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Learning descriptive text interactively: Combining the students' creativity and writing skills for Phase D

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Abstract

Teaching descriptive texts at the junior high school level, particularly in Grade 7, often encounters challenges in creating an interactive and inclusive learning environment, especially for students with special needs. This study aims to explore and analyze effective interactive learning strategies for teaching descriptive texts, with a particular focus on technology integration, adaptations for special needs students, and comprehensive evaluation methods. Using a literature review approach, this article examines recent sources from educational journals, textbooks, and scholarly publications in the fields of Indonesian language instruction, educational technology, and inclusive education. The discussion addresses fundamental concepts of descriptive texts, interactive learning strategies such as the use of visual and audio media, group activities, language games, and the integration of technology into the learning process. The findings indicate that interactive learning approaches which incorporate technology and address students' diverse needs significantly enhance descriptive writing skills, creativity, and student engagement. In conclusion, implementing interactive learning strategies in teaching descriptive texts not only improves students' academic abilities but also fosters critical thinking and social skills, ultimately creating a more inclusive and meaningful learning experience for all students.

Keywords: descriptive text, inclusive education, interactive learning, special needs students, technology integration

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INTRODUCTION

Descriptive text instruction holds a crucial position in the Indonesian language curriculum at the junior high school level, particularly for seventh-grade students. Mastering the ability to describe objects, places, and experiences in a structured and engaging manner is not only fundamental to effective communication but also serves as a key foundation for developing students' literacy and critical thinking skills (Agustina & Hariyadi, 2018). Through descriptive text learning, students are encouraged to observe their environment more attentively, organize their thoughts systematically, and articulate ideas with rich and precise language. These competencies are essential not only for academic success but also for practical application in everyday life and future career endeavors.

Nevertheless, teaching descriptive texts to seventh-grade students presents significant challenges. At this educational stage, students undergo a transition from primary to secondary education, facing increased academic

expectations and cognitive demands. Common difficulties include generating ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and composing coherent text structures. Furthermore, variations in students' learning styles, abilities, and prior knowledge intensify the complexity of the teaching process. Teachers often struggle to balance the imperative of meeting curriculum standards with the necessity of fostering engaging and meaningful learning experiences (Darmuki & Hidayati, 2019).

In response to these challenges, interactive learning has emerged as a promising pedagogical approach. Interactive learning emphasizes active student engagement through diverse methods, including group discussions, educational games, collaborative projects, and multimedia technology integration. Within the context of descriptive text instruction, interactive strategies offer opportunities for students to explore ideas creatively, practice writing skills in an enjoyable and supportive environment, and receive immediate feedback from teachers and peers. Additionally, interactive learning facilitates the accommodation of diverse learning needs, including students with special educational needs, thereby promoting inclusive education practices.

Interactive learning strategies have been shown to enhance students' engagement and writing skills in descriptive text instruction. A study by Agustini et al. (2024) demonstrated that the use of ICT-based interactive videos significantly improved seventh-grade students' engagement and the quality of their descriptive writing. The interactive videos provided visual and auditory stimuli that facilitated students' understanding and retention of descriptive writing elements. Furthermore, it is also essential to teach the students using daily life contexts which are close to them. An innovative learning which utilizes contextual learning resources will help the students' understanding (Rahayu et al., 2021). The use of technology also plays significant role in learning. Diana and Assidik (2025) developed electronic student worksheets (E-LKPD) using the Liveworksheets platform to assist junior high school students in writing descriptive texts. Their research indicated a significant improvement in students' writing abilities, with post-test scores averaging 80.62 compared to pre-test scores of 58.12. The E-LKPD provided structured guidance and immediate feedback, which were crucial in enhancing students' writing skills.

Inclusive education aims to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners, including those with special educational needs. The universal design for learning framework provides a set of principles for curriculum development that offers all individuals equal opportunities to learn (Meyer et al., 2014). It emphasizes multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement to cater to the varied learning preferences and needs of students. Duque et al. (2021) explored the impact of inclusive interactive learning environments, such as interactive on students with and without special needs. Their findings revealed that such environments not only improved academic outcomes but also fostered social inclusion and mutual respect among students.

