

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL THROUGH TEXT-BASED INSTRUCTION

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### ABSTRACT

This research is aimed at finding out whether or not the implementation of text-based instruction can improve students' writing skill at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Parigi. This research employed quasi experimental design which involved two groups of students as experimental and control groups. The samples were selected by purposive sampling technique. The samples were the students of X MIPA F as the experimental group and X MIPA E as the control one. The instrument of this research was a test which was given to the sample as pretest and posttest in the form of written test. The result of data analysis shows that the mean score of posttest in experimental group (72.22) was higher than the mean score of posttest in control group (50,00). By applying 50 degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance, it indicates that the  $t_{\text{counted}}$  (4.79) is higher than the  $t_{\text{table}}$  (2.01). Furthermore, it clarifies that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. In conclusion, the findings of this research reveal that students' writing skill can be effectively and significantly improved by using text-based instruction.

**Keywords:** writing, improving, text-based instruction

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penerapan pembelajaran berbasis teks dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis siswa di kelas sepuluh SMA Negeri 1 Parigi. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain eksperimen semu yang melibatkan dua kelompok siswa sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol. Sampel dipilih dengan teknik purposive sampling. Sampel adalah siswa X MIPA F sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan X MIPA E sebagai kelompok kontrol. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah tes yang diberikan kepada sampel sebagai pretest dan pascates dalam bentuk tes tertulis. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa skor rata-rata posttest pada kelompok eksperimen (72,22) lebih tinggi daripada skor rata-rata posttest pada kelompok kontrol (50,00). Dengan menerapkan derajat kebenaran (dk) 50 dan taraf signifikansi 0,05, ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai hitung t (4,79) lebih tinggi dari pada nilai tabel t (2,01). Lebih lanjut, ini menjelaskan bahwa hipotesis penelitian ini diterima. Sebagai kesimpulan, temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa keterampilan menulis siswa dapat ditingkatkan secara efektif dan signifikan dengan menggunakan pembelajaran berbasis teks.*

**Kata kunci:** menulis, meningkatkan, pengajaran berbasis teks

### INTRODUCTION

Writing is an activity to communicate with other people in written language. In written communication people convey their messages come from their idea, feeling, emotion, and desire. Regarding with delivering messages to others in written phase, people transfer their ideas from their mind into a group of words, sentences, and paragraphs in order to communicate with other people

Moreover, writing is also a part of language skills in English. Commonly, there

are four skills that should be mastered by the students in language learning. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those four language skills are integrated each other. In other words, those who are good at speaking must also be good at listening. Those who are good at reading could also be good at writing and vice versa. By mastering these skills students will be able to communicate in English well.

Among these skills, writing is a difficult activity for most students, both in

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mother tongue and in foreign language (Bidabadian & Tabatabaei: 2015). This skill is not only about putting letters, symbols, and numbers, but it also involves some language components, such as spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Writing is a skill in learning language that has a bundle of complex and integrated process which may not be easy (Alodwan & Ibnian: 2014). To make a good sentence, someone needs to understand the rules of English grammar and mechanics such as the correct use of verb and pronouns, as well as commas, and other mark punctuation (Braine 1996: 60). Even though writing is hampered by many overwhelming barriers, students therefore have to be taught how to express their feeling and need through written communication.

In formal education, writing is taught from elementary up to university level. In senior high school writing is taught integratedly with listening, speaking, and reading skills to achieve the goal communicative competence. Based on Curriculum 13 or K-13, students in senior high school have to be able to not only understand the nature of writing but also to produce certain various short functional texts, monologues and essays in the form of procedure, narrative, descriptive, recount and report text.

However, those high standards set by the government do not merely run as the expectation. According to the national curriculum, all skills of English should have the same attention and time proportion. It is easily found that school teachers tend to focus more on certain skills, particularly those which are included in the national examination. Teachers provide more time allocation for those two skills and fewer for the other two, speaking and writing or the productive skills. Furthermore, teacher as a facilitator did not deliver appropriate instructional procedure at teaching and learning process. These conditions certainly results in students' lack of ability in producing texts both spoken and written. It is what is happening at SMA Negeri 1 Parigi particularly at Grade X MIPA F. Based on the problem that got after conducting preliminary observation, the students of Grade X MIPA F find difficulties when they write. The students need much time to express their ideas and put them on a piece of paper. It

could be because of two possibilities that have direct connection to the problem student's language proficiency level and the natures of written language itself.

