

THE IMPACT OF LEARNING METHODS AND MOTIVATION ON DESCRIPTIVE WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

This research was aimed at examining how the choice of technique and the level of motivation relates to students' writing skills, namely in the writing of descriptive texts in Al Jannah SMA Depok. The population sample was 90 students. The research data was taken from the questionnaires from the students and analyzed using SPSS software. In identifying the data, the author used a survey method to find out the effect of learning methods on learning motivation and writing ability. Among the factors that should be researched further are teaching styles and their effectiveness when paired with student motivation towards writing. The conclusions derived from the research are that the learning method and the learning motivation impacted the ability to draft descriptive text, and learning motivation is important and should be practiced for proficient English language acquisition.

Keywords: *learning method; learning motivation; descriptive text; writing test.*

A. Introduction

Writing a text is a fundamental skill that contributes significantly to a student's proficiency in language acquisition. In the context of education, various learning methods and motivational factors play pivotal roles in shaping students' writing abilities. Understanding how these elements influence students' perceptions and, consequently, their learning outcomes is essential for educators seeking to enhance instructional strategies and optimize learning environments. According to Kristiana (2021), writing becomes a challenging task for students in the sense that they know very little about writing and its process, have trouble coming up with ideas or topics, make scant attempts at outlining, possess no skills to write and organize text, encounter problems concerning writing processes and make no or few efforts to edit their pieces of writing. Hence, written communication is essential, and every student should be able to express himself or herself in writing while being mindful of grammar, content structure, vocabulary, language use, and writing techniques.

Based on the 2013 curriculum taught in senior high school, 10th-grade students will learn about descriptive text (Kemendikbud, 2013). The author made preliminary observations by observing 10th-grade students learning English. The students still experienced problems in writing, for example, when the teacher asked them to write a descriptive text for several meetings in the writing class. Most of them needed help understanding the mechanism of descriptive text. In addition, more than 25 students needed better vocabulary and grammar mastery. This condition has occurred several times. Most of them still make mistakes in these aspects. In conclusion, their writing skills can be categorized as poor.

The author also found that students' learning motivation and attitudes towards English subjects were also still low. It can be found when the learning process takes place. Students showed indifferent attitudes towards the subject matter and the teacher who teaches. This problem is caused by one of them being bored and considering English to be less interesting. In addition, the average value of learning English results has yet to reach the target or has not been maximized. From these data, the author observes that several factors cause students to face difficulties in learning English. One of the reasons for the low score in English is the need for initial ability as self-development. English lessons are an ongoing subject (Zein, 2020). To master advanced material, it must be supported by initial knowledge, which serves as the basis. The stronger a student's foundation, the easier it is for him to develop the abilities. The failures commonly faced by students in solving English questions can also be caused by a lack of student motivation in learning and students' understanding of the questions presented. Therefore, the achievement of learning outcomes is not only the teacher's responsibility but also the students' obligation and responsibility to achieve maximum learning outcomes.

The author finds this issue particularly concerning, as students often spend a significant amount of time writing descriptive texts. Yet, only three students managed to complete their assignments. The others appeared to struggle with generating ideas for their writing, indicating challenges in expressing their thoughts effectively. These difficulties extend to organizing their ideas, particularly regarding cohesion, coherence, and unity in their writing. This seems to stem from a lack of pre-writing techniques to help them brainstorm and structure their ideas before starting. As a result, many students expressed uncertainty about how to begin and what to write.

Moreover, some students admitted that they rarely used dictionaries to look up unfamiliar words, despite having a limited vocabulary. In fact, over 25 students did not bring dictionaries to school. Additionally, they struggled to organize the generic structure of descriptive texts, such as identification and description. Out of 30 students, only three applied the correct generic structure in their writing. Furthermore, students frequently made errors in grammar (such as subject-verb agreement) and vocabulary usage. These issues highlight the challenges 10th-grade students face in writing descriptive texts, which significantly impact the quality of their work.

Another contributing factor was the teacher's reliance on conventional teaching methods, particularly the cloze answer technique. In this method, parts of a text are removed, and students are tasked with filling in the blanks. While this approach measures text readability and the students' reading ability (as noted by Suzanne, 2019), it makes the teaching process highly teacher-centered. As a result, students are unable to fully explore their creativity or improve their language skills. This unengaging and rigid strategy leads to a lack of interest and enthusiasm among students, leaving them bored and disengaged from the writing process.

B. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Definition of Perception

Perception is an experience about object, event, or any relationship from data realignment and interpretation. According to Wood (2015), 'perception' is described as the 4th level which includes selecting, organizing and interpreting people, objects, situations, and many more to create meaning.

