THE USE OF DIARY TO IMPROVE THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to prove whether or not the use of diary can improve the ability in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu. The researcher applied a quasi-experimental research design which involved an experimental group and a control group. The samples were X MIA 5 as the experimental group and X MIA 4 as the control group. They were selected by using purposive sampling technique. In collecting the data, the researcher gave pretest and posttest for both groups. The result of the data analysis shows that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest results. The mean score of the experimental group before the treatment is 35.47 while the control group is 37.30. After the treatment, the mean score of the experimental group is 70.09 and the control group is 56.75. It is also shown that $t_{counted}$ (4.10) is greater than the t-table (2.008) which indicates that the research hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the use of diary can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text

Keywords: Writing Ability; Descriptive Text; Diary.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membuktikan apakah penggunaan buku harian dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif pada siswa kelas sepuluh SMA Negeri 2 Palu. Peneliti menerapkan desain penelitian kuasi eksperimental yang melibatkan eksperimen dan kontrol. Sampel penelitian ini adalah kelas XMIA 5 sebagai eksperimen dan kelas X MIA 4 sebagai kontrol. Keduanya dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Dalam mengumpulkan data, peneliti memberikan prates dan pascates untuk kedua grup. Hasil dari analisis data menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan antara hasil pratest dan pascatest. Nilai rata-rata grup eksperimen sebelum perlakuan adalah 35.47 sementara nilai grup kontrol adalah 37.30. Setelah perlakuan, nilai rata-rata grup eksperimen adalah 70.09 dan nilai grup kontrol adalah 56.75. Hal tersebut juga menunjukkan bahwa nilai hitung t (4.10) lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai tabel t (2.008) yang mengindikasikan bahwa hipotesis penelitian diterima. Dengan demikian, penggunaan buku harian dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif.

Kata Kunci: *Kemampuan Menulis; Teks Descriptive; Diari*

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INTRODUCTION

English is spoken all over the world. People use it as a tool for international communication that enables them to interact with others from different languages. In Indonesia, English is considered as the first foreign language and a subject to be taught in secondary schools. Also, it is considered as a requirement subject to pass in the National Examination. This means people should understand and master English skills in order to gain knowledge, information, and technology.

Writing is one of the skills that should be learnt by the students since the aims of the teaching English in Indonesia is to make the students be able to write various kinds of text. Based on the syllabus in curriculum 2013, the students expected to understand basic concepts and terminology used for describing writing skills and apply this to practical teaching. There are some texts that should be learnt by senior high school students especially in the tenth grade. Those are recount, narrative, announcement, and descriptive text.

Descriptive text is one of the genre texts that present the characteristics of something in order to make clear impression of person, place, or thing. Keraf (2000) mentions in writing descriptive, the writer transfers the images, the feeling that writer experienced to the readers. It means that writer should make clear description in order to make the reader can imagine the object desribed. In addition, Droga and Humphrey (2005:148) state that descriptive text has certain generic structure and language features.

Descriptive text has two generic structures. The first generic structure is Identification. Identification means the general statements that consist of main idea of text. It can be the general statement about place, person or thing to describe. The second, description. The description describe the characteristics of particular object which is being describe or discussed such as physical appearance, behavior, and qualities. Conclusion is the last part of descriptive text; however it is optional. In conclusion, writer can restate the main idea or give the final comment of his/her descriptive text. It is also gives signal to the reader if it the end of text.

Descriptive text also has language features which are using present tense, means everything in descriptive text should be true. Focus on specific participant to describe which means having one clear object. The use of adjective is to modify noun for example good boy, big house, beautiful girl and *etc*. The use of adverb as the additional information.

Through writing descriptive text, the students can express their ideas, thougths and experiences. It also can create good imagination to the students, because they have to write something more details to describe people, place, and thing. In this case, if the students want to describe someone, they have to describe not only physical appearance but also their character and behavior. For example *Shakira is tall, she has brown eyes and black hair. She is very artistic and really good at drawing.*

In reality, based on the preliminary research, it was found that the tenth grade students have two main problems affecting students' ability in writing English text. First, most of the students are weak in vocabulary. They have less knowledge about vocabulary especially in adjective. It is hard for them to used correct word in order to make correct sentences. Second, the use of grammar is not suitable for the tense. They are supposed to use past tense to tell about an event occuring in duration of time in the past. Instead, they use present tense. The other reason is because the students just memorize the pattern of the tense without having an oppurtunity to practice their writing skill.

