

Improving English Descriptive Writing Skill Through Brainstorming Technique

¹Siti Masitah, ²Yosi Marita, ³Lisa Rakhmanina, ⁴Melati, ⁵M. Alif Firdaus

^{1,2,3,4,5}English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Universitas Prof. Dr. Hazairin, SH Bengkulu, Indonesia

Corresponding e-mail: *masitah21282@gmail.com yosimarita@unihaz.ac.id
lisarakhmanina@unihaz.ac.id melati@unihaz.ac.id 22120005@unihaz.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Generally, the purpose of this research was to improve the writing learning process, namely how to implement English descriptive writing teaching using brainstorming techniques in the English Language Education Study Program, Prof. University. Dr. Hazairin S.H involving lecturers and students. Furthermore, the specific technique of this research aims to describe the use of brainstorming in writing descriptive English teaching and to found out the results of descriptive writing produced by students after using this brainstorming technique. This research was mixed research (mixed methods) with an Action Research design, where qualitative data mining will first be carried out to explore in depth how Brainstorming techniques can be applied in improving students' descriptive writing skills. Then proceed with quantitative data collection. The research results showed that there was an increase in students' English descriptive writing skills. This can be seen from the increase in scores from the pre test, Post test cycle I, and post test cycle II. The students' average score increased from 68.54 in the first cycle post test to 73.00 in the second cycle post test. From these results it can be concluded that the brainstorming technique is effective in improving students' English descriptive writing skills.

Keywords: *Descriptive text, Brainstorming, Action Research.*

ABSTRAK

Secara umum penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperbaiki proses pembelajaran menulis, yaitu bagaimana cara menerapkan pengajaran menulis deskriptif bahasa Inggris dengan teknik brainstorming di Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Prof. Dr. Hazairin S.H yang melibatkan dosen dan mahasiswa. Selanjutnya secara khusus penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pemanfaatan teknik brainstorming dalam pengajaran menulis deskriptif bahasa Inggris dan dapat mengetahui hasil penulisan deskriptif yang dihasilkan mahasiswa setelah memakai teknik brainstorming ini. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian campur (mixed methods) dengan desain Action Research, dimana qualitative data mining akan terlebih dahulu dilakukan untuk menggali secara mendalam bagaimana teknik Brainstorming dapat diterapkan dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis deskriptif mahasiswa. Kemudian, dilanjutkan dengan pengumpulan data secara quantitative. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terjadi peningkatan keterampilan menulis deskriptif bahasa Inggris mahasiswa. Hal ini terlihat dari peningkatan nilai dari pre test, post test siklus I, dan post test siklus II. Nilai rata-rata mahasiswa meningkat dari 68.54 pada post test siklus I menjadi 73.00 pada post test siklus II. Dari hasil tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa teknik Brainstorming efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis deskriptif bahasa Inggris mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: *Deskriptif teks, Brainstorming, Penelitian Tindakan*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a process of thinking activity because by writing, a person uses his brain to think so that he can have an opinion and express himself using written media. Apart from that, writing is an effective way of communicating which is expressed in the form of written work. Writing activity is a person's intellectual activity (Heffernan and John, 1990). Because from his writing, one can see his language skills, breadth of insight and knowledge. Yazid (2021) writing in English is a mandatory subject held at foreign language colleges and universities that have English language study programs. There are four writing courses that students must take, namely Basic Writing, Paragraph Development, Essay Writing, and Pre-Thesis Writing, each weighing 2 credits, which students must take in semesters 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Writing, like other language skills, can be acquired by practice. Practicing continuously is a tip for students to become skilled at writing. In writing, a student not only has to express ideas but also knows how to create good written content, organize ideas, use and choose appropriate vocabulary, use clear language structures and correct writing procedures. Apriani and Melati (2018), in descriptive writing skills, apart from students having to master the points mentioned above, students must also be able to write writing that, when read, makes it seem as if the reader can imagine what the author is discussing. For example, when a student writes a descriptive article about his mother, he must be able to describe what his mother is like, from her physical appearance to her mother's nature and character so that when the writing is read by someone else, the reader can imagine what the author's mother was like.

