



IMPROVING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING SKILLS USING THE DRILL METHOD AMONG STUDENTS CLASS VII-2 AT PANGERAN ANTASARI JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN MEDAN

MENINGKATKAN KETERAMPILAN MENULIS DESKRIPTIF MENGGUNAKAN METODE LATIHAN DI KALANGAN SISWA KELAS VII-2 DI SEKOLAH MENENGAH PERTAMA PANGERAN ANTASARI DI MEDAN

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Abstract

This study aims to improve the ability to write descriptive essays using the drill method among seventh-grade students in Class VII-2 at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School in Medan. The use of the drill method is expected to help students understand the material and write descriptive essays, thereby improving their skills. This study was conducted at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School in Medan. The research subjects were the 7th-grade Class 2, consisting of 30 students. The study was conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of two sessions. Research data were obtained from (1) observations, (2) interviews, and (3) tests in the form of student assignments (written work) and photographic documentation taken during the activities. The results of the study indicate that the use of the drill method can improve students' ability to write descriptive essays. This is evidenced by improvements in the learning process, particularly in the learning environment, where students are more focused during instruction. This is evident in the pre-cycle average student score of 66.16; in Cycle I, the average score increased to 73.5, and in Cycle II, it further increased to 82.5. Overall, in Cycle II, all aspects of descriptive writing showed a highly significant improvement. Based on these research results, it can be concluded that the use of the drill method was successful and capable of improving the descriptive writing skills of seventh-grade students in Class VII-2 at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School in Medan.

Keywords : Improvement, Drill Method, Writing, Descriptive Composition.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis esai deskriptif dengan menggunakan metode latihan di kalangan siswa kelas 7 kelas VII-2 di SMP Pangeran Antasari di Medan. Penggunaan metode latihan diharapkan dapat membantu siswa memahami materi dan menulis esai deskriptif, sehingga meningkatkan kemampuan mereka. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMP Pangeran Antasari di Medan. Subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas 7 kelas 2, yang berjumlah 30 siswa. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus, dengan setiap siklus terdiri dari dua sesi. Data penelitian diperoleh dari (1) observasi, (2) wawancara, dan (3) tes berupa tugas siswa (karya tulis) dan dokumentasi foto yang diambil selama kegiatan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan



metode latihan dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis esai deskriptif. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan peningkatan proses pembelajaran, khususnya dalam lingkungan belajar, di mana siswa lebih fokus selama pembelajaran. Hal ini terlihat dari rata-rata nilai siswa pra-siklus sebesar 66,16; Pada Siklus I, nilai rata-rata meningkat menjadi 73,5, dan pada Siklus II, meningkat lagi menjadi 82,5. Secara keseluruhan, pada Siklus II, semua aspek penulisan deskriptif menunjukkan peningkatan yang sangat signifikan. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini, dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan metode latihan berulang berhasil dan mampu meningkatkan kemampuan menulis deskriptif siswa kelas VII-2 SMP Pangeran Antasari di Medan.

Kata Kunci : Peningkatan, Metode Latihan, Menulis, Komposisi Deskriptif.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means of communication that humans use to convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings, both orally and in writing. In Indonesian language learning, writing skills play a crucial role as they serve as a means of developing students' critical thinking, creativity, and written communication skills. Writing is a productive and expressive language skill that requires mastery of linguistic elements and the ability to organize ideas systematically.

Compared to other language skills, writing is relatively difficult to master because it requires not only theoretical understanding but also continuous practice. One of the competencies that junior high school/MTs students must master is writing descriptive essays with attention to word choice and proper spelling. However, in practice, students' writing skills remain relatively low.

Findings from observations and interviews with Indonesian language teachers at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School indicate that the descriptive writing skills of students in Class VII-2 are not yet optimal. Data on learning outcomes over the past three academic years show that there are still students who score below the Minimum Passing Grade (KKM) of 76. This low writing ability is caused by several factors, including students' difficulty in developing ideas into coherent sentences, limited vocabulary, low interest in writing, and the use of teaching methods that are still dominated by lectures and question-and-answer sessions, making the learning process less engaging.

