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IMPROVING THE STUDENTS` ABILITY AT WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS BY USING THE LEARNING CELL LEARNING STRATEGY AT GRADE X- FASHION STUDY PROGRAM AT SMK N 2 KOTANOPAN

By
Dina Syarifah Nasution
Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal
Email: dinasyarifah1982@gmail.com

Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to measure the implementation of the learning cell learning strategy on improving students` ability at writing descriptive texts of grade x- fashion study program at SMK N 2 Kotanopan , Mandailing Natal-Sumatera Utara. The method of this research was classroom action research. The participants in this classroom action research were 21 students of grade x- fashion study program SMK N 2 Kotanopan. The instrument consisted of the learning cell learning strategy, writing test, observation sheet, and interviews. The data of this research was analyzed two methods of data analysis.Quantitative data analysis was used to examining and interpreting data from the learning cell learning strategy and writing test.The data taken from observation and interview was used qualitative data analysis.the result shows that the learning cell learning strategy better improves the students` ability at writing descriptive texts. This can be evidence from the students` mean which improved gradually in the first cycle and second cycle that there was significance value on students` marks at writing descriptive texts through the learning cell learning strategy. The mean of pre-test was 61, 04, the mean of post-test in first cycle was 74, 23 and the mean of post-test in second cycle was 82, 80. The percentage of the students score in pre-test who got point up to 75 there were only 2 of 21 students (9,52%), and percentage of the student's score in the cycle I who got point up 75 there were only 8 of 21 students (38,09%). It means that there was an improvement of about 28,57%. Then the percentage of the student's score in post-test of the second cycle who got a point up 75 there were 19 of 21 students (90,47%). It meant the improvement was 80,95% from the pretest. *This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.*

Corresponding Author:
Dina Syarifah Nasution
Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri, Mandailing Natal
Email: dinasyarifah1982@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

In English language, there are four skills to be mastered, They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is how to produce a written product. It is a process of transforming ideas coherently and cohesively into written text. In writing skill, there are some kinds of text that will be learned by the students, one of them is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a kind of text that is used to describe something. It is usually used to describe a thing, person, place or event to give an explanation for someone.

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There are many factors that can influence the low of student's ability at writing descriptive text, such as internally and externally. Internally consist of motivation, interest, personality, element language, etc. externally consist of teacher's ability, facility of school, learning media include learning strategy.

Learning strategy can be defined as the general patterns of activities of teachers and students in the embodiment of teaching and learning activities to achieve the objectives that have been outlined.

Ideally, if the teacher can be applying the learning strategy which matches with the student's situation, it can make the student more interested and will improve their ability in mastering a learning material. In fact, writing is not easy for the Grade X- Fashion Study Program at SMK N 2 Kota Nopan. The students of grade X- Fashion Study Program got difficulties in writing tests, especially doing describing objects, although they had been given the explicit background knowledge about descriptive texts.

This problem happened because the students have difficulties writing descriptive text. Besides that, the teacher always uses conventional methods, so that the students have less interest that affects their ability at writing descriptive text.

Therefore to solve the problems above, the writer proposes using a learning strategy like the learning cell learning strategy. The learning cell is an effective way for a pair of students to study and learn together. Furthermore, this strategy is hoped to be able to increase the student's ability at writing descriptive text. Besides that, students can be more active and open their opportunities in the way of thinking in learning.

The definition of writing has several meanings. According to Jhon Langan in his book, writing is treated as a process. This means that when you first write something down, you have already been thinking about what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. Then after you have finished writing, you read over what you have written and make changes and corrections. Therefore, writing is never a one-step action; it is a process that has several steps.

Writing is both a physical and a mental act. At the most basic level, writing is the physical act of committing words or ideas to some medium, whether it is hieroglyphics inked onto parchment or an email message typed into a computer. On the other hand, writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader.

Writing, one of the world's oldest technologies, uses an expansive array of tools, from pencil or pen to software programs and video streaming capacities.6

According to Utami Dewi in her book, that writing is the expression of language in the form of letters, symbols, or words. It means that someone can express what are there in their mind by using letter, symbol, or words that can be understood by the reader as a manifestation from their mind.

