

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING PUNCTUATION IN
DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH WRITING AT THE FIRST SEMESTER
OF THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMPN 2 PARDASUKA
IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2016/2017**

A Thesis

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for S1-Degree

By

DWI ATMA ETINURWATI

NPM 1211040039

Study Program : English Education



**TARBIYAH AND TEACHER TRAINING FACULTY
STATE INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
RADEN INTAN LAMPUNG
2016**

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Advisor : Meisuri, M.Pd

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**TARBIYAH AND TEACHER TRAINING FACULTY
STATE INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
RADEN INTAN LAMPUNG
2016**

ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING PUNCTUATION IN DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH WRITING AT THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMPN 2 PARDASUKA IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2016/2017

By :

Dwi Atma Etinurwati

Writing is very important, because it is one of the language skills to be mastered. The students' writing ability of SMPN 2 Pardasuka was still low, they did many mistake in using punctuation when they write a paragraph. The objective of this research was to describe the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

This research applied descriptive quantitative research. The researcher took class VIII B that consisted of 37 students as the sample. The sample was taken by using cluster random sampling. The data of this research was gotten by test. The researcher analyzed the data by giving scores of students' test and also computed the frequency students' score and the frequency of students' ability classification. After the researcher analyzed the data, so that we know the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

From the analysis, the result showed that no student was categorized into excellent, 4 students or 11% were categorized into good, 21 students or 57% were categorized into fair, 12 students or 32% were categorized into low, and no student was categorized into failed. The total average score of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017 was 59.7, it can be concluded that the students' ability was categorized into fair. The contribution of this research is that it can be a reference both for teachers and students to more practices about punctuation to improve the students' ability.

Keyword: Descriptive Paragraph Writing, Descriptive Quantitative Research, Punctuation, Students' Ability in Using Punctuation.



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Certify that this thesis is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this thesis. Other people's opinions or findings included in the thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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The Researcher,

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MOTTO

...وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ... ﴿٢﴾

“ and cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. . . . ” (Q.S. Al Maaidah, 2)¹



¹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Mushaf Al-Qur'an Terjemah*, (Bandung: Nur Publishing, 2007), p.160

DEDICATION

Praise and gratitude to Allah the Almighty for His abundant blessing for me, and from the deepest of my heart and great love, this thesis is dedicate to:

1. My heroes in my life, my beloved parents Mr. Suyatno and Mrs. Sehati who always pray and give me support and spirit as well as wish for my success. Thank to much for never ending love for me. I love you till the end of my life.
2. The one and only my beloved sister, Faujiyah Nurul Azizah, thanks for your kindness, support, and togetherness.
3. My beloved almamater and lecturers of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung, who have made me grow up and have contributed much for my self-development.

CURRICULUM VITAE

The researcher's name is Dwi Atma Etinurwati. She was born in Pujodadi, on May 09th, 1994. She is the first child of Mr. Suyatno and Mrs. Sehati. She has one sister whose name Faujiyah Nurul Azizah.

She accomplished her formal education at Elementary School at SDN 04 Sukorejo, Pringsewu in 2000 and graduated in 2006. After that, she continued her study at Junior High School at SMPN 2 Pardasuka, Pringsewu and graduated in 2009. Then, she continued her study at Senior High School in SMAN 1 Ambarawa, Pringsewu and graduated in 2012. After finishing at SMAN 1 Ambarawa, she continued her study to IAIN Raden Intan Lampung in English Education Study Program of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty.

Since she studied at IAIN Raden Intan Lampung, she has joined some extra campus organizations. She was a member of Front Mahasiswa Nasional (Front of National Students) and *Tapak Suci*. Besides, she was a private teacher of students' Elementary and Junior High School.

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All praise be to Allah the Almighty, the Lord of the World, who has blessed and given the researcher abundant mercies, help and guides so that she could complete this thesis. Then, peace and salutation may be upon to the great messenger prophet Muhammad Peace be upon Him, who has brought us from the darkness to the lightness.

This thesis entitled “An Analysis of Students’ Ability in Using Punctuation in Descriptive Paragraph Writing at the First Semester of the Eighth Grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the Academic Year of 2016/2017” is presented to the English Education Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung. The primary aim of writing this thesis is to fulfill students’ partial fulfillment of the requirement to obtain S1-degree.

Then the researcher would like to thank to the following people for their ideas, time, guidance, support, encouragement, and assistance for this thesis:

1. Dr. H. Chairul Anwar, M.Pd, the Dean of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty IAIN Raden Intan Lampung with all the staff, who helped the researcher along her study until the end of this thesis composition.
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8. Her beloved best friends: Dewi Fitria, Mentari Oktalia, Mirda Septiana, Nisa Azizah, Anis Wardiana, Devi Meidasari, and others who always give support and suggestion to the researcher in writing this thesis.
9. Especially for her beloved partner, Dwi Prastantio Putra, who always gives supports, appreciates, and accepts whoever she is.
10. All of the coolest friends of PBI A, B, C, D, and E in English Department Study Program of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung 2012.
11. All of the people who helped the researcher to finish the study that cannot mentioned one by one.

Finally, the researcher was fully aware that there are still a lot of weaknesses in this thesis. Therefore, any correction, comments, and criticism for this thesis are always open-heartedly welcome. Furthermore, she expected that the thesis might be useful for all readers. Aamiin Yaa Robbal ‘Alamiin.

Bandar Lampung, October 2016

The Researcher,

Dwi Atma Etinurwati
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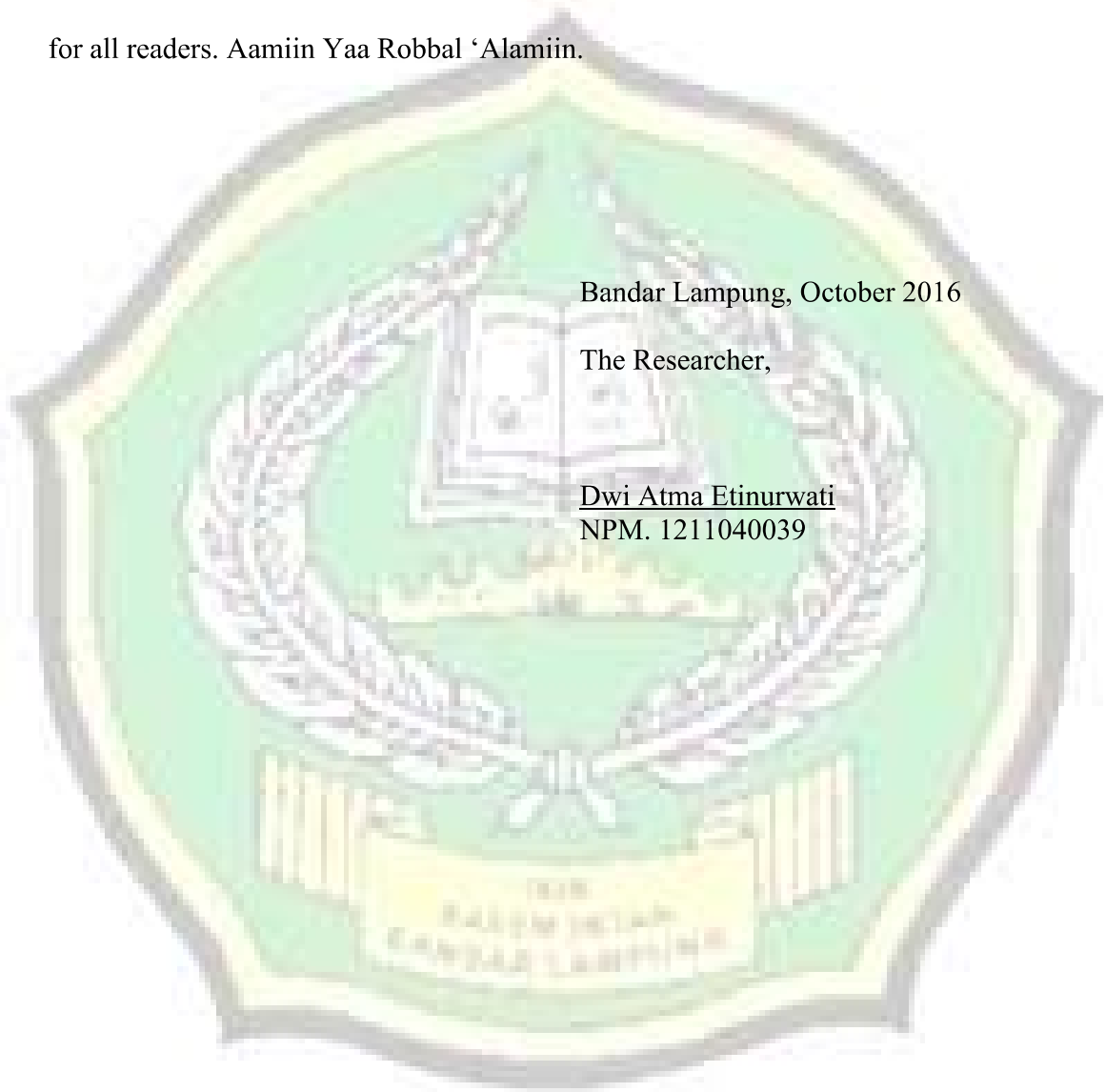


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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Language is very important in human life. It is used by people to communicate with one another. With language, they are able to express their feelings, thought, opinion, and ideas. Setiyadi states that language is a group of sounds with specific meanings and organized by grammatical rules.² Brown also defines language is a system arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written, or gestural symbols that enable members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another.³ By using language, we can ask other people to do something, exchange our ideas, and can communicate each other about our plans in the future or experiences. It can be said that language is needed by people to communication.

