

## THE USE OF BRAINSTORMING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE THE WRITING SKILL OF THE NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Ni Komang Dea Astuti<sup>1</sup>, Ni Made Wersi Murtini<sup>2</sup>, Ida Ayu Made Sri Widiastuti<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar

Email: *komangdhea75@gmail.com*

### ABSTRACT

This classroom action research's goal was to determine whether brainstorming and flashcards could enhance the ninth-grade students' writing abilities at SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati. A group problem-solving method called brainstorming involves the impromptu sharing of original ideas and solutions. A tool that is utilized to support the application of the brainstorming technique is the flashcard. In particular, the IX B class at SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati in the academic year 2022/2023 was the focus of the discussion. There were 40 subjects in total, with 16 female and 24 male participants. Planning, action, observation, and reflection were the four processes for each of the two cycles that this research was conducted in. The pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2, and questionnaire data were analyzed quantitatively and quantitatively. The outcome demonstrated that brainstorming and flashcards together can help the ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati in the academic year 2022/2023 to improve their writing skills.

**Keywords:** improving, writing skills, brainstorming

### ABSTRAK

*Penelitian tindakan kelas ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah keterampilan menulis siswa kelas IX SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati dapat ditingkatkan melalui brainstorming yang dikombinasikan dengan flashcards. Brainstorming adalah teknik pemecah masalah yang melibatkan kontribusi ide dan solusi yang kreatif secara spontan. Flashcards merupakan media yang digunakan untuk mendukung penerapan teknik brainstorming. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas sembilan SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati tahun ajaran 2022/2023, terutama pada kelas IX B. Subjek penelitian berjumlah 40 siswa yang terdiri dari 16 perempuan dan 24 laki-laki. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua cycle dan setiap cycle terdiri dari empat langkah (perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi). Data yang diperoleh dianalisis secara kuantitatif dari pre-test dan post-test, dan kuantitatif dari hasil kuesioner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan menulis siswa kelas sembilan SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati tahun ajaran 2022/2023 dapat ditingkatkan melalui brainstorming yang dikombinasikan dengan flashcards.*

**Kata kunci:** meningkatkan, kemampuan menulis, brainstorming

### INTRODUCTION

One of the four crucial skills that students need to master in order to learn English is writing. Ideas, feelings, and thoughts are expressed through writing. Writing is frequently regarded as the hardest skill to learn since it involves both the act of actually writing something and the application of one's writing abilities to expand one's knowledge of a certain subject. Students must be able to produce texts in writing that reflect their opinions on the assigned topic. In

addition, in writing we are also required to master grammar and structure of English (Murtini, 2021). When the students have not mastered grammar and structure, there will be a lot of mistakes in writing.

According to Brown (2001: 336), writing is a reflection of what people believe because it captures the ideas that stick in their brains. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007: 15), writing is always a continuous act of creativity. When the students write something, they already have been thinking

about how to say it. After they have finished writing, they will read over what they have written and make corrections. The students write and revise, write and revise until their writing expresses exactly what they think and want to say. Writing is a way to afford students extended opportunities to think about manipulating and transforming ideas and reflect on students existing knowledge, beliefs, and confusions in written form. Because writing is permanent and promotes more concrete and precise thinking processes, it offers a unique mechanism for extending learning beyond presentation, inquiry activities, and discussion (Toría, 2014: 30).

Writing skill is very important to be mastered by students, especially ninth-grade students. However, many students are less interested in writing and the students also still need help with writing. The students often face problems in writing there are: difficulty finding and expressing ideas, and difficulty making sentences into paragraphs with the right vocabulary and grammar. Based on an interview with one of the English teachers in SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati, the teachers said that the students still have difficulty in writing. The students need help developing and expressing their ideas in paragraphs. The students also do not interest in learning English, especially writing because of a lack of grammar and vocabulary.