Brainstorming Method

The author used a learning method to assist students in expressing their ideas in written form using brainstorming method. Essentially, brainstorming is just what the words suggest. It makes ideas flow and appears easily in students' minds when they begin to write. Thus, brainstorming is an effective way on the production of ideas in writing. The author believes using brainstorming technique can improve students' writing in descriptive text. A number of studies about brainstorming technique have been done before.

Most scholars believe that using a brainstorming technique is up to the task. Mahdian Mehr et al. (2016) pointed out that brainstorming positively influenced students' writing success

and had a significant effect earlier the participants' work, it's obvious that with the help of the brainstorming technique, learners are provided with the support necessary for them to be more successful in the specific assignment at hand. Also, Abedianpour and Omidvari (2018) believed there is a strong association between the strategy of brainstorming and the writing performance of the targeted group. Also, most of the learners believed that they were able to adopt this strategy effectively while enhancing their writing skills.

Because brainstorming is categorized as a pre-writing technique, there are previous researchers who have conducted their research in applying pre-writing techniques. Alemu (2020) found that pre writing techniques can increase student participation and student achievement in writing. In addition, Nadia (2020) found that students' writing skills after carrying out classroom action techniques experienced a better improvement.

After paying attention to the problems above, English teachers need to prepare themselves with meaningful activities that allow students to write descriptive texts. Teachers should choose strategies where students can be motivated to write and organize their ideas. In this case, the researcher tries to solve the problem by applying brainstorming techniques as the learning method before writing descriptive text, which is considered to be able to improve students' writing skills. This kind of strategy will help students develop their ideas in the form of descriptive text. The author also wants to find further about the students' learning motivation in studying English, because their achievements can be seen from the inner motivation. Learning motivation is very important as predictor of learning and achievement. Students who are more motivated to learn persist longer, produce higher quality effort, learn more deeply, and perform better in classes and on standardized tests. Based on the description above, the author is interested in conducting a research entitled *Examining The Impact Of Learning Methods And Motivation On Students' Proficiency In Writing Descriptive Texts*.

C. Research Method

The population of this study was the 10th grade students at SMA Al Jannah Depok who enrolled in the 2023/2024 academic year. The author determined that 90 students were taken from 3 classes to become the research sample. Meanwhile, the research method used in this study is a survey method. Survey methods use questionnaires to obtain information from

individuals (respondents). This approach proves valuable when researchers seek insights into perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, or opinions (Siedlecki, 2020). With the advantages of being relatively inexpensive and easy to administer, survey methods as a form of data collection still present their relevance today. However, the willingness of the subjects to respond to items in the survey and the reliability of the items within the survey itself are potential threats to internal and external validity and are a major study design limitation.

Regarding the sample selection technique, this study employed a combination of cluster, proportional, and random methods. The cluster technique is used when students are grouped according to the school where they study. The proportional procedure was applied from each class in the reachable population to determine the number of sample members. Meanwhile, existing sampling technique ratios were applied to isolate the sample members from each class. This research took 4 months to examine the effects of the teaching methods and their motivation toward learners in a descriptive text writing exercise.

The perception instrument was prepared based on the several indicators above. Based on these indicators, questions related to the independence variable were prepared. For the instruments in this study, it was planned that 25 questions were then tested for the validity of the items and the reliability of the instruments, so that they were used as research instruments. The instrument used to collect data on perceptions is in the form of a questionnaire using a rating scale in the form of a continuum with four answer choices. The score for each item for positive statement items can be described as: strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. Before being used for data collection, questionnaires from both variables were tested first on students who were not members of the sample to see the level of validity and reliability of the instrument. Then, data analysis of this research calculated using multiple linear regression with SPSS application program.

Additionally, the study ensured the calibration of perception measurement tools by assessing the validity of each question and the reliability of the instrument. The Pearson product-moment correlation formula was applied to determine the validity of questionnaire items. Validity was evaluated by comparing the calculated correlation coefficient (f count) with the tabulated value (f table), where the f table represents the Pearson product-moment correlation

value for a one-tailed test at a significance level (α) of 0.05 and a degree of freedom (df) of 2 (with k representing the number of test respondents).

The criterion for validity was that if the f count exceeded the f table, the item was deemed

Table 1. The results of testing the multiple correlation coefficients of variables X1 and X2 on Y

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.838 ^a	.703	.696	4.313

a. Predictors: (Constant), Learning motivation, Brainstorming Method

deemed invalid. In this study, with 30 students participating in the instrument trial, the f-table value was determined to be 0.361.

D. Discussion

Based on the data presented in Table 1, a correlation coefficient of 0.838 and a determination coefficient of 70.3% were obtained after conducting a correlation analysis. The analysis using SPSS software confirmed the significance of the correlation coefficient. This indicates that the independent variables X1 and X2 collectively have an effect on the dependent variable Y, which represents the Ability to Write Descriptive Text.