As an international language, English is the only language used by each country to communicate with other nations. Siahaan states that the world globalization give the English language a very important function for human's life.⁴ It means that English is important learnt by everyone. The purposes students have for learning will have an effect on what it is they want and need to learn and as a result will influence what they are taught.⁵ English is also needed to transfer knowledge and high technology

² Ag. Bambang Setiyadi, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2006), p.10

³ H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, (4th Ed.), (New York: Prentice Hall Inc., 1994), p.5

⁴ Sanggam Siahaan, *The English Paragraph*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2008), p.83

⁵ Jeremy Harmer, *How to Teach English*, (London: Longman, 2007), p.11

even culture, because most of books of knowledge of high technology are written in English. Therefore, English as the international language needs to be mastered by people in the world.

English is taught in Indonesia as the first foreign language and it is a compulsory subject that should be given to the students of Elementary school up to University. There are four skills in English, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. We should master these if we want to be able to use English for communication.

Writing is one of the language skill that the students have to master. According to Raimes, “Writing is a skill in which we express ideas, feelings, and thinkings which are arranged in words, sentence, and paragraph by using eyes, brain, and hand.”⁶ Sutanto states that writing as a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words should be one at our leisure. Writing can be very enjoyable as long as we have the ideas and the means to achieve it. The writer must have a clear concept of what to convey to the readers.⁷ It means that writing is used to convey the ideas in communicating with others.

In writing, the students can devote some ideas in their mind on a piece of paper. They can write something that they can't talk, so their idea can be understood by the reader. To make a good paragraph writing, the students must pay attention in using many aspect influence writing.

⁶ Ann Raimes, *Technique in Teaching Writing*, (London: Oxford University Press,1983), p.3

⁷ Leo Sutanto, *English for Academic Purpose Essay Writing*, (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset, 2007), p.1

One of the aspects influence writing is using punctuation correctly, it can make a good paragraph writing. According to Harmer, “If capital letters, commas, full stops, sentence and paragraph boundaries, etc., are not used correctly, this can not only make a negative impression but also make a text difficult to understand.”⁸ It supported by Kane that all punctuation exist, basically, to help readers understand what you wish to say.⁹ It means that the correct punctuation, is an essentially part of the properly constructed English sentence. In other words, if punctuation marks in the texts are not properly used, the readers may have difficulties to understand the text. From the explanation above, we can realize that punctuation is very important in writing.

Based on the preliminary research by interviewing Mr. Rizal Nursalim, S.Hum, as the English teacher of the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Pardasuka about the students’ ability in mastering English, especially about their writing, he explained that the students’ skill in writing were still low. The students had problems with their writing ability. The students had low understanding in using punctuation, so they were less attention in using punctuation in their writing. Beside that, the students also lack exercise about punctuation.¹⁰

The researcher also got the data from the questionnaire that given to the students. Most of students stated that writing is difficult skill. In students’ writing, the

⁸ Jeremy Harmer, *How to Teach Writing*, (London: Longman,2004), p.49

⁹ Thomas S. Kane, *The Oxford Essential Guide to Writing*,(New York: The Berkley Publishing Group,2000), p.379

¹⁰ Rizal Nursalim, *an Interview*, SMPN 2 Pardasuka, on January 18th,2016

researcher found that they were less pay attention in using punctuation.¹¹ In doing preliminary research, the researcher got the data of students' score in writing from English teacher at the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka. It can be seen in following table:

Table. 1
The Students' Score in Writing at the First Semester of the Eighth Grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the Academic Year of 2016/2017

No.	Students' Score	Class						Total	Percentage
		VIII A	VIII B	VIII C	VIII D	VIII E	VIII F		
1	<74	21	24	23	21	22	24	138	63 %
2	≥74	14	13	13	16	15	14	82	37 %
Total		35	37	36	37	37	38	220	100 %

(Source: English Teacher at the Eighth Grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka)

According to criteria of minimum mastery (KKM) of English subject in SMPN2 Pardasuka, 74, it can be seen from the table above that 138 out of 220 students or 63% got lower score, and there are 82 students or 37% of the students that qualify from the criteria of minimum mastery (KKM). Based on the result of interview the teacher and questionnaire that given to students that had the researcher explain before, in students' writing, they were less pay attention in using punctuation.

From the explanation above, the researcher conducted the research entitled "An Analysis of Students' Ability in Using Punctuation in Descriptive Paragraph Writing at the First Semester of the Eighth Grade of SMPN2 Pardasuka in the Academic Year of 2016/2017."

¹¹ Students' answer in *Questionnaire* on January 18th, 2016

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher identified the problems are :

1. The students' writing ability was still low.
2. The students were less pay attention in using punctuation in their writing.

C. Limitation of the Problem

In this research, the researcher focused on analyzing nine kinds of punctuation (Capital letter, comma, full stop, apostrophe, hyphen, brackets, quotation mark, exclamation mark, and colon) that used in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the problem above, the researcher formulated the problem as : “How is the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing?”

E. Objective of the Research

The objective of this research was to describe the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

F. Use of the Research

The uses of the research are :

1. Theoretically, to give information to the students in using punctuation, with

expectation that the students can increase their ability in using punctuation in their writing.

2. Practically, to give information about the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

G. Scope of the Research

The scope of the research are :

1. Research Subject

The subject of this research was the students of the eighth grade of SMPN2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

2. Research Object

The object of this research was an analysis of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

3. Research Place

The research was conducted at SMPN2 Pardasuka which is located on Jl. Raya Pekon Sukorejo, Kec. Pardasuka, Kab. Pringsewu, Lampung.

4. Research Time

The research was conducted at the first semester in the academic year of 2016/2017.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Concept of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

English is an international language. It means that the countries in the world communicate with other nations by using English. English is a foreign language in Indonesia and it has been taught starting from the Elementary School up to University. Besides, English is also introduced to kindergarten. There are various skills in mastering language: receptive skill, listening (understanding the spoken language), reading (understanding the written language), and productive skills-speaking and writing.¹² The purpose of teaching learning process is to develop those skills above.

In learning English as a foreign language students are not only hoped to be able to use language, but also to receive and get information. According to Boey in Aprilia, “The purpose of teaching foreign language is to enable the students to use the language to communication.”¹³ Harmer states “Many people learn English because they think it will be useful in some way for international communication and travel.”¹⁴ English is also needed to transfer knowledge and high technology even

¹²Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (London: Longman,2007), p.265

¹³ Nuri Aprilia, *An Analysis of Language Mechanical Error in Paragraph Writing at the First Semester of the Eighth Grade of MTs. Mamba'ul Ulum Margoyoso Tanggamus in 2012/2013 Academic Year*, (Bandar Lampung: Unpublished S1 Thesis of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung),p.8

¹⁴ Jeremy Harmer, *How To Teach English*, (Cambridge: Longman,2004),p.11

culture, because most of books of knowledge of high technology are written in English. Therefore, English as the foreign language needs to be learnt by students.

In teaching English as a foreign language, the teacher should know what they do in order to make the students interested in English. Hence, the teacher should really prepare the materials, instruction and technique well. It is also expected that the objective of English instruction is to make the students get the ability or skill to communicate well.¹⁵ It means that teaching is giving instruction, guiding in studying something, providing with knowledge and causing understanding.

In addition, Setiyadi states that there are three terms which are often overlapped in language teaching, they are approach, method and techniques. Approach is the level of theories, method is the plan of language teaching which is consistent with the theories, and techniques carry out a method.¹⁶ It means that, in teaching English as a foreign language, the teacher should know approach, method, and techniques to make learners interest in teaching learning process.

From the statements above, it can be said that teaching English as a foreign language is the teacher must give their knowledge about English to the students use approach, method, and interesting technique, and help them to develop their skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is also hoped that at the end of teaching

¹⁵ Jeremy Harmer, 2007, *Op.Cit.*, p.265

¹⁶ Ag Bambang Setiyadi, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2006), p.7

English as a foreign language activities students will understand the subject that is taught and they can using English in communication.

B. Concept of Writing

Writing is one language skills that should be learnt by students. Students can be able to communicate or express ideas, thinking, and feeling indirectly to another person as a reader, which is used as a written language. According to Siahaan, “The written productive language skill is called writing. It is the skill of a writer to communicate information to a reader or group of reader.¹⁷ It can be said that writing is a one way to sending information to the readers.