Multimodal pedagogy involves the use of various modes of communication—visual, auditory, textual, and kinesthetic—to enhance learning experiences (Molina, 2023). This approach is particularly beneficial in inclusive classrooms, as it allows for the accommodation of different learning styles and needs. The integration of assistive technologies, such as text-to-speech software and interactive multimedia, further supports students with disabilities in accessing and engaging with the curriculum. For instance, the development of interactive multimedia applications for teaching descriptive texts has shown promise in engaging students and improving their writing

skills. Such applications provide interactive and multimodal content that caters to various learning preferences, thereby supporting inclusive education practices.

Given these considerations, this article aims to explore and analyze effective interactive learning strategies for teaching descriptive texts to seventh-grade students. Specifically, it focuses on innovative approaches that integrate creativity and writing skill development while addressing the diverse needs of students. By doing so, this study seeks to provide practical insights and guidance for educators in designing and implementing interactive learning experiences that enhance student engagement, literacy skills, and inclusivity in the classroom.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method employed in this article is a literature review. This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive overview of interactive learning in descriptive text instruction, particularly for seventh-grade junior high school students and those with special educational needs. The review process began by identifying and collecting relevant sources from various academic databases, educational journals, textbooks, and recent scientific publications in the fields of Indonesian language instruction, educational technology, and inclusive education. The inclusion criteria encompassed studies focusing on interactive learning strategies, the use of technology in teaching descriptive texts, and adaptive teaching methods for students with special needs (Indriyani & Mulyono, 2019).

Following data collection, thematic analysis was conducted to identify patterns and key themes that emerged from the reviewed literature. These themes were then synthesized to construct a conceptual framework representing best practices in interactive descriptive text learning. Special attention was given to studies presenting empirical evidence on the effectiveness of different teaching strategies, as well as research exploring the integration of technology in language instruction.

To ensure the credibility and relevance of the review, special consideration was given to peer-reviewed journals and high-impact publications. Triangulation was employed by comparing insights drawn from empirical studies, systematic reviews, and field reports to strengthen the reliability of the findings. This triangulated approach allowed for a more balanced and robust synthesis of knowledge, offering practical implications for both educational practitioners and future researchers.

Through this methodology, the study presents a thorough and critical examination of current knowledge on interactive descriptive text instruction, identifies existing research gaps, and proposes directions for improved pedagogical practices and further inquiry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Basic concept of descriptive text

Descriptive text is a type of writing that aims to portray or illustrate an object, place, or event in detail, allowing the reader to seemingly see, hear, or feel what is being described (Nurjannah & Suyanto, 2018). The main characteristics of descriptive text include the use of language rich in adjectives and adverbs, a focus on specific aspects of the described object, and the ability to evoke the reader's imagination through vivid and detailed depictions. This type of text has

the power to deliver strong sensory experiences, engaging the reader's sense of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

The structure of descriptive text typically consists of three main parts. First is the identification or introduction of the object, which provides a general overview of what is being described. Second is the description section, which forms the core of the text, where the writer elaborates on various aspects of the object, such as shape, color, size, texture, or other characteristics. Finally, the conclusion or closing contains the writer's impression or opinion of the described object. This structure helps the writer organize the information logically and makes it easier for the reader to understand the presented description.

In terms of linguistic features, descriptive texts have several distinctive characteristics. The use of specific nouns is essential to clarify the object being described. Adjectives are used extensively to illustrate the traits of the object, while adverbs help explain how an action or condition occurs. Descriptive texts often use figurative language or stylistic devices such as similes, metaphors, or personification to make the portrayal more vivid and engaging. The use of varied sentence structures and lengths contributes to a dynamic rhythm in the text. Additionally, the consistent use of a point of view—whether first-person or third-person—is also a key feature of descriptive writing. All of these linguistic elements work together to create a clear, detailed, and captivating image for the reader (Sari & Puspita, 2019).

