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Improving Exposition Paragraph Writing Skills Through the Think-Talk-Write Method

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Abstract

Students' ability to write exposition paragraphs is an important component of Indonesian language learning. However, students of class X-1 at SMA Negeri 14 Ambon experienced difficulties in writing exposition paragraphs, particularly in relation to the suitability of topic and content, grammar, affixation, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. This study aims to improve students' ability to write exposition paragraphs through the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method. This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), which was conducted collaboratively through two cycles. The data were collected through interviews, observations, writing assignments, and questionnaires. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show an improvement in students' exposition writing ability following the implementation of the TTW method. In the first cycle, only 7 of 21 students achieved the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM), with a class average score of 60.2. Following reflection and improvement of the learning process, the second cycle resulted in 16 of 21 students achieving the KKM, with a class average score of 83.0. Thus, the students' average score increased by 22.8 points from the first to the second cycle. The findings indicate that the Think, Talk, Write method can improve students' exposition paragraph writing ability by providing opportunities for students to think, interact, exchange ideas, and organize their ideas into written form.

Keywords: *Writing Ability; Exposition Paragraph; Think, Talk, Write (TTW); Classroom Action Research.*



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INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential means of communication that enables human beings to interact and convey thoughts, feelings, and information. As the development of science and technology continues, individuals are increasingly required to possess adequate language skills so that they can receive, process, and communicate information effectively, both orally and in written form (Özçelik & Batur, 2023; Tuncer & Karataş, 2022). In formal education, language learning is directed toward developing students' ability to use language effectively. These abilities encompass four interrelated language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, writing has an important position because it enables learners to communicate ideas and information through written language.

Writing is a complex language skill because it requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, ideas, organization, and the ability to communicate meaning coherently. Carvalhais et al., (2021), explain that writing is a process involving prewriting, writing, editing, revision, and refinement. Similarly, Sun and Zhang (2022) views writing as an activity of expressing ideas, opinions, thoughts, and feelings in written form. The ideas expressed through writing need to be organized in a systematic, orderly, and comprehensible manner so that readers can understand the intended meaning. Thus, writing cannot be regarded as a spontaneous activity but requires conscious effort and continuous practice. The complexity of writing is also reflected in the process of transferring ideas into written symbols. Turkbek (2021), states that writing is a process that requires knowledge and skills, while Bisriyah (2022) describes writing as a creative process of transferring ideas into written symbols. Writing therefore involves not only the ability to produce sentences but also the ability to organize ideas, select appropriate language, and communicate meaning to readers. Dux et al., (2022) similarly emphasizes that writing produces ideas expressed through written language so that they can be read and understood by a wider readership.

One type of writing that students are expected to master is the exposition paragraph. An exposition paragraph aims to explain or present information about a particular object or topic in order to broaden the reader's knowledge. Unlike persuasive writing, exposition does not primarily seek to change the reader's attitude or opinion. Its principal purpose is to provide information in an objective manner. Liu and Huang (2021), explain that exposition may be developed through several strategies, including examples, processes, cause and effect, classification, definition, comparison, and contrast. These characteristics require students to organize information logically and express it through coherent paragraph structures. In the context of Indonesian language learning, the ability to write exposition paragraphs is therefore an important competency for students. However, the preliminary observation conducted in class X-1 of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon indicated that most students experienced difficulties in writing exposition paragraphs. The difficulties were found in several aspects, including the suitability between topic and content, grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. The learning process at the time was also predominantly teacher-centered, with the teacher providing explanations and instructions before asking students to write. This situation provided limited opportunities for students to actively develop and exchange their ideas during the writing process.