The problem of students' language proficiency level comes from the fact that the majority of students of the class is not very good at English. They have low mastery of English grammar. Some of them even find it hard to write a correct sentence. The characteristics of the skill, writing, could also be a problem. One characteristic of writing, which causes difficulties, comes from the fact that everyone who wants to write should organize their idea well. They should develop the ideas that come to their mind into good order to avoid ambiguity and mistakes. In addition, writing also has a rule of how the writer put the punctuation and spelling that is called mechanics. All of those problems that happened make many students find writing demanding.

Due to the problems that have been identified above, Text-Based Instruction is tried to propose as one of the teaching methods used to improve students' writing skill. Text-based instruction seeks to develop communicative competence by mastering different types of texts (Richards: 2006). It is an effective method compared to other language learning methods because this method allows students to learn language explicitly. Text-based learning involves a process in which the teacher assists students in producing text and gradually reduces the aid until students are able to produce their own text particularly on writing descriptive text. Furthermore "text-based instruction lead students to understand the material explained while they were enjoying the learning process" (Yulianti, E & Reni: 2018).

## RESEARCH METHOD

In conducting this research, quasi experimental research was used. There were an experimental group and a control one that were not chosen randomly. Both classes are taken from the classes that have been formed by looking at the same condition. The experimental group was taught by using Text based instruction while the control one was taught without that strategy. It means that the treatment was used only in the experimental group. This study used a design which is

proposed by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:283) as follows:

Experimental	O <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>
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Control	O <sub>3</sub>		O <sub>4</sub>

Where O<sub>1</sub> and O<sub>3</sub> are pretests, X is treatment, and O<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>4</sub> are posttests.

The population of this research is Grade X students of SMA Negeri 1 Parigi which contains of 343 learners. It consists of nine parallel classes. The samples are the students of X MIPA F as the experimental group and X MIPA E as the control one.

In this research, instruments were used to obtain the data. The instrument was test. The test consists of pretest and posttest. The pretest aimed to find out students' previous knowledge in writing a text, while a text, while posttest aimed to prove either the result of using text based instruction can improve students' skill in writing or not. In doing essay test, some components like grammar, and mechanics were assessed.

In scoring each part of descriptive text, the scoring procedure was used as follow:

**Table 1** The scoring rubric of writing

NO	Writing competent	Score	Explanation
1	Grammar	3	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies
		2	Some grammatical inaccuracies
		1	Frequents grammatical inaccuracies
		0	Almost all grammatical patterns inaccuracies
2	Mechanics	3	Almost no inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling
		2	Some inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling
		1	Low standard

of accuracy in punctuation and spelling  
Ignorance of convention of punctuation and almost all spelling inaccurate

*Adapted from Weigle, C.S (2002)*

## FINDINGS

In presenting the data, there were two research instruments administered, namely pretest and posttest. Consequently, there were two scores gathered for the present study which consisted of pretest and posttest. The tests were administered to both experimental and control group. The pretest was administered to measure the prior knowledge of students both in control and experimental class while the post-test was administered after conducting treatment. The result of each test was used to measure whether the use of text based instruction can improve students' writing skill or not. In the tests, the students of X MIPA E and X MIPA F were asked to make a descriptive text. Then, they were assessed by using the scoring rubric on table 1. During this study, there were 25 students of experimental group and 27 students of control group who joined the tests. The result of the pretest and posttest of experimental group is presented in table 2

**Table 2** The Students' Score and Deviation of Pretest and Posttest of Experimental Group

No.	Initials	Students' Standard Scores		Deviation (x <sub>2</sub> - x <sub>1</sub> )
		Pretest (x <sub>1</sub> )	Posttest (x <sub>2</sub> )	
1	A	33.33	83.33	50
2	AJK	50	83.33	33.33
3	ASK	33.33	66.67	33.34
4	BAS	50	83.33	33.33
5	BRS	50	83.33	33.33
6	DF	50	66.67	16.67
7	H	50	83.33	33.33
8	JOL	50	83.33	33.33