Concerning the problems that are faced by the students, it is neceseary to find an appropriate technique in teaching writing descriptive text in order to help the students produce good writing. Therefore, diary as a technique can help the students to develop their writing ability. A diary comes from daily writing, which means writing everyday. Progoff (1975:87) defines diary as "typically a notebook, booklet of blank pages, or any source for students to record thoughts, reactions to learning experiences, and even inner most fears about a learning activity". Diaries contain stories of happenings, hopes and fears of what might happen, memories, thoughts and ideas, and all the attendant feelings. The students have space to write what has happened over the day. Family, friends, subject, etc can be a topic to write in their diary. The students can get many ideas about what to write down in their diaries.

There are some steps in teaching writing through diary writing. In the end of the teaching, the teacher ask the students to write descriptive text about people by using tense that teach and tell the students that their writing will be collected next meeting. Teacher allows the students to discuss with their friends about the tense use, vocabulary and mechanicsm. In the second meeting, the teacher collects the students' writing and correct them by giving notes in every students' writing paper about the fault in writing. It help the students to develop their writing ability. To sum up, diary can solve this problem. Through diary writing, students can keep a record of their ideas, opinions, and their stories of daily life

METHOD

In this study, quasi experimental research design was applied. There are experimental group and control group. Experimental group is a group which gets treatment, whereas control group is a group which does not get treatment. The method of this study was formulate by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007:283) as follows:

$$Experimental \quad O_1 \quad X \quad O_2$$
$$Control \quad \quad O_3 \quad \quad O_4$$

Where: O_1 = the pretest of experimental group

O_2 = the posttest of experimental group

O_3 = the pretest of control group

0_4 = the posttest of control group

X = the treatment of experimental group

Population is all subject of study (Arikunto, 1997:117). The population of this study was the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu about 201. Two classes in this study were class X MIA 5 as the experimenal group and X MIA 4 as the control group. In relation to the topic of this study, the dependent variable (X) is student's writing ability while the independent variable (Y) is diary.

To collect the data, test were used. Tests are expected to measure the student's result in writing descriptive text before and after the treatment and to find out if the technique can develop the students' ability in writing descriptive text. In this study, two kind of test were applied. Pretest was used to see starting point of the class before conducting the treatment. The test was subjective test, which was a test where the students were asked to describe their own self. Posttest was aimed to measure the students' ability and to see whether the treatment applied to the experimental group is effective to develop the students' ability in writing descriptive text. The test was the same as a prettest where the students have to describe theirself.

To measure the students' score, Weigle (2002:117) scoring system is addopted. It is used to consider the writing component: vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The explanation of those components is as follows:

Table 1 The Scoring Table of Writing

No	Writing Component	Rating	Score	Explanation
1	Vocabulary	0	0 – 39	Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication
		1	40 – 69	Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inapproroacies and/or repetition
		2	70 – 89	Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution
		3	90 – 100	almost no inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare appropriate and/or circumlocution
2	Grammar	0	0 – 39	almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate
		1	40 – 69	frequents grammatical inaccuracies
		2	70 – 89	some grammatical inaccuracies
		3	90 – 100	almost no grammatical inaccuracies
3	Mechanic	0	0 – 39	ignorance of convention of punctuation and almost all spelling inaccuracies
		1	40 – 69	low standard of accuracy in punctuation and spelling
		2	70 – 89	some inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling
		3	90 – 100	almost no inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling

FINDINGS

Before receiving any treatment, the students were given a pretetst to know their ability in writing descriptive text. The following table show the result of pretest experimental group.