There are many kinds of text types in writing such as narrative text, recount text, new items, procedure text, descriptive text, report text, analytical exposition, spoof text, hortatory exposition, explanation text, discussion text, review text, anecdote text.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was a Classroom Action Research. According to Wallace (1998), a Classroom Action Research is a research which focuses to facilitate the reflective cycle and this way provides an effective method for improving professional action. It means that a classroom action research is conducted to improve and solve the problems that occur in the classroom. Besides that, it also increases the students' quality in learning process. The researcher found the students in his classroom have a problem in speaking skill. The researcher considered that CAR is conducted to help her to solve the problems that occurred in the classroom. Based on the statement above the researcher can conclude that classroom action research is one of ways to solve teaching problem in a form of action which done in the class. In this case, she was helped by English teacher called a collaborator. There are some steps that researcher should know if they want to conduct the action research. Kemmis and Taggart (1988: 10)state that there are four fundamentals steps of action research; they are plan, action, observation and reflection. In this research the researcher planned to conduct one cycle design only. But, because the result was still not satisfactory, the second cycle was conducted. The participants of this research were the researcher, collaborator and 44 students at grade X- Fashion Study Program of SMKN N 2 Kota Nopan got difficulties in writing of Descriptive Texts. So the researcher thought that it is much better if she helped the students to improve their skill in writing of descriptive texts using the learning cell-learning strategy. The data in the research were gathered from: (1) observation checklists on students, teacher, and steps of teaching, (2) fields notes,(3) interviews and (4) writing test.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

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There are two different kinds of data; quantitative and qualitative data gathered in the research. The findings are important to answer questions of the research. The quantitative data gathered in the research is aimed to answer whether the learning cell-learning strategy of Descriptive Texts could improve the teaching and learning process in teaching writing at grade X- Fashion Study Program of SMKN 2 Kota Nopan .While the qualitative data answered the second question about what factors influence the improvement of students ` writing skills of Descriptive Texts at grade X- Fashion Study Program of SMKN 2 Kota Nopan.

First Cycle

The writer is conducting based on the problems that was found in the pretest. In the pre-test, it was found that the students are difficult to write descriptive text and even they don't know to produce it, cycle I was conducted from meeting 1 until meeting 2.

Table 1. Action for showing the learning cell learning strategy

No	Activities	Output
1	Conducting test before doing cycle I (pre test)	Knowing the student's writing descriptive text ability before giving the material
2	Explain the material and competence which will reached	Students will know the material and competence so that will encourage them focus
3	Giving the instruction how to apply The learning cell strategy	Knowing the procedures/ steps of the learning cell strategy
4	Conducti ng the assesment during cycle 1 by asking the students to describe based on the picture by writing	Knowing the improvement of their writing descriptive texts

3.2 Second Cycle

Because unsatisfactory result in the first cycle on the students` improvement on the speaking skill, the researcher and the collaborator continue the research into the second cycle.

The data was analyzed by quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were taken from the mean of student's score at writing descriptive text. The data were taken from a class which consisted of 22 students. The qualitative data were taken from interview, observation sheet, diary note and documentation.

This research was done in two cycle. Every cycle consisted of four steps of action research (plan, action, observation and reflection). Each cycle consisted of two meetings in this research.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data were obtained from the score of student's writing test. The improvement of student's ability at writing descriptive text by using the learning cell learning strategy can be seen from the mean of student's score in pre-test, post-test in cycle I and post-test in cycle II.