Writing is productive and expressive skill. In the process of writing, the students should use language, structure, and diction. Besides, in writing, we need much exercise or practice regularly. Harmer states that the students should be encouraged to express their ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings through writing.¹⁸ Besides, Siahaan states that writing is a piece of a written text about the topic in a context.¹⁹ It means that when someone write sentence, he or she needs to think about ideas, action, concentration, time and practice, so both of the reader and writer are interested to read.

¹⁷ Sanggam Siahaan, *The English Paragraph*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2008),p.2

¹⁸ Jeremy Harmer, *How to Teach Writing*, (London: Longman, 2004),p.31

¹⁹ Sanggam Siahaan, *Op.Cit.*,p.3

To make a good writing, there are some component that must be attention. As Brown states, “A writer has to master the components of language, namely; spelling, vocabulary, punctuation mark and grammar to make a good writing. All of the components above will influence the writer to create good sentences.”²⁰ According to Harmer, “Writing like any other skills, has its mechanical component. These include spelling, punctuation, and the construction of well-formed sentences, paragraph, and text.”²¹ It can be inferred that writing is a process of sending message by using mechanical component.

Based on the explanation above, it can be summarized that writing is a way to communicate and express ideas, experiences, thoughts and feelings. To create and arrange a good sentence in writing, we must master the component, such as spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar.

1. Concept of Writing Ability

Basically, in learning languages there are some skills to be mastered. Writing is one of the language skills. Harmer says, “Writing is one of the skills to be achieved in English language learning, writing has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English. Writing has been characterized as a written. The students should be encouraged to express their ideas, experience, thoughts, and feelings through

²⁰ H. Douglas Brown, *Principle of Language Teaching and Learning*, (New York: Prentice Hall Inc., 1994),p.321

²¹ Jeremy Harmer,2004, *Op.Cit.*,p.44

writing.”²² Besides, Elbow in Mutiara says that writing ability is the ability to create words or idea of the writer.²³ It means that writing ability is one of English skill that aims to express ideas, experience, thoughts, and feeling to other people in written symbols to make other people or readers understand the ideas conveyed.

The concept writing ability is the process involving two features of writing communication simultaneously, for example the concept of writing and the use of language. There are some tips which can help improving writing ability, those are:²⁴

1. Use acceptable grammatical systems (e.g. tenses, agreement, pluralization, patterns, and rules.)
2. Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.
3. Use cohesive devices in written discourse.
4. Use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse.
5. Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written text according to form and purpose.
6. Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as meaning idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
7. Distinguish between literal and implied meaning when writing.

²² *Ibid*,p. 124

²³ Rafika Mutiara, *Teaching Descriptive Text by Using Guided WH-Questions*, in Journal English Language Teaching (ELT) Volume 1 Number 1, September 2014, p.53 available on <http://journal.pbing.org/index.php/wks/article/view/7>, accessed on January 25th, 2017

²⁴ H. Doughlas Brown, *Teaching by Principle: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*, (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2001),p.343

8. Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text.
9. Develop and use a battery of writing strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience's interpretation, using pre-writing devices, writing with fluency in the list drafts using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback and using feedback for revising and editing.
10. Brush up on grammar and style.

In this globalization era, people use their writing to show their idea, such as a newspaper which is used to inform something in a written form. Furthermore, Weigle states that the ultimate goal of learning to write is, for most students, to be able to participate fully in many aspects of society beyond school, and for some, to pursue careers that involve extensive writing.²⁵ It can be assumed that writing ability is the ability that the students must have to convey their ideas, feelings, desire, and knowledge in written form to participate in many aspect of the globalization era.

To make a good writing, there are some components that must be attention. This components can help the reader understand the text easier. McCrimmon states that the criteria of good writing there are:²⁶

1. Content (The ability to think creatively and develop thoughts.)
2. Organization (The ability to write in appropriate manner.)
3. Vocabulary (The ability to use of word/idiom.)

²⁵ Sara C. Weigle, *Assessing Writing*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,2009),p.4

²⁶ James M. McCrimmon, *Writing with a Purpose*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983), p.6

4. Language (The ability to write appropriate structure.)
5. Mechanics (The ability to use punctuation, spelling, and layout correctly.)

Based on the explanation above, it can be summarized that writing ability is the ability to create words or idea of the writer by expressing their ideas, feeling, and thought in order to transfer an information to the reader. In having good writing when arranging the ideas, the writer must keep more attention to five important points of writing such as content, organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics.

2. Concept of Students' Writing Ability

Writing is aimed to train the students to have good written language. Writing taught in order the students are able to write a good paragraph. As the other skill in which the communication in English developed, writing also become very crucial in order the learners are able to do all writing activities such as doing a test, composing story, writing a letter. Without ability in writing, the learners will not able to communicate their ideas in written form. As brown says, "Writing is a transaction with words whereby you free yourself from what you presently think, feel, and perceive."²⁷ It means that by practice writing, students are able to explore their ideas as much as they can in form of written.

²⁷ H. Douglas Brown, 2001, *Op.Cit.*, p.362

To be successful in writing, students should require more attentions on their writing. According to Brown, “A writer has to master the components of language, namely; spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar to make a good writing. All of the components above will influence the writer to create good sentences.”²⁸ Besides, Harmer states that if we want our students to be good writers in English we need to teach them how to use punctuation conventions correctly.²⁹ It means that using punctuation correctly is important, because it make the students’ writing good and they can be a good writers. Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that to have ability in writing and to make a good writer, the students has to master the component of language such as spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar.

According to Rahmawati in her thesis, “Traditionally, teaching writing in schools only focuses on the grammar and vocabulary but punctuation is rarely learn in English class specifically.”³⁰ Therefore, Nurhayati states, “Basically, the problem which found in writing skill are spacing between words, punctuation, italicization, including parenthesis, underlining, upper and lowercase, capitalization to indicate sentence beginnings and proper nouns; inverted commas, etc.”³¹ It means that teaching learning process in writing, teacher and students less pay attention in learn

²⁸ H. Douglas Brown, 1994, *Loc. Cit.*

²⁹ Jeremy Harmer, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p.49

³⁰ Lia Rahmawati, *Error Analysis Of Using Punctuation Made By Students In Writing II Class*, (Salatiga: Unpublished S1 Thesis of STAIN Salatiga,2014),p.1

³¹ Tri Nurhayati, *Error Analysis of Using Punctuation in English Text*, in *Journal English Language Teaching (ELT)* Volume 1 Nomor 2, Juli 2013. Accessed on *January 15th, 2017*.

about punctuation, so most of the students' problem is not using punctuation correctly in their writing.

From the explanation above, the researcher summarized that by practice writing, students are able to explore their ideas as much as they can in form of written. To be a good writers in English, the students must have ability in using all of the component of writing. It means that becomes homework for the teacher to improve the students' ability in writing. Giving the students motivation and understanding what they will understand and do in writing. Guiding the students how to express the idea or the imagination in writing form. Without ability in writing, the students will not able to communicate their ideas in written form.

C. Concept of Paragraph

Most English writing is organized into paragraph. A paragraph contains several sentences. According to Oshima and Hogue, "A paragraph is a basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of related sentences develops one main idea."³² Siahaan states that a paragraph is a piece of written text that can be classified into three parts; they are the beginning, the body, and the ending.³³ It can be summarized that a paragraph is a written text that contain several sentences and has three part that develop one main idea.

³² Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, *Writing Academic English*, (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998),p.16

³³ Sanggam Siahaan, *Op.Cit.*,p.5

Meanwhile, Lorch states, “A paragraph is the smallest unit of writing that can effectively present an argument and the proof of the argument. The paragraph is made up of a topic sentence and a number of support sentences.”³⁴ It can be concluded that a paragraph starts with a topic sentence that states the main idea of paragraph and it tells what the paragraph will explain about the topic.

According to Oshima and Hogue, a paragraph has the following three major structural parts:

1. The topic sentence

A topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It briefly indicates what the paragraph is going to be discussed.

2. Supporting sentences

Supporting sentences develop the topic sentence. That is, they explain the topic sentence by giving reasons, examples, facts, statistics, and quotations.

3. The concluding sentence

A concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the reader with important points to remember.³⁵

³⁴ Sue Lorch, *Basic Writing a Practical Approach*, (Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1984), p.22

³⁵ Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, *Op. Cit.*, p.17

From the statement above, it can be summarized that paragraph is a group of sentences containing a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence which relate to each other logically that a writer develop about subject.

D. Types of Paragraph

There are many kinds of English paragraph writing, each of these kinds are used for different purpose and follow a different style or structure. A writer's style is a reflection of his or her personality, unique voice, and way of approaching the audience and readers. However, every piece writers write is for a specific purpose.

