IMPROVING WRITING SKILL OF THE TENTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMKN 2 DENPASAR IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021 THROUGH ESA COMBINED WITH PICTURE

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ABSTRACT

Amongst four English skills, writing becomes pivotal, and students must be capable in this skill. Writing is a communication form where the writer delivers and arrange ideas into a readable form for a specific purpose. The present research was mainly based on the preliminary observation towards 32 subjects in the X BDPM 1 class at SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021. The results showed that most of the subjects' writing skill was still low. Besides, the present research was aimed at investigating whether or not the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar can be improved through ESA combined with picture. To achieve the objective, the researcher conducted classroom action research which was done in two cycles. Furthermore, the required data were obtained by administering the research instruments: tests and a questionnaire. The collected data were then analyzed by comparing the pre-test and post-tests, which showed significant improvements in the subjects' mean scores from the pre-test to post-tests. Furthermore, the questionnaire results showed that the subjects' positive responses toward the implementation of ESA combined with picture. It could be concluded that writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021 can be improved through ESA combined with picture.

Keywords: improving, writing skill, and ESA combined with picture.

ABSTRAK

Menulis adalah salah satu dari empat keterampilan bahasa yang penting untuk dikuasai siswa. Menulis adaah bentuk komunikasi dimana penulis menyampaikan dan menyusun ide ke dalam bentuk yang bisa dibaca untuk tujuan tertentu. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada observasi awal terhadap 32 subjek di kelas X BDPM 1 SMKN 2 Denpasar tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan menulis sebagian subjek masih rendah. Selain itu, penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui apakah keterampilan menulis siswa kelas sepuluh SMKN 2 Denpasar dapat ditingkatkan melalui ESA dikombinasikan dengan gambar atau tidak. Untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut, peneliti melakukan penelitian tindakan kelas sebanyak dua siklus. Selanjutnya, data yang diperlukan diperoleh dengan memberikan instrumen penelitian: tes dan kuesioner. Data penelitian dianalisis dengan membandingkan pre-test dan post-test, yang menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan terhadap nilai rata-rata subjek dari pre-test dan post-test. Selanjutnya, hasil kuesioner menunjukkan respon positif subjek terhadap pengimplementasian ESA dikombinasikan dengan gambar. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa keterampilan menulis siswa kelas sepuluh SMKN 2 Denpasar tahun ajaran 2020/2021 dapat ditingkatkan melalui ESA dikombinasikan dengan gambar.

Kata kunci: meningkatkan, keterampilan menulis, dan ESA dikombinasikan dengan gambar.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is categorized as a productive skill in a language learning. It is one of the crucial language skills that must be mastered by students. Writing is pivotal to be learned since it is a part of communication in life. Writing is an active process of delivering ideas by using symbols and arrange them into a readable form. Moreover, writing is a complex process that involves brain activity to control the flow of ideas so that they can be well-presented to the readers. Writers must have an idea of what they are going to write and develop in writing. In addition, communicating with others, developing imagination, conveying information, and showing expression can be freely done through writing.

Based on Nunan (2003:88), writing is a physical and a mental act. Physical act means the act of arranging words onto paper, whereas mental act means the act of thinking new ideas, expressing them, arranging them, and others. Because writing is a thinking process to invent ideas, writers are required to think about how to express ideas in good writing and arrange them into statements and paragraphs clearly. They should also pay attention to vocabulary choice, spelling, and sentence pattern in arranging their ideas into a written form. Therefore, writing is not just about arranging words; it is also about expressing ideas, opinions, and feelings. Since writing takes a lot of imagination, each writer has a different point of view. As a result, the written product is highly influenced by background knowledge.

Writing is functioned as a practice tool to assist students practice and work with the language they study (Harmer, 2007:112). In addition, writing is a way of sharing personal meaning and writing courses that highlight individuals' power to build their opinion towards a topic (Hyland, 2003:9). It means learning writing is beneficial for students since they can develop their language mastery. Moreover, students can develop their creativity as well as their critical thinking through writing. They also learn to deliver their own ideas, opinions, and feelings in a written form. It will be good and useful when students have already been familiar with writing. Writing skills are often used for academic and career purposes, such as making a proposal, curriculum vitae, report, journal, and other written products. Therefore, writing is a fundamental productive language skill, and students in learning a language, especially English.