The Student's Score in the Pre-Test

The researcher gave a test in the pre-test. The number of the students who test was 22. Here the students score of pre-test as follow:

Table 2. The Student's Score in the Pre-Test

No	Initial of Student	Pretest	
		Score	Criteria Scores (> 75)
1	Ais	55	Passed
2	Dal	55	Failed
3	Fat	62	Failed
4	Fm	84	Passed
5	Hjj	60	Failed
6	Idn	62	Failed
7	Jh	51	Failed
8	Lf	53	Failed

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9	Mrd	57	Failed
10	Mh	73	Failed
11	Ma	37	Failed
12	Na	68	Failed
13	Nj	75	Failed
14	Qrm	66	Failed
15	Rh	37	Failed
16	Rs	62	Failed
17	Rn	75	Failed
18	Rs	55	Failed
19	Ygp	53	Failed
20	Ya	62	Failed
21	Ym	80	Passed

Total $\sum xi = 1282$

From the table of pre-test, the total score of students was 1282 and the number of students who took the test was 21 students, so the student's mean was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{N}$$
$$\bar{x} = 61.04$$

From the analysis above, student's ability at writing descriptive text was low. The mean of students was 61.04. The number of students who were competent at writing descriptive text was calculated by applying the following formula :

$$P1 = \frac{N1}{N} \times 100\%$$
$$P2 = \frac{N2}{N} \times 100\%$$

Table 3. The Percentage of student's Score in the Pre-Test

	Criteria	Total Students	Percentage
P1	Passed	2	9,52 %
P2	Failed	19	90,47%
Total			

From the table analysis, the student's ability at writing descriptive text was still low. The mean of students was 61,04 From the criteria 2 students got success score or it was only 9,52% On the other one, 19 students got unsuccessful score or it was only 90,47% It could be concluded that the student's ability at writing descriptive text was still low when doing action research in pre-test. So, post-test continued in the first cycle.

The Student's Score in the Post-Test of the First Cycle

In the post-test of the first cycle, the data analysis can be followed bellow:

Table 4. The Student's Score in the Post-test of the First Cycle

No	Initial of Student	Pretest	
		Score	Criteria Scores (> 75)
1	Ais	86	Passed
2	Dal	66	Failed
3	Fat	73	Failed
4	Fm	86	Passed
5	Hjj	71	Failed
6	Idn	77	Passed
7	Jh	71	Failed
8	Lf	75	Failed
9	Mrd	71	Failed
10	Mh	80	Passed
11	Ma	66	Failed

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12	Na	73	Failed
13	Nj	82	Passed
14	Qrm	71	Failed
15	Rh	60	Failed
16	Rs	77	Passed
17	Rn	80	Passed
18	Rs	66	Failed
19	Ygp	73	Failed
20	Ya	71	Failed
21	Ym	84	Passed

Total $\sum xi = 1559$

From the table of post-test in the first cycle, the total score of students was 1559 and the number of students who took the test was 21 student's mean was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{N}$$
$$\bar{x} = 74.23$$

From analysis above, student's ability at writing descriptive text was low.

$P1 = \frac{N1}{N} \times 100\%$

$P2 = \frac{N2}{N} \times 100\%$

Table 5. The Percentage of Student's Score in Post-Test of the First Cycle

	Criteria	Total Students	Percentage
P1	Passed	8	38,09 %
P2	Failed	14	61,90 %
Total			

From the table analysis, the student's ability at writing descriptive text was still low. The mean of students was 74,23 From the criteria 8 students got success score or it was only 38,09 %. On the other one, 13 students got unsuccessful score or it was only 61,90 %. It could be concluded that the student's ability at writing descriptive text was still low when doing action research in post-test. So, post-test continued in the second cycle.

The Student's Score in the Post-Test of Second Cycle

The researcher gave test to the students in the end of each cycle. It was found that mean of student's score was kept improving from pre-test until post-test of the second cycle. The analysis of post-test in the second cycle as follow:

Table 6. The Student's Score in the Post-Test of Second Cycle

No	Initial of Student	Pretest	
		Score	Criteria Scores (> 75)
1	Ais	95	Passed
2	Dal	77	Passed
3	Fat	80	Passed
4	Fm	95	Passed
5	Hjj	80	Passed
6	Idn	82	Passed
7	Jh	80	Passed
8	Lf	82	Passed
9	Mrd	86	Passed
10	Mh	86	Failed
11	Ma	73	Passed
12	Na	80	Passed
13	Nj	91	Passed
14	Qrm	80	Passed

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15	Rh	75	Failed
16	Rs	86	Passed
17	Rn	86	Passed
18	Rs	77	Passed
19	Ygp	77	Passed
20	Ya	80	Passed
21	Ym	91	Passed

Total $\sum$ xi= 1739

From the table of post-test in cycle II, the total score of students was 82,80 and the number of students who took the test was 21 student's mean was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{N}$$
$$\bar{x} = 82.80$$

From analysis above, student's ability at writing descriptive text was low.