The problem may occur because the teacher did not use teaching media to support the teaching-learning process in the classroom. The use of teaching media during the teaching-learning process effectively supports the teacher while explaining the material. In teaching writing, the teacher needs the right strategies that can make the students interested and motivated to learn. There are many teaching strategies that can be used to improve students' writing skills,

one of the strategies that can be used is brainstorming. Zemach and Rumisek (2006:6) define brainstorming as the process of gathering ideas in our heads and expressing them in written form on a sheet of paper. There are six steps of the brainstorming strategy: Preparation, Fact-finding, Warm-up, Idea finding, Solution finding, and Implementation. Through this activity, students can convey their ideas and present them in the classroom. In this method, the teacher becomes a facilitator in learning, where the teacher can invite students to discuss together so that they can be actively involved in learning (Widiastuti et al, 2022). Based on Alrubaie and Esther (2014: 44) the advantages of brainstorming strategies include: building knowledge, improving mental abilities, and helping students learn without any criticism, rules, or evaluations in terms of restrictions on generating ideas.

Based on the explanation above, the use of appropriate strategies is very important and affects the student's learning achievement in learning. Brainstorming with flashcards is one of the strategies that can improve student achievement in writing skills. This strategy effectively improves student motivation in writing because by using flashcards, the learning process will be more interesting and students will feel more interested and motivated in learning English. This study was conducted to know whether the writing skill of the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati in academic year 2022/2023 can be improved through brainstorming.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

In this study, the researcher used classroom action research as the research design. Classroom action research is a part of a broad movement that has been going on in

education in general which is related to the reflective practice and the researcher as the teacher (Burns, 2010: 2). According to Kemmis and Mc Taggart in Burns (2010: 8), classroom action research typically involves four steps in a cycle of research, there are planning, action, observation, and reflection Teaching and learning process was divided into a cycle that depends on the students who pass the passing grade. Each session or cycle consisted of four interconnected activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

In this study the research design is adopted from the classroom action research design by Kemmis and McTaggart as cited in Burns (2010: 8). The step of classroom action design consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Furthermore, to get the required data on the subject's pre-existing writing skills, it is necessary to do an initial reflection before the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Initial reflection is the first step of classroom action research design which the researcher carried out a preliminary study by interviewing the English teacher about the difficulties and problems faced by the subjects, especially in writing, observing the subject, and administering a pre-test. This study is carried out in two cycles, each cycle consisting of two sessions.

The subject of the study is IX B class of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati in academic year 2022/2023. There were 40 students as the subject of this study, consisting of 16 females and 24 males. This class had a problem with writing, low achievement in writing, organizing and expressing their ideas, and making good writing with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. They also struggle to express their ideas in written form, especially in writing procedure text based on the interview with the English teacher who taught the IX B class.

Furthermore, the researcher expected the students' writing skills could be improved through the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The data of this study were collected from pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire.

### ***Pre-cycle***

In the pre-cycle, the researcher interviewed the English teacher of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati and did an observation to know the pre-existing of the subjects. Moreover, to ensure the data, the researcher administered a pre-test to the subjects to obtain the problem faced by the subjects and to measure the subjects' achievement in writing especially in writing procedure text.

Based on the interview and observation, the subjects have difficulties in writing. The subjects were still confused about expressing their ideas and making the paragraph or text with the right vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, the subjects were also confused to arrange the sentence and make them coherent and unity.

To find the subjects' pre-existing writing skills, the researcher administered a pre-test before the action was carried out in the classroom. In administering the pre-test, the researcher asked the subjects to make a procedure text that consists of the goals, materials, and steps of the procedure text based on the flashcards. The pre-test was followed by 40 students. Based on the tabulation data in table 4.1, the score of the students' procedure text was low and needs to be improved. The total scores of the subjects were 2180 and the scores obtained by the subjects were between 40 to 75. Furthermore, the mean score of the subjects' pre-test in this

research could be calculated as follows:

$$\text{The mean score of Pre-test} = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{2180}{40} = 54.05$$

The mean score of the pre-test which was followed by 40 students was 54.05, it means the main score of the pre-test showed that the subject's writing skills were still low and not achieving the minimum passing grade, the minimum passing grade in SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati that was 70. Furthermore, the data from the pre-test showed that only 4 subjects could pass the minimum passing grade. Based on the result above, the researcher tried to improve the subjects' writing skills by implementing a brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards.