Even though writing has its own advantages for the students; however, as what has been stated by Zemach and Islam (2006:iv), writing is a difficult skill to master by English language learners. In writing, students are required to think creatively and develop their own ideas. Nevertheless, thinking of new ideas is very challenging to do by the students. Moreover, students must concern the correct writing components, which make writing more difficult for them. They should master format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure. Besides, learning to write requires perseverance and patience in practice. Thus, learning writing is never easy.

Based on the results of the preliminary observation by interviewing the English teacher who taught the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar, the students had struggled in writing. Writing was

challenging for students as they often faced difficulty in developing ideas (Budiarta, 2017). In terms of punctuation and mechanic, they did not know the correct uses of capital letters. Furthermore, incorrect word spellings and misuses of the period and other punctuation were also the students' problems in writing. In terms of content, the students made sentences that were inappropriate or not in line with the focus. In terms of organization, the students could not organize their ideas into a good text based on its structure. In terms of grammar and sentence structure, the students made some word order errors and unclear meanings in their writing which cause misunderstanding. Therefore, the students had less interest in writing because of these difficulties, and the teacher must guide them during the teaching-learning process, particularly in writing.

Many factors could affect the improvement of the students' language skills; one of them was the teacher's teaching technique. In line with the interview with one of the English teachers of SMKN 2 Denpasar, the teacher's technique was still conventional. The teacher focused on using teacher-centered learning technique, namely the demonstration technique. This technique required the teacher to explain the materials without the students' involvement. This teaching technique was focused on the teacher as the source of knowledge. The students tended to be passive in learning, especially in writing class since they just listened to what the teacher said. The teacher also explained the material generally and never asked the students to practice writing a text. This kind of teaching tended to cause the students to forget the learning material that could affect their writing achievement.

The use of the teaching technique in the teaching-learning process is very crucial. It can affect the result of the lesson; one of them is the students' improvement. Thus, teachers need to consider using the appropriate teaching technique. Teachers should use a technique where they can make an interesting and exciting class. Based on the elucidation, it could be wrapped up that the teacher's technique was ineffective in teaching writing. It might happen because the teacher only explained the learning material and asked them to construct a text without practice or guidance. It made the students confused and difficult in developing their ideas into a text. Furthermore, the teacher only gave a score to the students without any corrections to their works. The teacher rarely told the criteria that were assessed in their writing. These activities made the students unable to improve their writing skill since they did not know their writing mistakes.

There are many teaching techniques that can be used in teaching writing. The new understanding of EFL writing classroom is that writing instruction must emphasize more on writing activity rather than writing theory (Maharani & Santosa, 2021). In the present study, the researcher chose ESA and combined it with a picture in teaching writing a descriptive text. A teaching technique that is appropriate to be used in teaching writing is ESA. ESA is a technique that has three important elements; they are Engage, Study, and Activate. Harmer (2007:57) states that these elements are the basic building blocks for successful language teaching and learning. Besides, the suitable supporting media in teaching and learning writing descriptive text is a picture. Raimes (2001:27) argues that everybody likes to

look at pictures which stimulates focus for students' attention. Therefore, picture is a useful media to be used in teaching writing descriptive text since it provides a focus of interest for the students.

ESA combined with picture is an interesting technique that can be applied within the teaching-learning process. The integration of media such as technology in teaching language is always challenging to do (Budiarta & Santosa, 2020). To attract the students' attention, the researcher combined the technique with a teaching media, a picture, to make them interested during the learning process. When the students were aware, their learning outcome would be better. Besides, this technique was combined with picture, which could stimulate students to reveal and explain their ideas. It could help them organize their thoughts and develop their text. By using this technique and media, students are hoped to be attracted, motivated, and comfortable in writing a descriptive text. Furthermore, this technique has simple steps that are easy to manage. Therefore, ESA combined with picture is the perfect combination of technique and media that could be used to teach descriptive text writing.

Based on the study's background, the researcher tried to apply ESA combined with picture in teaching writing. The researcher considered ESA combined with picture was the appropriate teaching technique and media to improve students' descriptive writing skill. Using ESA combined with picture, the teacher could catch their attention and motivate them before explaining the material. It also stimulated and helped them to get a better understanding by observing the picture. When the students have already understood the learning material, they could produce a better writing composition. According to the statement above, the researcher was highly attracted to conduct a research entitled "Improving Writing Skill of the Tenth-grade Students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in Academic Year 2020/2021 through ESA Combined with Picture".