The problem was also associated with students' limited interest in writing activities. The preliminary data showed that only 7 of 21 students stated that they liked writing materials, while 14 students reported that they did not. Similarly, only 10 students expressed interest in writing exposition paragraphs, whereas 11 students did not. Most students also stated that the teacher had not previously used varied learning methods, and 18 of the 21 students reported that the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method had never been implemented in their class. These conditions indicate the need for a learning approach that provides students with greater opportunities to develop ideas, interact with peers, and actively participate in the writing process (Ummah et al., 2022). One instructional approach that can accommodate these needs is the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method. The method emphasizes three interconnected stages: thinking, talking, and writing. Through the thinking stage, students are given an opportunity to develop and organize ideas before writing. The talking stage allows students to interact with peers, exchange information, and clarify their ideas through discussion. These ideas are subsequently transformed into written form in the writing stage. The collaborative character of learning is particularly relevant to writing instruction because students can obtain additional ideas and feedback through interaction with their peers (Budiyono et al., 2023; Widayawati et al., 2021). The importance of individual interaction and the development of students' ideas through learning activities is also reflected in the literature concerning the development of individual student abilities.

The implementation of a learning method that encourages interaction is particularly important in writing instruction because students need opportunities to formulate and refine their ideas before producing a written text. The TTW method provides a sequence through which students are not immediately required to write, but first engage in individual thinking and interaction with their peers. In this way, writing becomes part of a broader process of idea development (Budiyono et al., 2023). The method is consequently expected to address some of the difficulties identified in the preliminary observation, particularly difficulties in

organizing ideas and expressing them coherently in exposition paragraphs. The need to improve the writing ability of students in class X-1 SMA Negeri 14 Ambon is also related to the position of exposition writing as one of the competencies included in Indonesian language learning at the senior high school level. The preliminary condition demonstrated a gap between the expected competency and students' actual writing performance. Therefore, an instructional intervention was needed to improve both the learning process and students' writing outcomes. Classroom Action Research provides an appropriate framework for addressing such classroom-based problems because its orientation is toward improving educational practices through systematic action and reflection (Defianty & Wilson, 2024).

Based on the problems identified in the preliminary observation, this study focuses on improving the ability of class X-1 students of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon to write exposition paragraphs through the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method. The study aims to determine whether the application of the TTW method can improve students' exposition paragraph writing ability. The improvement is examined through students' writing performance and the development of the learning process across successive action cycles. The study is expected to contribute to the development of more interactive writing instruction and provide an alternative method for teachers in improving students' ability to develop ideas into coherent exposition paragraphs.

METHODS

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve the ability of students in class X-1 of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon to write exposition paragraphs through the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method. Classroom Action Research is conducted to improve the quality of learning practices in the classroom by implementing actions based on reflection on the learning process and its outcomes (Suwartono, 2024). The use of CAR in this study was intended to address the difficulties experienced by students in writing exposition paragraphs and to improve the learning process through the implementation of the TTW method. The research was conducted in class X-1 of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon. The participants consisted of 21 students. The research was conducted collaboratively, involving the researcher and a collaborator in observing the learning process and assessing students' writing outcomes. The collaborative character of Classroom Action Research allows teachers and colleagues to participate in observing the learning process and identifying problems that need to be addressed through subsequent actions (Defianty & Wilson, 2024).

The research was implemented in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of four interconnected stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The first cycle was designed based on the problems identified during the preliminary observation. The results of the first cycle were then reflected upon and used as the basis for planning the second cycle. The second cycle was therefore developed based on the weaknesses identified in the first cycle rather than being designed independently from the initial action. At the planning stage, the researcher prepared the lesson plans, learning materials, instructional media, and assessment instruments required for the implementation of the TTW method. The planning also considered the difficulties identified during the preliminary observation, particularly students' difficulties in organizing ideas and writing exposition paragraphs. The implementation stage, the learning activities were conducted according to the lesson plans. Students were introduced to the objectives of exposition paragraph writing and were guided through the TTW learning process. Students were given opportunities to think about the topic and develop ideas, interact and exchange ideas with members of their groups, and subsequently organize those ideas into written exposition paragraphs (Budiyono et al., 2023; Widyawati et al., 2021). The writing activities were directed toward five assessment aspects: the suitability of the topic and content, grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization.

