Third, the students seem to have problem in choosing lexically appropriate adjectives. The last, the students seem to have difficulty in using pronouns with appropriate gender.

B. Suggestions

Teachers need to improve their students' understanding about verbal sentences. They need to make the students understand the subject-verb agreement rules in writing by giving them explanation especially about subject-verb agreement rules in writing not only as a part of other lesson. They can provide the students with exercises that contain various kinds of subjects to be paired with suitable verbs. The amount of exercises about verbs to be added with 's/es' should be balance with the exercises about verbs not to be added with 's/es' so that the students can avoid overgeneralization. This also applies to the matter of double verbs use (verbs + *verb-be*). The teachers need to make the students understand the foundation of constructing a sentence so they can avoid the use of unnecessary

verbs use. They should be able to make the students understand when to use verbs and when to use *verb-be* so that they can avoid unnecessary use of *verb-be*. Giving the students exercises about differentiating nominal sentences to verbal sentence would certainly help them to have better understanding about the matter.

The teachers also need to make an effort in improving the students' vocabulary to make meaningful sentences. Vocabulary enrichment is very important in language learning and especially in writing. By having a wide range of vocabularies the students can avoid wrong choice of words in writing. The teacher can give their students exercises to improve their vocabulary by giving them a list of vocabulary and asking them to look it up at the dictionary to be used in a sentence later. The teacher can also give the students vocabulary exercises in a form of *fill in the blank* by providing a list of vocabulary to be used in the provided sentences with a blank. In this exercise, the students are required to know the meaning of the provided vocabulary to be able to choose appropriate words that are suitable for the sentences.

They also need to make their students understand how to use pronoun appropriately especially how to differentiate pronouns to substitute female and male. The teachers can give the students exercises in using first and third singular male pronouns and first and third singular female pronouns so that the students can differentiate the use of pronoun for male and females and understand better the use of pronouns. Not only about the personal pronouns, the teachers can also give the students exercises in using possessive pronoun for third singular male and third singular female person.

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