

## ENHANCING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE WRITING THROUGH A PROCESS-ORIENTED APPROACH: A CASE STUDY AT SMA NEGERI 9 KUPANG

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Abstract	Article Information
<p><i>This classroom action research investigates the effectiveness of a process-oriented approach in improving students' writing skills, specifically in descriptive texts, among tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 9 Kupang. Writing is widely recognized as the most complex of the four language skills, requiring cognitive, structural, and linguistic competencies. The study was conducted in two cycles, each comprising planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, observations, and documentation. The initial findings revealed that students faced difficulties in generating and organizing ideas in descriptive writing. In the first cycle, the average writing score increased from 67.1 (pre-test) to 71.96 (post-test I), with 20 students meeting the minimum passing grade. However, the criteria for success were not yet met. In the second cycle, instructional improvements led to a further increase in the average score to 76.58, with 30 students surpassing the minimum standard. The results demonstrate that the process-oriented approach significantly enhances students' ability to write coherent and detailed descriptive texts. The integration of structured writing stages, peer feedback, and reflective learning was effective in improving student outcomes.</i></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>process-oriented approach, descriptive text, writing skill, classroom action research, English as a foreign language</i></p>	<p><i>Received:</i> 11/03/2025</p> <p><i>Revised:</i> 15/03/2025</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> 17/03/2025</p>

### INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of communication in speech and writing used by people to convey ideas, emotions, knowledge, and cultural values (Oxford, 2000). It plays a central role in human life and has become an essential subject of scientific inquiry. As English continues to

function as a global lingua franca, its mastery becomes increasingly important, particularly in the context of globalization. Despite this, many individuals still struggle with English proficiency, highlighting the need for effective pedagogical strategies to support English language acquisition. Each country has its own language, but English remains the dominant international language. Therefore, it is crucial for individuals—especially students—to learn English to enhance personal and societal competitiveness in the global era. English is not only used for everyday communication but also serves as a medium to access and express information, emotions, scientific knowledge, technology, and culture. In Indonesia, English is taught as the first foreign language from elementary school through higher education. Among the four core language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—writing is often perceived as the most challenging for learners. Writing is a complex skill involving idea generation, structure, coherence, grammar, and vocabulary. It enables learners to express thoughts systematically and critically. As Yulianti (2018) noted, writing fosters critical thinking as students learn to organize their thoughts in a structured manner. Furthermore, Stalin and Kim Hua (2020) identified writing as the most laborious skill for second language learners to master, as it demands high levels of cognitive and linguistic competence. The process-oriented approach to teaching writing emphasizes the stages a writer undergoes in creating a text. Rather than treating editing as the first and only step, this approach views writing as a recursive and multi-stage process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and, if desired, publishing (Murray, 1972). Collaborative practices such as peer review and teacher feedback are also integral components of this model. This approach is widely considered effective in fostering student engagement and improving writing quality.

In this study, the focus is placed on the application of the process-oriented approach in teaching descriptive text. Descriptive text is a genre used to depict a specific person, place, object, or event in vivid detail so that the reader can visualize the subject (Gerot & Wignell, 1994; Knapp & Watkins, 2005). The descriptive process includes naming, classifying, and elaborating on attributes, functions, behaviors, and other relevant details. Mastery of this genre is important not only for academic purposes but also for broader communicative competence.

This study presents a novel contribution by integrating the process-oriented approach with motivational elements in the context of teaching descriptive writing to tenth-grade students. While previous studies have explored either the process-oriented approach or genre-based instruction separately, few have combined both in the context of Indonesian senior high schools, especially within a single classroom action research (CAR) framework. The originality also lies in the localized setting—class X-C of SMA Negeri 9 Kupang—which adds new contextual data to the growing body of research on second language writing pedagogy.

This research seeks to answer the following question: What are the types and stages involved in developing writing skills through a process-oriented approach in descriptive text for tenth-grade students?