9	KFZ	50	83.33	33.33	10	IA	50	50	0
10	MFZ	33.33	66.67	33.34	11	KZH	50	66.67	16.67
11	MHAG	50	66.67	16.67	12	LY	50	66.67	16.67
12	MPAE	16.67	66.67	50	13	MA	50	50	0
13	NA	16.67	83.33	66.66	14	MDL	33.33	50	16.67
14	NA	16.67	66.67	50	15	MG	16.67	33.33	16.66
15	NL	50	66.67	16.67	16	MHA	66.67	66.67	0
16	NRAP	50	66.67	16.67	17	MR	16.67	50	33.33
17	OP	50	66.67	16.67	18	MR	33.33	16.67	-16.66
18	RK	33.33	50	16.67	19	MS	33.33	50	16.67
19	RR	16.67	83.33	66.66	20	NA	50	50	0
20	RS	33.33	66.67	33.34	21	PJM	33.33	50	16.67
21	SMU	16.67	66.67	50	22	RM	16.67	50	33.33
22	TR	16.67	50	33.33	23	SK	33.33	50	16.67
23	TAS	50	66.67	16.67	24	UWAH	50	50	0
24	VNM	50	66.67	16.67	25	ZA	33.33	33.33	0
25	VPL	16.67	83.33	66.66					
26	VPS	33.33	83.33	50					
27	YFT	50	66.67	16.67					

The pretest result of experimental group indicated that the highest score was 50 and the lowest score was 16,67. The total score of the students was 1016,67. After getting the total score of the students, the students' mean score was computed. The mean score of the students of experimental class on their pretest was 38. Then, their mean score on posttest was also calculated and it was 72.22. Those data explained that the improvement of experimental class was 34.22. The result of the pretest and posttest of control group is presented on table 3.

**Table 3** The Students' Score and Deviation of Pretest and Posttest of Control Group

N o.	Initials	Students' Standard Scores		Deviation ( $x_2 - x_1$ )
		Pretest ( $x_1$ )	Posttest ( $x_2$ )	
1	AAF	33.33	50	16.67
2	APD	33.33	50	16.67
3	ATA	33.33	50	16.67
4	BZW	33.33	50	16.67
5	CDS	33.33	50	16.67
6	DIMK	33.33	33.33	0
7	DNKL	33.33	50	16.67
8	HC	50	66.67	16.67
9	HM	50	66.67	16.67

By having the results from the same formula, it can be obviously seen that the classical students' ability of the control group in the post-test was 38 and the pretest was 50. it can conclude that the students of control group also could increase their mean score. In addition, experimental group improvement is more significant than the control group.

In order to find out the significance between the experimental and control class, then the data was analyzed by using formula from Arikunto (2006). The result of the data analysis shows that the t-counted is 3.75. By applying 0,05 level of significance with the degree of freedom (df)  $N_1 + N_2 - 2 = 25 + 27 - 2 = 50$ , it implies that t-counted (4.79) is higher than t-table (2.01). Thus, it means that the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, the using of text-based instruction can improve students' writing skill.

## DISCUSSION

This research was conducted in order to prove that the implementation of text-based instruction can improve students' writing skill. Text-based instruction is an appropriate method that can be used in teaching and learning process since during its steps the students had teacher's guide before they write their own text. The guide of teacher can prepare students to express whatever comes in their mind by considering the elements of writing. This is in line with Maleerat and Sarjit (2015). As an expert in the classroom, the teacher provides students with systematic guidance and careful support through various

activities so that students ultimately gain the control of written genres

Even though it needs teacher's guide, the implementation of text-based instruction leads the students to be more creative and active in the class. The students are given a chance to make a text with their friends in a group or pair by using contextual teaching media and interactive activity. This discussion focused on the improvement of the students during and before the implementation of text-based instruction.

Eight meetings were conducted for both experimental and control groups. Two meetings were for pretest and posttest, while the six meetings more were for the treatment. The pretest was conducted in order to know students' prior knowledge. The result of this pretest showed that most of the students in the experimental group had problem on their writing, particularly grammar and mechanics. They were difficult to construct grammatical sentence and use appropriate spelling and punctuation. The treatment, then, was given to the experimental group. During the six meetings, different topics were given for both two groups. The experimental group, especially, was the group in which text based instruction was used as the treatment while, the control group used conventional method.