Interactive learning strategy for descriptive text

Interactive learning strategies for descriptive texts involve a variety of approaches that actively engage students in the learning process. The use of visual and audio media is a key component of these strategies. Teachers can utilize images, videos, or sound recordings to stimulate students' senses and provide concrete examples of objects or situations to be described. For instance, displaying a photo of a beautiful natural landscape or playing the sound of ocean waves can help students develop descriptive vocabulary and understand the importance of sensory details in writing (Widodo & Ningsih, 2018).

Group activities and discussions also play a crucial role in interactive learning of descriptive texts (See Figure 1). Students can be divided into small groups to analyze sample descriptive texts, identify their features and structures, and discuss effective language use. Through discussion, students can share perspectives, enrich their understanding, and learn from their classmates' ideas. Activities such as peer review, where students give each other feedback on their descriptive writing, can further enhance their analytical and evaluative skills.

Language games that stimulate creativity offer an enjoyable and effective strategy for descriptive text learning. Teachers may organize games such as "Guess the Object," where students must describe an object without naming it, or "Descriptive Relay," where each student adds one descriptive sentence to complete a depiction of a place or object. These games not only sharpen students' descriptive skills but also encourage quick thinking and creativity in using descriptive language.

Collaborative writing practice combines both social and cognitive aspects of learning. Students can work in pairs or small groups to compose a descriptive text together. They may divide tasks—for example, one student focusing on visual descriptions, another on auditory elements, and another on kinesthetic aspects of the object or place being described. This collaborative process results

in richer and more varied texts, while also teaching students about teamwork, idea negotiation, and the value of each group member's contribution (Fauziah & Syambasril, 2020). Through this practice, students also learn to give and receive constructive feedback, which is essential for developing their writing skills.

Figure 1. Interaction in learning is crucial, as the students will share their ideas and build common understanding (Picture is only for illustration, retrieved from www.freepik.com).

Integrating technology in learning descriptive text

The integration of technology into descriptive text instruction opens up various innovative opportunities to enhance students' learning experiences. The use of digital applications and platforms has become a key component of this approach. Teachers can utilize collaborative writing tools such as Google Docs or Padlet, which allow students to work together in real-time to write and edit descriptive texts. Online learning platforms like Kahoot! or Quizizz can be used to create interactive quizzes on the elements of descriptive texts, helping students to test their understanding in a fun and engaging way (Rahmawati & Suryanto, 2020). In addition, digital mind-mapping tools like MindMeister or Coggle can assist students in the planning and organization stage by helping them visually map out their descriptive ideas.

Virtual field trips offer a unique and enriching experience for descriptive text learning. Through platforms such as Google Earth or virtual museums, students can "visit" various locations around the world without leaving the classroom. These experiences provide inspiration and rich material for descriptive writing. For example, students could take a virtual tour of Borobudur Temple, observe its architectural details, and then write a description highlighting the beauty and uniqueness of the temple. Virtual field trips may also include explorations of natural ecosystems, historical cities, or even outer space, broadening students' horizons and enriching their descriptive vocabulary.

The use of multimedia to present descriptive texts adds a new dimension to how students share their work. Students can use tools such as PowerPoint, Prezi, or Canva to create visual presentations that combine their descriptive

writing with images, videos, or even animations. This not only makes presentations more engaging but also helps students understand the importance of visual elements in reinforcing written descriptions. Podcasts or audio recordings can also be effective media for presenting descriptive texts, particularly for conveying atmospheres or situations that rely on sound. Students can record their descriptive narratives and incorporate suitable sound effects to create a rich auditory experience. Through this integration of technology, descriptive text learning becomes more dynamic, interactive, and relevant to the digital age, while remaining focused on the development of essential descriptive writing skills.

