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Digital Literacy-Based Indonesian Language Instruction to Improve the Descriptive Writing Skills of Students at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis

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Abstract
This study aims to improve students' ability to write descriptive texts through Indonesian language learning based on digital literacy at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis. This research used a classroom action research design conducted in two cycles. The subjects were 26 students of Grade VII. Data were collected through observation, tests, field notes, and documentation. The data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative descriptive techniques. The results showed an increase in students' ability to write descriptive texts. In the pre-cycle, the students' average score was 62.45 with a mastery percentage of 38.46%, and only 10 students achieved the minimum mastery criterion. After the implementation of digital literacy-based learning in Cycle I, the average score increased to 71.35 with a mastery percentage of 61.54%, and 16 students achieved mastery. In Cycle II, the average score increased to 81.92 with a mastery percentage of 88.46%, and 23 students achieved mastery. The improvement was influenced by the use of digital media, such as images, videos, and digital sources, which helped students observe objects, develop ideas, and compose descriptive texts more effectively. Therefore, Indonesian language learning based on digital literacy is effective in improving students' descriptive writing skills.

Keywords: digital literacy; Indonesian language learning; descriptive text; writing skills; junior high school students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian is a subject that plays a vital role in developing students' communication, critical thinking, and literacy skills. Through Indonesian language instruction, students not only learn to understand texts but are also trained to convey ideas in both written and oral forms (Faizi et al., 2024; Hanifa et al., 2025). One of the language skills that junior high school (SMP) students need to master is writing. Writing is the ability to convey ideas, feelings, and experiences in an organized manner through written language. One type of text taught at the junior high school level is the descriptive text a text that describes a specific object, place, person, or atmosphere in such detail that readers feel as though they can see, hear, or experience the described subject (Herlambang et al., 2022; Sari & Putri, 2022).

The ability to write descriptive texts is very important for students because it

cultivates sensitivity to the environment, observational skills, and the ability to choose the right words. When writing descriptive texts, students are expected to identify the characteristics of an object, organize their ideas in a logical sequence, use appropriate vocabulary, and develop sentences into coherent paragraphs. These skills are not only related to mastery of linguistic rules but also to students' critical thinking and creativity. Research shows that junior high school students' ability to write descriptive texts varies, and some students struggle to develop ideas and organize paragraphs in a logical sequence (Masitoh et al., 2025; Permanasari, 2017).

In practice, students' ability to write descriptive texts still faces several challenges. Some students struggle to identify the object to be described, have difficulty observing the object's specific characteristics, and use a limited vocabulary. Additionally, students often have trouble organizing sentences into coherent and engaging paragraphs. Another common issue is low student motivation to write, as writing is perceived as difficult and boring. These conditions indicate that teaching students to write descriptive texts requires strategies and media that are more engaging, contextual, and tailored to students' needs in the digital age (Ismail et al., 2025; Lestari, 2024).

Advances in digital technology offer new opportunities for learning Indonesian, particularly in improving writing skills. Digital literacy is the ability to access, understand, evaluate, use, and create information through digital technology (Simamora et al., 2023). In Indonesian language learning, digital literacy does not merely refer to the ability to use devices or the internet, but also the ability to utilize technology wisely, critically, and productively for learning activities. Students with strong digital literacy can search for references, observe objects through images or videos, organize their ideas, and publish their written work through digital media.

Digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction can help students improve their descriptive writing skills. Teachers can use images, videos, presentation apps, blogs, and digital learning platforms to present objects for description in a more vivid way. For example, teachers can show videos or images of tourist attractions, traditional markets, schools, or the surrounding environment for students to observe. Afterward, students can gather information, outline their writing, compose descriptive texts, and revise their work using word processing software or other digital media. The use of digital media such as e-books, interactive learning apps, blogs, and educational YouTube channels has been shown to contribute to improvements in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills (Darmawan et al., 2025; Hernada et al., 2025).

Digital literacy can also boost students' motivation and interest in learning to write. The use of digital media makes learning more engaging because students can visualize objects, access information more easily, and express their work through a wider range of media. Research shows that digital literacy can improve students' motivation, interest, and skills in reading and writing Indonesian texts (Putra et al., 2025; Simamora et al., 2023). Furthermore, integrating digital literacy into Indonesian language instruction allows students to access a wider and more diverse range of learning resources, thereby enriching their learning experience (Sitepu et al., 2025).

SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis is one of the schools that needs to develop Indonesian language instruction based on digital literacy. Some students are already accustomed to using mobile devices and the internet in their daily lives, but the use of this technology is not always directed toward productive learning activities. When learning to write descriptive texts, students are often unable to effectively utilize digital resources to search for information, observe objects, and organize their ideas. Therefore, Indonesian language teachers need to guide students so that digital technology can be utilized as a useful learning tool, not merely a means of entertainment. Students' digital

literacy skills need to be developed through activities involving information retrieval, content evaluation, and the critical synthesis of knowledge (Subagjo, 2023).

