

USING ANIMATED FILM TO DEVELOP SEVENTH GRADER'S DESCRIPTION WRITING SKILLS

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Abstrak

This research aims to determine whether animated films effectively overcome students' challenges when writing descriptive texts, particularly difficulties in expressing ideas. This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, with data collection conducted through observations, recording, test, and interviews. The data analysis method was descriptive analysis. The research involved 32 students of 7th grade at SMP N 42 Semarang over 2 hours. The findings reveal three main positive aspects: student enthusiasm, because animated films can attract attention and make the learning atmosphere more enjoyable. Second improved understanding of the film characters, the students can see the characters' expressions, actions, and personalities directly, making the character descriptions in their writing more accurate and vivid. Last increased motivation to write, animated films provide inspiration and new ideas for students. The students feel more motivated to write because they have clear and interesting visual references. This makes the writing process not feel boring, so students are more active and productive in producing written works. The researchers concluded that animated films can simplify writing descriptive texts by making learning materials more engaging and easier to understand.

Kata kunci: Animated film, Descriptive text, Writing Skills

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Introduction

One essential English skill that language students need to master is writing because it enhances students' cognitive abilities and supports the development of other language skills (Purnamasari et al., 2021). Writing is a form of expression that allows individuals to convey ideas and knowledge through written text. It is important because engaging in writing activities helps develop oral and written communication skills. Pangestu et al. (2021) state that students require guidance to practice their writing because it involves various elements such as vocabulary, grammar, organization, punctuation, and spelling. This presents a challenge in teaching writing skills, particularly for Indonesian students who are non-native speakers. Teachers must inspire and employ engaging techniques or media to facilitate the writing process for these students.

Teaching writing goes beyond traditional methods and should incorporate information and communication technology. This approach helps store data and disseminates information, making it accessible to the international community (Saputra et al., 2021). A clear indication that writing instruction is ineffective is when students lack enthusiasm and struggle to articulate their ideas using correct grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Mufidah and Dewi (2021) state that students require alternative strategies to improve their English writing skills. The POEW (Predict, Observe, Explain, and Write) approach is a method that can address these writing challenges effectively. According to Zirak et al. (2022), it is crucial for writing teachers to incorporate flashcards, photos, pictures, images, and video clips as teaching tools in the classroom. Using visual media strategies

helps students feel more at ease and better understand their tasks. Visual aids also provide students with new ideas and encourage thoughtful consideration. Additionally, the internet offers audiovisual resources, such as animated videos, which can serve as effective learning tools. Animated film media has been proposed as an innovative approach to overcome this challenge. However, although this potential is recognized, there is still a lack of empirical research evaluating the effectiveness of animated films in improving students' descriptive writing skills. Therefore, this research aims to explore how animated films can improve students' descriptive writing skills. By conducting exercises and interviews to explore students' experiences, this research is expected to provide new insights into teaching strategies that are more effective in improving students' descriptive writing skills.

Based on the Merdeka curriculum, students begin studying the descriptive text in the second semester of seventh grade. This type of writing aims to portray the characteristics of a person, place, or object by detailing and revealing its specific attributes. Mastering the skill of writing descriptive text is crucial for every student, as it is one of the initial writing forms they encounter. Ismayanti and Kholiq (2020) state that learning and mastering descriptive texts as foundational material will enable students to improve their writing skills in other text forms.

Meinawati (2021) states that technology can help create a realistic and enjoyable environment for young language learners when used correctly and effectively. To enhance the effectiveness of classroom teaching and make learning more engaging for students, teachers use videos as a medium (Taka & Cendana, 2024). Using English movies as a teaching medium is

