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THE USE OF CLUSTERING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT (A CASE OF THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 1 KRAGAN REMBANG)

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Abstract

This research focuses on improving writing skills in descriptive text using clustering technique. Writing skill is one of the skills that are quite complicated to learn because it requires extra thought to produce words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs in a text. Many students still find difficult to explore and develop their idea, students write content not related to the topic, and students write ideas and sentences are not organized well. The sample was students of the seventh-grade of SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang with total was 64 students. The researcher uses experimental research. There were two groups namely experimental group consist of 32 students and control group consist of 32 students. Instrument of the research was writing test. The researcher conducted pre-test and post-test sessions. Data collection was done by using quantitative method. Based on data analysis from the experimental group showed that the mean of pre-test was 58.84 while post-test was 72.84. In the control group showed that the mean of pre-test was 60.59 while post-test was 68.13. In the T-test showed that the sig. (2-tailed) of experiment and control group were 0.000 < 0.05. It means that there is a significance difference in the result of students' learning scores between experiment and control group. The result of this research showed that clustering technique can improve students' writing skill in descriptive text. Clustering technique is a good and easy technique to help develop and organize ideas in writing.

Keywords: Clustering Technique, Writing Skill, Descriptive Text

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INTRODUCTION

Writing skill is very important, especially for students. Writing is a difficult skill and complex compared to the other three English skills. Therefore, in improving writing skills, a teacher needs to apply the right techniques so that students can get good results. Writing skill is one of the skills that is quite complicated to learn because it requires extra thought to produce words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs in a text. According to Amaliah (2018:2), writing is an important skill because students need to explore ideas, opinions, and information to be written on paper. Students do not know how to write well, so the scores obtained by students are still low. According to Sari and Wahyuni (2018:167), writing is the most difficult skill compared to other skills in English because students need attention in writing words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs based on structure, composition, and constructs in writing. According to Rimes in Handayani (2018:17), writing is the process of expressing ideas and thoughts then arranging and writing from word forms, sentence forms, and paragraph shapes on paper. Readers can find out information from the author about what the author thinks and feels. Another definition from Sumardiyani, Wiyaka, and Prastikawati (2018:246), teaching writing is very important because writing is a written communication tool. Students need a lot of practice to develop their writing such as keeping diaries, writing letters, reports, stories, and so on. Good writing skills will make students more confident in developing ideas into writing. Some of the problems that are often encountered by students, feeling difficulties in exploring and developing their ideas, the content is not related to the topic, the ideas and sentences are not organized well.

According to Brown (2004:246) to be a good paragraph, it is necessary to pay attention to the five components of writing as follows:

1. Content
Content is a logical development of ideas. The writer imagines, then develops the idea or thought logically into text.
2. Organization
Organization is a process of compiling a text starting from the introduction, body, and conclusion. The content of the text must be well organized.
3. Vocabulary
Vocabulary is vocabulary selection according to the topic described.
4. Syntax
Syntax is a rule that includes sentence structure in text.
5. Mechanics
Mechanics are the graphic conventions of the language used, including the correct use of punctuation and spelling.

When writing must follow the steps of writing so that it becomes good text and makes it easier for readers to understand the content of the text. Practicing writing using the correct process will make students better at writing. Harmer in Sinaga (2017:70) states that there are four steps to good writing:

1. Panning
Students plan what will be written and what will be expressed in detail.
2. Drafting
Students begin to draft their writing before it is edited in the final version.
3. Editing
Students read and check their writing if there are errors.
4. Final versions
Students can add changes as needed until students produce the final version of their writing.

At the junior high school level, there are several texts that are taught such as descriptive, narrative, recount, and procedure text. This research uses one of the texts that are taught in seventh grade junior high school students, namely descriptive text. Text is a series of interrelated sentences that contain meaning. Each sentence must be related to each other so that the intent to be conveyed in the text can be conveyed to the reader clearly. According to Egar et al, text is a unit of meaning which is coherent and appropriate for its context. Another definition from Mahsun in Sufanti (2013:38) views that text is an expression of the human mind that contains situations and contexts. According to Egar et al states that there are two kind of text, namely story text and factual text. Story text is a text that represents an information. While factual text is a that represents factual information to direct listeners or readers. Moreover, every kind of text has different social function, different generic structure, and different language features.