Table 2 The Individual Score of Experimental Group on Pretest

No	Initials	Score				
		V	G	M	Total	Students
1	ARA	1	0	1	2	22.22
2	ASM	1	1	1	3	33.33
3	ANT	1	1	1	3	33.33
4	AKA	1	1	1	3	33.33
5	AWR	0	0	0	0	0
6	DMC	1	1	1	3	33.33
7	DDD	1	2	1	4	44.44
8	FNQ	1	1	1	3	33.33
9	FNR	2	1	2	5	55.56
10	FAP	1	1	1	3	33.33
11	FFR	2	1	1	4	44.44
12	FJF	3	2	2	7	77.78
13	MHN	1	1	0	2	22.22
14	MHD	1	1	1	3	33.33
15	NFT	1	1	2	4	44.44
16	NKR	1	1	1	3	33.33
17	NAN	2	3	2	7	77.78
18	NAY	1	1	1	3	33.33
19	RAD	1	1	0	2	22.22
20	RFG	0	0	0	0	0
21	SAY	1	1	1	3	33.33
22	TTD	1	1	1	3	33.33
23	VPP	2	1	0	3	33.33
24	YPP	1	1	1	3	33.33
25	ZMH	1	1	2	4	44.44
26	ZZZ	1	1	1	3	33.33
	Total	30	27	26	83	922.22

Based on the table above, it can beconcluded that most of the students got lower score than the standard score (75). There are 2 students receiving 0 as a lowest score. Based on their written test, two students got 0 score because their vocabulary is a common vocabulary, their grammar pattern is incorrect and they also ignore the use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. The highest score is 77.78. The students who got the high score is receive high score in one category and received 2 in the others category. Both of the students have a enough vocabulary and some grammatical inaccuracies. The total score of students in the experimental group is 922.22. The mean score of pretest in the experimental group which is 35.47 by divided the total score all of students and the number of students in the experimental group.

Table 3 The Individual Score of Control Group on Pretest

| No | Initials | Score | | | | |
		V	G	M	Total	Students
1	AMT	2	1	1	4	44.44
2	AMW	1	1	1	3	33.33
3	AMF	1	0	0	1	11.11
4	APT	2	2	1	5	55.56
5	ARP	2	1	2	5	55.56
6	BMN	1	1	1	3	33.33
7	CAM	2	2	1	5	55.56
8	CFU	2	1	2	5	55.56
9	DNS	3	3	1	7	77.78
10	DAH	1	1	1	3	33.33
11	DFB	3	3	1	7	77.78
12	EWM	1	1	0	2	22.22
13	FCH	2	1	0	3	33.33
14	FDL	1	0	1	2	22.22
15	FTG	2	2	2	6	66.67
16	FZS	0	0	0	0	0
17	FAN	1	1	1	3	33.33
18	IGA	1	1	1	3	33.33
19	MAL	1	1	1	3	33.33
20	MRL	1	1	3	5	55.56
21	MTG	1	1	0	2	22.22
22	NHA	2	1	1	4	44.44
23	NHR	0	0	0	0	0
24	NWD	1	1	1	3	33.33
25	PMP	1	1	1	3	33.33
26	SGD	2	1	1	4	44.44
27	SFA	1	1	1	3	33.33
28	VDM	1	1	0	2	22.22
	Total	39	31	26	96	1044.44

Based on the table 3, most of the students in control group were still weak in using vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic. The highest score is 77.78. The students who got the highest score already understood the use of vocabulary and grammar, but they still ignored the use of mechanic especially in punctuation. After finding out the lowest score and the highest standard score, the same formula was also applied in determining the mean score of experimental group. The mean score of the control group before treatment is 37.30 means

the difference between the mean score of the experimental group (35.47) and the control group (37.30) is only 1.83. The slight difference indicates that the level of knowledge of the two groups was similar.

After giving the pretest to the students, the treatment was applied on experimental group.. it was conducted for six meetings where each meeting took 1×45 minutes lesson. On the other hand, the control group was taught by using a conventional teaching method.

After conducting the treatment, the students were given a posttest to measure the students ability after the treatment.