The reality in the English Education Study Program shows that students' descriptive writing skills are still low. From the results of informal interviews with lecturers in the writing course, information was obtained that the low level of descriptive writing skills of class students was due to the learning techniques applied being less interesting and effective. Apart from that, information was obtained that, in descriptive writing skills, there are still many students who cannot write paragraphs with good content and organization. Writing is a fundamental skill in English language learning, essential for academic success and effective communication. Kencana and Melati (2020) among the various types of writing, descriptive writing plays a significant role in enabling students to express their ideas vividly and comprehensively. However, many students encounter difficulties in generating ideas, organizing thoughts, and using appropriate vocabulary and grammar in their descriptive texts. These challenges are particularly evident among fourth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at the University of Prof. Dr. Hazairin, S.H., Bengkulu.

One effective teaching strategy to address these challenges is the brainstorming technique. Brainstorming, a prewriting activity, encourages students to think critically and creatively while generating ideas collaboratively or individually. According to Brown (2001), brainstorming fosters a supportive environment that motivates students to explore their creativity, resulting in more structured and coherent writing. From this information, the researcher tried to conduct interviews with several students. From the interview results, information was obtained that the students' low descriptive writing skills were caused by the course being considered difficult because it combined many aspects such as grammar, vocabulary and other skills. Students also complained about the boring way of teaching, the lack of time given by lecturers for students to practice and their lack of understanding of writing theory. Teaching basically helps students learn. In studying, students not only use theory but also practice so that students can immediately apply the theory they have learned. Targeted learning techniques are needed that can make students actively explore solutions to the problems they face in writing and can make students independent even though learning has ended. On the other hand, lecturers must be inspirations who can advise students to actively participate in the lecture process.

Despite its potential, limited research has explored the application of brainstorming techniques in improving descriptive writing skills, particularly in the context of Indonesian tertiary education. This

study aims to fill that gap by investigating the impact of brainstorming on enhancing descriptive writing skills among fourth-semester students of the English Education Study Program at the University of Prof. Dr. Hazairin, S.H., Bengkulu, during the 2024/2025 academic year. By examining the effectiveness of this technique, the research contributes to improving teaching practices and offers insights for English language instructors seeking innovative strategies to enhance student writing performance.

In connection with the above, the researcher offers an alternative in learning English descriptive writing, namely by using the brainstorming technique. The use of this learning technique can improve the student's learning process which in turn is expected to improve the results they achieve. Brainstorming can be used as a technique to get ideas that can produce maximum value. Apart from that, brainstorming techniques can make the class atmosphere more lively so that students can be more enthusiastic about practicing writing. Based on the background and research focus in this study, it can be formulated as follows; a) how can students' English descriptive writing skills be improved by using brainstorming techniques? And b) can the use of brainstorming techniques improve students' English descriptive writing skills?.

METHODOLOGY

This research was mixed methods research with an Action Research design, where qualitative data mining would first be carried out to explore in depth how brainstorming techniques can be applied in improving students' descriptive writing skills. Then, proceed with quantitative data collection. The action model used in this research is the Kurt Lewin model. The participants of the study were 25 fourth-semester students enrolled in the English Education Study Program at the University of Prof. Dr. Hazairin, S.H., Bengkulu, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants were selected using a purposive sampling method, as they represented a group with observable challenges in descriptive writing. This model was chosen by researchers because the model was in the form of a device or thread with one device consisting of four components, namely planning, action, observation and reflection.

This research was carried out from April to June 2024 in the Semester IV English Language Education Study Program in the Essay Writing course. The sample in this research was all 12 students in the fourth semester of the English Education Study Program who took the Essay Writing course. Data Collection Instruments includes 1) *Writing Tests*: Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to assess students' descriptive writing skills. The tests focused on four aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar, 2) *Observation Checklists*: These were used to monitor student engagement and participation during the brainstorming sessions, 3) *Questionnaires*: Administered to gather students' perceptions of the brainstorming technique and 4) *Field Notes*: Taken to document classroom activities, challenges, and responses during the intervention.

The Procedures of the research, *first, Planning*: In this phase, lesson plans were developed, incorporating the brainstorming technique into descriptive writing activities. Materials and evaluation rubrics were prepared. *Second, Action*: The brainstorming technique was implemented in two cycles. Each cycle involved three meetings, focusing on generating ideas, organizing thoughts, and drafting descriptive paragraphs. *Third, Observation*: Students' writing performance and engagement were observed during each session. Data were collected using checklists and field notes and fourth *Reflection*: At the end of each cycle, the results of the writing tests and observations were analyzed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Adjustments were made for the subsequent cycle based on the findings.