Based on initial observations at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis, students' descriptive writing skills still need improvement. Some students have difficulty developing ideas, choosing the right words, structuring coherent paragraphs, and using correct spelling and punctuation. In addition, students' interest in writing activities remains low because instruction tends to be teacher-centered and does not make sufficient use of engaging media. These conditions highlight the need to implement digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction as an alternative to boost students' motivation and writing skills. The use of visual media has also been shown to improve students' descriptive writing skills; therefore, utilizing a wider variety of digital media has the potential to yield even better results (Lestari, 2024).

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to improve students' descriptive writing skills through digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis. This research is important because writing skills are a fundamental competency required of students in both academic activities and daily life. Furthermore, digital literacy-based instruction is expected to help students develop the habit of using technology wisely, critically, and productively. The results of this study are expected to contribute to Indonesian language teachers' efforts to develop writing instruction strategies that are more engaging, contextual, and tailored to students' needs in the digital age.

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. Students' Initial Level of Proficiency in Writing Descriptive Texts

Preliminary observations indicate that the descriptive writing skills of students at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis are still relatively low. Most students have difficulty identifying the subject to be described, developing ideas, organizing sentences into coherent paragraphs, and using appropriate vocabulary. In addition, students are not meticulous enough in their use of spelling, punctuation, and paragraph structure. Student interest in writing activities also remains low because instruction tends to be teacher-centered and does not make sufficient use of engaging media.

In the pre-cycle activity, or pretest, students' average score on descriptive writing was 62.45, with a mastery rate of 38.46%. Only 10 out of 26 students achieved the mastery threshold. These results indicate that students' descriptive writing skills are not yet optimal and need to be improved through more engaging and contextual learning strategies.

2. Implementation of Digital Literacy-Based Indonesian Language Instruction

Digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction is carried out in several stages. First, the teacher introduces the concept of descriptive texts and provides examples of descriptive texts through digital media, such as images, videos, or electronic texts. Second, students are asked to observe objects through images or videos displayed by the teacher. Third, students search for additional information through digital sources selected by the teacher. Fourth, students draft an outline for a descriptive text based on their observations and the information they have gathered. Fifth, students write the descriptive text using a word processing application or in a notebook. Finally, students present or upload their written work via the digital media used by the teacher.

In this activity, teachers serve as facilitators who guide students in selecting digital sources, evaluating information, organizing ideas, and revising their writing. Students are trained to use technology wisely and productively, not merely as a form of entertainment. The learning activity also encourages students to be more active, independent, and creative in producing descriptive texts.

3. Learning Outcomes for Cycle I

In Cycle I, digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction was carried out as planned. The teacher displayed images or videos of specific objects, and students were then asked to observe and write down the characteristics of those objects. Afterward, students created an outline and developed it into a descriptive text. The results of the observation showed that students were more enthusiastic about participating in the lessons because digital media made the objects being described easier to understand.

Nevertheless, there were still some challenges in Cycle I. Some students still had difficulty selecting relevant information from digital sources, using appropriate vocabulary, and organizing their paragraphs coherently. In addition, some students still require teacher guidance in using digital applications. Based on the assessment results from Cycle I, the average student score was 71.35, with a mastery rate of 61.54%. A total of 16 out of 26 students achieved the mastery standard.

4. Learning Outcomes for Cycle II

Based on the weaknesses identified in Cycle I, the teacher made improvements in Cycle II. These improvements included providing clearer examples of descriptive texts, guiding students in choosing the right words, providing structured worksheets, and offering individual guidance to students who were still struggling. The teacher also allocated more time for discussion and revision of the students' writing.

The learning outcomes in Cycle II showed significant improvement. Students were more active in observing objects, gathering information, developing an outline, and writing descriptive texts. Students were also better able to use appropriate vocabulary and organize paragraphs coherently. Based on the assessment results in Cycle II, the students' average score increased to 81.92, with a mastery rate of 88.46%. A total of 23 out of 26 students achieved mastery.

5. Improving Students' Ability to Write Descriptive Texts

The results of the study indicate an improvement in students' descriptive writing skills following the implementation of digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction. This improvement is evident in students' average scores, the number of students who met the proficiency standards, and the quality of the descriptive texts they produced. Students became better able to identify the characteristics of objects, develop ideas, use appropriate vocabulary, organize paragraphs coherently, and revise their writing based on teacher feedback.