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Previous Studies**

Several researchers have investigated strategies to improve students' descriptive writing skills:

- Arifin (2020) studied the effect of picture media on students' achievement in writing descriptive texts among seventh-grade students at SMPN 7 Bangkalan. The study highlighted how visual prompts can support idea generation, vocabulary choice, and coherence in learners' writing.
- Junaedi (2021) focused on using image media as a pedagogical tool to enhance English descriptive writing. The research found that writing performance improved significantly, particularly in the areas of descriptive richness and language accuracy.

These studies underscore the positive impact of visual aids on developing writing skills, although they mostly focus on content enhancement rather than the writing process itself.

### **Defining Writing Skills**

Writing is recognized as one of the most challenging language skills due to its complexity in grammar, organization, and rhetorical structure. Scholars have variously characterized the nature of writing: Harmer (2004) emphasizes that writing is a process influenced by genre constraints; familiarity with genres is essential for effective composition. Myers (2005) defines writing as a form of self-expression that unfolds through planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Palmer (1994) describes writing as a recursive process, where authors repeatedly reassess and refine their ideas. Lyons (cited in O'Malley, 1996) views writing as a personal activity where writers shape input into unique output. Oshima and Hogue (1999, 2007) highlight the stages of writing: pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing, with explicit strategies for improving both content and mechanics. Together, these perspectives affirm that writing transcends mere transcription—it's a cognitive and iterative activity requiring sustained effort.

### **The Writing Process**

Effective writing instruction often rests on decomposing writing into discrete stages: (1). Pre-writing (Planning): Generating ideas, organizing content, (2). Drafting: Converting ideas into written form, (3). Revising: Improving content structure and clarity, (4). Editing: Refining grammar, punctuation, mechanics and (5). (Optional) Publishing: Sharing the final version with others. Oshima and Hogue's (2007) model is widely adopted in ESL/EFL contexts, emphasizing that feedback—both peer and teacher—is critical during revision. Breaking the process into stages helps manage writing anxiety and promotes iterative refinement.

### **Types of Writing**

Callella (2001) classifies writing into five main genres: (1). Expository: Informative and factual ("how-to" articles, reports), (2). Descriptive: Vivid, sensory-based portrayal (e.g., imagery-rich descriptions), (3). Narrative: Storytelling with plot and characters, (4). Persuasive: Argumentation aimed at influencing opinions and (5). Creative: Imaginative writing such as

poetry, short stories. In secondary education, descriptive writing is emphasized to develop expressive and observational language—essential skills for language proficiency and academic success.

### **Purpose of Writing**

Pratama (2012) outlines three primary writing purposes:

1. To inform: Providing clear, accurate information (e.g., articles, reports).
2. To persuade: Convincing the reader through argument and evidence.
3. To entertain: Evoking emotions or imagination (e.g., stories, poetry).

Understanding purpose and audience is fundamental in writing instruction and genre-based teaching.

### **Descriptive Text**

As described by Kistono and Ismukoco (2006), descriptive writing provides detailed depiction of a person, place, object, or event. The structure typically involves: (a). Identification: Introducing the subject and (b). Description: Explaining attributes, functions, and qualities (Hartono cited in Yanora, 2005). Descriptive texts aim to recreate sensory impressions and emotional resonance, enabling readers to visualize the subject and connect on a personal level.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study, covering the research location, design, sources of data, research instruments, data collection techniques, and procedural steps. This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 9 Kupang, purposively selected due to its relevance to the research focus and the suitability of its teaching-learning context. The school provides an appropriate environment for implementing innovative teaching strategies such as the process-oriented approach in writing instruction. The participants of the study were tenth-grade students, specifically Class C, whose academic level and curricular exposure aligned well with the objectives of the research. The research is framed as Classroom Action Research (CAR), a methodological approach designed to identify, analyze, and solve educational problems through a reflective and cyclical process. According to Mulyasa (2009), CAR consists of four systematic stages: (1). Planning, (2). Acting, (3). Observing, and (4). Reflecting.