There are types of text as follows:

1. Narrative Text is a text that tells about fairy tales, myths, folklore, animal stories, and so on. The purpose of this text to entertains or inform the reader or listener. The generic structures are orientation, evaluation, complication, and re-orientation. Recount Text is a text that retells events in the past. The purpose of this text to retell a series of events in the past. The generic structures are orientation, events, re-orientation.
2. Anecdote is a short story, usually serving to make the listeners laugh or ponder over a topic. The purpose of this text to share with others about funny happenings. The generic structures are abstract, orientation, crisis, incident, and coda.
3. Procedure Text is a text that contains steps or how to do something. The purpose this text to instruct someone on how something can be done. The generic structures are goal, materials, and steps.
4. Explanation Text is a text that contains about how or why something happened. The purpose of this text to explain how and why something occurs. The general structures are general statement position the reader and sequenced explanation of why or how something occurs.
5. Exposition Text is a text that describes an author's views on an issue. The purpose of this text to argue or persuade by presenting one side of an issue. The generic structures are thesis, arguments, and reiteration.
6. Discussion Text is a text that contains a discussion of a matter and contains idea or opinion from different points of view. The purpose of this text to present problems based on different opinions or views. The generic structures are issue, arguments, and conclusion.
7. Descriptive Text is a text that describe person, animal, thing, and place. The purpose of this text to describe person, animals, and place in particular. The generic structures are identification and description. Descriptive text belongs to the factual text. Descriptive text is a text that describe person, animal, thing, or place about shape, color, size, etc. According to Amaniarsih, Asrul, and Sihite (2020:41) states that descriptive text is a text that describes a certain object by stating its characteristics clearly and systematically. Another definition from Zemach and Rumisek in Tiara (2020:11) descriptive text is a text that describes how someone or something looks and feels. For example, describing animals, pictures, and places. The purpose of descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place, or things. Hartono in Rinawati (2018:23) views that the purpose of describe text is to describe certain person, place, or things in detail about how something looks. There are two generic structures in a descriptive text must be considered. The first is identification, the author describes or introduces the topic in general. The second is the description, the author describes in more detail the quality, character, shape, size of the topic. Descriptive text has language features, namely use the simple present tense, focus on specific participants, use

attribute and identifying processes, and use adjectives. When writing descriptive text, students must pay attention this to be a good paragraph.

Most teachers ask students to write without telling students a technique that makes it easier for students when they start writing. Students will be confused about how to start writing. This makes students' writing not optimal. The English teacher needs to use special techniques to facilitate, motivate, and attract students in writing descriptive text. Sudrajat (2008) views that technique is the way that is done by applying certain methods specifically. According to Gerlach and Ely in Kusnah (2018:10) states that the technique is the way the teacher does to direct the student learning process. Kusnah (2018:10) states that technique is a tool to deliver teaching materials chosen by the teacher. So, technique is a way used by teachers so that the learning process or delivery of material can obtain optimal results. Therefore, a teacher needs to consider the technique to be used.

According to Oshima and Hogue (2006) there are several techniques that teachers and students can use in the writing learning process such as:

1. Journaling
Journaling is writing about daily activities. In journal writing, students write for themselves. Students can write whatever they think of without thinking about the opinions of others.
2. Listing
Listing is a brainstorming activity in which students make a list of words or phrases about the topic to be written about. Listings make it easy to quickly organize ideas or thoughts.
3. Free writing
Free writing is a brainstorming activity where students are free to write whatever they think of. When writing, one idea will give rise to other ideas. Develop ideas to completion.
4. Clustering
Clustering technique is another brainstorming activity to help develop ideas from general to specific. Write the topic in the middle of the blank paper and circle it. Then connect topics with subtopics with lines.

This research takes one of the alternatives is a clustering technique. Clustering technique is a technique that used when prewriting is in the writing learning process. Clustering is also called making a diagram or mapping on a paper that is used as a draft. Clustering is a good way to make it easier for students to generate, organize, and develop their ideas so that students' writing will be clearer and more structured. The clustering technique can be used for any type of writing. According to Baroudy in Sari and Wahyuni (2018:169) defines clustering is a grouping process that generates ideas, images, and feelings into interrelated patterns. According to Langan in Giyang (2015:26) that the clustering technique is a prewriting technique which is also known as diagramming or mapping. This technique helps students to design their ideas to be written on paper. Students can use lines, boxes, arrows, and circles to show the relationships between ideas. Scarry and Scarry's in Tiara (2020:12), clustering technique is a writing preparation technique that creates a brainstorming list. The subject to be described is written in the middle of the page and is surrounded by a circle. Explore ideas or items in more detail and then relate them to the subject. There are various types of clustering, namely routing, webbing, and branching. In short, clustering techniques can help students to solve problems when they have difficulty developing ideas.

