Teaching Written Descriptive Text through Gallery Walk Technique

Mardiana \(^1\), Syamsul Bahri Ys.\(^1\), and Burhansyah\(^1\)

\(^1\)Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh

*Corresponding author: mardianabintisayuti@gmail.com

Abstract

This study is intended to find out whether the use of Gallery Walk technique can improve the students’ ability in writing descriptive text or not. This is an experimental research that used one group pretest-posttest design. The population of this study was the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh. The sample of this study is class X-4 consisting of 25 students selected by using simple random sampling. The instrument of data collection is written test. The result of data analysis showed that the students’ mean score in pretest was 53.24 and the mean score in posttest was 76.8. Moreover, the analysis of t-test showed that \(t_{\text{score}} > t_{\text{table}}\) or 12.144 > 1.711 at the level of significance 0.05 with the degree of freedom (df) 24. The most improvement of writing aspects was in content and organization. Other aspects such as grammar, vocabulary and mechanics also improved, but not as much as those two aspects. It means that the use of Gallery Walk technique improved students’ ability in descriptive writing. Thus, the application of Gallery Walk technique can be used to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Key Words : Writing, Descriptive, Written Descriptive text, Gallery Walk Technique

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is the way people express ideas and thoughts, share information and experiences to others in written communication. Writing is one of the important skills in English other than speaking, reading and listening that should be mastered by students. Kasihani (2008, p. 68) stated that among other language skills, writing is the most difficult language skill because it involves the ability and mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. In the writing process, students have to construct their ideas and paragraphs clearly. As stated by Nunan (2003, p. 88), writing is the process of thinking to invest ideas, thinking about how to express ideas into good writing, and arranging the ideas into statements and paragraphs clearly.

According to Curriculum 2013 for SMA/MA, teaching writing at the level of senior high school begins by introducing various kinds of text (descriptive, narrative, recount, etc.) and its generic structure as well as linguistic features. By
learning various kinds of text, students are expected to be able to express their ideas in written form. Referring to the basic competence 4.4 targeted for teaching writing students are able to construct oral and written simple descriptive text about places and famous historical buildings based on its generic structure and linguistic features (Kemendikbud, 2016). In this basic competence, the students learn about descriptive text. Thus, the students must be able to produce descriptive text into written form by using their own words by considering the aspects of writing in order to write a good paragraph.

Although the curriculum has targeted all students to be able to write a descriptive text, but the reality shows that the students still face some difficulties. Based on the preliminary study conducted by the writer at SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh on February 6, 2019, by interviewing the English teacher, it was found that the average score of writing comprehension achieved by tenth grade students was still much below the Minimum Passing Grade (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal/KKM), that is 75. Among 23 students, only 8 achieved scores higher than 75, while the lowest score (30) was achieved by 3 students. Furthermore, the teacher said that the students experienced difficulties in writing English. Generally, most of their problems concerned lack of vocabulary, so that they had difficulties in choosing appropriate words, combining sentences, and communicating their ideas or thoughts into good sentences or text. Besides, several of them were still confused in using the grammar (choosing good and right grammar in combining word by word).

In this case, the writer realized that the students’ achievement is not only affected by their ability and skills in writing but is also influenced by the method used by the teacher.

To make the students interested in learning and to help them in writing, the teacher should use a suitable technique. Based on the interview with five students of SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh, they said that the teacher taught writing in full English, which caused them to have difficulties understanding the lesson. The teacher did not use creative methods that made students interested in learning, and the teacher merely gave a general explanation of the material and then immediately gave exercises, which made students have less interest in writing and made them bored. Students’ writing ability is influenced very much by the technique used by the teacher. Hence, the teacher should be creative in applying a suitable technique in teaching writing. To solve this problem, it is important for the teacher to find a good technique in writing in order to improve students’ descriptive writing ability. One of the techniques that can be used in writing descriptive is the Gallery Walk technique.

Silberman (2007, p. 274) stated that Gallery Walk is one of the ways to assess and remember what students have learned during this time. In addition, Dinata and Anggraini (2017, p. 52) stated that Gallery Walk as an active strategy where the students will move around the classroom to see the pictures, posters, or even their works, and the students will have discussion after they look around the gallery, give their comments, share about their thought, and ask for clarification to other groups.