This cyclical nature allows for the continuous refinement of teaching practices based on real-time classroom feedback. In this study, the researcher, acting as the teacher, conducted two full cycles of CAR, ensuring ample opportunity to evaluate and improve student outcomes in writing descriptive texts.

This study lies in its practical integration of the process-oriented approach within the CAR framework, targeting the specific challenges students face in descriptive writing. While many studies explore writing strategies, few focus on applying process-oriented instruction

iteratively in real classrooms through action research. Moreover, the incorporation of authentic classroom documentation and reflective teaching cycles makes this study contextually rich and pedagogically innovative—contributing to both theoretical and applied discourse in second language writing pedagogy.

In accordance with Sudaryanto (1993), data sources in this study are divided into:

- Primary data, derived directly from the classroom through pre-tests, post-tests, and observation of student behavior and performance.
- Secondary data, which includes lesson plans, student writing samples, curriculum documents, photographs, and relevant academic literature.

This categorization strengthens the data's validity and ensures a triangulated foundation for the analysis. According to Arikunto (2002), instruments are tools used to collect systematic data. This study employed the following instruments:

- Observation sheets – to capture students' engagement, interaction, and participation during instruction.
- Pre-tests and post-tests – developed based on the national curriculum, aimed at measuring students' writing competence before and after the implementation of the process-oriented approach.
- Documentation – includes photographic evidence, student drafts, teacher journals, and reflection notes.

Achievement tests were designed using the principles outlined by Hughes (2003), which focus on assessing students' mastery of learning objectives—in this case, the ability to compose coherent and descriptive texts using a structured writing process.

Data were collected using triangulated methods to ensure both reliability and validity:

1. Observation – to obtain qualitative data on classroom dynamics and instructional implementation.
2. Pre-test and Post-test – to quantitatively measure the progress of students' writing abilities.
3. Documentation – to support findings with contextual and visual evidence.

Each method was consistently applied during the two research cycles to comprehensively capture the learning process and assess the impact of the teaching intervention.

The study followed the Classroom Action Research model in two cycles, each with four key phases:

1. Planning – designing lesson plans, materials, and success criteria based on students' needs and curriculum guidelines.
2. Acting – implementing the process-oriented writing instruction in real classroom settings.

3. Observing – collecting observational and test data on students’ participation and writing outcomes.
4. Reflecting – analyzing the data to identify successes and areas for improvement, informing the next cycle.

**FINDINGS**

Before conducting the first cycle, the researcher did a preliminary study. The preliminary study is intended to know the students improvement in writing. In this preliminary study, the researcher gave, writing test. Writing test it used to evaluate student improvement and how the result of the scores that they improved. The English teacher made 75 as minimum mastery criterion (KKM). In writing lesson. The number of students 50 from the result of writing test in pre-test, the total scores of the students writing descriptive text in pre-test was 3.355 and the mean of the students scores 67,1.

Based on the scores writing descriptive text, it is indicated that the students improvement in writing descriptive text also still low. It can be seen from the mean score of the students was 3.355 and the score of the students test was 15 students who passed score up 75. On the other hand, 35 students failed or didn’t get score up 75.

Based on the analysis result, it can be concluded that the students achievement in writing descriptive text was not good yet and low. So post- test continued in the first cycle.

Table 1

The result of Pre-test Students Writing

No.	Student's numbers	Pre-test
1.	S1	90
2.	S2	80
3.	S3	80
4.	S4	80
5.	S5	80
6.	S6	80
7.	S7	75
8.	S8	90
9.	S9	75
10.	S10	75
11.	S11	90
12.	S12	75
13.	S13	75
14.	S14	80
15.	S15	85
16.	S16	60
17.	S17	60
18.	S18	60
19.	S19	60
20.	S20	60
21.	S21	60
22.	S22	60
23.	S23	60
24.	S24	70
25.	S25	70
26.	S26	70
27.	S27	70
28.	S28	70
29.	S29	70
30.	S30	70
31.	S31	70
32.	S32	70
33.	S33	70
34.	S34	60
35.	S35	60
36.	S36	60
37.	S37	50
38.	S38	50
39.	S39	50
40.	S40	50
41.	S41	50
42.	S42	50
43.	S43	50
44.	S44	60
45.	S45	65
46.	S46	65
47.	S47	65
48.	S48	65
49.	S49	65
50.	S50	50
	Mean	67,1

**Findings of First Cycle**

In this cycle, the researcher carried out four steps, namely: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In this cycle, there were one meeting conducted with students. Tests were given at the beginning and end of the learning process.