one effective way to develop writing skills. This approach can boost enthusiasm in both students and teachers during the teaching process (Hasby & Sugianto, 2022). The selection of short films plays a crucial role in sparking students' interest in learning. Animated films are particularly effective as a medium to enhance the learning process. Using movies to practice descriptive text can be an engaging and effective method for improving writing skills. During observations at SMP N 42 Semarang during PLP 2, the researchers noticed that students felt bored and uninterested in learning English. They struggle when asked to write text and seem confused and disengaged. Therefore, researchers chose to conduct research at SMP N 42 Semarang. To make learning English more appealing, especially in teaching descriptive text writing, the researcher aims to introduce English animated films as a tool to enhance students' writing skills. Although the importance of writing skills is recognized, a significant gap exists in understanding how to teach these skills effectively in certain contexts. This research focuses on innovative teaching strategies, such as using animated films to increase student engagement and improve writing outcomes. This exploration can result in more effective teaching practices that meet students' needs. Animation films, with their visual elements, gestures, and expressions, can help students grasp the material more easily.

Literature Review

1. Writing

Mayekti et al. (2022) state that writing organizes ideas, opinions, and emotions into written form. When thoughts are written down, ideas can be reviewed, revised, expanded, rearranged, and altered according (Harlena et al., 2019). Individuals can express feelings, ideas, and information

to others through writing. Writing plays a crucial role in enhancing communicative competence in language learning, as it is a productive skill that enables language users to convey messages through written form (Pangaribuan & Prayuda, 2021). A.D Jayanti (2019) states that writing has several functions, including: communicating with readers, conveying ideas without the pressure of direct communication, exploring a topic, recording experiences, and understanding the rules in written English discourse (text). Writing allows students to express themselves, investigate, and communicate their thoughts. It allows students to organize their thoughts into a well-structured text, enabling others to understand their perspectives and encouraging critical thinking. Mazmurrini et al. (2023) state that writing, in contrast, requires the cognitive process of developing an idea and then determining how to express it in clear statements and paragraphs for the reader. It encompasses the author's method of conceptualizingorganizing, structuring, revising, and reviewing, as well as the final product. This process is often cyclical and can sometimes be chaotic. Through writing, students can express their thoughts, develop their ideas in written form, and convey messages through their text (Ardayati, 2018). Previous research explains that writing organizes ideas, opinions, and emotions into written form. It provides a basic understanding of the importance of writing skills, which will be strengthened through media such as animated films. Previous research, discussed writing skills more generally, while this research specifically explores the use of animated films as an aid in teaching writing descriptive texts. This shows an innovative approach that focuses on practical application in the classroom.

2. Animated Film

Animated movies are engaging media that to entertain students and create a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment (Nuansari & Sriyanto, 2021). Animated films don't record ongoing outdoor action in real time. Instead, they create a sequence of images by capturing one frame at a time. Siregar et al (2021) state that animation, or moving pictures, involves making objects appear to move on the screen through a biological phenomenon called "persistence of vision," which occurs when objects move at a certain speed. Torabian & Tajadini (2017) states animated films are considered a technique that conveys stories through scene movement, sound effects, and character dialogue. In this way, students can see, hear, and understand various events that may be difficult to understand. Animated films can be a highly effective and engaging tool for learning English, offering visual context, clear pronunciation, and entertaining narratives that make the learning process enjoyable. Using animated movies as instructional media can motivate students to adopt a more positive attitude toward the teaching and learning process (Silvani, 2020). By using animated movies, students become more interested in learning how to write descriptive texts and practice writing more regularly (Simatupang et al., 2023). Previous research provides a strong theoretical basis for how animated films can be used as learning tools. This supports the argument that this media increasing effectively increases students' interest and involvement in the writing-learning process. Previous research showed increased motivation and learning outcomes in general. Still, the current research shows a specific increase in students' descriptive writing abilities

and a positive impact on their attitudes towards learning writing.

3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a form of writing that aims to offer detailed and vivid portrayals of people, places, objects, or events. Its objective is to create a clear and captivating mental image for the reader by employing sensory details to enrich their experience and comprehension. Descriptions are used to provide more in-depth details about something physical, such as a person, place, or thing according to Rivai (2017). Batubara et al., (2021) state the lexicogrammatical features of a descriptive text include specific participants, the use of the simple present tense, and adjectives for describing, numbering, or classifying. First, a specific participant identifies the subject of the text. Second, the present tense is used to convey the facts or characteristics of the participant. Third, adjectives are employed to describe the participant. Consequently, writers are expected to portray the topic realistically.