$P1 = \frac{N1}{N} \times 100\%$

$P2 = \frac{N2}{N} \times 100\%$

Table 7. Percentage of student's Score in Post-Test of the Second Cycle

	Criteria	Total Students	Percentage
P1	Passed	19	90,47 %
P2	Failed	2	9,52 %
Total			

From the table analysis, the mean of students was 82,80 From the criteria 19 students got success score or it was only 90,47 %. On the other one, 2 students got unsuccessful score or it was only 9,52 %. It could be concluded that the student's ability at writing descriptive text was improved. So, post-test of the second cycle was categorized success.

4.3. The Improvement of the Student's Ability at writing Descriptive text by Using the Learning Cell Learning Strategy

Here the improvement of student's ability at writing descriptive text in the pre-test, post-test I and post-test II.

Table 8. Data Analysis of student's score in Pre-test, Post-test of the First Cycle, and Post-Test of the second Cycle

No	Initial Of Students	Pre-Test		Cycle 1		Cycle 2	
		Score	Criteria Success	Score	Criteria Success	Score	Criteria Success
1	Ais	55	Passed	86	Passed	95	Passed
2	Dal	55	Failed	66	Failed	77	Passed
3	Fat	62	Failed	73	Failed	80	Passed
4	Fm	84	Passed	86	Passed	95	Passed
5	Hjj	60	Failed	71	Failed	80	Passed
6	Idn	62	Failed	77	Passed	82	Passed
7	Jh	51	Failed	71	Failed	80	Passed
8	Lf	53	Failed	75	Failed	82	Passed
9	Mrd	57	Failed	71	Failed	86	Passed
10	Mh	73	Failed	80	Passed	86	Passed
11	Ma	37	Failed	66	Failed	73	Failed
12	Na	68	Failed	73	Failed	80	Passed
13	Nj	75	Failed	82	Passed	91	Passed
14	Qrm	66	Failed	71	Failed	80	Passed
15	Rh	37	Failed	60	Failed	75	Failed
16	Rs	62	Failed	77	Failed	86	Passed

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17	Rn	75	Failed	80	Passed	86	Passed
18	Rs	55	Failed	66	Failed	77	Passed
19	Ygp	53	Failed	73	Failed	77	Passed
20	Ya	62	Failed	71	Failed	80	Passed
21	Ym	80	Passed	84	Passed	91	Passed
Total		$\bar{x} =$		$\bar{x} =$		$\bar{x} =$	

From the result of analysis showed that there was a development on the student's ability at writing descriptive text. It showed from the mean of pre-test was 61, 04, the mean of post-test in the first cycle was 74, 23, and the mean of post-test in the second cycle was 82,80.

Points scored
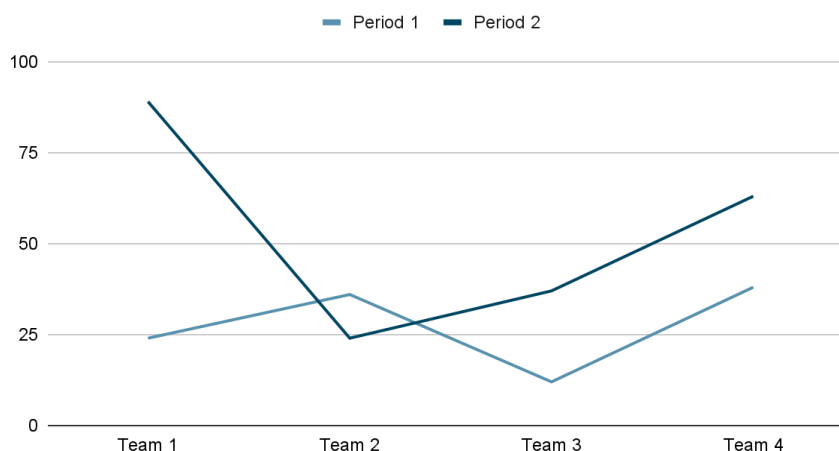
Table 9. The Percentage of Student's ability at Writing Descriptive Text by Using the Learning Cell Learning Strategy in Pre-test, Post-test I and Post-test II