The use of the clustering technique is easy and simple to facilitate the learning process. The clustering technique is very helpful in the writing learning process. The clustering technique has several advantages compared to other writing techniques as follows:

1. Clustering technique can make it easier for students to find keywords related to the topics discussed.
2. Clustering technique is an interesting writing technique, so students will be motivated to write a good text.
3. Clustering technique can make it easier for students when following the steps or writing processes such as prewriting, drafting, and revising.

Teachers must guide students because students are still confused about how to start writing using the clustering technique. The clustering technique has several disadvantages as follows:

1. Clustering technique is not suitable for writing long paragraphs such as essays.
2. The learning process will be noisy because students must be active.
3. If the teacher makes a mistake, the student will do it too, because the student determines what the teacher does. Thus, the guidance and direction of the teacher is very necessary.

There are several steps the use of clustering technique that can be followed:

1. Write the topic in the middle of the paper and make a big circle.
2. Students write down ideas related to the title around the topic.
3. Circle the ideas and connect them using a line to the topic.

Clouse in Batul (2020:21-23) states that the steps of clustering as follow:

1. Take a piece of paper and write the main topic in the middle and circle it.
2. Write down ideas related to the topic and circle them. Write quickly and use the free space.
3. Write down ideas, facts, or others to support ideas in detail.
4. Circle the word or phrase and draw a line to the main word or related word.
5. Continue until the idea on the topic is detailed. Students can cross out words or phrases that don't match, then start writing the first draft.

According to Axelrod and Cooper in Rinawati (2018:26), the steps for clustering are as follows:

1. Prepare a blank paper, write the topic, and circle in the middle of the blank paper.
2. Write down the main parts. Circle and connect them to the topic in the middle.
3. Write down ideas, facts, examples in detail related to the main parts of the topic. Circle and connect with main parts.

The researcher conducted this research with the aim : 1) to find out the students' ability to write descriptive text taught using clustering technique, 2) to find out the students' ability to write descriptive text taught without using clustering technique, 3) to find out whether there is or there is not a significant difference in the students' ability to write descriptive text between those who taught using clustering technique and without using clustering technique.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher used experimental research. Sugiyono (2017:107) states that the experimental research method is a research method used to find the effect of treatment under controlled conditions. This research focused on improving writing skills in descriptive text using clustering technique. Data collection of this research used quantitative data. According to Sugiyono (2017:14), quantitative research is a research method used to examine a particular population or sample with a random sampling technique. The population of this research is the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang. There are nine class

in this school, but the researcher only took two class. The researcher took sample because the population is too large to be studied. Sugiyono (2017:118) views that the sample is part of the number and characteristics of the population. The sample of this researcher is class VII H as an experimental group and class VIIG as control group. Total sample is 64 students. The experimental group was taught descriptive text using clustering technique. Meanwhile, the control group was taught descriptive text without using clustering technique. To get data the researcher use instrument is Test Method. Sugiyono (2017:148) states that instrument is used to measure the phenomena studied by researcher. In this research. The researcher used an instrument in the form of a writing test to determine the achievement of students' writing skills using clustering technique and without using clustering technique. The researcher used pre-test and post-test. Both pre-test and post-test were given to the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group was given treatment before being given the post-test. Students write descriptive texts to determine students' writing skills.

1. Pre-test

The researcher gave a pre-test to VII H as an experimental group before being given treatment and VII G as a control group. Both without using the clustering technique.

2. Post-test

The researcher gave a post-test after pre-test and treatment VII H as an experimental group wrote descriptive text using clustering technique. Meanwhile, VII G as the control group wrote descriptive text without using the clustering technique.