Moreover, the regression analysis yielded the equation $Y = 17.541 + 0.235 X1 + 0.407 X2$. This suggests that both brainstorming techniques and learning motivation facilitate students' ability to write descriptive texts. The regression coefficients of 0.235 and 0.407 denote a positive impact of the independent variables X1 and X2 on the dependent variable Y.

Table 2. The results of the calculation of the significant testing of the regression coefficients of the variables X1 and X2 on Y

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5142.401	2	2571.201	70.397	.000 ^b
	Residual	250.754	87	2.882		
	Total	5393.156	89			

Table 3. The results of the calculation of the multiple regression equation of the variables X1 and X2 on Y

Coefficients ^a				
Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
B	Std. Error	Beta		
17.541	4.629		3.789	.000
.235	.046	.326	5.143	.000
.407	.038	.683	10.793	.000

Based on the data presented in Table 2, the Brainstorming Method and Learning Motivation significantly influence students' writing abilities. It is supported by the statistical results, with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) and an F-value of 95.848. Table 3 presents the multiple regression equation: $Y = 17.541 + 0.235X_1 + 0.407X_2$. This equation indicates that the perception of the Brainstorming Method (X1) contributes 23.5%, and Learning Motivation (X2) contributes 40.7% to students' ability to write English descriptive texts. Additionally, Table 1 shows that both perception variables combined contribute 70.3% to students' writing ability.

Correlation analysis reveals a coefficient of 0.838, with a determination coefficient of 70.3%, confirming the significant relationship between the independent variables (X1 and X2) and the dependent variable (Y: ability to write descriptive text). Regression analysis further supports this finding, as the equation demonstrates that Brainstorming and Learning Motivation

facilitate improvements in students' writing skills. The regression coefficients of 0.235 and 0.407 indicate a positive influence of both independent variables on the dependent variable.

The regression coefficient values also suggest that for every unit increase in the perception of either variable, students' ability to write descriptive text improves by 23.5%. The regression significance test results (Sig. = 0.000, F = 95.848) further validate the model, as the calculated F-value exceeds the critical value ($F_t = 3.10$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirming the significance of the regression coefficients. It also indicates that the Brainstorming Method and Learning Motivation significantly affect students' English descriptive writing skills.

Linearity tests using the SPSS program confirm that the regression line is linear, and further tests of the regression coefficient's significance validate that both independent variables positively affect the dependent variable. These findings prove that perception and learning motivation are key factors influencing students' ability to write descriptive English texts.

E. Conclusion

The learning process in schools is complex and comprehensive. Many people think that to achieve high achievement in learning, a person must have a high Intelligence Quotient (IQ). Because intelligence is a potential provision that facilitates learning, it will produce optimal learning achievement (Duckworth, A. L., & Seligman, M. E. P., 2019). Moreover, perception also plays an essential part in this research. Friston, K., & Price, C. J. (2021) described the latest theories on how the brain processes sensory information and generates perception and how these theories can explain various aspects of human experience.

In fact, in teaching and learning at school, it is often found that students cannot achieve learning achievements because of their intelligence abilities. Some students have high intelligence abilities but obtain relatively low learning achievements, but there are also students who have relatively low intelligence abilities who can achieve relatively high achievements.

IQ and EQ intelligences are necessary in the student learning process. IQ can only function properly by participating in the emotional appreciation of the subjects taught at school. However, usually, the two intelligences complement each other. The balance of IQ and EQ is the key to successful student learning at school (Afrina, 2021, p. 134). Education in schools not only

needs to develop rational intelligence, namely a model of understanding that students usually understand, but also needs to develop students' emotional intelligence. Thus, perception is the process of a person capturing, identifying, interpreting, and responding to information in the human brain through his senses.

According to the synthesis theory in chapter II of this research, learning motivation can arouse or encourage a person to study hard to achieve his goals, try to know a lesson by understanding, following, focusing attention, studying harder, and finally achieving the desired achievement. Motivation to learn will give birth to attention, facilitate the creation of concentration, prevent distraction from outside attention, strengthen the attachment of lessons in memory, reduce study boredom within oneself, and increase motivation from within to study harder. Learning outcomes are students' intellectual abilities that contain related knowledge and skills in an effort to be able to complete a learning program. The achievement of learning English is the level of achievement of students' knowledge skills in English material, as well as the achievement of skills and attitudes related to insights about English.

Motivation can affect the quality of student achievement in a particular field of study; a student who has excellent motivation for a particular subject will focus more attention on it than other students because intensive concentration and attention to the material allow the student to study harder and finally achieve the desired achievement. Motivation towards English results from how an English teacher with good mastery and presentation of material tries to motivate students to like English, namely by being aware of the importance of English, both in continuing their studies and in everyday life. If the student pays high attention and has enough motivation towards English, then in learning, the person concerned will not feel satisfied if he does not succeed in solving the problems he faces. From this description, learning motivation is very useful and needs to be implemented to support effective English learning.

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