

English Teachers' Gender Based Teaching Strategies in Teaching Descriptive Text

Baiq Indria Setia Ningsih*, Lalu Thohir, Hartati Suryaningsih, Arifuddin

English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram, Jl.

Majapahit No. 62, Mataram NTB, 83125. Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: baiqindri271@gmail.com

Article History

Received : August 06th, 2025

Revised : September 17th, 2025

Accepted : October 15th, 2025

Abstract: Writing is one of the most essential and challenging skills in English language learning because it demands creativity, organization, and linguistic accuracy. Among various text types, descriptive text plays a crucial role in helping students express ideas clearly and vividly by describing people, places, or objects in detail. However, many students still face difficulties in generating ideas, organizing sentences, and using appropriate vocabulary. This study aimed to analyze gender based teaching strategies employed by male and female English teachers in teaching descriptive text and how these strategies are implemented in the classroom. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method. The participants were five English teachers at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah, consisting of three males and two females. The data were collected through classroom observation and interviews and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results revealed that each teacher applied distinct strategies. Male teachers used guided writing, imaginary strategy, and visual learning to stimulate creativity and provide structural support, while female teachers used modified vocabulary instruction and collaborative learning to strengthen linguistic readiness and promote peer interaction. Drawing on the findings, it can be concluded that although male and female English teachers demonstrated different emphases in their teaching, both aimed to facilitate students' descriptive writing development, boost confidence, and encourage active participation through supportive and interactive learning environments.

Keywords: Descriptive Text, Gender, Teaching, Writing

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching focuses on developing four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of these skills presents unique challenges in the learning process, yet they are interrelated and essential for achieving effective communication and avoiding misunderstanding. Among them, writing is considered the most complex skill because it requires higher-order thinking, organization, and linguistic accuracy (Harmer, 2001). Writing is not only a skill but also a productive process that demands creativity and the ability to express ideas logically and coherently. In Curriculum Merdeka, students at the junior high school level are required to master five types of functional texts: descriptive, report, recount, narrative, and procedure. Among these, descriptive text plays an important role as it helps students describe people, animals, or places vividly and meaningfully. Wardiman et al. (2008) state that

the purpose of descriptive text is to provide information by creating a vivid picture of a person, place, or object so that readers can imagine what is being described. However, teaching writing, including descriptive text, remains a demanding task for teachers. According to Fitri et al. (2022), effective teaching of writing should not only focus on grammar but also on content development, organization, and clarity of expression. Therefore, teachers need to apply appropriate strategies that balance linguistic accuracy with creativity to help students develop coherent and meaningful writing (Brown, 2004).

In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the teaching of descriptive text is not limited to grammar and vocabulary instruction but also focuses on fostering creativity, organizing ideas systematically, and connecting learning to real-life contexts. However, in

practice, many students still face difficulties in developing detailed descriptions in their writing. According to Mulyasin et al. (2023), students' limited vocabulary and difficulties in structuring ideas are among the main factors that hinder their descriptive writing performance. These challenges often make students perceive writing as a complicated and less engaging task, which eventually decreases their motivation to learn.

Similar challenges are also observed at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah. Based on interviews and classroom observations, teachers reported that many students struggle to generate ideas, organize them into cohesive paragraphs, and use appropriate vocabulary. Grammar errors and lack of motivation are common, leading students to become passive during writing lessons. Therefore, teachers play an essential role not only as instructors but also as facilitators who guide, motivate, and support students throughout the writing process. Brown (2004) explains that teaching strategies are systematic approaches designed to achieve learning objectives, and selecting the right strategy can enhance students' engagement and writing performance.

Differences in teaching strategies may arise from various factors, including experience, personality, and gender. Gender, in particular, significantly influences teachers' classroom behavior and instructional preferences (Sunderland, 2010). Rashidi (2012) and Mahmud (2015) argue that male teachers often employ structured and goal-oriented strategies, while female teachers emphasize collaboration, communication, and emotional support. Several international studies also confirm the influence of gender in teaching practices. For instance, a study conducted at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait (PAAET) revealed that students preferred male teachers due to their perceived leadership and confidence. Meanwhile, Mahdi and Al-Dera (2013) found that female Saudi teachers used less ICT in language teaching compared to male teachers. In Taiwan's ESL classrooms, female teachers were found to promote more peer collaboration, while male teachers focused on personalization and task completion. Although their approaches differ, female teachers are often viewed as more empathetic and communicative in classroom interaction.

At MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah, there are five English teachers consist of three females and two males whose gender diversity contributes to

variations in teaching styles, classroom management, and interaction patterns. Observations show that female teachers tend to apply communicative and student-centered strategies, while male teachers prefer structured and product-oriented approaches. These differences illustrate that gender plays an influential role in shaping teachers' strategies in teaching writing. Therefore, this study aims to explore and analyze English teachers' strategies in teaching descriptive text at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah from a gender perspective.

Previous studies have also discussed teaching strategies in writing instruction. Istiqomah (2019) investigated English teachers' strategies in teaching descriptive writing to second-grade junior high school students. Isnaini (2021) analyzed teaching methods used at SMP Muhammadiyah Plus Salatiga during the 2020/2021 academic year, and Iskandar (2017) explored the cubing strategy for teaching descriptive writing at SMPN 22 Palembang. The difference between those studies and the present one lies in the research focus and purpose. While previous studies focused on general strategies in teaching writing, this study specifically examines these strategies from a gender perspective, emphasizing how male and female teachers differ in their approaches to teaching descriptive text.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, as it aimed to describe and interpret social phenomena in depth without involving numerical or statistical analysis (Creswell, 2017). This approach was considered suitable because it enabled the researcher to explore how male and female English teachers applied teaching strategies in a natural classroom setting. The research was conducted at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah during the 2024/2025 academic year. The school was selected purposively because it has both male and female English teachers with varying teaching experiences, providing a rich context for examining gender-based teaching strategies in writing instruction. The participants of this study consisted of five English teachers: three males (HS, HLH, and PS) and two females (NRY and ND) who were actively involved in teaching descriptive writing. Their teaching experience ranged from 15 to 21 years, reflecting a high level of pedagogical competence and familiarity with the curriculum.

The participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, as they met specific criteria relevant to the study, such as experience in teaching writing and willingness to participate in classroom observation and interviews. This composition allowed the researcher to compare and analyze how gender differences might influence teachers' strategies in teaching descriptive text.

To ensure comprehensive data collection, the research procedure was carried out in several stages: preparation, data collection, and data analysis. In the preparation stage, the researcher developed research instruments and obtained permission from the school. The data collection stage employed two main techniques: classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations were conducted to identify how teaching strategies were implemented in real classroom contexts, focusing on teachers' instructional methods, interaction patterns, and classroom management. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were used to gain deeper insights into teachers' reasoning for choosing certain strategies, their reflections on the teaching process, and the challenges they faced in guiding students' writing development.

The collected data were then analyzed following Miles and Huberman's (2014) model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and organized the relevant information from field notes and interview transcripts. The data were then displayed in a descriptive and narrative format to make interpretation clearer and more systematic. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns and contrasting elements in the teaching strategies used by male and female English teachers. This systematic process allowed the researcher to develop a comprehensive understanding of how gender differences shape the ways teachers plan, implement, and adapt their teaching strategies in writing instruction.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation of the data findings in this section relates to teachers' gender-based strategies in teaching descriptive writing at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah. The data were

obtained from selected English teachers, consisting of both male and female participants.

Findings

Based on the results of observations and interviews, it was found that each English teacher at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah applied different teaching strategies in teaching descriptive text. These differences were evident in the types of strategies used, the way they were implemented in the classroom, and the specific focus of the learning process. To simplify the analysis, the information was categorized into several data codes (M1, M2, M3 for male teachers and F1, F2 for female teachers). A summary of the research findings is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Strategies employed by male and female English teachers in teaching descriptive text at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah.

Code	Teacher Initial	Gender	Teaching Strategies Used
M1	HS	Male	Guided Writing
M2	HLH	Male	Imaginary Strategy
M3	PS	Male	Visual Learning Strategy
F1	NRV	Female	Modified Vocabulary Instruction
F2	ND	Female	Collaborative Learning

The Table 1 shows clear differences in the strategies used by male and female teachers. Male teachers generally used structured and visual-based strategies, while female teachers tended to apply collaborative and creative-based strategies. These distinctions reflect different teaching orientations influenced by gender differences in classroom interaction styles, communication preferences, and teaching focus. From the classroom observations, it was found that the male teachers preferred strategies that emphasize structure, step-by-step guidance, and visualization. For example, data M1 (HS) implemented guided writing by presenting sample descriptive paragraphs and analyzing their structure together with students. He often provided writing outlines and prompts to help students build their paragraphs logically. To make writing more engaging, he incorporated the imaginary strategy, encouraging students to imagine someone famous or a close friend and

describe their physical appearance and personality traits.