Some of steps taken by the researcher to obtain the data as follows:

1. The researcher provided a letter of application for permission to the principal of SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang.
2. The researcher was conducted learning to obtain data.
3. The researcher gave a pre-test sheet to write descriptive text to the experimental group and control group.
4. The researcher gave treatment to the experimental group.
5. The researcher gave a post-test sheet to write descriptive text to determine student achievement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research is about the use of clustering technique to improve students' writing skill in descriptive text. Clustering technique is a technique that used when prewriting is in the writing learning process. Clustering is also called making a diagram or mapping on a paper that is used as a draft. Clustering is a good way to make it easier for students to generate, organize, and develop their ideas so that students' writing will be clearer and more structured. The clustering technique can be used for any type of writing. According to Baroudy in Sari and Wahyuni (2018:169) defines clustering is a grouping process that generates ideas, images, and feelings into interrelated patterns. The research was conducted at the SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang on 13 October to 2 September 2021. To collect the data, the research conducted several meetings. The research finding is answer of the statement of the problem. The data are present based on score of students' writing test.

The criteria of writing assessments are presented as follows:

Table 1 Assessment Criteria for Writing Aspects

No	Writing Aspects	Score
1.	Content	30
2.	Organization	20
3.	Vocabulary	20
4.	Syntax	25
5.	Mechanics	5
Total		100

(Brown, 2004:246)

The criteria of test score are presented as follows:

Table 2 The Criteria of Test Score

No	Score	Category
1.	90-100	Excellent
2.	80-89	Good
3.	70-79	Adequate
4.	60-69	Inadequate
5.	Below 60	Falling

(Brown, 2004:287-289)

In processing the data, the researcher took several steps as follows:

1. After obtaining a score, the researcher calculated the mean of the Experimental group as follows:

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of The Experimental Group

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Experiment	32	48	70	58.84	6.022
Post-test Experiment	32	63	85	72.84	4.813
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Based on the result of the experimental group, the researcher can find out the lowest score, highest score, mean, and standard deviation. In the pre-test, the lowest score was 48 obtained by one student. The highest score was 70 obtained by two students. The mean of the pre-test was 58.84. Standard deviation was 6.022. In the post-test, the lowest score was 63 obtained by one student. The highest score was 85 obtained by one student. The mean was 72.84. Standard deviation was 4.813.

2. The researcher calculated the mean of the control group as follows:

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Control Group

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Control	32	45	75	60.59	9.154
Post-test Control	32	55	80	68.13	6.695
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Based on the result of the control group, the researcher can find out the lowest score, highest score, mean, and standard deviation. In the pre-test, the lowest score was 45 obtained by one student. The highest score was 75 obtained by four students. The mean of the pre-test was 60.59. Standard deviation was 9.154. In the post-test, the lowest score was 55 obtained by one student. The highest score was 80 obtained by two students. The mean was 68.13. Standard deviation was 6.695.

3. The researcher calculated N-Gain Test

Thus, to find out the improvement of students' ability in writing descriptive texts between taught using clustering techniques and taught without clustering technique can use the N-Gain score test.

N-Gain score is presented below:

Table 5 N-Gain score

N-Gain	Category
$G > 0.7$	High
$0.3 \leq G \leq 0.7$	Medium
$G < 0.3$	Low

(Meltzer, 2002)

The result of N-Gain score of experimental and control group are presented below:

Table 6 The N-Gain Test

Descriptives				
Class		Statistic	Std. Error	
Experiment	Mean	.3394	.01366	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.3116	
		Upper Bound	.3673	
	5% Trimmed Mean	.3389		
	Median	.3475		
	Variance	.006		
	Std. Deviation	.07728		
	Minimum	.19		
	Maximum	.50		
	Range	.31		
	Interquartile Range	.13		
	Skewness	-.115	.414	
	Kurtosis	-.600	.809	
	Control	Mean	.1729	.02671
95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Lower Bound	.1184	
		Upper Bound	.2274	
5% Trimmed Mean		.1769		
Median		.1667		
Variance		.023		
Std. Deviation		.15109		

Minimum	-20	
Maximum	.45	
Range	.65	
Interquartile Range	.12	
Skewness	-.106	.414
Kurtosis	.676	.809

Based the table above, the average N-Gain value of the experimental group was 0.34. The average of 0.34 is >0.3 dan <0.7. So, improving students' ability to write descriptive texts taught using clustering techniques is included in the medium classification.

