

**BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE WRITING
SKILL IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS OF VOCATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Candra Minawati

English Language Education

Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Slamet Riyadi University,

Surakarta

E-mail: cminawati@yahoo.com

Abstract

The article was based on a research that concerned in improving students' skill in writing descriptive texts using Brainstorming Technique. The objectives were: 1) To find out whether the use of Brainstorming Technique can improved the writing skill in descriptive texts of tenth grade students of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo in the academic year of 2017/2018, and 2) To describe the class condition when brainstorming technique were implemented in writing skill in descriptive texts of tenth grade students of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo in the academic year of 2017/2018. The researcher was conducted in class X which consisted of 30 female students from August to September 2017. This Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisted of 2 cycles. Each cycle consisted of two meetings in 80 minutes for each meeting. The data were collected through test and non-test. The tests consisted of pre-test and post-tests. While, non-tests consisted of observation, interview, field notes and documentation. Furthermore, the researcher used qualitative and quantitative data analysis to analyze the data. The result of this research showed that Brainstorming Technique could improve the students' skill in writing descriptive texts at the tenth grade students especially class X of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo. The improvement could be seen from the result of the test. The mean score of pre-test was 4.80, post-test 1 was 6.93, and post-test 2 was 7.68. Moreover, the result of t-test was 12.321 in cycle 1 and 3.425 in cycle 2. It meant that there was improvement in students' skill in writing descriptive texts.

Key words: Writing Skill; Descriptive Texts; Brainstorming Technique; Classroom Action Research

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of important skills to be mastered by the students. The students can express their ideas in writing. Moreover, the students can express their experiences when writing. Harmer (2004:4) states that in writing, a writer will need to express his/her ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings so that he/she has to be sported by sufficient language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. It means that the reason why teaching writing is considered important for the students. The reason is that writing reinforces the grammatical, vocabulary, and spelling that have been given by teacher. In learning writing there are some texts that must be mastered by students. there are some texts namely recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, and report that should be mastered by students. One of the texts which is learnt in Senior High School is descriptive text. Description texts is writing about characteristic features of a particular thing. Oshima and Hogue (1997:50) quoted by states that descriptive writing appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/ or sounds. In additon, a good description is like a

“word picture”; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind. A writer of a good description is like an artist who paints a picture that can be “seen” clearly in the mind of the reader.

In the preliminary study at SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo, most of the students still got difficulties in writing descriptive texts. The students found problems in writing incorrect present tense in a sentence, misspelling words, misuse full stop mark, organizing the ideas in a descriptive text randomly. And then, the cause of problems of the teaching learning writing come from many factors, they are from teacher’s factors, students’ factors, and also school’s factors. From the teacher’s factors are (1) the teacher only used LKS (Lembar Kerja Siswa) as the only learning material, (2) she only sat down on the chair so that there was no body movement to attract the students’ attention, (3) moreover, the teacher just used Translation Method in a class so that it did not improve the students’ competence. While from students’ factors are (1) Many students were not interested in writing activity because they felt bored with writing assignment

given by the teacher, (2) the students were bored with the class activities, and (3) they also had lack of motivation in joining English class. Moreover, from the school's factors are (1) there were no interesting English books that could interest students to improve their motivation in learning English, and (2) there was LCD in a classroom but it was never used.

As a result, the students achieve the minimum passing score or KKM (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) over 75. To resolve the problems Brainstorming Technique by Brown (2001:349) was implemented. Brainstorming is one of several different ways to begin writing. The purpose is means you can come up with your ideas. And then, that will help to explore ideas that you might want to write. Brainstorming technique which is generally used in a group setting to quickly generate a large number of ideas about a specific problem or topic. Moreover, Ghaith (2002), in his article, states that brainstorming is similar to free writing in that you write down everything you can think of without considering whether it is valid, good or usable. Brainstorming Technique shows that brainstorming technique is free writing takes on a format that looks something like a paragraph,

while brainstorming usually result in a list of words and phrases. Moreover, according to Rumisek and Zemach (2005:6), brainstorming is a way of gathering ideas about a topic. The purpose is to make a list of as many as ideas as possible without worrying about how will use them. The steps of Brainstorming Technique by Blanchard and Root (2203: 41) are described as follows; (1) the students begin with a broad topic, (2) the students write down as many as ideas about the topic as you can in 5 minutes, (3) the students add more items to your list by answering the question *what, how, when, where, why, and who*, (4) the students make group similar items on the list together. In the last, the students cross out items that do not belong.