Data from the writing tests were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics to measure improvements in students' scores. Qualitative data from observations, questionnaires, and field notes were analyzed thematically to identify patterns and insights regarding the effectiveness of the brainstorming technique.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Improving English writing skills through brain storming techniques could be seen as a whole in the following table:

Table : Comparison of Pre Test, Post Test Score Cycle I dan Post Test Cycle II Score

| No. | Student | Pretest Score | Cycle I Score | Cycle II Score |
|-----|---------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 | M1 | 52 | 56 | 68 |
| 2 | M2 | 60 | 66 | 74 |
| 3 | M3 | 72 | 74 | 76 |
| 4 | M4 | 60 | 70 | 72 |
| 5 | M5 | 60 | 66 | 70 |
| 6 | M6 | 78 | 78 | 80 |
| 7 | M7 | 76 | 76 | 78 |
| 8 | M8 | 54 | 66 | 68 |
| 9 | M9 | 48 | 62 | 70 |
| 10 | M10 | 78 | 78 | 80 |
| 11 | M11 | 62 | 62 | 68 |
| | SUM | 700 | 754 | 802 |
| | Average | 63.63 | 68.54 | 73.00 |

From the table above, we can see the comparison of students' writing skills test results in the initial assessment test (pre test), post test cycle I, and post test cycle II. Based on the data above, in general the results of the initial assessment test (pre test), post test cycle I, and post test cycle II of students have increased. All students' grades increased. The largest increase in score was experienced by student number 9 with an increase of 22 points.

The process of improving English writing skills using the brain storming technique applied in the learning process in both cycle I and cycle II went smoothly. The results of students' English writing skills can be improved by applying brain storming techniques. This can be seen from the data obtained by researchers from each cycle, both in cycle I and cycle II and the comparison with the pre-test, post-test of cycle I and cycle II. The pre-test results showed that out of 11 students, 4 (36.36%) students got a score above 68, 3 (27.27%) students got a score of 60, 2 (18.18%) students got a score of 50-59, and 1 (0.9%) student got a score of less than 50. The highest score obtained by students was 78 and the lowest score obtained by students was 48. In the results of this pretest the average score for students' writing skills was 63.63. This preliminary data shows that students' writing skills are still relatively low, so efforts are needed to improve students' writing skills. In the first cycle, there were 5 students who scored above 68 (45.45%), 5 students who got a score of 60 – 67 (45.45%), while there was 1 student who got a score below 60 (0.9%) with an average score of 68.54. If you pay attention to the test results in cycle I, they have started to increase but still have not reached the target score you want to achieve, namely a score of ≥ 68 .

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this research was directed at two aspects in accordance with the research questions formulated at the beginning, namely related to the process of improving students' writing skills through the application of brain storming techniques. Second, the discussion was directed at the results of improving students' writing skills through brain storming techniques. This technique included Suspend Judgement, all team members must restrain themselves, not judge ideas, opinions and

thoughts put forward by other members. Record all Ideas, there was someone who can be appointed as a note taker who records all ideas, opinions and thoughts put forward, even if they are sounds strange, Encourage "Piggy-backing" ideas, the coordinator or facilitator encourages the development of new or additional ideas, opinions or concepts from ideas that have already been implemented, Think out of the box, namely encouraging new ideas, not repeating ideas or existing opinions. By applying appropriate brainstorming techniques, students' descriptive writing skills improve.

Process of Improving English Writing Skills Through Brain Storming Techniques for Students.

Based on the description of actions in cycle I and cycle II of action research to improved English writing skills through the brain storming technique, the discussion is presented as follows: Learning to read using the brain storming technique can improve the reading comprehension ability of students in the second semester of the UNIHAZ Bengkulu English Language Education Study Program. The increased occurred due to actions using the stages in the Brain storming learning technique. By applying brain storming learning techniques, student understanding becomes better.

Effectiveness of Using Brain Storming Techniques to Improve Students' English Writing Skills

Based on the results of problem identification in initial observations, it was known that students' descriptive writing skills are still low. Students' writing skills were still not as expected, because the average result of the pre-test taken is 63.63. Students still applied the four basic stages of writing, namely; planning (*pre writing*), writing (*drafting*), revising (*revising*), editing (*editing*) and review activities (*review activities*). In descriptive writing, students had not fulfilled the aspects of writing skills which include the content of the essay, organization of the essay, vocabulary Efforts made to overcome problems that occur among students are by applying brain storming learning techniques. The used of this technique was to improved students' English descriptive writing skills. The results of the analysis of the evaluation of lecturers' and students' actions in cycle I showed that the learning stages had not been carried out optimally, because the activities of lecturers and students had not yet reached the indicators of success. The evaluation results in the post test cycle I were that there were 5 students with scores above 68 (45.45%), 5 students who scored 60 - 67 (45.45%), while 1 student who scored below 60 (0.9%) with average score 68.54. If you pay attention to the test results in cycle I, they have started to increase but still have not reached the target score you want to achieve, namely a score of ≥ 68 . The test results in cycle I had increased compared to the results in the initial assessment test, but it is not yet significant.