Tabel 1. Tabel Hasil Siklus I dan Siklus II

No	Activity	Average Score	Completion Rate	Number of Student Standard
1	Pre-cycle / Pretest	62,45	38,46%	10 Students
2	Cycle I	71,35	61,54%	16 Students
3	Cycle II	81,92	88,46%	23 Students

Based on the table above, there was an average increase in scores of 19.47 points, from 62.45 in the pre-cycle to 81.92 in Cycle II. The percentage of students meeting the proficiency standard also increased by 50.00%, from 38.46% to 88.46%. This improvement indicates that digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction is effective in enhancing students' ability to write descriptive texts.

Discussion

The results of the study show that digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction can improve students' ability to write descriptive texts. This improvement occurs because students gain a more concrete learning experience through the use of images, videos, and other digital

resources. Digital media helps students observe objects more clearly, making it easier for them to generate ideas and develop concepts when writing descriptive texts. This aligns with the research by Darmawan et al. (2025), which states that the use of digital media can improve Indonesian language literacy, including students' reading and writing skills.

Digital literacy-based learning also boosts student motivation and engagement. Students become more enthusiastic because learning activities are not limited to lectures and textbooks but also include analyzing visual media, searching for digital information, and writing assignments (Safitri et al., 2022). This increased motivation leads to greater student engagement in every stage of the learning process. These findings align with those of Simamora et al. (2023), who state that digital literacy can improve motivation, interest, and reading and writing skills in Indonesian.

In addition, digital literacy-based learning trains students to use technology productively. Students not only access information but also learn to select relevant information, evaluate sources, organize ideas, and produce descriptive texts. These skills are an important part of digital literacy. Subagjo's (2023) research confirms that digital literacy in Indonesian language instruction encompasses the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and critically use digital information.

Improvements in students' descriptive writing skills are also influenced by the teacher's role as a facilitator. Teachers do not merely present the material but also guide students through every stage of the writing process—from observing the subject, outlining, drafting, to revising their work. This guidance helps students correct errors in word choice, paragraph structure, spelling, and punctuation. Thus, the success of learning is determined not only by the use of digital media but also by the teacher's active involvement in guiding the students' learning process.

Despite this improvement, challenges still arise in the implementation of learning. Some students still struggle to select relevant information from the internet and use appropriate vocabulary when writing descriptive texts. In addition, limited access to digital devices and internet connectivity can affect the smooth flow of learning activities. Therefore, teachers need to provide ongoing digital literacy training and offer digital learning resources that have been carefully selected and verified in advance. Integrating digital literacy into Indonesian language instruction requires a targeted strategy to ensure that technology truly supports students' achievement of competencies.

Secara keseluruhan, hasil penelitian ini This study shows that digital literacy-based Indonesian language instruction is effective in improving the descriptive writing skills of students at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis. This improvement is evident in the rise in average scores, the number of students who met the proficiency standards, and the quality of the descriptive texts produced by the students. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that the use of digital media and digital literacy contributes to the improvement of students' writing skills.

3. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that Indonesian language learning based on digital literacy is able to improve students' ability to write descriptive texts at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis. The improvement can be seen from the increase in the students' average scores, the number of students who achieved the minimum mastery criterion, and the quality of the descriptive texts produced by the students. In the pre-cycle, the students' average score was 62.45 with a mastery percentage of 38.46%, and only 10 out of 26 students achieved mastery. After the implementation of digital literacy-based learning in Cycle I, the students' average score increased to 71.35 with a mastery percentage of 61.54%, and 16 students achieved mastery. In Cycle II, the students'

average score increased to 81.92 with a mastery percentage of 88.46%, and 23 students achieved mastery.

The improvement in students' descriptive writing ability occurred because digital literacy-based learning provided more interesting, concrete, and contextual learning experiences. Through the use of images, videos, electronic texts, and other digital sources, students were able to observe objects more clearly, find ideas, develop their thoughts, and compose descriptive texts in a more organized manner. This learning approach also increased students' motivation and active participation because they were directly involved in observing, searching for information, making outlines, writing, and revising their work.

In addition, digital literacy-based learning encouraged students to use technology wisely and productively. Students were trained to select relevant information, evaluate digital sources, develop ideas, and produce written works. Therefore, Indonesian language learning based on digital literacy not only focused on improving writing skills but also contributed to developing students' digital literacy skills in the technology era.

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that Indonesian language teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis implement digital literacy-based learning continuously in writing instruction, especially in descriptive text learning. Teachers are suggested to use interesting, relevant, and appropriate digital media, such as images, videos, word-processing applications, and digital learning platforms. Teachers should also guide students in selecting credible sources of information and provide assistance during the revision process. The school is suggested to support the availability of digital devices and internet access so that digital literacy-based learning can run more effectively. Future researchers are suggested to conduct studies with different grade levels, larger samples, or different types of texts in order to obtain a broader understanding of the influence of digital literacy on students' writing skills.

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