According to Siahaan, there are four types of paragraph: expository paragraph, persuasive paragraph, narrative paragraph, and descriptive paragraph.³⁶

1. Expository : this type of paragraph explains something or provides instruction. It could also describe a process and move the reader step by step through a method. This type of paragraph often requires research, but it's possible that the writer is able to rely on his or her own knowledge and expertise.
2. Persuasive : this type of paragraph tries to get the reader to accept a particular point of view or understand the writer's position. This is the type of paragraph that many teachers focus on because it's useful when

³⁶ Sanggam Siahaan, *Op.Cit.*, p.109

building an argument. It often requires the collection of facts and research.

3. Narrative : this type of paragraph tells a story. There's a sequence of action or there's a clear beginning, middle, and end to the paragraph.

4. Descriptive : this type of paragraph writing that uses the five senses to paint a picture for the reader. This paragraph incorporates imagery and specific details.

In this research, the researcher focused to the descriptive paragraph. The researcher chose descriptive because the students at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka learn about descriptive.

E. Concept of Descriptive Paragraph

Most English writing is organized into paragraph. A paragraph contains several sentences. There are many kinds of English paragraph, each of these kinds are used for different purpose and follow a different style or structure, but here the researcher focused on descriptive paragraph.

According to Kane, "Description is about sensory experience-how something looks, sounds, tastes."³⁷ Further, Siahaan and Shinoda states that description is a written

³⁷ Thomas S. Kane, *Op. Cit.*, p.351

English text in which the writer describes an object. In this, the object can be a concrete or abstract object. It can be a person, an animal, a tree, or camping. It can be love, hate or belief.³⁸ It can be said that descriptive paragraph is a paragraph which describes the characteristic of something. In descriptive, the writer can describe in details about things, such as person, animal, or place.

In addition, Pardiyono says that to make descriptive paragraph clear, the students must implement of the important part of descriptive besides the genre, they are:³⁹

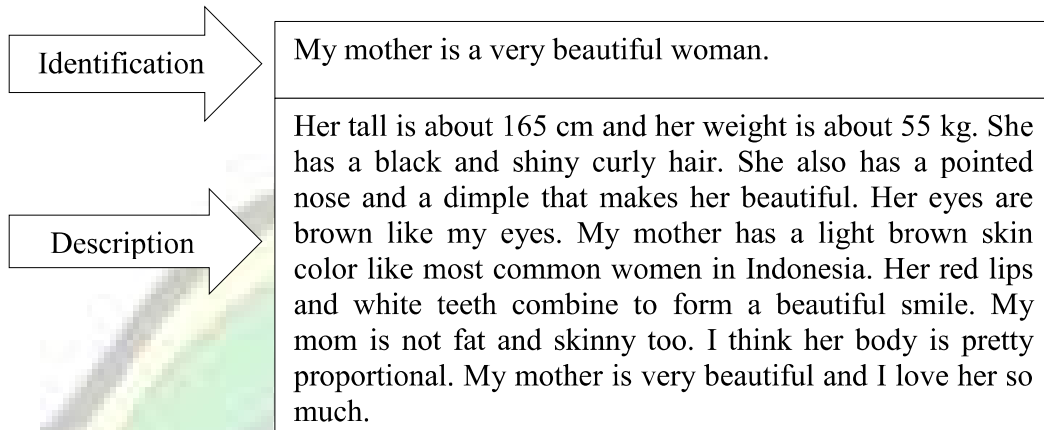
1. Communicative purposes: description is a type of written text, which has the specific function to give description about an object.
2. Generic structure
 - a. Identification: the statement includes object of the topic will be describe.
 - b. Description: the detail statement about the identification of object.
3. Grammatical pattern (language features): It means the pattern of the grammatical often used in certain kind of the paragraph. Grammatical pattern commonly used in descriptive paragraph are:
 - a. Use of verb; be (is,am,are), have, linking verbs (seems,looks,sounds,like).
 - b. Use of simple present tense.
 - c. Use of the adjectives to describes the condition of the object.

³⁸ Sanggam Siahaan and Kisno Shinoda, *Generic Text Structure*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu,2008),p.89

³⁹ Pardiyono, *Pasti Bisa! Teaching Genre-Based Writing*,(Jakarta: Penerbit ANDI,2009), p.34

Based on the explanation above, the example of descriptive paragraph is:⁴⁰

My Mom



Based on the statement above, the researcher concludes that descriptive paragraph is a paragraph that describe about particular things, such as person, an animal or a place. Descriptive paragraph have important parts, they are communicative purpose, generic structure and grammatical pattern. It also can make the reader be easy to imagine what the writer's feeling by giving some information in detail. Through descriptive paragraph writing, the writer can express what they feel, what they see or what they percept, so the readers also could feel the same way as they do.

F. Concept of Punctuation

As we know that writing is an indirect expression. Because of that, the writers should find a way to show their word expression one by one. To give some emphasize meaning or expression, in writing we use punctuation, or the sign mark

⁴⁰ Sujarwo, *Paragraph Writing*, available in <http://paragraphwritingpaksue.blogspot.com>, accessed on April 18th, 2016

in writing or same with intonation in speaking. Punctuation is placed in text to make meaning clear and to make reading easier.⁴¹ Kane states that all punctuation exist, basically, to help readers understand what you wish to say.⁴² It means that punctuation is signs that show what the appropriate expression with the sentence that have been built by the writer.

Punctuation make good writing and make a reading easier. Harmer states that if we want our students to be good writers in English we need to teach them how to use punctuation conventions correctly. Further he states,

“Using punctuation correctly is an important skill. Many people judge the quality of what written just on the content, language and the writer’s handwriting but also on their use of punctuation. If the capital letters, comma, full stop, sentence and paragraph boundaries, etc. are not used correctly, this cannot only make a negative impression but can, of course, also make text difficult to understand.”⁴³

It is supported by Jackson who states,

“The purpose of punctuation is to enable your reader to interpret unambiguously the structure, and therefore the meaning, of your writing. The absence of full stops to distinguish the sentences in the email above is, in effect, an insult to the readers. It tells the readers to work it out for themselves. Poorly punctuated writing can make for frustrated and annoyed readers, who will be less sympathetic to appreciating the content of what you are writing. So, punctuation is important.”⁴⁴

According to McCaskill *et.al.*,

“The various punctuation marks perform four functions: they (1) separate (a period separates sentences), (2) group or enclose (brackets enclose extraneous information), (3) connect (a hyphen connects a unit modifier), and (4) impart meaning (a question mark may make an otherwise declarative sentence interrogative.)”⁴⁵

⁴¹ Mary K. McCaskill, *et.al*, *Grammar, Punctuation and Capitalization*, (Washington DC: NASA,1990),p.56

⁴² Thomas S. Kane, *The Oxford: Essential Guide to Writing*, (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group,2000), p.379

⁴³ Jeremy Harmer,2004,*Op.Cit*, p.49

⁴⁴ Howard Jackson, *Good Grammar for Students*, (London: SAGE Publications Ltd.,2005), p.116

⁴⁵ Mary K. McCaskill, *et.al.*, *Op.Cit.*, p.57

It means that punctuation is a standard sign and marks in writing to separate word into sentences, clauses and phrases in order to clarify meaning. It cannot be neglected in writing. In other words, if punctuation marks in the texts are not properly used, the readers may have difficulties to understand the text.

There are many kinds of punctuation, and each of them have different function. According to Harmer, “Punctuation has twelve characters, they are: capital letter, full stop, comma, question mark, exclamation mark, colon, semi-colon, hypen, quotation mark, brackets, dash, and apostrophe.”⁴⁶ The function of them are:

1. Capital Letter (A, B, C)

Capital letters used for the first letter of a sentence. It should be used in the following cases:⁴⁷

a. Proper names.

Example: James Pieter, Mary Winter, etc.

b. The first person pronoun.

Example: I agree with you.

c. Use capital letters for the days of the week, months, special days, and holidays. But not for the names of the seasons.

⁴⁶ Jeremy Harmer, 2004, *Op. Cit.* p. 148

⁴⁷ Mary K. McCaskill, *et.al.*, *Op. Cit.*, p.81

Example:

- 1) On Monday, 24th July they celebrated her birthday at a local restaurant.
- 2) My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving, but Valentine's Day is a close second.
- 3) Last fall they spent Thanksgiving in Denmark.

d. The names of public places, countries and language, institutions, title of books and films.

Example: White House, Italy, The Hollow, Because of You.

e. Personal titles, like doctor, professor, and judge, when they refer to a specific person. Do not capitalize those words when they refer only to an occupation.

Example:

- 1) The course was taught by Professor Johnson.
- 2) When I was a kid, I thought I'd be a doctor, but I became a professor instead.

f. Acronyms are almost always formed with capital letters

Example: Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA)

2. Full stop (.)

The full stop is a mark of separation.⁴⁸ It is used at the end of sentence that is not a question or an exclamation.

- a. Mark boundaries between two thoughts or ideas.

Example: He stopped. She stopped too.

- b. Use full stop to end statement and request.

Example:

- 1) I tell story to him. (statement)
- 2) Tell me a story, please. (request)

- c. After most abbreviations.