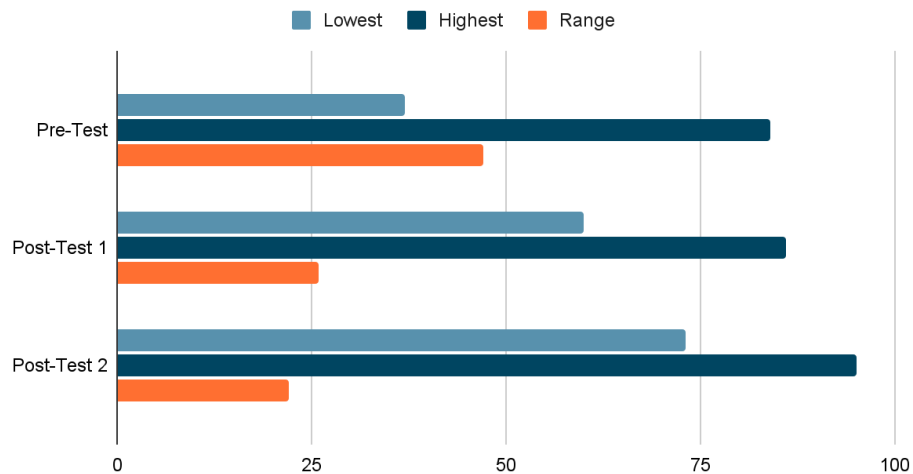| Meeting	Student Who Get Score > 75	Percentage
Pre-Test		
Cycle 1		
Cycle 2		

Based on the table above, the result of the analysis showed that there was an improvement on the student's ability at writing descriptive text. It was saw from the mean of pre-test was 61,04, the mean of post-test in first cycle was 74, 23 and the mean of post-test in cycle II was 82,80. The percentage of the students score in pre-test who got point up to 75 there were only 2 of 21 students (9,52%), and percentage of the student's score in the cycle I who got point up 75 there were only 8 of 21 students (38,09%). It means that there was improvement about 28,57 %. Then the percentage of the student's score in post-test of the second cycle who got point up 75 there were 19 of 21 students (90,47%). It meant the improvement was 80,95%.

The students score in pre-test, post-test I and post-test II had variation. In pre-test, the lowest score was 37 and the highest one was 84. In post-test I, the lowest score was 60 and the highest score was 86. In post-test II, the lowest score was 73 and the highest score was 95. The comparison score of writing descriptive text s can be seen on the table below:

Table 10. The Comparison of the Student's Score in the Three writing Descriptive Text Test

Name of Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test 1	Post-Test 2
Lowest Score			
Highest Score			
R (Range)			
N			

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Range Score Test

It concluded that the student's ability at writing descriptive text by using the learning cell learning strategy had increased from 61,04 to 82, 80.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, which aims to improve the student's ability at writing descriptive text by using the learning cell learning strategy, the researcher made conclusion related to the research question which are stated in chapter. The conclusions were obtaining through real phenomenon as the researcher did during the observation. The researcher draws some conclusion as follow:

The student's ability at writing descriptive text by using the learning cell learning strategy had improved. It could be showed from the discussion the result of pre-test and post-test in cycle I and II, the researcher could said that the learning cell learning strategy could be improved the student's ability at writing descriptive text. It is proved with student's improvement score of the tests because the mean of post-test in cycle I is higher than mean of pre-test (74, 23 > 61,04), the mean of post-test II in cycle II is higher than mean of post-test in Cycle I (82, 80 >74,23). The proven target is 8, 57% or 19 from 21 students who increase their writing descriptive text.

Observation and interview sheet result showed that the students were active, more enthusiastic and response during teaching learning process. Interview, observation sheet and documentation report showed that the learning cell learning strategy helped them at writing descriptive text.

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