Similarly, data M2 (HLH) used the imaginary strategy to activate students' creativity but combined it with scaffolding. During observation, he divided the writing process into stages: brainstorming, drafting, and revising. He provided close assistance at the beginning and gradually reduced it as students became more independent. This gradual release model made students feel more confident in expressing ideas.

Data M3 (PS), the third male teacher, emphasized visual learning by using pictures as learning media. He displayed images of animals, people, and tourist attractions to stimulate ideas before writing. After that, he organized group discussions, allowing students to exchange opinions and describe what they saw collaboratively. According to the interview, he believed that pictures helped students visualize ideas and reduce anxiety when starting to write. On the other hand, the female teachers demonstrated a different teaching focus. Data F1 (NRY) concentrated on vocabulary enrichment through Modified Vocabulary Instruction. She focused on helping students expand their vocabulary before writing by introducing new words and practicing their usage in sentences. This activity enabled students to better understand word meanings and apply them appropriately in descriptive writing. Through this approach, she aimed to overcome one of the major challenges students faced limited vocabulary which often hindered their ability to express ideas clearly in English.

Meanwhile, Data F2 (ND) emphasized Collaborative Learning as her main strategy. She encouraged students to work together in small groups to brainstorm ideas, compose sentences, and revise their writing collectively. During the observation, she frequently guided students by monitoring each group's progress and providing feedback throughout the process. According to the interview, this collaborative approach increased students' confidence and participation, as they could share ideas, learn from peers, and correct errors together. It also created a supportive learning environment that reduced anxiety and made writing activities more engaging for all students.

Discussion

The findings show that male and female teachers used different but complementary

strategies. Male teachers tended to emphasize structure, creativity, and visual stimulation to help students generate and organize ideas. One teacher applied Guided Writing by providing models and step-by-step guidance that gradually led students to write independently, helping to reduce writing anxiety. Another used the Imaginary Strategy to activate imagination and personal experiences as sources of ideas, making the writing process more natural and engaging. The third used Visual Learning, showing pictures to stimulate ideas and vocabulary. This aligns with the notion that combining verbal and visual inputs enhances comprehension and supports learners with varying language proficiency. According to Paivio's (1990) Dual Coding Theory, visual and verbal information processed together can strengthen memory and understanding, making visual-based learning particularly effective in writing instruction.

Meanwhile, female teachers focused more on language development and collaboration. One employed Modified Vocabulary Instruction by integrating vocabulary activities such as picture labeling and synonym matching before writing tasks, ensuring students had adequate lexical resources. Another used Collaborative Learning Strategy, guiding students to plan, draft, and revise their texts together. These strategies encouraged teamwork, reduced anxiety, and built peer support, aligning with theories emphasizing the role of social interaction in learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Nation, 2001). Nation (2001) argues that vocabulary mastery is essential for supporting idea development and coherence in writing, as lexical richness enables learners to express meaning more precisely. Similarly, Hyland (2003) emphasizes that writing is a social act, where interaction and collaboration allow learners to share experiences and co-construct meaning, which aligns with the female teachers' emphasis on collaborative learning.

Despite differences in strategies, both male and female teachers shared similar goals: to reduce students' writing difficulties, improve confidence, and promote active engagement. They both used scaffolding by providing gradual support based on students' needs and gave constructive feedback to encourage improvement. The difference lay mainly in orientation male teachers focused on guiding students through structured and creative stages, while female teachers emphasized vocabulary mastery and cooperation. Tompkins (1994)

supports this notion by stating that effective writing instruction should balance structure and creativity through guided support, allowing students to develop both linguistic control and expressive ability.

In practice, both groups showed adaptability in handling large classes and mixed-ability learners. They adjusted tasks, allowed students to brainstorm in Bahasa Indonesia before translating into English, and used visual aids and praise to maintain motivation. Male teachers typically began with models and guided practice before moving to creative tasks, while female teachers started with vocabulary preparation followed by collaborative writing and project work. Sunderland (2000) also notes that gender differences influence classroom behavior and interaction styles, where male and female teachers may prioritize distinct aspects of learning, yet both contribute meaningfully to classroom diversity.

