

**THE EFFECT OF USING ENGLISH PRIME AS AN
INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL ON STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING
A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMAN 4 PADANG**

THESIS

*Submitted as a Partial fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain the Strata One
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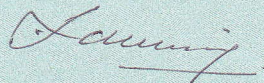
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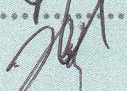
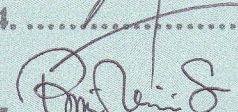
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ABSTRAK

Fertesa, Nini. 2012. "The Effect of Adopting English Prime as an Instructional Tool on Students' ability in Writing Descriptive Text at SMAN 4 Padang". *Skripsi*. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Siswa SMA pada umumnya mempunyai kesulitan dalam menulis (*writing*), terutama dalam menulis teks deskriptif (*descriptive text*). Hal ini disebabkan oleh kemampuan tata bahasa dan kosakata mereka yang terbatas dan belum adanya penggunaan strategi dan kegiatan yang sesuai. Untuk mengatasi masalah ini, digunakan *English Prime* sebagai sebuah instruksi (*instructional tool*) bagi siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif (*descriptive text*). Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melihat apakah penggunaan *English Prime* memberikan efek signifikan yang lebih baik atau tidak terhadap kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif (*descriptive text*) siswa di SMAN 4 Padang. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam metode eksperimen dimana kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif (*descriptive text*) sebagai variabel terkontrolnya dan *English Prime* sebagai variabel pengontrolnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan *English Prime* tidak memberikan perbaikan yang signifikan terhadap kelas eksperimen,. Hal ini bisa dilihat dari hasil tes menulis berbentuk esai yang diberikan kepada kedua kelas tersebut pada awal dan akhir penelitian. Hasil tes menulis kedua kelas itu tidak terlalu jauh berbeda. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa *English Prime* tidak memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks berbentuk deskriptif(*descriptive text*).

Kata kunci: *Writing, English Prime, Descriptive Text, Instructional Tool.*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Based on (*KTSP*) School Based Curriculum (2006), the purpose of learning English at school in Indonesia is to make the students are able to use English as a language to communicate. Communication here means able to produce and use English text, in spoken or written form. The curriculum also said that the standard of Senior High School for the students' ability in English is the students are expected to be able to reach the informational level. In this level, students are able to access the language in communication, spoken or written. Based on this curriculum, the informational level is a level where the students are provided with the ability to deal with higher standard education, university.

Teaching English at school is based on the genre-based approach. This genre defines teaching English through different kind of texts. Later on, through the text, students can learn about the vocab and grammar. Grammar is not taught separately from other language aspects, but it is taught implicitly through the text and its situation. Each text is different on purpose, language features, and its generic structures. Moreover, the texts are used on different situation. So, learning each kind of text is important for the students to get them familiar with those texts and help them to find a strategy if they find those texts on their examination.

The genre based approach consists of twelve types of text. One of them is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a kind of text to describe something or someone. It can be people, place or thing. Reep (2009) mentions that descriptive text gives detail about physical features, appearance, or composition of subject. This text gives detail description about an object which can be people, thing or place.

Learning descriptive text is important to build someone's ability to identify something. As the ability to identify is playing an important role in people life even in making other kind of text. For example, to identify a criminal from a picture, or to make an analytical expository text about three levels of government on Australia, the writer has to identify the differences between those levels.

Descriptive text is taught in English through four English skills. One of them is writing. Writing is a productive skill that allows students to process the information they get through receptive skills. This information can be gotten from reading, hearing, or personal experience in the real life context. This information then transferred into text that can be understood by readers. Through writing students share what they have got in the form of text or passage.

Writing is also a way to assess students' competence in one language. As Weigle (2002) says that someone cannot write in a second language without knowing at least something about grammar and vocab of that language. In learning English as a language, students learn about vocab, grammar, and sentences structure and organization. Through writing, students apply what they had learned and express them into written work. Students can express and tell

their ideas, thoughts, and experiences through writing. Writing is such a reflection how much the students had got from learning the language. Moreover, this way provides an opportunity for the students to practice the language in written form.

Even descriptive text had been taught to students since they were on Junior High School; there are still some difficulties for the students to write about descriptive text in the Senior High School. For example at SMAN 4 Padang, based on the interview, short observation and students mark gotten from the school, the students' ability in English subject especially writing, is low. It can be seen from the students mark on the mid test which most of the students did not pass the minimum passing grade criteria, so almost all of the students have to repeat or remedial the test. Based on the interview with the English teacher, the students already felt that learning English language is difficult, and they only had limited knowledge about English language, including the grammar and the vocabulary, so it is little bit hard to expect that the students will easily understand the English subject. In addition, the school probably had done some solution to solve the problem, but there are still some obstacles in solving the problem, for example, it is difficult to find a right strategy to be applied in order to solve the problems.