Table 4 The Individual Score of Experimental Group on Posttest

No	Initials	Score				
		V	G	M	Total	Students
1	ARA	3	2	2	7	77.78
2	ASM	2	2	2	6	66.67
3	ANT	2	2	2	6	66.67
4	AKA	3	2	2	7	77.78
5	AWR	1	1	1	3	33.33
6	DMC	3	2	2	7	77.78
7	DDD	2	3	2	7	77.78
8	FNQ	3	2	2	7	77.78
9	FNR	3	2	1	6	66.67
10	FAP	3	2	2	7	77.78
11	FFR	3	2	3	8	88.89
12	FJF	3	3	2	8	88.89
13	MHN	1	1	0	2	22.22
14	MHD	2	2	2	6	66.67
15	NFT	2	2	2	6	66.67
16	NKR	2	2	3	7	77.78
17	NAN	3	2	3	8	88.89
18	NAY	3	2	3	8	88.89
19	RAD	2	2	2	6	66.67
20	RFG	1	1	1	3	33.33
21	SAY	2	2	3	7	77.78
22	TTD	3	2	2	7	77.78
23	VPP	2	1	2	5	55.56
24	YPP	2	2	2	6	66.67
25	ZMH	3	3	2	8	88.89
26	ZZZ	2	2	2	6	66.67
	Total	61	51	52	164	1822.22

By looking at the Table 4, the highest score of the experimental group after the treatment is 88.89 and the lowest score is 22.22. The students' mean score of the experimental group in posttest is 70.09 by divided the total score all of students in posttest and the number of students in the control group. The difference between mean score of experimental group in pretest and posttest is 34.62 means there is improvements in students score. Most of the students in experimental group improve their score in writing ability especially in writing English descriptive text.

Table 5 The Individual Score of Control Group on Posttest

No	Initials	Score				
		V	G	M	Total	Students
1	AMT	2	2	2	6	66.67
2	AMW	3	2	2	7	77.78
3	AMF	1	0	0	1	11.11
4	APT	2	2	2	6	66.67
5	ARP	2	2	2	6	66.67
6	BMN	1	1	1	3	33.33
7	CAM	2	2	2	6	66.67
8	CFU	2	1	2	5	55.56
9	DNS	3	3	2	8	88.89
10	DAH	2	2	2	6	66.67
11	DFB	3	3	2	8	88.89
12	EWM	2	1	1	4	44.44
13	FCH	2	2	1	5	55.56
14	FDL	2	2	1	5	55.56
15	FTG	3	2	3	8	88.89
16	FZS	1	1	1	3	33.33
17	FAN	2	2	2	6	66.67
18	IGA	2	1	1	4	44.44
19	MAL	2	2	3	7	77.78
20	MRL	2	2	3	7	77.78
21	MTG	1	2	1	4	44.44
22	NHA	2	2	1	5	55.56
23	NHR	1	0	0	1	11.11
24	NWD	2	1	1	4	44.44
25	PMP	2	2	1	5	55.56
26	SGD	2	2	1	5	55.56
27	SFA	2	2	2	6	66.67
28	VDMD	1	1	0	2	22.22
	Total	54	47	42	143	1588.89

Based on the result of posttest in control group, the highest score is 88.89, and the lowest score is 11.11. Moreover, most of the students in control group also improved their scores, Using the same formula that was also applied in determining the mean score of experimental group. The students' mean score of control group is 56.75

Based on the result of pretest and posttest in the experimental group and the control group, it can be conclude that the students of the experimental group could increase their mean score, where their mean score in posttest (70.09) which is higher than their mean score in pretest (35.47). Besides, the students of the control group could also increase their mean score, where the mean score in posttest is (56.75) and in pretest is (37.30). In short, the mean score of the experimental group is higher than the mean score of the control group.

To find the total deviation, the total score in posttest is deducted by the total score in pretest after that the total deviation is squared to get the square deviation. Based on the calculation, it was found that the total deviation score of the experimental group is 900.00 and the square deviation score of experimental group is 36172.84. On the other hand, the

total deviation score and the square deviation score of control group are 544.44 and 15185.18.

To find out the mean deviation score for both experimental and control group, where the total deviation is divided into the number of students in each group. The mean deviation of the experimental group is 34.62 and the mean deviation of the control group is 19.44 while the sum of square deviation score of the experimental group is 5018.99, and the sum of square deviation score of the control group is 4598.77. after the computation of the significance between the experimental and control group by using formula from Arikunto (2006), the result of the data analysis shows that the $t_{\text{-counted}}$ is 4.10. By applying 0,05 level of significant with the degree of freedom (df) $N1 + N2 - 2 = 26 + 28 - 2 = 52$. Thus $t_{\text{-counted}}$ (4.10) is greater than $t_{\text{-table}}$ (2.008), and it means that the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, using diary can improve students ability in writing descriptive text.