The students will find it easier to write paragraphs. Many writers prefer brainstorming because the resulting list is easy to work with in terms of separating ideas. With little effort, they have an informal outline that can guide them in organizing their draft. Brainstorming Technique can be done individually or in group.

Therefore the focus of this article is to find out whether or not the use of brainstorming technique can improve the writing skill and to describe the

class condition when brainstorming technique were implemented at the tenth grade of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo in the 2017/2018 Academic Year.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo. This school is located at Jl. Solo-Purwodadi Km 11, Gondangrejo. This research was used X which consisted of 30 students. This research was conducted from August until September 2017. The method of the study was Classroom Action Research. According to Burns (1999:30) action research is the view to improve the quality of action within social situation, involving collaboration and cooperation of researchers, practitioners and laymen. There were four phases of Classroom Action Research: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The study was conducted in two cycles. The data were collected through test and non-test. In collecting the data, it used test with written test in pre test, post test 1, and post test 2. Besides that to collect the non-test data, it used observation, interview, and documentation. While, to analyze the data was used t-test.

RESULTS

The students did pre-test before the implementing *Brainstorming Technique* to measure the students writing skill in descriptive texts. The mean score was 4.80 that far below was still the KKM (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*).

Before implementing the research, this research created with planning. It made the materials, the materials were lesson plans, students activity and worksheet, and blue print of post test 1. From the collected data, the researcher analyzed the score of students' writing skill especially in descriptive text. After that, the researcher conducted the pre-test. The pre-test was conducted in order to obtain the student's writing skill especially in descriptive text. The pre-test was conducted on Monday, August 21st 2017 at 12.20-14.00 in class X of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo. In pre-test, the students from class X were asked to

write a descriptive text in the students' worksheet which was given by the teacher. The pre-test was conducted for 80 minutes. The researcher gave 3 topics, the students chosen one a topic for write a story. The topic that students wrote in the pre-

test was, “My Favorite Singer”, “My Favorite Place”, and “My Favorite Pet”. The indicators of writing which became assessment in pre-test were content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (by Brown, 2007). After correcting the students’ works in pre-test, it was found that the score of students’ writing skill on pre-test was 4.80 (The average score of the class). It meant that the students’ writing skill was very low, it was under KKM (75).

After the pre-test was conducted, the researcher conducted cycle 1 which consisted of two meetings and it was ended by the post-test 1. The first meeting of cycle 1 was conducted on Monday, August 28th 2017 while for the second meeting of cycle 1 was conducted on Monday, September 4th 2017. Then the cycle 1 was ended by the post-test 1. Post-test 1 was conducted on Monday, September 11st 2017 at 12.20 until 14.00. The test was about write a story with a topic “My Classmate” into a good descriptive text. Post-test 1 was conducted in 80 minutes. The indicators of writing which became assessment in post-test 1 were content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (by Brown, 2007). The researcher finished the implementation in the

first cycle. In this research, the researcher observed the implementation of the action in the classroom. In the first meeting of cycle 1, some of the students were noisy during the teaching and learning process. They looked bored and had no enthusiasm to more active in the classroom activity. They still got difficulties in the use of vocabulary and correct grammar. In the second meeting of cycle 1, the researcher started to apply Brainstorming Technique as teaching learning. The students looked more enthusiastic when they would learn in a group task. They also paid more attention to the researcher’s explanation about how to create descriptive text using Brainstorming Technique. The students enjoyed the teaching learning process, and the discussion about the material ran well. Moreover, their score was better than the previous one, the score increased from 4.80 in pre-test became 6.93 in the first post-test, but it was still under KKM (75).

After the cycle 1 was ended, the researcher conducted the next cycle. In cycle 2, the researcher revised the plan. The researcher gave more exercises about content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The researcher still used the sample of descriptive text in

Facebook to observe the students' improvement. The researcher planned the second cycle which consisted of two meetings and it was ended by the post-test 2. First meeting of cycle 2 was conducted on Monday, September 18th 2017 while for the second meeting of cycle 2 was conducted on Monday, September 25th 2017. Then the cycle 1 was ended by the post-test 2. Post-test 2 was conducted on Monday, September 25th

2017. The test was started at 13.00 until 13.40. The test was the theme "My Favorite Cartoon Character" into a good descriptive text. The post- test 2 was conducted in 80 minutes. The indicators of writing which became assessment in post-test 2 were content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (by Brown, 2007). The researcher finished the implementation of the action in the second cycle. In the first meeting of cycle 2, the students were more enthusiastic and enjoyed with the lesson than before. The students could write with better content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics than before. In the second meeting of cycle 2, the students were more passionate and cooperative in a group task. However, it could be concluded that the second cycle was better than

the first cycle. It could be seen from the mean score of post-test 1 which improve from 6.93 became 7.68 in the post-test 2.