Example:

- 1) Prof. H. Gulton, M.Sc.
- 2) Mr. Adelino is my English teacher.

- d. Place full stop before closing quotation marks

Example:

The operator presses the letter *n* to indicate “no” and the letter *y* to indicate “yes.”

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.71

3. Comma (,)

The comma separates groups of words. It used for:⁴⁹

- a. Use comma before direct quotes.

Examples: She said, "I do love you."

- b. Use comma between items in a series (more than two items.)

Example: I'd like to visit Spain, Italy, Australia, and Germany.

- c. To separate address, letter, and dates.

Examples:

- 1) Tuesday, December 20, 2006.

- 2) IAIN Raden Intan is located on Letkol. Endro Suratmin Street,
Sukarame, Bandar Lampung.

- 3) Dear Mom, I have received your letter last week.

- d. Use comma after an introductory word or phrase.

Examples:

- 1) Since you asked, I will tell you.

- 2) Unfortunately, we had lost her address.

- e. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

Examples:

⁴⁹ Fuad Mas'ud, *Essentials of English Grammar*, (Yogyakarta:BPFE-Yogyakarta,2005),Third Edition, p.312

- 1) I come to work early, but no one was here.
- 2) There is no one in Mr. Frendy's home, so I come back.

4. Question Mark (?)

The purpose of the question mark is to terminate a direct question.⁵⁰

Example: What is your name?

5. Exclamation Mark (!)

Exclamation mark is set within a sentence in order to stress the preceding word or phrase. It is usual function to:⁵¹

- a. As signal suprised or strong emotion.

Example: That's fantastic!

- b. Exlamation mark as a command.

Example: Don't do it!

6. Colon (:)

In modern writing the most common function of the colon is to introduce a specification. The colon is used as follows:⁵²

- a. Signal that something like a list or extra information.

Example: There are many kinds of guitar: accoustic, electric, Spanish, or
bass guitar.

⁵⁰ Thomas S. Kane, *Op.Cit.* p.384

⁵¹ Fuad Mas'ud, *Op.Cit.* p.313

⁵² Mary K. McCaskill, *Op.Cit.* p. 51

- b. Between hours and minutes in time

Example: 11:30 a.m.

- c. To express ratios

Example: 2:1 mixture

7. Semi-colon (;)

Semi-colon indicates that the main thrust of a sentence continues, but it temporarily halted. It is used in:⁵³

- a. If coordinate clauses are not joined by a coordinate conjunction, they must be joined by a semi-colon.

Example: The work in the office was quite simple; she had merely to answer her phone and do a little typing.

- b. Semi-colon may separate elements of a series that are complex or require internal commas.

Example: The Capital of the South East of Asian countries are; Indonesia, Jakarta; Philippine, Manila; Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur; Thailand, Bangkok; etc.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p.77

- c. If coordinate clauses are joined by a conjunctive adverb (*however, thus, therefore, hence*), a semi-colon (or a period) must precede the conjunctive adverb.

Example: It's raining very hard; therefore, the club will cancel the picnic.

8. Hyphen (-)

Hyphen used to join two or more words together in user-friendly way. It is used in:⁵⁴

- a. Words may be hyphenated at the ends of lines between syllables.

Example: Fatimah didn't go to school yesterday, because she was ill.

- b. Two-word adjectives where the second part ends in *-ed* or *-ing*.

Example: The sad-looking man

He was well-informed

- c. Two-word adjectives which describe a connection 'between' the two elements. Example:

- 1) The Paris-Dacca rally
- 2) Anglo-Argentinian relations

- d. Multi-word adjectives

Example: An out-of-work actor

⁵⁴ Jeremy Harmer, 2004, *Loc. Cit.*

e. Nouns, verbs, and adjectives (sometimes) to separate prefixes from word roots. Example:

- 1) A TV co-production
- 2) Her ex-husband

9. Quotation Mark (“ “)

Quotation marks used to enclose words quoted from another source, direct discourse, or words requiring differentiation from the surrounding text. It is used for:⁵⁵

a. Enclose quotation of direct speech.

Example: He said, “Watch out!”

b. Use quotation marks to indicate the titles of short story or poem and song title. Examples:

- 1) “The Snow White” is a memorable short story.
- 2) My dad and I danced to “When a Man Loves a Woman” at my wedding.

10. Brackets [()]

Used to enclose extra information that is not absolutely necessary and which may seem outside the meaning thrust of the sentence.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

Example:

The Cambridge Folk Festival (held in the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall) is one of the most enjoyable dates in the Cambridge calendar.

11. Dash (–)

It used to separates an idea from the rest of the sentence.⁵⁷

Example: If you want to succeed – really succeed – you must study hard.

12. Apostrophe (‘)

The functions of the apostrophe are to indicate possession and contractions.⁵⁸

- a. Use the apostrophe to show possession.

Example: This is Miko’s book.

- b. Use the apostrophe with contractions.

Example : She’s a great teacher.

Based on the theory above, it can be summarized that punctuation is the sign of writing to make clear the writer’s ideas. Punctuation can help the writer expresses their meaning in writing. In other words, using punctuation correctly will help the readers understand what the writers intend to communicate. In conclusion, punctuation is placed in a text to make the meaning clear and to make reading easier. Each character has different meaning. In this research, the researcher only

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.148

⁵⁸ Howard Jackson, *Op.Cit.*, p.120

focused on nine punctuations, because they usually used in writing; they are: capital letter, full stop, comma, colon, quotation mark, exclamation mark, brackets, hyphen, and apostrophe.

G. Concept of Students' Ability in Using Punctuation

Ability is the capacity for doing or achieving something. According to Bull, "Ability is skill or power."⁵⁹ In addition, Milman states that person's ability as a base which itself is related to the implementation of the job effectively or very successful.⁶⁰ It means that ability is power or an individual person's potential to master the skill of doing a variety of tasks in a job or an assessment of person's actions.

According to Livingstone as quoted by Stoner in Suratno, ability can and should be taught.⁶¹ Meanwhile, Hornby states, "Ability is potential, capacity or power to do something physical or mental."⁶² It means that ability is a people's skill to do something or state of being able that had been learnt before.

As the other skill in which the communication in English developed, writing also become very crucial in order the learners are able to do all writing activities such as

⁵⁹ Victoria Bull, *Op.Cit.*, p.1

⁶⁰ Milman Yusdi, *Pengertian Kemampuan*, available in <http://milmanyusdi.blogspot.com/2011/07/pengertian-kemampuan.html>, accessed on Februari 13rd, 2016

⁶¹ Suratno, *Konsep Kemampuan Sumber Daya Manusia*, p.1. available in <http://sulut.kemenag.id/file/kepegawaian/aunw1341283316>, accessed on April 18th, 2016

⁶² AS Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.2

doing a test, composing story, writing a letter. As Harmer says that writing is a basic language skill, just as important as other skills, students need to know how to write sentences, how to put written report together, and increasingly, how to write using electronic media.⁶³ Based on the statement above, the researcher has assumed that in order to be successful in writing, the students should learn how to express the idea or the imagination in writing form. Without ability in writing, the students will not able to communicate their ideas in written form.

As we know, writing is an indirect expression. Because of that, the writer should find a way to show her word expression one by one. To give emphasize meaning or expression, we use punctuation. According to McCaskill, "Punctuation is placed in writing to make meaning clear and reading easier."⁶⁴ Besides, Kane states that poorly punctuated writing can make for frustrated and annoyed readers, who will be less sympathetic to appreciating the content of what you are writing.⁶⁵ It can be said that punctuation is important to make writing clear and the the reader not feel frustrate.

Furthermore, Harmer states that if we want our students to be good writers in English we need to teach them how to use punctuation conventions correctly.⁶⁶ It means that using punctuation correctly is important, because it make the students' writing good and they can be a good writers.

⁶³ Jeremy Harmer, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p 79.

⁶⁴ Mary K. McCaskill, *et.al.*, *Loc. Cit.*

⁶⁵ Howard Jackson, *Loc. Cit.*

⁶⁶ Jeremy Harmer, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p. 120

Based on the explanation above, it can be inferred that students' ability in using punctuation is the students' capacity or skill to using punctuation correctly in their writing. Because the correct punctuation make the good students' writing and the students' writing clear. In this research the researcher want to know the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.



CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

In this research, the researcher used descriptive quantitative research. In this study, the researcher described the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing based on the students' test results. As Glass and Hopkins state that descriptive research can be either quantitative or qualitative. It can involve collection of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form such as score on a test or the number of times a person chooses to use a certain feature of a multimedia program.⁶⁷ It is supported by Dornyei who states quantitative data can be obtained in a number of ways. Furthermore he says that the most common instrument used for this purpose is the test, which has several types for example, language tests or psychological tests such as aptitude tests or personality batteries.⁶⁸ In this researcher, the researcher used number as the data to analyze what going to be known.