### *Cycle I*

Cycle I was administered based on the result of the pre-test that showed the subjects' writing skills before the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards was implemented. According to the result of the pre-test that showed the subjects' writing skills, especially in writing procedure text still low, then the researcher decided to carry out cycle I. Cycle I consisted of four activities, such as planning, action, observation, and reflection.

Planning was the first step in this cycle. In this step, the researcher prepared everything that was needed before the implementation brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards. The researcher in planning prepares a lesson plan, learning material, flashcards as teaching media, students' worksheet, and post-tests. The lesson plan was made for two sessions based on the syllabus of the 2013 curriculum in SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati. The learning material that the researcher taught to the subjects was about procedure text which

provided the definition of procedure text, the generic structure, the language feature, and the example of procedure text about how to make food.

After the planning is complete the second step is action. In session 1, the researcher explained the learning material, such as the definition of procedure text, the generic structure of procedure text, language features, and how to write procedure text. The researcher divided the subjects into ten groups, each group consisting of four students. Furthermore, the researcher asked the subjects to make procedure text based on the flashcard that was given. The researcher also gives some guidance and directed the subjects to write procedure text. In writing procedure text, the subjects have to share their ideas with their partner in the group. After they finished the text, the researcher asked each group to share their procedure text in front of the class.

In session 2, the researcher and the subjects discussed the student worksheet that has been done before. The researcher asked five groups to share their procedure text. The other group gave feedback or comments on their friend's work. In addition, this session ended by administering a post-test which was followed by all of the subjects in the classroom to know the improvement of the subjects. In the teaching and learning process, the researcher also did observation in the classroom. The observation was focused on the subjects' responses and identifying the situation in the classroom. Based on the observation, the researcher observed that a few subjects were good and active during the teaching and learning process. In addition, a few subjects did not pay attention to the learning process because they are busy talking with their classmate, they talk about

things outside of the material that was being taught.

At the end of session 2, the post-test was administered to evaluate how far the progress and achievement of the subjects' writing skills. The post-test was followed by 40 subjects and the total score of the post-test was 2615 which can be seen in table 4.1. The mean score of cycle I could be calculated as followed:

$$= \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{2615}{40} = 65.38$$

The mean score of post-tests 1 followed by 40 subjects was 65.38 and there were 15 subjects who could pass the minimum passing grade. Moreover, there was an improvement in the subjects' writing skills, some of the subjects could create the procedure text with a clear format, grammar, content, organization, and punctuation. In addition, the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards showed the improvement of the subjects in writing, but the success indicator was not yet achieved.

### *Cycle II*

After conducting cycle I and getting the result, the researcher continued the research by conducting cycle II. This cycle was conducted to solve the problems that the subjects still faced in the teaching and learning process in cycle I. Same as cycle I, cycle II was also divided into two sessions. The researcher also designed planning in cycle II, the researcher prepared everything that was needed for the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards, there were a lesson plan, learning material, a student worksheet, post-test II, and questionnaires. After the planning was complete, the action of cycle II was carried out. The researcher explained the learning material of the procedure text. The researcher

stimulated the subjects to ask questions related to the learning material that has been taught. In engage, the researcher showed the example of procedure text. Moreover, in collecting the data, the researcher divided the subjects into ten groups. The researcher asked the subjects to make procedure text based on the flashcard. The researcher also gave some guidance and directed the subjects to write a good procedure text. After they finished the text, the researcher asked each group to share their work in front of the class. In addition, the researcher and the other subjects paid attention to the group who share their work and gave some feedback.

In session 2, the researcher reviewed the previous learning material. The researcher asked the subjects to check their homework, the researcher also invited the subjects to ask questions about the learning material that they did not understand in making the procedure text or about the procedure text that they made. Furthermore, this session ended by administering post-test 2 to the subjects to get the data of the subjects' improvement and understanding. The subjects were asked to make a procedure text on how to make a drink based on the given flashcards.

During the teaching and learning process, the researcher also observed the subjects. It was found the subjects were more focused in the classroom. The subjects were more engaged with the learning material and interested in learning writing. The subjects were more active to asked and answering questions and paid more attention to the teaching and learning process from the beginning until the end of the session.