DISCUSSION

There are several improvements when brainstorming technique implemented in the class. In cycle 1, the class condition was still passive in learning process, but in cycle II the class condition was more active and more enthusiastic in teaching writing process. Using brainstorming technique in teaching learning writing, students became more active and enjoyed. The improvement was also supported by the score of the test. The improvement of the students mean score from the test can be seen from the table below:

Table 1. The Improvement of Students Mean Score

Pre Test	Post Test 1	Post Test 2
4.80	6.93	7.86

Table 2. The T-Value of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

T-Value of Cycle 1	T-Value of Cycle 2
12.321	3.452

The table shows that the students writing skill in descriptive

texts improve gradually by using Brainstorming Technique. This technique is suitable for enhancing the students achievements to use in writing learning process. From the results of students mean score, it can be calculated that t - test is used to compare the significance of teaching writing skill with $df = n-1 = 29$. In t-table values, significance 5% is 2.045 and significance 1% is 2.756. The results of pre-test and post test 1 is significance which $2.045 < 12.321 > 2.756$. It can be concluded that there is significant difference from pre-test score and post-test 1. Then the results of the analysis by using t-test between post-test 1 and post-test 2 is 3.452. Then t- test result between post-test 1 and post-test 2 is higher ($2.045 < 3.452 > 2.756$). A significant improvement between post-test 1 and post-test 2 can be seen clearly from that.

In addition, the understanding of teaching and learning process show that there is a change of classroom situation after Brainstorming Technique is implemented. It can be showed that the students are enjoy in the learning process when the students active in learning process, the students know use have and has in simple present tense, the students make a good

descriptive text. Besides that, the students are enthusiast in learning process with the students write the sentence in the whiteboard, ask what they do not know yet, and enthusiast to give response to the questions based on their ideas and prior knowledge. The condition of learning process is conducive, the students work in groups and in pairs to discuss the relationship between question and answer based on the technique. It helps the students to think creatively and critically. The students present their discussion in front of the class to debate and share their ideas and background knowledge to answer with another groups or pairs. It makes the students actively participate in learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussions, the conclusion are as follows that Brainstorming Technique can improve students' skill in writing descriptive text at the tenth grade students of SMK Plus Bhakti Oetama Gondangrejo in the academic year of 2017/2018. It can be seen from the improvement of the mean score of the test. The mean score of pre-test was 4.80, post-test 1 was 6.93 and post-test 2 was 7.68. The mean score

of post-test 1 were still lower than the minimum score (75). Meanwhile, the mean score of post-test 2 were higher than the minimum score (75). Moreover, the t-test showed that the result of pre-test and post-test 1 was 12.321, then the result of post-test 1 and post- test 2 was 3.425. It means that there was a significant improvement in the students' skill in writing descriptive text using Brainstorming Technique.

The use of Brainstorming Technique can improve both of the students' process and achievement in writing. It can be seen from the students who got more active and enjoyed in joining the class activities, for example like in group discussion. They enjoyed working in group task, they can work cooperatively. They were also solved the difficulties in writing a descriptive text by a group discussion.

REFERENCES

- Blanchard, K. & Root, C. 2003. *Ready to Write: A first Composition Text* (Third Edition). New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Brown, H. D. 2007. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (Fifth Edition). New York: Pearson Education.
- Burns, Anne. 1999. *Collaborative Action Research for English Language Teacher*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ghazi, Ghaith. 2002 .Writing.
<http://www.uhu.es/Antonia.dominguez/virtualwriting/writing.htm>.
Retrieved on June 14th, 2013.
- Harmer, J. 2004. *How to Teach Writing*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited
- Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. 1997. *Introduction to Academic Writing* (2nd Edition). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Zemach, D. E. & Rumisek, L. A. 2005. *Academic Writing from Paragraph to Essay*. Macmillan: Cambridge University Press.