RESEARCH METHOD

In the present study, the subjects were the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021. The students of X BDPM 1 were chosen as the subjects of the study, which consisted of 32 students. This class was chosen based on the previous interview with the English teacher of SMKN 2 Denpasar. The researcher got some information about their problems. Based on the teacher's information, the subjects had problems mostly in organizing their ideas into a unified and coherent text. Moreover, starting to construct their writing was also difficult for them, so their writing skills still needed improvement. Thus, the researcher applied ESA combined with picture to solve the problem.

To resolve the problem faced by the students of SMKN 2 Denpasar, the researcher needs to use a research design. Research design is a planned design to answer the research question or prove scientific theories. Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes a blueprint, measurement, and data analysis (Kothari, 2004:31). Research design is needed since it makes research run smoothly and efficiently. It is also used for planning the technique that is going to be used. Therefore, in this research, classroom action research was utilized. Moreover, a classroom action research design was used

since it was concerned with improving students' writing skills.

As what has been stated by Burns (2010:1), action research is a beneficial way to extend the teaching skills and understand the teachers, classroom, and students. A teacher uses classroom action research to solve the problem faced in the teaching-learning process. In addition, classroom action research is directed toward problem-solving and improve the next teaching-learning process. It involves a critical systematic approach which highlights self-reflection to investigate the teaching context. The teacher needs to identify the problem and try to improve it based on related theories or experiences. In this case, the teacher's roles here are not only an investigator but also as a participant in carrying out the classroom action research.

In relation to the present study, classroom action research was used to improve the subjects' writing skill in constructing descriptive text. The teaching learning process had been conducted in two cycles with two sessions per each cycle. Each session engaged four connected activities, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The researcher needed to follow the steps of classroom action research to make the research run-well as planned. In addition, initial reflection was done prior to the teaching-learning process. The purpose of doing initial reflection was to collect the required data of the subjects' pre-existing writing skill before the present research was carried out.

In conducting the research, the researcher needed various kinds of research instruments. To obtain the data, the researcher needed to design the research instruments. The purpose of the research instrument was to help the researcher in collecting accurate data that were needed in this research. Therefore, the research instruments were crucial in the present research. In the present study, the research instruments were used to gather valid and reliable data represented the students' improvement in learning process of writing through ESA combined with picture. The research instruments were important to gain valid and reliable data in this study. The researcher used two research instruments; they were test and questionnaire.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Finding

Classroom action research design was used in the present study. This design had four interconnected stages, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. Besides, the present classroom action research was mainly carried out in pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II. Furthermore, the findings of the study were obtained through the research instruments administration. The finding of the present study can be presented as follows.

Pre-Cycle

The present study was started by conducting the pre-cycle to know the subjects' problem and their pre-existing writing skill. the researcher interviewed the English teacher who taught the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021, especially in X BDPM 1 class. In addition, observation was also done in the teaching-learning process though online class. Furthermore, to get more comprehensive data, the researcher also administered a pre-test before implementing the teaching technique. The total score of the pre-test was a figure of

1607. Then, it was calculated to find the mean score as follows:

$$\text{Mean Score of Pre-test} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{1607}{32} = 50.22$$

Based on the data above, the mean score of the pre-test was in line with the results of the interview. Furthermore, it revealed that the subjects' writing skill was unsatisfying. The pre-test data also showed that among 32 students, there was only 1 subject who could pass the passing grade of English subject in SMKN 2 Denpasar, which was 70. This result indicated that the subjects had difficulty in writing. Based on the result above, the researcher took further action by conducting cycle I and implementing ESA combined with picture to improve the subjects' descriptive writing ability.