The first treatment was conducted in the experimental group on November 14<sup>th</sup> and the topic was *family member*. The treatment was divided into four steps. At the first step named building of knowledge field, the students were introduced descriptive text and the social function of this text. Moreover, they were asked about some questions about the topic. They were asked about their mother personal appearances and behavior. At the time, the students actively mentioned the characteristics of their mothers. The second step was modeling. Since it allows the teacher to explain the way in which the students used simple present tense and using appropriate punctuation and spelling, this step is effective to help the students in order to be aware in term of mechanics and grammar. During this step the students were introduced the descriptive text by an example of descriptive text about mother. Then, they were asked to analyze generic structure and language feature of the text. After the students analyzed the language feature, they concluded that

descriptive text used simple present tense. The students were explained about the simple present tense and its role in a sentence. Moreover, they were taught about how to put appropriate punctuation. Furthermore, they also were given opportunity to translate new vocabulary from the text and learned the way to write the words in order to avoid inappropriateness in spelling.

The third step was joint construction of the text. In this step one student was asked to come in front of the class to give information about his mother. Then, the other students on the class were asked to make a descriptive text that consisted of two paragraphs based on the informations were given by their friend before. They made it by mentioned the sentences one by one. After they mentioned the sentence, the other students gave comment about the sentences. They responded the sentences whether the sentences correct or incorrect. This step encouraged the students to be more active since the students had opportunity to do peer assessment which allowed them to give some correction about their friend's work. Moreover, this third stage involved teacher to give feedback about students' work. The feedback itself was a revision in term of their grammar and mechanic. The final step was independent construction of the text. This step required the students to write their own descriptive text independently and creatively. The text consisted of two paragraphs. The first is identification which is a paragraph section that identifies or introduces characters, objects, or places and the second is description that is a paragraph section that describes characters, objects, or place (Usman, Setyosari, Widiati and Lembah: 2015). When students finished their independent work, they were also given feedback. After all of the steps were conducted, some students slightly had improvement on their writing particularly on their mechanic.

For the next second until sixth meeting the same steps were applied. In addition, different activities or medias were used. Those activities and medias effectively made the students more enthusiastic during teaching and learning process. Moreover, text-based instruction also gave chance to teacher as facilitator to create an interesting teaching



and learning process especially in teaching writing skill.

After the treatment conducted, posttest was given to the two groups. The aim of post test was to measure students' ability, particularly the use of some elements of writing which are grammar and mechanic in descriptive text after the treatment. Based on the result, it shows that both experimental and control groups have got progress but the progress itself was different. It could be seen from the students' score that the experimental group got higher than the control group. Most of the students of experimental group could write descriptive text with the right elements of writing. In addition by analyzing language feature of different sample of texts, the students' had improvement in terms of grammar and mechanics.

This improvement, in fact, reflected in Nagao Akiko (2018) study after the participants of university level were asked to write argumentative essay. This showed that text-based instruction can be implemented not only at school, but also at universty. Furthermore, this finding concurs with Arimbawa (2012) who believed that teacher should have innovative and creative thinking in order to build up motivated teaching and learning process. Manurung (2012) also stated that motivation is significant to generate successful learning. In this case, teacher is the one who became the motivator. Thus, it implies that the way teacher chose learning materials, medias, and activities definitely influenced the role of teacher in order to motivate learner to learn. Moreover, giving the students opportunity to respond their friend's work can helpfully motivate the students and improve their participation in each step. Furthermore, the motivation students got can influence their learning outcomes (Usman: 2017). The learning outcomes of students who have high motivation are different from the students who have low motivation. Besides, teacher also acts his or her role as facilitator and guide for the students during teaching and learning process. Concerning the result of the posttest the t value was counted and the result was compared with the t value. Finally, the result shows that the implementation of text-based instruction can improve students writing skill and it was automatically conclude that the hypothesis was accepted.

## CONCLUSIONS

After conducting the treatment for six meetings and analyzing the data, the conclusion is that the implementation of text based instruction can effectively improve students' writing skill at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Parigi, especially in the two elements of writing which are grammar and mechanics. It was supported by the mean score of posttest in experimental group (72.22) was higher than the mean score of posttest in control one (50.00). It also was proved by the  $t_{\text{counted}}$  value (4.79) was higher than the  $t_{\text{table}}$  (2.01). Therefore, the hypothesis of this research is accepted.

Moreover, teaching writing through text based instruction can help students to construct sentences particularly in writing descriptive text. Text based instruction encourages the students to be more active and interactive in the class. It requires teacher guide before the students make their own text and teacher's role as a motivator in the teacher and learning process. The implementation of text based instruction is much supported by proper and comfortable atmosphere in which students are given inputs and support to make them enjoy the teaching and learning process.

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