Action planning in cycle II was adjusted to the results of action evaluation and reflection in cycle I and takes into account the stages of the brain storming learning technique. Actions taken by lecturers in cycle II include; 1) Lecturers encouraged students to be more active in expressing ideas in descriptive writing. 2) Lecturers provided guidance for students who have difficulty using brainstorming techniques. Learning using the brain storming technique in cycle II turned out to be better than cycle I. Based on the results of the evaluation of the learning process in cycle II, in general there had been significant improvements and improvements. Based on the results of collaborators' observations, lecturers' performance was also more optimal in applying the brain storming technique, namely by providing guidance to students so that the process of implementing this technique can run smoothly and achieve learning targets. From the post test results data from cycle II, all students (100%) scored above 68, which is the minimum criteria for successful action. In the second cycle post test, almost all students experienced an increase in their scores compared to the results of the first cycle post test. This shows the completeness of this research which has achieved indicators of success in action, so the research does not need to be continued any longer.

Based on the results of these achievements, it can be concluded that students' English writing skills have increased significantly from the initial conditions to cycle II. From the research results, it can be said that the formulation of the action research hypothesis, namely "If the brain storming learning technique is applied, the writing skills of students in the UNIHAZ Bengkulu English education study program will improve" was accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that almost all students have achieved improvements in English writing skills by using brain storming learning techniques. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the brainstorming technique effectively improves the descriptive writing skills of the fourth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at the University of Prof. Dr. Hazairin, S.H., Bengkulu during the 2024/2025 academic year. This section discusses the findings in relation to the research objectives, previous studies, and theoretical frameworks.

Improvement in Writing Skills

The application of the brainstorming technique demonstrated a significant improvement in students' ability to generate ideas and organize them coherently in their descriptive writing. Pre-test and post-test comparisons revealed notable progress in the following aspects: content development, organization, vocabulary usage, and grammatical accuracy. These findings align with the theory proposed by Brown (2001), which emphasizes that brainstorming encourages creative thinking and idea generation, essential for effective writing.

Active Engagement and Collaboration

The brainstorming sessions facilitated active student participation and collaborative learning. Students reported feeling more confident and motivated to write, as the technique allowed them to explore ideas collectively before individual execution. This observation is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Al-Mukhaini, 2019; Kassem, 2017) that highlight the role of brainstorming in reducing writer's block and enhancing students' engagement.

Challenges and Adaptations

Despite the overall positive outcomes, some challenges were encountered during the implementation process. A few students initially struggled to actively contribute during brainstorming sessions due to limited vocabulary and self-confidence. To address this, scaffolding techniques such as providing vocabulary lists and prompts were introduced, which proved effective in overcoming these barriers. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), suggesting that appropriate support can enhance learners' performance.

Comparison with Traditional Techniques

The study also compared the brainstorming technique with traditional methods of teaching descriptive writing, such as direct instruction and guided practice. The results clearly show that brainstorming fosters a more student-centered learning environment, promoting creativity and critical thinking, as opposed to the more passive role students often assume in traditional approaches. This finding echoes similar conclusions drawn by Ahmed (2020), who noted that brainstorming techniques lead to higher levels of student autonomy in the writing process.

Implications for Teaching Practice

The positive impact of the brainstorming technique suggests its potential for broader application in English language teaching, particularly in contexts where students struggle with idea generation and structured writing. (Martina et.al, 2023), the study underscores the importance of incorporating interactive and collaborative methods to enhance writing instruction.

CONCLUSION

The test results in cycle I have increased compared to the results in the initial assessment test, but it is not yet significant. In the second cycle post test, almost all students experienced an increase in their scores compared to the results of the first cycle post test. This shows the completeness of this research which has achieved indicators of success in action, so the research does not need to be continued any longer. From the results obtained by students from the pre-test, cycle I, and cycle II, the brain storming technique is appropriate and effective in improving students' English writing skills.

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