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the situation is caused by 2 factors. They are students' factors and teachers' factor. From the students' factors, the students had some difficulties in writing descriptive text. The students are lack of ability to vary their way to describe thing/person in English. This situation led by two factors. The first one is because the students are

lack of vocabulary so they cannot make much variety on their writing. This situation makes the students produce uncreative and unclear description about the thing/person that they describe. Their description is not clear enough and seems general that can lead to the erroneous description. The second is the students are lack of understanding of grammar. Vocabulary and grammar are two important aspects on writing, so the ability to use and choose them is important to develop the students' ability on writing itself. Furthermore, the lack of those two aspects is led by another factor that is the teacher's factor. It is the way of teaching or the teaching process. It can be related to the teacher's strategy or the activity being used on teaching writing process. Related to this situation teacher had tried some strategy and activities to solve the problem but it seems had not work out yet.

Therefore, it needs another strategy that combines grammar and writing in one activity. One of the activities that involve both the skill and the language component is English Prime. English Prime (E-Prime) is introduced as an instructional tool that offers another way to indicate the noun. Herbert (2003) states that E-Prime eliminates the use of verb *to be* both in spoken or written English form, so the speaker or writer will make another reference to describe the person or thing in the text. For example, while writing 'my brother is popular', by deleting the verb *to be*, E-Prime lead students to write 'everybody in this town knows my brother'. That means his brother is popular.

As mentioned before, many students sometime have difficulty in grammar, words choices, or developing ideas. The implementation of E-Prime suggests a great way to help students to develop their ideas, using grammar and choose

appropriate vocabulary. The removing of verb *to be* requires students to have much vocabulary to expanding their writing. E-Prime also provides the students to choose the vocabulary and how to use it. By using E-prime, the students have to describe someone or something with unusual way, so they are demanded to use many vocabularies or think to say something in the different way with the same meaning. In addition, E-Prime helps students to learn to elaborate description of the character in the text and make it clearer. It is supported by Scorpio (2003) who states that E-prime helps people to prevent the ambiguous, unclear, and erroneous description.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher felt the effectiveness of adopting E-Prime toward students' ability in writing descriptive text needs to be checked. It is aimed at discovering whether this instructional tool can be applied to give better effects on the students' ability in developing ideas and paraphrasing while writing descriptive text or not. This study is needed to be conducted to know the effect of adopting E-Prime as instructional tool toward students' ability in writing descriptive text at SMAN 4 Padang.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background stated before, some students get difficulties in writing that make the students' writing ability is still low. The difficulties come from 2 factors, students and teacher factors. From the students' factor is the students' difficulty in writing descriptive text. It is caused by the lack of vocabulary and the lack of grammar understanding. Unclear and unspecific

descriptions are also still making erroneous description in descriptive text. The second one is from the teachers' factor. Teachers rarely use media on teaching descriptive text. It makes writing is not interesting. Then, the teachers' strategies in teaching writing do not develop the students' writing ability.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problems above, the problem of this research is limited to figure out the effect of adopting English Prime to teaching writing descriptive text at SMAN 4 Padang. E-Prime will give them another way to expand their description by encouraging their vocabulary and grammatical use. This strategy will 'force' the students to use more vocabulary and grammar style on writing that can make them think about clearer ideas to prevent erroneous description of someone or something.

D. Formulation of the Research

Related to the limitation of the problem previously, the problem is formulated as follows: "Does English Prime give significant better effect on the students' ability in using in writing descriptive text at SMAN 4 Padang?"

E. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research can be generalized to figure out the effectiveness of English Prime toward students' ability in writing descriptive text.

F. Significance of the Research

It is expected the result of the research can give the contribution to English language teaching and learning process, both practically and theoretically. Practically, the result of this research can give the English teacher information toward the use of E-Prime as alternative to teach writing descriptive text for Senior High School Students. Theoretically, it is hoped that the result of this research later will be useful to develop the theory teaching writing skill. Finally, it is also hoped that the result can be beneficial as useful information for the next researcher or writer who conducts further research or write a paper about E-Prime.

G. Hypothesis

Based on those definition of english prime, it is expected that E-Prime can be used to develop students' ability on writing descriptive text at SMAN 4 Padang.

The hypothesis of this statement are:

H_0 = the students who are taught by using English Prime will not significantly get better score in writing descriptive text.

H_1 = the students who are taught by using English Prime will significantly get better score in writing descriptive text.

H. Definition of the Key Terms

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|--|
| a. | Students' Writing Ability: | The ability of the SMAN 4 Padang students' scores in writing a descriptive text. |
|----|----------------------------|--|

- b. Descriptive Text: One kind of text that taught at Senior High Schools that requires the students to identify and describe a thing or a person based on its appearance, characters or behavior.
- c. English Prime: A strategy that focus on the reduction of using verb *to be* in order to prevent the erroneous descriptions of a person, a thing or a place.
- d. Instructional Tool: A tool (material) that help teacher to achieve the goal of the teaching and learning process in teaching writing descriptive text.