These findings highlight that gender influences teaching strategies but not the quality or purpose of instruction. Male teachers' focus on creativity and structure and female teachers' emphasis on linguistic preparation and collaboration complement each other. When integrated, these strategies provide a more balanced and effective framework for teaching descriptive writing one that supports both the cognitive and affective aspects of learning. As Tompkins (1994) explains, writing instruction that integrates both cognitive engagement and emotional support helps learners develop confidence, motivation, and a sense of authorship in their writing process.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate both similarities and differences in the teaching strategies used by male and female English teachers at MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah in teaching descriptive writing. All teachers shared the same goal of helping students overcome difficulties in idea generation, sentence organization, and confidence building by fostering active participation and creativity. However, male teachers tended to focus on structural guidance and creativity through Guided Writing, Imaginary, and Visual Learning strategies, while female teachers emphasized language preparation and collaboration through Modified Vocabulary Instruction and Collaborative Learning. In classroom

implementation, both male and female teachers created supportive learning environments, encouraged active involvement, and provided constructive feedback to reduce writing anxiety. The main difference lay in focus: male teachers relied on modeling, imagination, and visual media, whereas female teachers highlighted vocabulary enrichment and teamwork throughout the writing process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher would like to express his gratitude to the lecturers, particularly the academic supervisor, for their valuable guidance and constructive feedback that greatly contributed to the completion of this study. Deep gratitude is also expressed to all individuals who supported this research, especially the principal of MTsN 1 Lombok Tengah and the English teachers who kindly participated and provided their valuable time and insights.

REFERENCE

- Brown, D. H. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. Pearson Education Inc.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Fitri, Z. H., Farmasari, S., & Aziz, A. D. (2022, December). The implementation of picture series in teaching writing procedural text at tenth grade of SMAN 1 Sakra in academic year 2022/2023. In *Journal of English Education Forum (JEEF)* (Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 22-27).
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. Pearson Longman.
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Longman.
- Hyland, K. (2003). Genre-based pedagogies: A social response to process. *Journal of second language writing*, 12(1), 17-29.
- Iskandar, J. (2017). Teaching descriptive writing by using Cubing strategy to the eighth grade students of SMP N 22 Palembang. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran*, 4(1), 52-66.
- Isnaini, I., & Hikmat, M. H. (2022). *Teaching strategies used by the English teacher in teaching writing at smp muhammadiyah plus Salatiga in 2021/2022 academic*

- year (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta).
- Istiqomah, S. (2019). *AN ANALYSIS ON THE ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING AT THE SECOND GRADE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Pancasakti Tegal).
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1999). Making cooperative learning work. *Theory into practice*, 38(2), 67-73.
- Mahdi, H. S., & Al-Dera, A. S. A. (2013). The Impact of Teachers' Age, Gender and Experience on the Use of Information and Communication Technology in EFL Teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 6(6), 57-67.
- Mahmud, M. (2015). Students' expectations toward their teachers: A study on teachers' competence, gender issues and politeness between teachers and students in Indonesian context. *ELT Worldwide*, 2(1), 96-112.
- Miles, M. B. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. *Thousand Oaks*.
- Mulyasin, M. A., Zamzam, A., Putera, L. J., Amin, M., & Arfah, H. (2023). The challenges and strategies in writing descriptive text on local places in the EFL essay writing course. *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA*, 9(4), 2086-2092.
- Nation, I. S., & Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (Vol. 10, pp. 126-132). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Paivio, A. (2014). *Mind and its evolution: A dual coding theoretical approach*. Psychology press.
- Rashidi, N., & Rafieerad, M. (2010). Analyzing patterns of classroom interaction in EFL classrooms in Iran. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 7(3).
- Sunderland, J. (2000). Issues of language and gender in second and foreign language education. *Language teaching*, 33(4), 203-223.
- Sunderland, J. (2010). Theorizing gender perspectives in foreign and second language learning. In *Gender perspectives on vocabulary in foreign and second languages* (pp. 1-19). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Tompkins, G. E. (1994). *Teaching writing: Balancing process and product*. Macmillan College.
- Wardiman, A., Jahur, M. B., & Djusma, M. S. (2008). English in focus: For grade VII junior high school (SMP/MTs). *Jakarta: Pusat perbukuan departemen pendidikan nasional*.