In this technique, the students are divided into four or five groups. Then, each group will rotate and answer some questions based on descriptive text that the teacher has given. Next, the group will practice as a small group discussion. After they have finished answering all questions, there will be a class discussion. By using the
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Definition of Writing

In learning English, there are four skills of language that have to be mastered by the students, one of which is writing. Writing skill can be defined as an ability to communicate ideas or imaginations into the form of structured patterns, so that readers may understand what writers mean in their writing. Meanwhile, Ismed (2013, p.11) stated that writing is a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words. In addition, Brown (2010, p.260) stated that writing is a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words, to sharpen main ideas, and to give them structure and coherent organization. It means that during the process of writing students are not only required to have ideas and to be able to write, but they can also express the ideas using good grammar, good words, etc.

2.2 Gallery Wall Technique

Based on Silberman (1996, p.24), Gallery Walk is a presentation method in which individual learners or groups display their work products (often on posters) and then walk around the room viewing each other's work. They may be asked to provide feedback to the group of individuals who created the work. Silberman's statement means Gallery Walk allows students to be actively engaged as they walk throughout the classroom. They work together in small groups to share ideas and respond to meaningful questions, images, and problem-solving situations or texts. On the other hand, Francek (2006, p.27) stated that Gallery Walk is a discussion technique that gets students out of their chairs and into active engagement.

2.3 Descriptive Texts

Sofyanda (2005, p.40) stated that descriptive text as a piece of writing or speech that says what someone or something is like. Descriptive text is often defined as a text which gives a clear description about people, places, objects, or events using details appropriately. Kane (2000, p. 351) also stated that descriptive text is about sensory experience description which is mostly about visual experience that describes out how something looks, tastes, and sounds. Moreover Wardiman as cited by Nazir, Syamaun, and Erdiana (2018, p.223) stated that descriptive text is the part of the paragraph that describes the character or we could say a descriptive text is a text that explains the features of someone, something, or a particular place.

3. METHODS

This study used a quantitative experimental research. According to Arikunto (2003, p.272), experimental research is research intended to know the effect of something. Then, Sukardi (2003, p.191) stated that with an experimental study a researcher will find the answer of his/her hypothesis related to the cause and effect of two variables.

In this study, the writer used the “One Group Pre-test Post-test Design” suggested by Arikunto (2003, p. 279). She stated that this design helps the researcher to prove a hypothesis without taking a long time, and the researcher will focus more on the experimental group, so it will be easier for the researcher to get the result of the study. The population of this study was the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh. There were six classes of the tenth grade students. Because
this study used the one-group pretest-posttest design, the technique of this study were taken using simple random sampling. In this study, the writer used writing test as the instrument because this instrument is the most appropriate instrument to measure students’ mastery in writing descriptive text. Moreover, she used two tests, i.e. pretest and posttest. The two tests were scored by using the rubric adapted from Brown (2007) which focused on 5 aspects of writing skill such as content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The writer conducted the study at SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh in order to know whether Gallery Walk Technique can improve students’ ability in writing descriptive or not. This study was conducted in three activities. Firstly, the writer gave the pretest in the beginning of activities before treatments were given. Then, she gave the treatments for three meetings. Lastly, she gave the posttest in the last meeting after the treatments conducted. The sample of this study was the tenth grade of class X-4 consisting 25 students: 12 female students and 13 male students. The data of the pretest and the posttest were scored by using the analytic rubric suggested by Brown (2007). After analyzing the data, the writer used the mean and t-test formula as suggested by Arikunto (2010, p. 349-350).

After the writer gained the scores of the pretest and posttest, she analyzed the mean score of each writing aspect in the pretest and the posttest in order to see the extent of students’ achievements in writing descriptive text before and after the treatments were given. The scores can be seen in the diagram below.

![Figure 1. Comparison of Mean Score in Each Aspects of Writing](image)

Based on the figure above, it showed that the highest increase was in the aspect of content and the lowest one was in the aspect of mechanics. The mean of the content score increased 7.5 points from 20.7 to 28.2; the mean of organization increased 4.4 points from 10.6 to 15; the mean of grammar increased 5.6 points
from 9 to 14.6; the mean of vocabulary increased 3.45 from 6.45 to 9.9. Then, the mean of mechanics score increased 2.25 points from 6.3 to 8.85. Based on the diagram, the vocabulary score and mechanics score gained were comparatively the same. It can be concluded that all of the aspects in writing improved after the students were taught by using Gallery Walk technique. It can be concluded that students’ achievement in writing descriptive by using Gallery Walk technique improved after the treatments. The following chart shows the improvement of the mean between the pretest and the posttest.