The observation stage, students' activities during the learning process were observed, while their writing performance was assessed based on the predetermined criteria. Observation was also used to identify students' difficulties during the implementation of the TTW method. In addition, students' responses toward the learning process were collected through questionnaires and self-assessment (Hakim et al., 2022; Mawiliana, 2021). The reflection stage, the results of the learning activities and students' writing performance were evaluated to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the action. The results of the first cycle showed that a number of students had not yet achieved the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM), particularly in grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and the organization of exposition paragraphs. These findings were used to formulate improvements for the second cycle. The cycle was continued until the learning outcomes met the predetermined success criteria, following the principle that subsequent actions in Classroom Action Research are determined by reflection on the results of the preceding cycle (Defianty & Wilson, 2024).

Data were collected through interviews, observations, writing assignments, questionnaires, and self-assessment. Interviews and observations were used to obtain information about the learning process and students' difficulties. Writing assignments were used to measure students' ability to produce exposition

paragraphs. Questionnaires were used to identify students' responses and perceptions toward the learning process, while self-assessment was used to obtain information about students' participation in the learning activities. Students' writing was assessed using five aspects: (1) the suitability of the topic and content, (2) grammar, (3) the use of affixed words, (4) spelling and punctuation, and (5) paragraph organization. The students' scores were then compared between cycles to determine the extent of improvement following the implementation of the TTW method. In the first cycle, the assessment was used to identify the students who had achieved and had not achieved the KKM. The results subsequently became the basis for improving the learning process in the second cycle.

The data were analyzed through three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting and organizing relevant information obtained from observations, interviews, questionnaires, self-assessments, and students' writing results. The reduced data were then presented descriptively to identify changes in students' learning activities and writing performance across the cycles. Conclusions were drawn by comparing the results of the first and second cycles, particularly students' average scores, the number of students achieving the KKM, and the types of writing difficulties experienced by students. The success of the action was determined by comparing students' writing performance across the cycles. The research was considered successful when the students' writing ability showed improvement and the learning outcomes reached the predetermined KKM. The original study used a KKM of 75 as the criterion for determining whether students had achieved the expected learning outcome.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initial Condition of Students' Exposition Writing Ability

The preliminary observation showed that students in class X-1 of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon experienced difficulties in writing exposition paragraphs. The difficulties were identified in several aspects of writing, including the relationship between the topic and content, grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. The learning process was predominantly conducted through teacher explanation, followed by writing assignments. This learning pattern provided limited opportunities for students to actively exchange ideas and develop their writing through interaction.

The initial questionnaire also indicated that students' interest in writing was relatively low. Of the 21 students, only 7 students stated that they liked writing activities, while 14 students did not. Ten students expressed interest in writing exposition paragraphs, whereas 11 students did not. In addition, 18 students stated that the TTW method had never previously been implemented in their class. These conditions became the basis for implementing the TTW method through Classroom Action Research.

Cycle I

The first cycle consisted of two meetings. The first meeting was conducted on October 7, 2015, while the second meeting was conducted on October 12, 2015. The learning activities focused on introducing exposition paragraph writing through the TTW method. Students were given opportunities to develop their knowledge through questions and answers and subsequently write exposition paragraphs based on materials provided by the teacher. The questionnaire results during the first cycle showed that students had begun to respond to the learning activities, although their participation was not yet optimal. Ten students reported that they seriously prepared themselves before writing, nine students reported asking their peers questions during group activities, seven students stated that they tried to write exposition paragraphs well, 13 students wrote according to the TTW method, and 12 students reviewed their work before submission.

The writing assessment in Cycle I focused on five aspects: topic-content suitability, grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. The total score obtained by the 21 students was 1,265, producing a class average of 60.2. Only 7 students achieved the KKM, while 14 students had not yet reached the KKM. The highest score was 85 and the lowest was 45.