In this study, descriptive research was used to describe the students' ability at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The researcher used quantitative data to know the students' ability. According to Lodico et.al who state that all quantitative research

⁶⁷ Gene V. Glass and Kenneth D. Hopkins, *The Handbook of Research for Educational Communications and Technology*, available in <http://www.aect.org/edtech/ed1/41/41-01.html>, accessed on May 22nd, 2016.

⁶⁸ Zoltan Dornyei, *Research Methods in Applied Linguistic: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methodologies*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 1998), p.95

approaches summarize results numerically. However, the approaches differ in their goals and procedures used to collect data.⁶⁹ Thus, it could be concluded that it was descriptive quantitative research, because in this research the data which gathered from the result of students' writing test as the data to measure the students' ability.

B. Research Subject

1. Population

The larger group to which one hopes to apply the results is called the population. Population means all the sources of the research, unlimited, and large. The population was the students at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017, which consisted of 220 students that divided into six classes.

Table. 2
Number of the Students at the First Semester of the Eighth Grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the Academic Year of 2016/2017

Classes	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
VIII A	20	15	35
VIII B	20	17	37
VIII C	20	16	36
VIII D	22	15	37
VIII E	21	16	37
VIII F	22	16	38
Total	125	95	220

Source : The Documents of SMPN 2 Pardasuka

⁶⁹ Marguerite G. Lodico, Dien T. Spaulding and Katherine H. Voegetle, *Methods in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice*, (New York: Jossey Bass,1987), p.12

2. Sample

A sample is a small propotion of population selected for observation and analysis. The sample of this research was 37 students at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

3. Sampling Technique

Sampling means selecting a group of content units to analyze. In this research, the researcher took the sample used cluster random sampling. Gall et.al., state “Cluster random sampling is used when it is more feasible to select groups of individuals rather than individuals from a defined population.”⁷⁰ In addition, Margono states that cluster random sampling used if the population in a group and homogenous.⁷¹ The process in determining the sample in cluster random sampling was done by using lottery, with the following steps:

- a. The researcher wrote the name of all the classes at the eighth grade of first semester in a small piece of paper.
- b. These piece of paper were rolled and put into a box.
- c. The box was shaken and the researcher took one piece of paper randomly to be decided as the sample.

⁷⁰ Meredith D. Gall, *et.al.*, *Educational Research*, (United States: Pearson Education Inc., 2003), p. 174.

⁷¹ Margono, *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta,2010), p. 127.

C. Data Collecting Technique

Sugiyono states that data collecting technique is the first main step in the research, because the main purpose of the research is to get the data.⁷² In order to collect the data, the researcher used test. There were two kind of test to collect the data in this research. First, the researcher asked the students to make descriptive paragraph writing with the correct punctuation based on the topic given. Second, the researcher asked the students to complete the descriptive paragraph with the correct punctuation. The result from students' test was considered as information that reflects their ability.

D. Research Instrument

An instrument is a device to get the data. Research instrument is one of important things which keep the quality of the research result. In this research, the researcher used test. The test was to measure the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The students had 2 x 40 minutes to finished, and the test were:

- a. The researcher asked the students to make descriptive paragraph writing by choosing the title provided: *My Mother*, *My Favourite Teacher*, and *My House*. The students were free to choose only one of the title. The titles was chose because in syllabus of the eighth grade, the students learnt about it.

⁷² Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*, (Bandung: Alfabeta,2013), p.306

- b. The researcher gave descriptive paragraph with the blank punctuation to the students, then the students completed the descriptive paragraph with the correct punctuation.

Table. 3
Specification of Test for Completing Punctuation

Subject	Frequency
Capital letter	7
Comma	3
Full stop	4
Apostrophe	2
Exclamation mark	1
Quotation mark	1
Hypen	1
Brackets	1
Total	20

After the researcher analyzed the punctuation used by students in descriptive paragraph writing, the researcher classified the level of students' ability based on the classification as follows:⁷³

Table. 4
Students' Ability Classification in Using Punctuation in Descriptive Paragraph Writing

Students' Ability	Level of Ability
80-100	Excellent
66-79	Good
56-65	Fair
46-55	Low
0-45	Failed

⁷³ Anas Sudijono, *Pengantar Evaluasi Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2013), p.35

E. Research Procedure

The research procedures were as follows:

1. Determining the research subject

In this research, the subject of the research was the students of class VIII B at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka that consisted of 37 students.

2. Giving try out readability to know the items of test instrument easy to read and understanding of the students.

3. Administering test

In this research, the researcher used writing test form. The researcher distributed the test and answer sheet to every students. Then, the students were required to finish the test in 80 minutes.

4. Collecting the students' work

The researcher collected the students' work after conducting the test.

5. Analyzing the data.

There were some steps to analyze the data after giving the test. There were:

- a) Checking the students' name and identity.
- b) Correcting the students' answer sheet one by one.
- c) Giving the students' score.
- d) Calculating the score to get the total score.
- e) Calculating the score to get the final score.

- f) Determining level of each students by using level of ability.
- g) Classifying the students' level of ability to know the frequency's percentages of students' classification.
- h) Calculating the total average score of the students to conclude the category of students' ability.

F. Try Out

The test instruments of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing was done trying out to the students before the instruments used. This was intended to know the validity and readability of the instrument. The researcher measured the readability by the trying out the instrument to the students that had been chosen as the sample.

G. Validity of the Test

Validity is an important key to effective research. To measure whether the test had good validity or not, the researcher analyzed the test from content validity and construct validity.

1. Content Validity

To get content validity, the test was suited with the material taught to the students. In other words, the researcher made the test based on the material in the syllabus used in SMPN 2 Pardasuka.

2. Construct Validity

Construct validity focused on the kind of the test that is used to measure the ability. In this research, the researcher used writing test in descriptive paragraph. To make sure that construct validity of the test in this research, the researcher consulted the instrument to the English teacher of SMPN 2 Pardasuka.

H. Readability

To know the readability of the essay test instrument, the researcher followed Kouame's research that quoted by Sya'banah in her thesis. Participants is asked to evaluate instructions and the understandability of each item on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 describes an item that is easy to read and 10 describes an item that is difficult to read.⁷⁴ The questions were tested individually. The participants might not have difficulty understanding because they take the context of the writing into consideration. After that, the researcher measured mean of each item. Based on the finding of Kouame's research in Sya'banah, if the mean of all items of the instruments has mean under 4.46, the instrument is quite readable and understandable by readers or test takers.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Sya'banah, *An Analysis of Students' Ability in Constructing WH-Question in Simple Past Tense from the Recount Text at the Second Semester of the Eighth Grade of MTs. Diniyyah Putri Lampung in the Academic Year of 2014/2015*, (Bandar Lampung: Unpublished S1 Thesis of IAIN Raden Intan Lampung), p.43

⁷⁵ *Ibid*

After giving the instrument of written test to 36 students out the sample, the result of instrument readability shows that the instrument was readable. The mean of all items of instrument was 1.99.

I. Data Analysis

After data were collected, the researcher analyzed them. Bodgan in Sugiyono states that data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others.⁷⁶ The data analysis in this research was data from the test of students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. In this research, the researcher analyzed the data with the steps as follows:

1. The researcher collected the data from the students' writing test.
2. The researcher analyzed the data of the students' writing test. The researcher used two methods in analyzed the students' writing test, there were:
 - a. To know the students' score in using punctuation in test1, the researcher used formula:⁷⁷

$$\text{Students' score} = \frac{\text{correct items}}{\text{correct+incorrect items}} \times 100$$

⁷⁶ Sugiyono, *Op.Cit.*, p.334

⁷⁷ Nar Herrhyanto and H.M. Akib Hamid, *Statistika Dasar*,(Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2006), p.22

b. To know students' ability in using punctuation in test 2, the students got score 5(five) for the correct answer and zero (0) for incorrect answer.⁷⁸

3. The researcher calculated the students' ability in using punctuation. To calculate the students' ability, the researcher used formula:⁷⁹

$$\text{Students' ability} = \frac{\text{result of test 1+test 2}}{\text{number of test}}$$

4. The researcher classified the level of students' ability.⁸⁰

Table. 5
Students' Ability Classification in Using Punctuation
in Descriptive Paragraph Writing

No.	Score Interval	Level of Ability
1	80-100	Excellent
2	66-79	Good
3	56-65	Fair
4	46-55	Low
5	0-45	Failed

5. The researcher found out the percentage of classification. After the students' ability was classified, the researcher found the percentage of classification. The researcher used formula of percentage:⁸¹

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage Number

F = Frequency

N = Number of Students

⁷⁸ Anas Sudijono, *Op.Cit.*, p.302

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p.440

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.35

⁸¹ Anas Sudijono, *Pengantar Statistik Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers,2008),p.43

6. The researcher found out the total average score of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The researcher used the formula:⁸²

$$X = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where :

X = the mean

$\sum x$ = the total score

N = the number of students



⁸² *Ibid*, p.8

CHAPTER IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Procedure

The researcher had done the research through test as instrument. The test was used to describe the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The researcher found some result of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

Before doing the test, the researcher tried to avoid the forgetfulness of the students. The researcher gave review about punctuation and their function. In the test, the researcher gave the test to the students to get the data about their ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. After that, the researcher analyzed the result of the test and determined the level of students' ability, then classification the category level of each students.