**Figure 2. The Mean Chart Analysis of Pretest and Posttest Score**

It showed that the mean score of pretest was 53.24, while the mean score of posttest was 76.8. It can be seen that the average score of posttest was much better than that of pretest. It means that there was an improvement of the students’ ability in writing descriptive text by using Gallery Walk technique. Next, the writer looked at the significant improvement in students’ ability in writing descriptive text. In analyzing the hypothesis, the writer referred to the t-table at the level of significance α 0.05.

Based on the data calculated from both the pretest and the posttest, the writer found that the degree of freedom (df) is 24. It was obtained by using the formula (n-1) which is 25-1= 24. The critical value for df 24 at a particular significance (0.05) is 1.711. From the result of study, the t-test calculated is 12.144. It must be compared with t-table score (1.711). The t-test value is higher than the critical value of t-table (12.144>1.711). The writer put all the summary of the score into a table.

**Table 1. The Improvement of Students’ Pretest and Posttest Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Mean (X₁X₂)</th>
<th>Difference (∑d)</th>
<th>Mean of Difference (Md)</th>
<th>T-Test</th>
<th>T-Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>1331</td>
<td>53.24</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>23.56</td>
<td>12.144</td>
<td>1.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that there were differences between the pretest and the posttest result. The mean score of the pretest was 53.24; otherwise, the mean score of the posttest was 76.8. The data were analyzed by using the t-test formula; the result of t-test was 12.144, while the t-table was 1.711. It can be summarized that
the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) was accepted and the null hypothesis ($H_0$) was rejected. It indicated that the use of Gallery Walk technique improved students’ ability in writing descriptive text.

4.2 Discussion

This study aimed to examine whether or not the use of Gallery Walk technique can improve students’ ability in writing descriptive text for the tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh. The result of data shows that the highest score in the pretest was 79 and the lowest score was 33. The score of the pretest indicates that students’ writing performance was under the expectation of the minimum passing grade (KKM). There were 2 students who gained the scores equivalent to the KKM, and only one student gained the score above the KKM. The mean score of the pretest is 53.24, which means that the students’ ability in descriptive text was still low.

After the writer conducted the treatments through Gallery Walk technique, there was an improvement in students’ ability in writing descriptive text. The majority of students gained the score above the KKM (>75), achieved by 20 out of 25 students. Based on the result of data, it reveals that the highest score in the posttest is 93 and the lowest score is 63, meanwhile the mean score of the posttest is 76.8. It can be concluded that there is a significant improvement on students’ ability in writing descriptive text after the treatments were given.

Based on the hypothesis testing, it was found that the value of t-test is higher than t-table. According to the formula proposed by Bungin (2005, p. 195), if the t-test > t-table, the null hypothesis will be rejected. Contrarily, if the t-test < t-table, the null hypothesis will be accepted. In this study, the result of t-test is 12.144, while t-table at the level of significance 0.05 is 1.711. It means that the null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) is accepted. Thus, as stated in the research hypothesis section in the first chapter of this study, the Gallery Walk can improve students’ ability in writing descriptive text.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the data analysis and findings of the study, the writer concludes that the use of Gallery Walk technique can improve students’ ability in writing descriptive text. This is proven by the progress of students’ learning outcomes, in which before the students were taught by using Gallery Walk technique, the mean score of the students was 53.24. However, after the students were taught by using the Gallery Walk technique, the mean score was 76.8. It is obviously apparent that the mean score of the posttest is higher than that of the pretest. The result of the writing aspects found that the lowest improvement of the mean score in the posttest is mechanics, which improved 2.25 points, while the highest is content which improved 20.7 points. Then, the mean score of organization improved 4.4 points, the grammar mean score improved 5.6 points, and the vocabulary mean score improved 3.45 points.

Finally, the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) is accepted and the null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected. It is proved that the t-score is higher than the t-table. The t-score is 12.144, higher than the t-table 1.711 at the level of significance 0.05 (5%). It means that the Gallery Walk technique can improve the students’ ability in writing descriptive text for the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh.
6. REFERENCES