Cycle I

To improve the subjects' writing skill and overcome the problems they faced, the researcher applied ESA combined with the picture as the teaching technique. After the pre-cycle was conducted, cycle I was carried out within two sessions. To obtain the required data on the improvement of the subjects' writing skill after the implementation of ESA combined with picture, the researcher administered post-test 1 at the end of cycle I. The post-test was followed by 32 subjects. The total score obtained from post-test 1 was 2453. Thus, the mean score of cycle I can be carefully calculated by applying the following mean score formula:

$$\text{Mean Score of Post-test 1} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2453}{32} = 76.66$$

The data above revealed that the mean score of the subjects was a figure of 76.66. In addition, the calculation of the mean score above showed that there was an improvement of the subjects' skill in creating descriptive text after the implementation of ESA combined with picture. Furthermore, there were 24 of 32 subjects who could achieve the passing grade in post-test 1. However, the research was needed to be continued because the mean score had not exceeded the success indicator. Thus, the researcher continued the present classroom action research to cycle II to achieve better improvement in the subjects' skill especially in writing a descriptive text.

Cycle II

After analyzing the results of the previous cycle, the researcher needed to proceed to cycle II. Cycle II was conducted in order to solve the problem of the subjects and increase their skill in writing a descriptive text. As same as the previous cycle, cycle II also broken down into two sessions, namely session 3 and 4. Furthermore, the same steps as cycle I, such as planning, action, observation, and reflection were also applied in cycle II. At the end of cycle II, post-test 2 was administered. The post-test was followed by 32 subjects. The total score obtained from post-test 2 was 2760. Thus, the mean score of cycle II can be carefully calculated by applying the following mean score formula:

$$\text{Mean Score of Post-Test 2} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2760}{32} = 86.25$$

The data above showed that the mean score from the results of post-test 2 was 86.25. Furthermore, it was found that all of the 32 subjects could pass the passing grade of English subject in SMKN 2 Denpasar in writing descriptive text. Thus, the data revealed that the subjects' skill in writing descriptive text could be significantly enhanced through the application of ESA combined with picture.

The present research could be ended when it had already reached the success indicator (at least 26 subjects should pass the passing grade). Therefore, the present study could be ended since the results showed that 32 subjects could pass the minimum passing grade and could be considered successful.

Questionnaire

Additional data were collected through administering the structured questionnaire at the end of cycle II in the attempt to know the subjects' responses towards the implementation of ESA combined with picture to improve their writing skill. To avoid the subjects' misunderstanding, the questionnaire was written in Bahasa Indonesia. Besides, the questionnaire consisted of ten items in which have five choices that were constructed on the basis of Likert scale ranging from five (5) to one (1). The total responses of the subjects for strongly agree was 980; agree, 412 responses; undecided, 60 responses; disagree, 2 responses; and none of the subjects responded strongly disagree. Moreover, the total responses of all items were 1454. Therefore, the percentages had been tabulated as follows:

1. The Percentage of Item SA

$$= \frac{980}{1454} \text{ x } 100\% = 67.40\%$$

2. The Percentage of Item A

$$= \frac{412}{1454} \text{ x } 100\% = 28.34\%$$

3. The Percentage of Item U

$$= \frac{60}{1454} \text{ x } 100\% = 4.12\%$$

4. The Percentage of Item D

$$= \frac{2}{1454} \text{ x } 100\% = 0.14\%$$

5. The Percentage of Item SD

$$= \frac{0}{1454} \text{ x } 100\% = 0\%$$

According to the analysis of the data obtained through administering the questionnaire, it could be seen from the amount of the responses toward the implementation of ESA combined with picture that there were 67.40% of the responses showed strongly agree; 28.34% of the responses, agree; 4.12% of the responses, undecided; 0.14% of the responses, disagree; and none of the responses showed strongly disagree. Thus, it could be stated that most of the subjects gave positive responses about the implementation of ESA combined with picture in improving writing skill.

Discussion

Classroom action research was the research design of the present research. The present research was done to determine the results of the implementation of ESA combined with picture to improve descriptive text writing ability of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021. In the present study, two cycles were conducted. Each cycle was divided into two sessions. Furthermore, it consisted of four connected activities such as planning, action, observation, and reflection. The research was initiated by conducting the pre-cycle. Then, cycle I and cycle II were done after the pre-cycle. Besides, two research instruments were used to obtain the research data, namely, tests (pre-test and post-tests) and a questionnaire.

In the pre-cycle, the researcher interviewed the English teacher of SMKN 2 Denpasar and continued with an observation via online class to determine the real condition of the subjects. Furthermore, to figure out the pre-existing subjects' writing skill, the researcher administered the pre-test. In line with the

pre-test results, it had been found that the subjects had low writing skills because most of them had difficulty organizing their ideas into a unified and coherent text. The mean score of the pre-test was 50.22. Amongst 32 subjects, there was 1 subject who could achieve the passing grade. Moreover, it indicated that the subjects' writing skill was still low, and it must be improved.