Moreover, the data of the subjects' progress in writing can be seen in table 4.1. It showed the improvement of the subjects' writing skills after being taught through

brainstorming strategies combined with flashcards. The total scores of post-test 2 that was followed by 40 subjects were 3060. the mean score of cycle II could be calculated as follows:

$$\text{The mean score of Post-test II} = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{3060}{40} = 76.05$$

The mean score of post-test 2 was 76.05 and there were 33 of 40 subjects who could pass the minimum passing grade. The mean scores showed that the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards could improve subjects' writing skills. The subjects were more focused and active in the teaching and learning process. The subjects could create a good procedure text with better grammatical, content, organization, and punctuation. The flashcard as a teaching media could help the subjects to deliver their ideas freely in making procedure text. Furthermore, if it was compared with the mean score of pre-test and post-test 1, the mean score of the subject in post-test 2 showed an improvement.

The supporting data in this study were collected by administering questionnaires to the subjects. The result of the questionnaire was presented in table 4.2. the responses to the questionnaire were analyzed by using a rating scale 5-1 and the option of the questionnaire was strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). Moreover, the responses to the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards for strongly agree (SA) were 720 responses, agree (A) were 848 responses, undecided (U) were 132 responses, disagree (D) were 0 responses, and strongly disagree (SD) were 0 responses. The total of responses to all option were 1700 responses. Therefore, the researcher calculated the result of the questionnaire as follows:

$$1. \text{ Total percentage of option SA} = \frac{720}{1700} \times 100\% = 42.35\%$$

$$2. \text{ Total percentage of option A} = \frac{848}{1700} \times 100\% = 49.88\%$$

$$3. \text{ Total percentage of option U} = \frac{132}{1700} \times 100\% = 7.77\%$$

$$4. \text{ Total percentage of option D} = \frac{0}{1700} \times 100\% = 0.00\%$$

$$5. \text{ Total percentage of option SD} = \frac{0}{1700} \times 100\% = 0.00\%$$

The percentage of the questionnaire showed the total of the responses who strongly agree (SA) was 42.35%, the total responses who agree (A) was 49.88%, the total responses who undecided (U) was 7.77%, and none of the responses of disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). Moreover, most of the subjects gave positive responses to the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards.

Based on the data, the result of this classroom action research showed an improvement of the subjects' writing skills. During the teaching and learning process, the implementation of the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards can make the classroom atmosphere more enjoyable and the subjects feel more comfortable and not get bored easily in the teaching and learning process because the subjects can share their ideas with their groups, the teaching and learning process also used flashcards as a media. It was very helpful for the subjects because it motivated them to develop the ideas that come to their mind and help the subjects to build their confidence and critical thinking in writing.

## CLOSING

### Conclusion

The finding of this classroom action research showed that the problem faced by the subjects could be overcome through the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards. Furthermore, most of the subjects gave positive responses and agreed that the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards can improve their writing skills. The subjects could make a good procedure text with better grammatical, punctuation, content, and organization. Based on the finding above, it can be concluded that the writing skill of the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati in academic year 2022/2023 can be improved through the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards.

### Suggestion

The English teacher who teaches the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati is suggested to give the students more exercise rather than theory in teaching writing. In teaching writing, the brainstorming strategy combined with flashcards is suggested to be used as an alternative technique or strategy to improve students' writing skills. Moreover, the teachers are suggested to be able to make the students more focused in the learning process and give the students motivation to learn English, especially in learning writing.

For the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri Hindu 2 Sukawati, the researcher suggested the students be more focused on the learning process, not talk with friends during the learning process, and pay more attention to their skill in writing. The students are also suggested to do more practice in writing by using platforms they like. Moreover, the students have to develop their

writing skills by applying brainstorming as a technique or strategy in learning writing in order to get and share their opinion and ideas with their friends.

For the other researcher who is going to conduct their classroom action research, they are recommended to adapt this study as a guide and reference in conducting their research to solve the problem faced by the students, especially in writing. Furthermore, the other researcher should be more active and creative in getting new information about brainstorming techniques and find some references to enrich the understanding of brainstorming strategy.

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