The research was conducted on August 18th, 2016. In this research, the researcher included the date or planned schedule of work as follows:

1. On August 11th, 2016, the researcher asked permission to the headmaster of SMPN 2 Pardasuka that the researcher did the research at her school.
2. On August 12th, 2016, the researcher conducted consultation to the English teacher and took the sample that would be used in this research at SMPN 2 Pardasuka.

3. On August 15th, 2016, the researcher did try out readability to know whether the instrument readable or not.
4. On August 18th, 2016, the researcher gathered the subject, and then gave the students test of using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.
5. On August 23rd, 2016, the researcher asked the additional information or data of the school such as: the history of school, profile of the teacher, and so on.

B. Research Findings

This research was conducted at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017. The subject of this research was the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Pardasuka. The purpose of this research was to gain the description of students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

The researcher conducted the research on August 18th, 2016 at 08.45 up to 10.05 a.m. At the time in first meeting, the researcher introduced herself and delivered her aim to the students. Then, she gave the test of using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing to the students. There were two kinds of tests in this research. The first test was the students should make a descriptive paragraph writing. The second test was the students completing the descriptive paragraph using the correct punctuation. After collected the data, the researcher analyzed the result of students' test. The steps were as follows:

1. The researcher collected the students' writing test.
2. The researcher analyzed the data of students' writing test.
 - a. in scoring the students' test in test 1 (one), the researcher used the formula as follow:⁸³

$$\text{Students' score} = \frac{\text{correct items}}{\text{correct+incorrect items}} \times 100$$

Based on the result in test 1, most of students got score 60. There were six students who got score below 55 and eight students whose score under 56. There were three students got the lowest score that was 40 and two students got the highest score that was 80.

- b. In test 2 (two), there were 20 frequency of punctuation that students must be completed. The students got 5 (five) for the correct answer and 0 (zero) for incorrect answer. Most of students got score above 60. There were 13 (thirteen) students got score below 60, 10 (ten) students got score 70, and 2 (two) students got score above 80.
3. After the result of students' test was found, then the researcher calculated the total of students' score to determining the level of students' ability by using the formula:⁸⁴

$$\text{Total students' score} = \frac{\text{result of test 1+test 2}}{\text{number of test}}$$

⁸³ Nar Herrhyanto and H.M. Akib Hamid, *Statistika Dasar*, (Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka, 2006), p.22

⁸⁴ Anas Sudijono, *Pengantar Evaluasi Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2013), p.440

Based on the result of calculating students' score in using punctuation, most of students got score 60. There were 5 (five) students got score 50, 10 (ten) students got score below 50, and 4 (four) students got score below 70. The students who got score 50, based on the result of the test; they rarely used punctuation and did not use punctuation correctly. The students who got score below 50, they used the punctuation; but some of them used the incorrect punctuation. The students who got score below 70, they used the correct punctuation in the test.

4. After the students' score was found, the researcher classified the level of students' ability based on the category as follows:⁸⁵

Table. 6
The Classification of Students' Ability in Using Punctuation
in Descriptive Paragraph Writing

Students' Score	Level of Ability
80-100	Excellent
66-79	Good
56-65	Fair
46-55	Low
0-45	Failed

From the table of the categories of students' ability, the frequency of each students' classification was calculated as follows:

⁸⁵ *Ibid*,p.35

Table. 7
The Result of Students' Ability Classification in Using Punctuation
in Descriptive Paragraph Writing

Students' Ability	Level of Ability	Frequency
80-100	Excellent	0
66-79	Good	4
56-65	Fair	21
46-55	Low	12
0-45	Failed	0

Based on the table above, there was no student who categorized into excellent. There were 4 students who categorized into good. The students who categorized into good, they were the students whose code AS and DD got score 75, RAS got score 72, and SR got score 70. The students who categorized into fair there were 21 students. In the fair category, there were eighteen students who got score above 60, and three students who got score below 60. There were 12 students who categorized into low. In this category, the lowest score that the students got was 50. And the last, that no student was categorized into failed.

5. Found out the percentage of classification.

After the students' ability was classified, the researcher found the percentage of classification. The formula used:⁸⁶

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage Number

F = Frequency

N = Number of Students

⁸⁶ Anas Sudijono, *Pengantar Statistik Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2008), p.43

The percentage of students' classification excellent:

$$P = \frac{0}{37} \times 100\% = 0\%$$

The percentage of students' classification good:

$$P = \frac{4}{37} \times 100\% = 11\%$$

The percentage of students' classification fair:

$$P = \frac{21}{37} \times 100\% = 57\%$$

The percentage of students' classification low:

$$P = \frac{12}{37} \times 100\% = 32\%$$

The percentage of students' classification failed:

$$P = \frac{0}{37} \times 100\% = 0\%$$

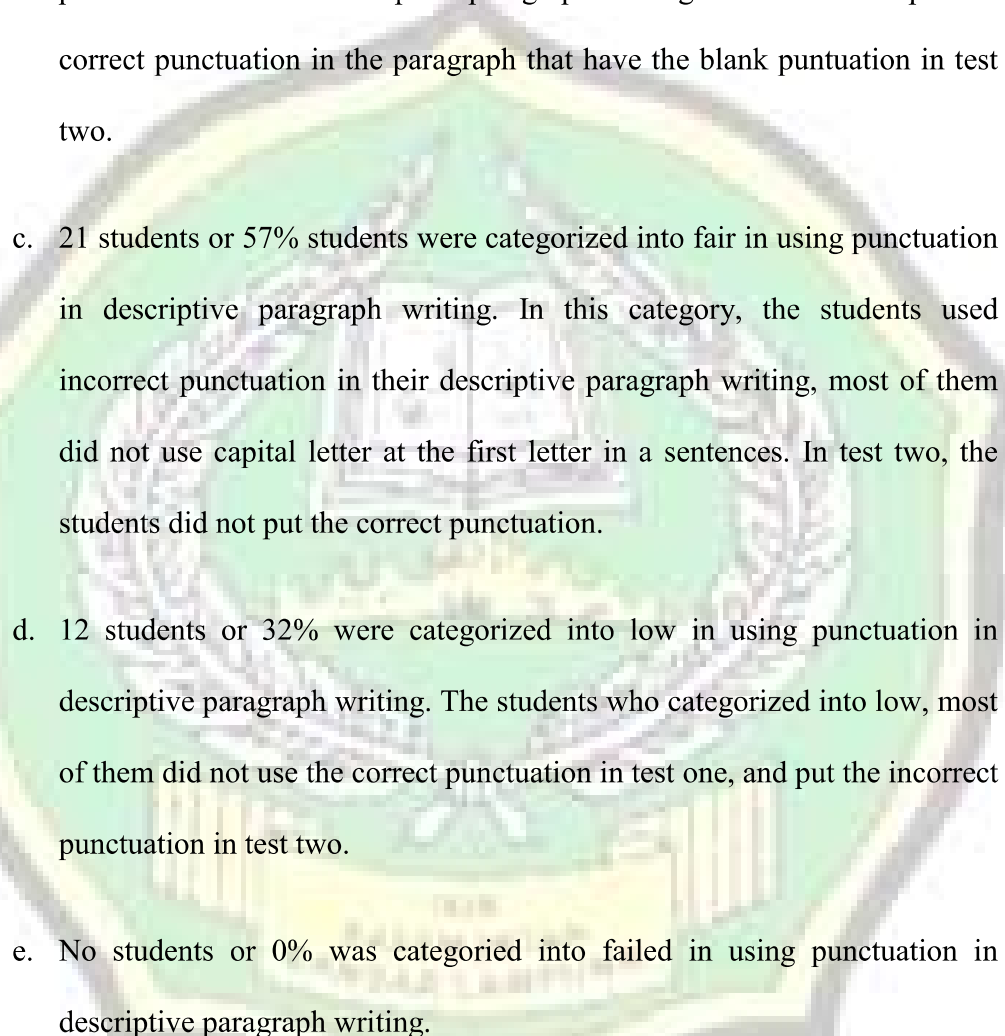
For more detail, it can be seen in the following table:

Table. 8
The Frequency's Percentage of Students' Ability Classification
in Using Punctuation in Descriptive Paragraph Writing

Students' Ability	Frequency	Percentage
80-100	0	0%
66-79	4	11%
56-65	21	57%
46-55	12	32%
0-45	0	0%

It was clearly seen in the table above that there were:

- a. No students or 0% was categorized into excellent in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

- 
- b. 4 students or 11% were categorized into good in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The students almost used the correct punctuation in their descriptive paragraph writing in test one and put the correct punctuation in the paragraph that have the blank punctuation in test two.
- c. 21 students or 57% students were categorized into fair in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. In this category, the students used incorrect punctuation in their descriptive paragraph writing, most of them did not use capital letter at the first letter in a sentences. In test two, the students did not put the correct punctuation.
- d. 12 students or 32% were categorized into low in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. The students who categorized into low, most of them did not use the correct punctuation in test one, and put the incorrect punctuation in test two.
- e. No students or 0% was categorized into failed in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing.