QA Syifa et al., (2022) state that descriptive text is written in the simple present tense, which highlights general, repetitive, and habitual actions. Descriptive text typically consists of two main sections: first, the identification, which introduces the person, place, animal, or object being described. Second, the description, details the features, forms, colors, or other attributes related to the subject, providing a thorough portrayal of what the writer is describing according to (Bernieke Damanik et al., 2023). This previous research supports the argument that animated films can help students develop writing skills by providing concrete examples of how to effectively describe an object or event. Previous research focused more on the

characteristics and structure of descriptive text, such as the use of specific participants, simple tense, and the use of adjectives to describe, but the current research will focus on the application of animated film media as a tool to improve descriptive text writing skills, which shows a more interactive and creative approach to learning.

4. Film Media

RM Siadari (2019) states film media is a type of learning tool designed to help students better understand the material presented through film screenings. Films are both educational and entertaining, enabling teachers to deliver lessons to students effectively and engagingly. Media is a tool for conveying information from a source to a recipient. Silalahi & Sari (2021) state media plays an important role as a learning tool in the classroom. Media has advantages in improving students' thinking skills, strengthening comprehension, enriching vocabulary, and developing students' creativity (Riyanti et al., 2022). Media can encourage students to actively discuss and interact with the material presented by the teacher. Films can create engaging learning experiences for students, relive important moments in history, and stimulate their imaginations. Through films, students can hone their analytical skills by exploring the storyline, characters, and messages conveyed (Ayu et al., 2023). The use of appropriate media allows learning to take place more focused, effective, and in-depth so that students can understand complex concepts better. The right media makes learning more effective because it involves various senses and makes abstract concepts more concrete. Film media is an audio-visual communication tool that combines moving images and sound. Film can be an effective learning medium because it

presents stories, information, or concepts dynamically and interestingly. Using film in learning interactions is an effective communication tool because it engages multiple senses at once. By combining sight and hearing in a single process, students are better able to comprehend, retain, and make use of the content and meaning being taught in the classroom (Palupi, 2021). Films help students understand the material better because they show real examples and involve various senses in the learning process. These studies show that films are entertainment and an effective learning tool. By improving critical thinking skills, involving multisensory learning, adding learning interactivity, facilitating effective communication, and encouraging active discussion, films can make the teaching and learning process more effective and enjoyable for students. Previous research focused more on documentaries and general educational films, but the current research specifically uses animated film media to improve writing skills, which offers a more interesting visual approach.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Ruhansih (2017) descriptive qualitative uses a simple qualitative approach with a specific to general (inductive) mindset to describe and analyze a phenomenon. This research employs a case study design to investigate the effectiveness of animated films in enhancing seventh-grade students' character description writing skills. The case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of this phenomenon within the specific context of SMP N 42 Semarang, providing rich, contextualised data. Data collection is primarily qualitative, utilising a multi-faceted approach comprising

observation, writing test, and interviews.

Observations were conducted before, during, and after implementing animated films as a writing stimulus. The primary purpose of these observations is to document student engagement, interactions with the animated films, and the writing process. Field notes captured details about student enthusiasm, collaborative behaviours, and any challenges encountered during writing activities.

Exercises, specifically pre- and post-intervention writing prompts, assess students' character description writing skills. By analyzing these writing samples, the study aims to identify improvements in descriptive writing, organization, and overall writing quality following exposure to animated films.

Brief interviews with students will provide valuable insights into their perceptions and experiences. These interviews are designed to gather data on student motivation, understanding of characters, and overall satisfaction with the animated film-based writing activities. This combination of data collection methods ensures a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the impact of animated films on students' character description writing skills.

