

# **IMPROVING EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY BY USING RAFT STRATEGY AT MTS ARKANUL ISLAM SITUBONDO IS ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/2019**

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## **Abstract**

RAFT is a writing strategy that focuses on the students' point of view as the author, the intended audience, the unique writing format and the stated topic. The researcher conducted this research as a qualitative descriptive study. The subject of this research was Viii Mts class students Arkanul Islam Situbondo. The data of this study are the results of field notes, observation lists, student writing assignments, and interviews. The teaching process of writing descriptive text using the RAFT strategy was successfully implemented. Students show improvement in writing performance and their perception of English. Furthermore, they showed a positive attitude towards strategies and English language learning. The researcher found the strategy was interesting and promoted students' creative thinking. This research has proven that the RAFT strategy can help students improve their writing skills, especially in writing descriptive texts. The results of student assignments show that the way they write is far more comfortable and they understand the material better. Finally, it can be concluded that the role, audience, format and topic (RAFT) strategies are useful for improving students' descriptive writing skills. This strategy also encourages students to write and promote students' creative thinking and motivation. In addition, it can make classroom activities more active and fun.

**Keywords: Writing, Descriptive text, and RAFT Strategy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Writing is an important part in English language teaching. There are some reasons why writing is important. First, writing is productive skill that requires students in producing a language to communicate. Second, it can support other language skills, such as listening, reading, and speaking. According to Rosmawati (2013, p. 38.) states that in writing process, the students are trained to use their brain

and sense at the same time. In addition, writing needs broad knowledge and deep-thinking process to produce words, sentences, and paragraphs with good English grammar. It means that process in the writing should be able to make the reader understand what he means through his sentences. In other word, writing is crucial for the learner. Moreover, writing is used to convey ideas, argument and opinions in piece of paper. Writing is the

process of selecting, arranging and developing ideas in effective sentences and paragraph

Writing is an activity which is done by people to communicate or convey the message to another person but it is indirect way to express ideas through a piece of paper (Henny Irawati, 2014, p 3). Maybe we know or learn since we started going to want to go to school, from there we have learned to write. Writing can also be interpreted as expressions or feeling expressed in writing. In other words, through the writing process we can communicate indirectly. Whereas in fact they have ideas in mind but they have difficulties in expressing in writing.

Descriptive text is a kind of text, it tells how something looks, feels, smells, taste, and or sound (Oshima and Hogue, 2007, p. 61). Descriptive text is a text that describes about something the students look, feel, smell, taste and hears. In addition, imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind. It describes a person, thing, and certain place based on the things they see. The purpose of the descriptive text is to describe what things are as they are or what things do as they do.

RAFT strategy in the process writing is to open the students' mind for generating idea by connecting the concept of role, audience, format, and topic in their draft. Damayanti, et al (2016, p. 3) states that there are four components in this strategy, first is Role, students must know what are they as the writer, by knowing and stating their role, students become more responsible in their work, second is Audience (whom they are writing to) by knowing the readers, they start to be careful to gather information for the text. In addition, students will learn how to shape writing to the audience needs. Next is format. Different kinds of format will broaden student's way of thinking and reduce their boredom. Next is Topic which is the theme that students want to write. According to Damayanti, et al. (2016, p. 3) states RAFT is suitable strategy that fit with

student needs in writing. it will reduce their anxiety and confusion of writing descriptive text.

There are some strategies in teaching writing. Teaching writing strategy is planned that used by the teacher to teach writing to the students. The purpose of using strategy is to find an easy and interesting way of teaching writing. The strategy can also make the learning process more effective. One of strategy that can use in the teaching process is RAFT strategy.

Salameh (2017, p. 38.) RAFT strategy is one of the guided writing strategies that can be applied in teaching writing and can be used to improve students' writing competence. RAFT is a system to help students understand the main elements to organize their writing. since writing is a skill that needs improvement from time to time, the objective of the current study is to improve the students' writing ability through using RAFT strategy as an attempt to help students overcome their difficulties in writing course. This strategy can help students understand their role as writers, the audience they address, the different formats for writing, and the topic they write about. And also it is supported by (Umaemah, et al, 2016, p. 4) states that RAFT strategy is effective to solve the problem in the class of writing in form several groups to facilitate students in completing and also can help each other. Before applying the RAFT method, the researcher explained the RAFT method and also descriptive text. different levels of school. The benefit of RAFT is to make students easy to write because there is already a theme determined by the teacher and this student is only told to describe it according to the theme he has chosen. and also students have been given good and correct writing stages that match the RAFT method. here researchers

## **Result and Discussion**

Based on the activities carried out by previous researchers, the researchers concluded that students had mastered

grammar, generic structure, punctuation, spelling, content, and vocabulary in writing descriptive texts. It can be seen that their descriptive text is good.

In addition, they work together to help each other by helping their friends if they don't know the material well. If their teammates wrote in the wrong grammar, others will fix it. If someone didn't know English words from several words in Indonesian, others helped by finding them in the dictionary. If others stop looking for other arguments, other friends would also think of finding another argument. So, it will make them build a very good relationship between their friends not only in their group discussions but also in the whole class. It can be seen that their descriptive text is good

Classroom action research is carried out collaboratively with English teachers who are focused on actions during the teaching and learning process and that are to address students' problems in writing. Kemmis and Mc Taggart (in Arikunto, 2010, p. 137) state that the design of classroom action research has four stages in each cycle. They are (1) planning, (2) acting, (3) observing, (4) and reflection. The design of classroom action research can be illustrated in the following figure.

The researcher observes before the action is carried out to find out what problems students face. After that, the researcher formulated this problem to be resolved. To collect data, researchers collected information from English teachers as informants. From the results of this study, researchers found three problems, namely about students' enthusiasm in learning to write, students' inability to write, and student scores in writing descriptive texts. The percentage of students writing descriptive texts that have been obtained from the preliminary is 35%. Then, the results of descriptive writing text tests after the action was given were 50% or 10 of 20 which scored 75 or more. These results indicate that actions in this cycle are

successful. So, researchers stopped at this cycle.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the data description and discussion, it is concluded that the implementation of RAFT strategy can improve students' writing skill of eight grade students at MTS Arkanul Islam Situbondo in the academic year 2018/2019 by providing collaboration among students meaningfully, so they could discuss the topic given. This process experiences students to write better descriptive Text. This is related to activities such as grouping, giving topics, writing different ideas on a piece of paper, discussing in groups and throughout the class, revising the results of the discussion and writing paragraphs individually based on the results of the discussion

## **Suggestions**

By considering the result above, some suggestions are given to the following people:

### **1. The English Teacher**

It is suggested that the English teacher should use RAFT strategy as an alternative strategy in teaching writing, not only for descriptive text but also other genres of text, explain how to use RAFT Strategy clearly, and pay attention more to the students who are the low achievers. It is due to the fact that the RAFT Strategy can improve the students' writing ability.

### **2. The Future Researcher**

Because of the limited time for conducting the action research, the future researchers are suggested to give more attention to the low achievers and use the result of this research as reference to conduct a further research with the same research design to develop the students' writing ability.

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