While, the average N-Gain value of the control group was 0.17. The average of 0.17 is <0.3. So, improving students' ability to write descriptive texts taught without using clustering techniques is included in the low classification.

4. Then, the researcher calculated the Normality Test

Normality test is presented as follows:

Table 7 Test of Normality

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		64
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	5.13097682
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.114
	Positive	.083
	Negative	-.114
Test Statistic		.114
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.038 ^c

- a. Test distribution is Normal.
- b. Calculated from data.
- c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

The results of the output above showed a significance value of 0.038 > 0.05. So it can be concluded that the residual value is normally distributed.

5. The researcher calculated the Homogeneity Test

Homogeneity test results are presented in the table 4.8 below:

Table 8 Test of Homogeneity

Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Students learning outcome	Based on Mean	5.184	1	62	.026
	Based on Median	3.684	1	62	.060
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3.684	1	55.487	.060
	Based on trimmed mean	5.186	1	62	.026

Based on the output above, it showed that the significance value based on the mean is $0.026 > 0.05$. So, it can be concluded that the variance of the post-test data for the experimental and control classes is homogeneous.

6. Last, the researcher calculated the T-Test Paired Sample

Based on the normality test above, it is concluded that the research data is paired and normally distributed. So, to find out the difference in the students' ability to write descriptive text between those who taught using clustering technique and without using clustering technique can use the paired sample t-test.

The table show the result of T-Test Paired Sample:

Table 9 T-Test Paired Sample

	Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper				
Pre-test Experiment - Post-test Experiment	-14.000	3.951	.699	-15.425	-12.575	-12.575	-20.043	31	.000
Pre-test Control - Post-test Control	-7.531	7.175	1.268	-10.118	-4.944	-4.944	-5.938	31	.000

Based on the output above, the sig. (2-tailed) of experiment and control group were $0.000 < 0.05$. If the significance < 0.05 (H_0) is rejected and (H_a) is accepted, it means that there is a significance difference in the result of students' learning scores between the experiment and control group.

CONCLUSION

The first conclusion is the students' ability to write descriptive text of the seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang taught using clustering technique was higher than without using the clustering technique. The students who are taught using the clustering technique get good achievements. It can be seen in the average value of the pre-test was 58.84 while the average value of the post-test was 72.84. N-Gain score was 0.34. Based on the previous study conducted by Handayani (2018), the achievement results of students who are taught using clustering techniques are better than using other techniques. Students show their enthusiasm when writing text using clustering techniques. So that the technique used in the writing process is very necessary, especially the clustering technique. The result of this research also related with the theory of Gorski in Giyang (2015:29) that clustering has many advantages: 1) clustering technique is easy to use for students, 2) clustering technique can make it easier for students to find keywords related to the topics discussed, 3) clustering technique can help students design and develop ideas, 4) clustering technique makes it easy for students to produce

related phrases, words, sentences in a paragraph, 5) clustering technique can help students to improve their ability to write paragraphs according to the topic.

The second conclusion is the students' ability to write descriptive text of the seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kragan Rembang taught without using clustering technique was lower than students taught using clustering techniques. The students who are taught without using clustering techniques get poor achievement. It can be seen in the average value of the pre-test was 60.59 while the average value of the post-test was 68.13. N-Gain score was 0.17. The use of techniques is needed to facilitate writing. Thus, students more motivated and can write well. According to Kusnah (2018), learning techniques are needed by teachers, so that the teaching and learning process can be carried out and get good results. Learning writing without the right technique will make students confused about how to start writing and the classroom situation will feel boring.

The third conclusion is there is significance difference in the students' ability to write descriptive text of the seventh-grade students at SMP N 1 Kragan Rembang between those who taught using clustering technique and without using clustering technique. It can be seen in the result of T-test was the sig. (2-tailed) of experiment and control group were $0.000 < 0.05$. So, the clustering technique really helps students in the writing process. The results of this study strengthen the research of Sari and Wahyuni (2018) that the use of the clustering technique is effective in improving students' ability in writing texts. Students are easier to explore ideas and compose sentences, so that they become good writing products. Students who were taught using the clustering technique showed improvement than students who were taught without the clustering technique. Based on the previous study conducted by Rinawati (2018), clustering technique successfully improving writing skill. The clustering technique is attractive and easy to use. Thus, students enjoy and are motivated to write more.

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