6. Found out the total average score of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. Here the formula that was used by the researcher for calculating the total average score of students' ability:⁸⁷

$$X = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where :

X = the mean

$\sum x$ = the total score

N = the number of students

From the formula above, the average score of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017 was 59.7, so the criteria of the students' ability belongs to fair.

C. Discussion of Findings

This section discussed about the research finding which include the result of the test in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing. There were 37 students as the sample. Based on the data, the mean score of the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017 was 59.7, so the criteria of students' ability belongs to fair.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.8

From the data analyzing showed that no student or 0% was categorized into excellent, 4 students or 11% was categorized into good, 21 students or 57% was categorized into fair, 12 students or 32% was categorized into low, and no student was categorized into failed. From the data gained that most of the students were less pay attention in using punctuation, they rarely used punctuation in their writing.

Based on the result of data analyze, the researcher identified:

1. The result of test 1 (one), almost of all the students did not use capital letter at the first letter in a sentence. Only some students who used the correct capital letter. The students also did not put the full stop at the end of a sentences in their writing. Most of the students did not put the apostrophe to showing possession. Based on the result of the students' test in descriptive paragraph writing, the researcher assumed that most of the students were not pay attention in using punctuation. The students only focused on the writing form.
2. In test 2 (two), the students completing the paragraph with the correct punctuation. The result showed that half of the students got the higher score than in test one. The students who got the highest score, they put the correct punctuation in the paragraph. They put capital letter at the first letter of a sentence, put capital letter for proper name, put the comma between items in a series, put the apostrophe for showing possession and in contraction, and used brackets to enclose extra information. The students who got the lowest score, it

caused that they did not put the correct punctuation. They were less attention in using capital letter for proper name and the first letter in a sentences. They also did not care to put full stop at the end of a sentence, and put comma between item in a series.

The researcher identified some of the students' mistake in using punctuation, example:

1. Most of the students did not use capital letter at the first letter in a sentence.

a. my favorite teacher is my English teacher.

*(Correct: **M**y favorite teacher is my English teacher.)*

b. my mother is housewife.

*(Correct: **M**y mother is housewife.)*

c. there are some flower in front of my house.

*(Correct: **T**here are some flower in front of my house.)*

2. The students did not use capital letter for proper name.

a. My mother called unah.

*(Correct: My mother called **U**nah.)*

b. Cristiano ronaldo is tall and thin.

*(Correct: Cristiano **R**onaldo is tall and thin.)*

c. His full name is Rizal nursalim.

*(Correct: His full name is Rizal **N**ursalim.)*

3. The students did not use full stop at the end of a sentence.

a. I love my mother

(Correct: I love my mother.)

b. He is guardian of my class

(Correct: He is guardian of my class.)

c. There is mango tree behind my house

(Correct: There is mango tree behind my house.)

4. The students did not use coma between items in a series.

a. There are television aquarium table and cupboard in my living room.

(Correct: There are television, aquarium, table, and cupboard in my living room.)

b. He has brown eyes olive-skinned and short hair.

(Correct: He has brown eyes, olive-skinned, and short hair.)

c. My mother is tall fat and beautiful.

(Correct: My mother is tall, fat, and beautiful.)

5. The students did not use comma after introductory word or phrase.

a. As a striker he becomes a goal getter for Manchester United and Real Madrid along his career.

(Correct: As a striker, he becomes a goal getter for Manchester United and Real Madrid along his career.)

- b. Although my mother is fussy I always love my mother.

(Correct: Although my mother is fussy, I always love my mother.)

6. The students did not use apostrophe in showing possession.

- a. My mothers hobby is cooking.

(Correct: My mother's hobby is cooking.)

- b. My mothers nose is pointed.

(Correct: My mother's nose is pointed.)

- c. Real Madrids fans often call him CR7.

(Correct: Real Madrid's fans often call him CR7.)

7. The students did not use apostrophe in contraction.

- a. Hes the best football player in the word.

(Correct: He's the best football player in the word.)

- b. Im love my mother so much.

(Correct: I'm love my mother so much.)

- c. Im love my mother forever.

(Correct: I'm love my mother forever.)

8. The students did not use brackets to enclose extra information.

Madridista Real Madrids fans often call him CR7.

(Correct: Madridista (Real Madrid's fans) often call him CR7.)

9. The students did not use exclamation mark as signal strong emotion.

Its really fun

(Correct: Its really fun!)

10. The students used incorrect punctuation.

a. There are three bedrooms in my house,

(Correct: There are three bedrooms in my house.)

b. He can get more than 30 goals every season,

(Correct: He can get more than 30 goals every season.)

c. He has brown eyes, olive₂skinned, and short black hair.

(Correct: He has brown eyes, olive-skinned, and short black hair.)

Based on the example above, the researcher found that the problems faced by the students were they did not understand about the function of punctuation. Almost of all the students made mistake in using capital letter. Some of students made mistake in using full stop. Some of the students also used incorrect punctuation and they did not use punctuation in their writing. From the twelve kinds of punctuation, not all of them used by the students in their descriptive paragraph writing. The punctuation that the students did not use were semi-colon, dash, and question mark.

The students were less pay attention in using punctuation when they write a paragraph, so they were made mistake in using punctuation. The students only focused in the writing form. On the otherhand, The students were lack exercise in

using punctuation, and its caused the students made many mistake in using punctuation in their writing. It was appropriate with the result of interview when the researcher did in preliminary research.

According to the result of this research, it showed that most of the students had not mastered the rule yet. It causing the students' ability in using punctuation in their writing was fair, because the students were less pay attention in using punctuation. Besides, in teaching learning process of writing, the teacher and students rarely learn about punctuation and lack exercise about it. It was supported by Nurhayati who states that the basic problem of teaching and learning writing, the teacher and students only focused in grammar and vocabulary.

In this globalization era, people use their writing to show their idea, such as a newspaper which is used to inform something in a written form. Furthermore, Weigle states that the ultimate goal of learning to write is, for most students, to be able to participate fully in many aspects of society beyond school, and for some, to persue careers that involve extensive writing. It can be assumed that students are expected to convey their ideas and knowledge by writing to participate in many aspect of the globalization era.

We know that writing is an indirect expression, because of that the writers should give the punctuation to show their word expression. It was appropriate with Kane who states that all punctuation exist, basically, to help the readers understand what

wish you to say. It means that using punctuation in writing is to show the appropriate expression in sentences that have been built by the writer and help the readers understand what the writers intend to communicate.

So, the researcher suggests to the English teacher that they must prepare the materials, instruction, and technique well to make the students more enjoyable and interest in teaching learning process. It was appropriate with Setiyadi who states that there are three terms which are often overlapped in language teaching. They are approach, method, and techniques. Especially in teaching and learning writing, the teacher and students not only learn about grammar and vocabulary, but also learn about punctuation. Because, the correct punctuation make the good writing. it was supported by Jackson who states that the purpose of punctuation is to enable the reader to interpret unambiguously the structure, and therefore the meaning in writing. Poorly punctuated writing can make the readers have difficulties to understand the text and the readers will be less sympathetic to appreciating the content. From the explanation above, we can realize that punctuation is very important in writing.

Based on the result of this research about an analysis of students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing showed that the students' ability is belong to fair. It caused that the students did not use punctuation correctly. Using punctuation correctly in descriptive paragraph writing is important, because the

correct punctuation show what the appropriate expression with the sentence that have been built by the writer and make reading easier.



CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

After collecting the data and analyzing the result of the research in the previous chapter, the researcher drew a conclusion about students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing at the first semester of the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Pardasuka in the academic year of 2016/2017.

The students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing was categorized into fair, since the mean of the students' score was 59.7. It was because half of the students were less pay attention in using punctuation. Other classification indicated that no one of student or 0% was categorized into excellent, 4 students or 11% students was categorized into good, 21 students or 57% students was categorized into fair, 12 students or 32% students was categorized into low, and no student or 0% was categorized into failed. Therefore, it can be concluded that students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraph writing was categorized into fair.

B. Suggestion

Considering the result of the research, the researcher would like to give some suggestions as follows:

1. For the English Teacher
 - a. The teacher should give motivation and attention in the students' writing.

- b. The teacher should give more practice about punctuation to improve the students' ability.
- c. The teacher may give interesting teaching methods in teaching English in order to make them more interested in learning English.

2. For the Students

- a. The students should increase their effort in improving their knowledge and subject that they learn when they are studying the foreign language, because the foreign language is not as simple as like mother tongue, there may rules that should be obey.
- b. The students should increase their understanding in using punctuation and do some extra practice of using punctuation in their writing, in order to improve their ability in using punctuation.

3. For Further Researcher

It is necessary to the further researcher to conduct further research with the same object and different perspective in order aspect of writing.

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