2. Participants

The participants in this study were 32 seventh-grade students at SMP N 42 Semarang. Participants were selected from a class identified as needing improvement in their writing skills. Specifically, Class F was chosen for this study due to the higher levels of engagement demonstrated, ensuring effective implementation of the intervention and more reliable results. To protect participants' identities, researchers assigned AS-labeled code names to students. This approach

ensures that the collected data remains anonymous, allowing participants to share their experiences honestly.

3. Instruments

In this research, the researchers used three instruments. The first tool is observation; several aspects that are observed include the classroom environment, student behaviour, and their responses to the material. The second is practice with the observed aspect being students' ability to write descriptive text after watching animated films. Third, a short interview was used to find out students' perspectives on the teaching and learning process using animated films.

4. Data Collection

The method of data collection used by researchers in this research is observation and interviews. Initial observations were out conducted by assessing their existing writing skills before the introduction of the animated film. This provides a benchmark for comparison. During the film animated film screening, the researcher documented students' reactions to the film, their level of participation in the discussion and their writing process as they worked on character descriptions. After showing the animated film, observations were made to assess any changes in students' attitudes towards writing and their level of confidence confidence level in writing descriptive texts. Detailed field notes were taken during each observation session, capturing objective data (e.g., number of students actively participating, time spent) and subjective impressions (e.g., student enthusiasm, challenges encountered). Researchers also pay attention to non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, to better understand students' experiences.

Interviews were conducted directly and informally to find out students' responses after writing students'

descriptive texts using animated films and the difficulties they faced. Interviews were recorded to ensure accurate verbatim transcription. This transcription will be the basis for further data analysis.

5. Data Analysis

The researcher employed descriptive analysis through several steps. First, the data collected is analyzed to identify the main themes, patterns, or trends that emerge. The data is presented in descriptive forms, such as narrative descriptions, direct quotes from interviews, or detailed descriptions from observations. Data is also presented in tabular form to provide a visual overview. Researchers interpret data to provide deeper meaning and understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Findings and Discussion

These findings indicate that using animated films as a learning medium effectively improves writing skills and can increase students' involvement and understanding of concepts. The benefits obtained from the use of animated films are very significant and can be an innovative teaching practice to meet students' needs. This research provides a basis for developing more effective teaching strategies in the context of learning to write. Researchers found strong evidence to support this statement. The findings derived from this study are based on data collected through observations, exercises, and brief interviews, which were subsequently analyzed by correlating and comparing the various data sets. The data obtained were analyzed and explained as follows:

Teacher's Teaching Approach and Its Limitations

One of the core findings from the observations was the teachers' teaching methods, which were described as lacking in engagement. It was noted that teachers primarily relied on traditional, text-based teaching methods, particularly using textbooks as the primary resource. This limited the variety of instructional strategies used in the classroom. There was a heavy reliance on verbal explanations and reading, with little to no incorporation of multimedia tools like images, sounds, or interactive content. As a result, students were less motivated and appeared disengaged in the learning process. The lack of variety in the teaching materials and methods contributed to a passive classroom environment, where students were not encouraged to actively participate or engage with the content.

Teachers are advised to adopt a more diverse and student-centred teaching approach, which includes a variety of instructional strategies and utilizes technology to create more dynamic and engaging learning experiences. Through the implementation of this change, it is hoped that students can become more motivated, engaged and perform better in learning English.

Students' Writing Skills

Another key observation was the students' struggles with writing. Many students struggled expressing themselves in writing, particularly when asked to describe their classmates. This difficulty was largely attributed to a limited vocabulary. When tasked with describing animals, for example, students found it challenging to find the right words to convey their thoughts clearly. This issue highlighted a significant gap in language proficiency, particularly in terms of vocabulary,

which is a crucial component of writing skills. The researchers noted that students' lack of vocabulary hindered their writing ability and affected their overall ability to communicate effectively in English. The students could not describe even familiar objects or people, indicating that their language skills were underdeveloped.

Student Interest

The study also revealed that students lacked interest in English lessons. This was primarily due to the monotonous teaching methods that did not capture their attention. Students were often passive participants in the learning process. The lessons were described as uninspiring, with little to no interactive activities that could spark curiosity or excitement about the subject. Because the lessons were predominantly text-based, students could not actively engage with the content meaningfully, leading to low motivation and enthusiasm.