DISCUSSION

On the result of students' experimental group pretest, two students got the highest score. The standard score at the school is 75. The percentage of the students who got lower score than the standard score (75) is 92%. It means that only 2 students (7%) who got score more than 75. In the pretest, the students were asked to write text that describes their own self. Some of the students knew how to write a descriptive text but it was hard for them to describe their own self.

By having a look the data percentage, it concludes the students' problems before the treatment. First, it is easier for the students to identify the vocabulary but it is hard for them to match the vocabulary into a sentences. Most of the students have already known the basic vocabulary of how to write their hobbies, their school, their birth place and date, and their address, and their hobbies.

Second, the students find it difficult to make grammatically correct sentences; when they want to stated their school, they write; *I am school in Sma 2 palu, my school in SMA N 2 Palu, I'm school in SMA NEGERI 2 PALU, I school in SMA negeri 2 palu, I studying at SMA negeri 2 Palu.* When the students wrote their hobby: *i hobby to playing volleyball, my hobbies is footbal, My hobby play a guitar and play a game.*

Third, the students ignored the mechanics of writing. The students do not care about employing punctuation especially full stop and coma in their writing. Most of the students also disregard the use of capitalization; My name is PUTRI MELANI, *was born in*

makassar, I live on manimbaya street number, my Hobby is swimming, My hobby is reading watching video on youtube.

After getting the students' problems based on the students work in the pretest, the treatment applied for the experimental group. It was conducted for six meeting. In the first meeting, the students learn about simple present tense then generic structure of descriptive text. During the teaching and learning process, the students are active and enthusiastic in doing the task. They ask the vocabulary related to the topic. In the end of each meeting, the students have to describe their best friends, their room, and their favorite things in their own diary as homework. In the next meeting, the students have to give their written text to be checked and corrected by giving notes in every student's diary.

After conducting the treatment, the posttest was applied for both experimental and control groups. The test was the same as the pretest where they have to describe theirself. Based on the students written text, they have already understood how to write descriptive text. It can be prove through the resulf of their writing. It shows before the treatment the students intended to write common information about their self, such as; class, school, age, address while after the treatment, the students write more specific information about their self. They already feel free to write about their personality, appearance, and behavior.

This fact can be seen in the 2 of student's worksheet: *I am very simple person. I love music, watching drakor and always read a novel.. my personality are kind,friendly, talkactive, always helping my friends, but sometimes I'm very selfies girl, stubborn and frontal person* and *i like to argue about what i think is right. And I a man ambitious person in achieving something*.

The result of posttest of the experimental group is that 53% students got score more than the standard score (75). It has increased 44 % from the result of the pretest score which 92% students got score lower than the standard score. Moreover, 21% students of the control group also get the score more than the standard score. It has increased their result of pretest for 14%. In short, students' score has increased from the pretest to the posttest. By comparing the result of pretest and posttest, the conclusion is diary can improve students ability in writing descriptive text. It is effective because there is a progress in students' score. There is also a significant progress by comparing the result of the $t_{counted}$ to the t-table.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Teaching writing through diary can help students to construct sentences, particulary in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu. It is believed

to be effective in improving students' writing ability. Diary encourages the students to generate ideas in writing descriptive text. It is easy for the students because they are in control of their writing. It allows the students to write freely and continuosly. It also increases their motivation to write during the writing process.

After conducting the treatment for six meetings and analyzing the data, it can be proved diary can improve the ability in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu by looking at the mean score of the experimental group before the treatment (35.47) and after the treatment (70.09). It is also proven by the result of the $t_{counted}$ (4.10) which is greater than the t-table (2.008). To sum up, the use of diary can improve students ability in writing descriptive text.

Diary allows the students to write about everything. It allows the students to express their ideas and experiences without being judge by others. It can encourage the students to write more often and improve their writing ability. The students should also be given more tasks to write about descriptive text to find out their ability in vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

It is better for English teachers to provide the students with activities that are motivating, especially by using an appropriate media such as the use of diary. The teacher could also use some media and other exposures because writing sometimes can be exhausting for the students. The discusseionof the use diary to improve students' writing ability in SMA Negeri 2 Palu. It is expected that the result of the study can be used as an additional reference for other researchers, especially the researchers dealing with the teaching of writing.

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