Previous studies have shown that the application of appropriate teaching methods can improve students' writing skills. Research conducted by Wati (2013) showed that the application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method was able to improve the descriptive writing proficiency of 10th-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Bintan. The results of this study showed an increase in the average score for descriptive writing ability from 67.80% in the pre-intervention stage to 78.90% at the end of Cycle II. Additionally, Syamsuddin's (2014) study indicates that the use of sequential image media combined with the drill method can improve the narrative writing skills of fifth-grade students at SD Inpres 4 Kasimbar, as evidenced by an increase in classical learning achievement from 35% in Cycle I to 90% in Cycle II.

However, previous research has focused primarily on the use of the CTL method in descriptive writing and the application of the drill method to narrative writing skills at the elementary school level. Research on the use of the drill method to improve descriptive writing skills among junior high school/MTs students remains relatively limited. Therefore, further study is needed to determine the effectiveness of the drill method in improving the quality of the learning process and the results of students' descriptive writing skills at the junior high school/MTs level.

The drill method is a learning method that emphasizes repetitive and structured practice to improve students' skills. Through continuous practice, students are expected to be able to develop ideas more systematically, enrich their vocabulary, and compose good descriptive essays in accordance with the rules of the Indonesian language. Thus, the drill method is viewed as one alternative that can be used to address students' low writing skills.

Based on the above, this study aims to analyze the quality of the learning process, the quality of learning outcomes, and the improvement in the descriptive writing skills of seventh-grade students



in Class VII-2 at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School in Medan through the application of the drill method.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) aimed at improving students' descriptive writing skills through the application of the drill method. The research was conducted at SMP Pangeran Antasari in Medan with 30 seventh-grade students from class VII-2 as the subjects. The research design followed Arikunto's model, consisting of two cycles that included the planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Research data were collected through descriptive writing tests, observations, and interviews. The test instrument was used to measure writing ability based on the aspects of theme, content, title appropriateness, sentence structure, and spelling, while observations and interviews were used to obtain data regarding students' activities and responses during the learning process. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of mean scores and learning achievement percentages, while qualitative data were analyzed descriptively. The study was deemed successful if at least 75% of students achieved the predetermined minimum passing score.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the pre-test administered to students in Class VII-2 at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School in Medan, the following data on student achievement based on the pre-test was obtained:

Table 1. Results of the Pre-Cycle Descriptive Writing Test

Score Range	Fr	(%)	Average Score
80–100	6	20	66.16 (Low)
70–79	8	26.66	
60–69	9	30	
50–59	4	13.33	
0–49	3	10	
Total	30	100	
Completion Rate	10 : 30 X 100% = 33.33%		

Based on the data in Table 1, it is shown that out of 30 students, 6 students (20%) scored in the 80–100 range, 8 students (26.66%) scored in the 70–79 range, 9 students (30%) scored in the 60–69 range, 4 students (13.33%) scored in the 50–59 range, and 3 students (10%) scored in the 0–49 range. Based on the results of the initial descriptive writing test, it can be seen that 10 students (33.33%) met the standard, while 20 students (66.67%) did not.

Table 2. Results of the Descriptive Writing Test, Cycle I

Score	Fr	(%)	Average Score
80 – 100	12	40	73.5 (Moderate)
70-79	13	43.33	
60- 69	2	6.66	
50-59	3	10	
0- 49	0	0	
Total	30	100	
Completion Rate	18 : 30 X 100% = 60%		

Based on the data in Table 2, it is shown that out of 30 students, 12 students (40%) scored in the 80–100 range, 13 students (43.33%) scored in the 70–79 range, 2 students (30%) scored in the 60–69 range, 3 students (13.33%) scored in the 50–59 range, and none scored in the 0–49 range. From Table 4.2, it can be seen that 18 students (60%) met the standard, while 12 students (40%) did not.

**Table 3. Results of the Descriptive Writing Test, Cycle II**

Score	Fr	(%)	Average Score
80-100	24	80	82.5 (High)
70-79	3	10	
60-69	1	3.33	
50-59	2	6.66	
0-49	0	0	
Total	30	100	
Completion Rate	26 : 30 X 100% = 86.66%		

Based on the data in Table 3, it is shown that out of 30 students, 24 students (80%) scored in the 80–100 range, 3 students (10%) scored in the 70–79 range, 1 student (3.33%) scored in the 60–69 range, 2 students (6.66%) scored in the 50–59 range, and none scored in the 0–49 range because all students were deemed fully proficient. From Table 4.5, it can be seen that 26 students (86.66%) were proficient, while 4 students (13.33%) were not.