Effectiveness of Animated Films in Increasing Engagement

A notable shift in student engagement was observed when animated films were introduced into the lesson. The use of multimedia, such as animated films, positively impacted students' enthusiasm and participation. When the researcher showed an animated film, students became more animated and attentive, signalling a significant increase in interest. The dynamic and visual nature of the animated content helped students better understand and relate to the material. The film served as an engaging tool that stimulated students' curiosity, making them more active participants in the learning process.

During the subsequent writing activity, where students were asked to describe animals from the film, students

seemed to find it easier to express themselves. With the visual stimulus from the animated film, students had a clearer mental image of what they were writing about, which helped overcome some of the vocabulary barriers. The use of the film allowed students to connect words and ideas with visual references, making the writing process more accessible.

Observations of the descriptive text writing activities using animated films were conducted by monitoring students' responses during the film screening and their writing practice after watching the film. The observations yielded the following data:

Table 1. The Result of Observation

| No. | Observed aspects | Score *1 - 4 | Notes |
|-----|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Students' attention during film screening | 4 | Students seemed focused and enthusiastic. |
| 2 | Student involvement in discussions | 3 | Many students answered questions enthusiastically. |
| 3 | Motivate students to write after the film | 4 | Students looked enthusiastic when asked to write characters in the film. |
| 4 | Creativity in writing descriptive text | 3 | Most students use detailed descriptions according to the characters in the film. |
| 5 | Response to story characters | 4 | Students can clearly name the characters from the film. |

Student Feedback on the Lesson

The researchers also conducted short interviews with students after the lesson. The feedback from the students further reinforced the positive impact of the multimedia lesson. When asked whether they enjoyed the lesson, the

students expressed happiness and satisfaction, with one student stating, "Yes, very happy." This response highlights how the use of engaging content, such as the animated film, contributed to a more positive learning experience.



Image 1. Observation of film screenings



Image 2. Observation of discussions after film screenings

The use of media, particularly animated films, positively influences student enthusiasm and participation. When researchers presented the animated film, students became more engaged and attentive, showing a notable increase in interest. The dynamic visuals help students understand and appreciate the material better. Films act as an engaging tool that sparks curiosity, leading to more active participation in the learning process. Around 80% of students actively participated in discussions, answering questions about the film's characters.

During the next writing activity, when students were asked to describe animal characters from animated films, students seemed to express themselves more easily. With the visual stimulus of

an animated film, students have a clearer mental picture of what they are writing, which helps overcome some vocabulary barriers. The students' writing results before and after watching the animated film:

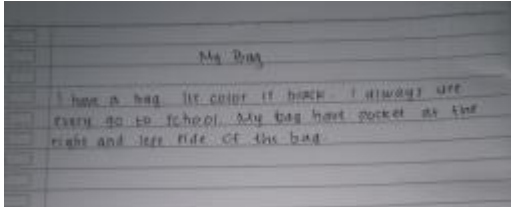


Image 3. Result of before film screenings

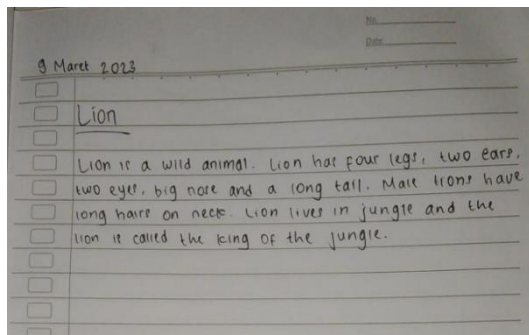


Image 4. Result of after film screenings

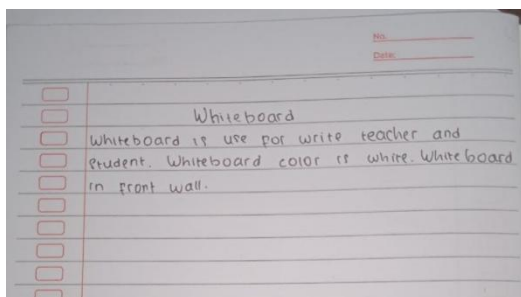


Image 5. Result of before-film screenings

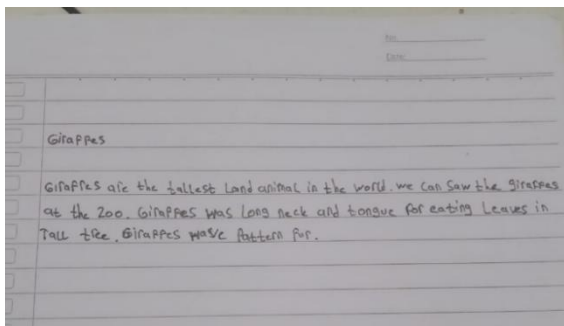


Image 6. Result of after-film screenings

Tabel 2. The assessment aspects for writing with and without the use of animated films:

| Assessment Aspect | No animated film | The use of animated film |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Vocabulary Variety | Limited, general use of the word | Wider, richer word variety |
| Accuracy of Description | Lack of detail and specifics | Detailed and specific, more lively |
| Student Engagement | Passive, lacking enthusiasm | Active, more motivated |
| Creativity in Writing | Lack of creativity, flat descriptions | More creative, increased imagination |

This table shows that using animated film to learn English significantly improves various aspects of assessment in students' descriptive text writing. By introducing vocabulary variety, accuracy of description, student involvement, and creativity, animated film can create a more effective and enjoyable learning experience for students. This shows the importance of integrating technology and media in the teaching process to improve overall student learning outcomes.

Following the lesson, researchers conducted brief interviews with students. Student feedback further reinforced the positive impact of multimedia instruction. When asked if they enjoyed the lesson, AS expressed happiness and satisfaction, stating:

"Yes, very happy."

This response highlights how engaging content, such as the animated film, contributed to a more positive learning experience. Furthermore, when asked if they experienced any difficulty describing the animals, AS responded:

"No, it's easier than ever"

The multimedia lesson helped them overcome challenges in the writing activity, indicating that the visual and auditory elements provided by the animated film not only enhanced engagement but also helped to improve students' comprehension and vocabulary, thereby facilitating their participation in the writing exercise.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process for writing skills increased after action research involving the use of cartoon films. This research shows that students become more motivated and confident when asked to write individually after watching cartoons. The findings show that using animated films as a learning medium is effective in improving writing skills and can increase students' involvement and understanding of concepts. When students watch cartoons, they are entertained and stimulated to think critically about the characters and storylines. Observations show that 80% of students actively participate in discussions after watching the film, reflecting their increased interest and involvement in learning. Cartoon films also make lessons clearer and more interesting. By using dynamic visual elements, students can easily understand the characteristics and traits of the characters they write. This research provides a basis for the development of more effective teaching strategies in the context of learning to write. Students find it easier to describe characters through cartoons, which helps them overcome some vocabulary barriers they may have previously faced.

Overall, these findings indicate that the use of animated films in the writing skills learning process significantly impacts student motivation and learning outcomes. Cartoon films not only make lessons more interesting but also help students understand the material more deeply. Thus, the application of animated film media can be an innovative teaching practice to meet students' needs and increase classroom learning effectiveness.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research is the use of animated film media can significantly improve the descriptive

writing skills of grade 7 students. This research identifies students' challenges, such as difficulties in organizing ideas and a lack of understanding of descriptive elements. Through a qualitative approach involving observation, interviews and data analysis, it was found that animated films not only attract students' interest but also increase their understanding of the material being taught.

The use of animated films as a learning tool provides visual and auditory stimulation that helps students conceptualize their writing. The results showed that students showed high enthusiasm for using animated films, which increased their motivation and understanding in writing descriptive texts. Thus, animated film media has proven to be effective in making learning more interesting and easier to understand, as well as helping students overcome difficulties in descriptive writing.

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