Table 1. Students' Exposition Writing Achievement in Cycle I

Indicator	Cycle I
Number of students	21
Total score	1,265
Mean score	60.2
Students achieving KKM	7
Students not achieving KKM	14

Highest score	85
Lowest score	45
KKM	75

The difficulties identified during Cycle I were mainly related to grammar, the use of affixed words, spelling and punctuation, and the relationship between the topic and the content. Four students experienced difficulties with grammar, four with the use of affixed words, five with spelling and punctuation, and one with the suitability of topic and content. No students were reported as experiencing difficulty with paragraph organization according to the difficulty classification presented for this cycle. The results demonstrate that the implementation of TTW in Cycle I had begun to create opportunities for students to participate more actively in writing activities. However, the learning outcomes had not yet reached the expected level because only one-third of the students had achieved the KKM. Therefore, the reflection stage identified several aspects that needed improvement before the implementation of Cycle II.

Cycle II

Cycle II was implemented based on the reflection results from Cycle I. The main difficulties identified in the first cycle were students' ability to relate the topic to the content, apply appropriate grammar, use affixed words, apply spelling and punctuation, and organize exposition paragraphs. Since only 7 of the 21 students had achieved the KKM in Cycle I, the learning process was continued into Cycle II. The first meeting of Cycle II was conducted on October 21, 2015. Students were again guided to write exposition paragraphs using the TTW method. They were given learning objectives and writing materials and were instructed to develop their exposition paragraphs according to the stages and directions provided during the learning process.

Students' responses during Cycle II showed substantial improvement. Nineteen students reported seriously preparing themselves before writing, all 21 students reported actively interacting with peers by asking questions during group activities, 20 students stated that they attempted to write exposition paragraphs well, all 21 students reported writing according to the method, and 20 students reviewed their work before submitting it. The second meeting of Cycle II was conducted on October 27, 2015. The writing assessment showed that 16 of the 21 students achieved the KKM. The total score increased to 1,745, producing a class average of 83.0. Compared with the Cycle I average of 60.2, the average score increased by 22.8 points.

Table 2. Comparison of Students' Exposition Writing Achievement

Indicator	Cycle I	Cycle II	Improvement
Number of students	21	21	—
Total score	1,265	1,745	+480
Mean score	60.2	83.0	+22.8
Students achieving KKM	7	16	+9
Students not achieving KKM	14	5	−9
KKM	75	75	—

The reduction in students' difficulties was also evident in Cycle II. No students experienced difficulties in matching the topic with the content. One student experienced difficulty with grammar, one with the use of affixed words, two with spelling and punctuation, and one with paragraph organization. The comparison between the two cycles demonstrates a substantial improvement. The number of students achieving the KKM increased from 7 to 16, while the number of students who had not achieved the KKM decreased from 14 to 5. Because the class average in Cycle II reached 83.0 and exceeded the KKM of 75, the research was concluded at the second cycle.

The Effect of TTW on Students' Exposition Writing Ability

The results indicate that the implementation of the Think, Talk, Write method improved students' exposition writing ability. The improvement is demonstrated by the increase in the class average from 60.2 in Cycle I to 83.0 in Cycle II. The increase of 22.8 points was accompanied by an increase in the number of students achieving the KKM, from 7 students to 16 students. This improvement can be understood from the learning sequence embedded in the TTW method. Writing requires students to develop ideas, organize information, and express those ideas in a coherent written form. The TTW sequence provides students with opportunities to formulate ideas before writing and to develop those ideas through interaction with peers.

The interaction stage is particularly relevant because students can exchange information and clarify their understanding before transferring their ideas into written language. The findings also demonstrate that the improvement was not limited to students' final scores. Students' participation during the learning process increased considerably. In Cycle I, only 9 students reported asking peers questions during group activities, whereas in Cycle II all 21 students reported actively interacting with their peers. Similarly, the number of students who seriously prepared themselves before writing increased from 10 to 19. These findings suggest that the Talk component of TTW provided an important bridge between thinking and writing. Students were not required to immediately translate ideas into written paragraphs. Instead, they had an opportunity to discuss and exchange ideas with peers. Such interaction potentially helped students clarify the content they intended to write and organize their ideas before producing the final paragraph.