Table 4. Frequency Data on Scores for Descriptive Writing Skills in the Pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II

No.	Score Interval	Fr		
		Pra	C I	C II
1	80-100	6	12	24
2	70-79	8	13	3
3	60-69	9	2	1
4	50-59	4	3	2
5	0-49	3	0	0
Total Student		30	30	30
Students Who Did Not Pass		20	12	4
Students Who Passes		10	18	26
Average Score		66.16	73.5	82.5
Classical Proficiency		33.33%	60%	86.66%

Table 4 shows that there was an increase in the scores for descriptive writing skills from the pre-cycle to Cycle II. The percentage of students meeting the minimum proficiency criteria increased from 33.33% in the pre-cycle to 60% in Cycle I and further increased to 86.66% in Cycle II. In Cycle II, there were still 4 students who had not met the minimum proficiency criteria for descriptive writing. A comparison of the average scores across each cycle also showed an increase. In the pre-cycle, the students' average score was 66.16; in Cycle I, it increased to 73.5; and in Cycle II, it further increased to 82.5. This rise in average scores demonstrates that the drill method is effective in improving both the process and the outcomes of students' descriptive writing skills.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the drill method is effective in improving students' descriptive writing skills. This improvement is evident in the increase in students' average scores and the percentage of students meeting the learning standards in each learning cycle. In the initial stage, most students struggled with developing ideas, organizing paragraphs systematically, and using appropriate vocabulary and spelling. These challenges led to low learning outcomes in descriptive writing instruction.

After the drill method was implemented, students had the opportunity to engage in repeated and targeted practice. Continuous practice helped students build writing habits, enrich their vocabulary, and improve their sentence and paragraph composition skills. Through systematic repetition, students found it easier to understand the structure of descriptive essays and were able to express their ideas more clearly and in an organized manner.

Theoretically, the drill method emphasizes repetitive practice to develop automatic skills. In writing instruction, continuous practice enables students to master the mechanical aspects of writing,



such as spelling, word choice, and effective sentence construction. Therefore, the more students practice writing, the better the quality of their writing becomes.

The findings of this study also indicate that the drill method not only improves learning outcomes but also enhances student motivation and participation during the learning process. In Cycle II, students appeared more active, more confident in presenting their written work, and more serious about completing the tasks assigned by the teacher. These conditions suggest that learning involving structured practice can create a more effective learning environment centered on student activities.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the drill method is an effective alternative for improving descriptive writing skills. The success of this method is demonstrated by the increase in students' average scores from 66.16 in the pre-cycle to 82.50 in Cycle II, as well as the increase in the classical mastery rate from 33.33% to 86.66%. Thus, the drill method can be used as a learning strategy to help students develop their writing skills more effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the classroom action research conducted over two cycles using the drill method to teach descriptive writing skills to seventh-grade students in Class VII-2 at Pangeran Antasari Junior High School, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a) Based on observations during Cycle I, student engagement in the descriptive writing process appeared to be low. Out of a total of 30 students, 12 students had mastered the skill (40%), while 18 students had not yet reached the proficiency level in writing descriptive essays (60%). From these results, it can be concluded that the students' descriptive essay writing skills were classified as moderate, with an average score of 73.5. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the students' writing skills were not yet optimal.
- b) Based on the results of observations of the 30 students in the study, it was found that 26 students were able to exceed the proficiency level for writing descriptive essays (86.66%), while 4 students did not exceed this level (13.33%).
- c) There was an improvement in students' test scores in descriptive writing ability: from a pre-cycle average score of 66.16, the average score increased to 73.5 in Cycle I, and further increased to 82.5 in Cycle II. The number of students achieving a minimum passing score (KKM) of ≥ 75 in Cycle I was 18, increasing to 26 in Cycle II. Meanwhile, the number of students who did not meet the standard in Cycle I was 12. In Cycle II, the number of students who did not meet the standard was.

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