Interactive learning for students with special needs

Interactive learning of descriptive texts for students with special needs requires a sensitive and adaptive approach to ensure inclusivity and effective learning. Adapting teaching methods is essential to accommodate the unique needs of each student. For example, for students with dyslexia, teachers can simplify instructions, provide extended time for tasks, or use more readable fonts. For students with hearing impairments, visual aids such as diagrams or concept maps can support their understanding of descriptive text structures. Students with ADHD may benefit from tasks broken down into smaller, more manageable parts, along with short breaks between activities to help maintain focus.

The use of assistive tools and technologies plays a critical role in supporting the learning of students with special needs. Text-to-speech software can help students with reading difficulties access descriptive text materials. Speech-to-text tools can be particularly useful for students who struggle with physical writing but have rich descriptive ideas. Tablets or computers equipped with specialized applications can assist students with motor impairments in participating in writing activities. For students with visual impairments, audio books or braille materials containing descriptive texts can be utilized. Modified keyboards or specialized joysticks may also support students with physical limitations in accessing and using technology in learning (Puspita & Hafid, 2019).

A multisensory approach in descriptive text learning is highly beneficial for students with special needs, as it engages multiple senses in the learning process. For example, when describing an object, students are not only shown its image but also invited to touch its texture (if possible), listen to associated sounds, or even smell its scent. For students with visual impairments, tactile descriptions using objects with different textures can help them grasp the concept of visual description. The use of body movements or short dramatizations to depict scenes or situations can assist kinesthetic learners in understanding and remembering descriptive elements. This multisensory approach not only makes learning more engaging and memorable but also helps accommodate a variety of learning styles and special needs, creating a more inclusive and effective learning experience for all students.

Evaluation and interactive assessment

Evaluation and interactive assessment in descriptive text learning offer a more holistic and meaningful approach to measuring student progress. Project-based assessment is one of the key methods that can be applied. In this context, students may be assigned to create a digital descriptive book about their school environment or compose a descriptive travel guide about their city. Such projects allow students to demonstrate their understanding of descriptive texts

in a broader and more authentic context. Through these projects, teachers can assess not only the final product but also the creative process, research skills, and students' collaboration abilities, providing a more comprehensive picture of their capabilities.

Peer review and collaborative feedback are essential components of interactive evaluation processes. Students can be engaged in sharing sessions where they read and provide constructive comments on descriptive texts written by their classmates. This process not only helps improve writing quality through diverse perspectives but also fosters students' critical skills in analyzing and evaluating texts. Teachers can provide rubrics or guidelines to ensure the feedback is specific and useful. Collaborative feedback can also be facilitated through digital platforms, allowing for deeper discussion and continuous reflection.

The use of digital portfolios serves as an effective tool for monitoring students' ongoing development. Students can collect various pieces of their descriptive writing, from initial drafts to final versions, in an online portfolio. Platforms such as Google Sites or Seesaw can be used for this purpose. Digital portfolios not only allow students to track their own progress over time but also give teachers deeper insight into each student's development process in descriptive writing. Teachers can provide comments and suggestions directly on the portfolio, creating an ongoing dialogue about student growth. In addition, digital portfolios can serve as a medium for students to reflect on their learning journey, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate their achievements (Hindun & Sumarwati, 2017). Through a combination of project-based assessments, peer review, and digital portfolios, interactive evaluation and assessment provide a richer and more accurate depiction of students' abilities and development in writing descriptive texts.

CONCLUSION

Interactive learning of descriptive texts for seventh-grade junior high school students, including those with special needs, demonstrates significant potential in enhancing students' writing skills and creativity. Through the integration of technology, collaborative learning strategies, and multisensory approaches, students can actively engage in a more dynamic and meaningful learning process. The use of visual and audio media, group activities, language games, and collaborative writing practices has proven effective in stimulating students' interest and participation. Adaptation of teaching methods and the use of assistive technologies enable students with special needs to fully participate and reach their potential. Project-based assessments, peer review, and digital portfolios offer a more comprehensive and reflective evaluation of students' development. Overall, this interactive approach not only improves students' descriptive writing skills but also fosters their critical thinking, creativity, and social abilities.

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