In cycle I, after the researcher applied ESA combined with picture, the subjects showed their improvement in writing a descriptive text. The post-test 1 were followed by 32 subjects, and the mean score was 76.66 wherein 24 subjects could pass the minimum passing grade. Furthermore, it showed significant improvement of the subjects' descriptive text writing. After applying this technique, some of the subjects could construct a descriptive text with a complete generic structure. However, some of the subjects still struggled to organize their ideas into a unified and coherent descriptive text. So, the researcher continued the research into cycle II to get much better improvement.

In cycle II, the mean score of post-test 2 was 86.25. This showed that the subjects' mean scores improved better than the pre-test and post-test 1. The results of cycle II also showed that the subjects' writing skill could be improved through the implementation of ESA combined with picture. The improvements showed that the students were able to construct a descriptive text based on the criteria. The results of post-test 2 showed that all of the subjects in the present study could pass the passing grade. Thus, the present classroom action research could be ended in cycle II and regarded as successful since it had reached the success indicator which has

been previously determined for the research.

Besides, the additional supporting data were obtained through a questionnaire given to the subjects to investigate their responses towards the implementation of ESA combined with picture in the teaching-learning process to improve the subjects' writing skill. The data showed that more than 95% of the responses indicated that the subjects agreed on the implementation of ESA combined with picture to improve their writing skill. Thus, the present classroom action research could be finally concluded that the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021 could be improved through the implementation of ESA combined with picture.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
Conclusion

The present research design was in the form of classroom action research. The objective of the present research was to figure out whether or not writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar could be improved through ESA combined with picture. In this research, the data were obtained by administering the pre-test in the pre-cycle, post-test 1 in cycle I, and post-test 2 in cycle II. Besides, the additional data were gathered by administering a questionnaire at the end of cycle II.

Based on the pre-test results, it revealed that the subjects 'writing skill still low. Moreover, it also showed that only 1 subject could pass the minimum passing grade. However, in cycle I, 24 subjects could pass the minimum passing grade. Finally, the post-test in cycle II showed that 32 subjects passed the passing grade. The

mean score of pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II respectively increased on the figure of 50.22, 76.66, and 86.25. This clearly showed that their writing skill could be improved through ESA combined with picture. Thus, based on the pre-determined success indicator, this research could be considered successful and ended in the last cycle or cycle II.

Along with the improvement of the subjects' writing skill, the additional supporting data obtained through the questionnaire also showed that the subjects gave positive responses toward the implementation of ESA combined with picture in teaching writing. The subjects' responses showed that ESA combined with picture could help them in enhancing descriptive text writing skill in such vivid detail that had a complete generic structure. Thus, ESA combined with picture was highly accepted by the subjects.

According to the crystal-clear description of the data which have been elaborated previously, it could be concluded that the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021 could be improved through the implementation of ESA combined with picture.

Suggestion

At the end of the present research, the researcher would like to give some suggestions that are expected to be beneficial for improving the students' writing skill. The suggestions are particularly given to the English teachers of SMKN 2 Denpasar who teach the tenth-grade students, the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar, and to the other researchers who want to conduct similar research in writing skill. The suggestions can be explained as follows:

The English teachers of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 2 Denpasar are suggested to use ESA combined with picture to teach descriptive text writing. ESA combined with picture is suggested to be implemented because it can arouse the students' attention and interest, making their involvement more active. Moreover, in teaching writing, the teachers should give the students more practice rather than focus on theory. Furthermore, the teachers should use media in teaching writing, such as pictures, to attract students' attention.

For SMKN 2 Denpasar students, especially the tenth-grade students, they are suggested to give more attention to their writing skill in English. They should be more serious in learning writing and do more practice to make them easier to write a descriptive text. Writing is critical when they continue their study to a higher level or when they enter the work-life; thus, they should intensely improve their writing skills. They must keep practicing writing to be successful since writing skill plays an essential role in career.

For the other researchers who will conduct similar research using ESA combined with picture, the present research can be used as a reference in completing future research. Some theoretical reviews in this research can also be used to improve the subjects' language skills. Moreover, the next researchers are also suggested to modify the weaknesses which can still be found in the present research.

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