Improvement in the Quality of Exposition Paragraphs

The improvement in students' scores was accompanied by a reduction in the number of students experiencing difficulties in the five assessed writing aspects. In Cycle I, difficulties were still found in topic-content suitability, grammar, affixation, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. By Cycle II, the number of students experiencing these difficulties had decreased considerably. The most notable improvement occurred in topic-content suitability. In Cycle I, one student experienced difficulty in this aspect, while no students were reported as experiencing this difficulty in Cycle II. This indicates that the process of thinking and discussing before writing may have helped students establish a clearer relationship between the topic and the information they intended to present. Grammar and affixation difficulties also decreased from four students for each aspect in Cycle I to one student for each aspect in Cycle II. Spelling and punctuation difficulties decreased from five students to two students. Paragraph organization, which was already reported as having no students experiencing difficulty in the Cycle I classification, remained relatively stable. These changes indicate that the improvement occurred across several components of writing rather than being limited to the overall score.

TTW and Students' Active Participation

Another important finding is the change in students' perceptions and participation during the learning process. In the first cycle, many students were still unfamiliar with the TTW method. Eighteen of the 21 students reported that TTW had never previously been implemented in their class. In the second cycle, however, all students reported that they enjoyed writing exposition paragraphs using the TTW method, while 20 students reported that they had experienced progress in the writing learning process. The finding indicates that the effectiveness of TTW was associated not only with the final writing scores but also with students' engagement in learning. The method created opportunities for students to interact, ask questions, exchange ideas, and review their writing. In this sense, writing was positioned as a social and cognitive activity rather than an individual activity that begins and ends with the production of a written paragraph. The result is consistent with the collaborative orientation of Classroom Action Research and the emphasis on student interaction in the development of individual learning abilities. (Defianty & Wilson, 2024) emphasizes the importance of collaboration in classroom action research, while Budiyo et al., (2023) highlights the development of students' individual abilities through learning activities. In the present study, the collaborative element was manifested through students' interaction during the Talk stage of TTW.

Achievement of the Research Success Criteria

The final indicator of success was the achievement of the predetermined KKM of 75. In Cycle I, the class average of 60.2 was below the KKM, and only 7 of 21 students achieved the required standard. Consequently, the action was continued into Cycle II. After improvements were made based on the reflection of Cycle I, the class average increased to 83.0, with 16 of 21 students achieving the KKM. The increase from 60.2 to 83.0 represents an improvement of 22.8 points, while the number of students achieving the KKM increased by 9 students. The proportion of students achieving the KKM therefore increased from approximately 33.3% in Cycle I to 76.2% in Cycle II. This indicates that the action achieved the predetermined learning criterion and provided sufficient evidence that the implementation of TTW improved students' exposition writing performance. The results ultimately show that the TTW method provided a more interactive learning environment for exposition writing. Through the sequence of thinking, discussing, and writing, students were given opportunities to prepare ideas, communicate them with peers, and transform the results of that interaction into written paragraphs. The improvement in both students' participation and writing scores supports the use of TTW as an alternative approach for teaching exposition paragraph writing in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Think, Talk, Write (TTW) method improved the ability of students in class X-1 of SMA Negeri 14 Ambon to write exposition paragraphs. The improvement was evident from the changes in students' writing performance between Cycle I and Cycle II. In Cycle I, the class average score was 60.2, with only 7 of 21 students achieving the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM). After improvements were made based on the reflection of Cycle I, the class average increased to 83.0 in Cycle II, with 16 of 21 students achieving the KKM. Thus, the students' average score increased by 22.8 points. The improvement was also reflected in students' learning participation. Through the TTW sequence, students were provided with opportunities to develop ideas individually, exchange ideas with peers, and organize those ideas into written exposition paragraphs. Students became more actively involved in group interaction, writing activities, and reviewing their work. The number of students experiencing difficulties in writing also decreased across the two cycles, particularly in topic-content suitability, grammar, affixation, spelling and punctuation, and paragraph organization. Based on these findings, the Think, Talk, Write method can be considered an effective alternative for improving exposition paragraph writing in this classroom context. The method not only contributed to improved writing scores but also encouraged students to participate actively in developing, discussing, and organizing their ideas before expressing them in written form. The achievement of the KKM in Cycle II provided the basis for concluding the Classroom Action Research after the second cycle.

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