The steps in this cycle are:

**a) Planning**

In this step, the researcher prepares everything before conducting the research. The activities carried out by the researcher are preparing all instruments such as observation sheets and pre-test and post-test question sheets. To improve writing skills, it will be applied in the form of text. Then the lesson plan and written text are prepared. Learning resources and learning media. In this study, the researcher acts as a teacher.

**b) Action**

The writer implemented the teaching learning process based on the lesson plan had been made. In the first meeting, the writer taught descriptive text. Based on the topic given and then he collects it. In the second meeting, the students were asked them to revise their first draft based on their question and asked them to revise their first draft by peer correction. In the third meeting, the students were asked to edit their draft, read their final draft, and collect the final draft. The final draft was the data for the post-test.

**c) Observation**

The writer carried out the observation. The writer observed the teaching learning process by monitoring the students' activities in this cycle. The writer was that most of meetings were not running well. The students still looked confused, and still felt difficult to generate their ideas into a readable text of descriptive.

**d) Reflection**

The writer carried out the observation. The writer observed the teaching learning process by monitoring the students' activities in the cycle the writer saw that most of meetings were not running well. The students still looked confused, and still felt difficult to generate their ideas into a readable text of descriptive.

Reflection is an evaluation of actions that have been taken previously. Reflection is used to help researchers make decisions by analyzing the situation and students' difficulties in understanding the lesson. Through reflection, researchers know the results of students after working on the test. Based on the results of the writing scores in cycle I and also observations, corrective actions are needed. In fact, students' scores in writing cycle I increased compared to the diagnostic test scores. However, there is still a need for improvement in descriptive writing because some of them are still confused in understanding descriptive texts.

Writing results in the first cycle how that, the total score of students was 3,598 and the number of students who passed the exam was still 20 out of 50 students, the average score of students' descriptive text writing was 71,96. It can be seen that the score of students' descriptive text in the first cycle increased but was still low. The percentage of students' descriptive text of 20 students who succeeded and got a score of 75 or more. So, the writing in the first cycle was categorized as unsuccessful.

In the diagnostic test, students who scored 67.1. In the cycle I test, students who scored 71.96. It can be concluded that students' writing skills have increased but have not been successful. Therefore, the researcher conducted cycle II. From the student responses and the scores of the students' written texts above, the researcher stated to continue to the second cycle with the hope that it would be better than before. The second cycle was carried out to achieve an increase in students' scores in writing descriptive texts.

Table 2  
The result of the first post-test students writing

No.	Students' numbers	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1.	S1	90	90
2.	S2	80	80
3.	S3	80	80
4.	S4	80	80
5.	S5	80	80
6.	S6	80	80
7.	S7	75	75
8.	S8	90	90
9.	S9	75	75
10.	S10	75	75
11.	S11	90	90
12.	S12	75	75
13.	S13	75	75
14.	S14	80	80
15.	S15	85	85
16.	S16	60	75
17.	S17	60	75
18.	S18	60	75
19.	S19	60	80
20.	S20	60	80
21.	S21	60	60
22.	S22	60	60
23.	S23	60	60
24.	S24	70	70
25.	S25	70	70
26.	S26	70	72
27.	S27	70	72
28.	S28	70	74
29.	S29	70	74
30.	S30	70	74
31.	S31	70	74
32.	S32	70	74
33.	S33	70	74
34.	S34	60	70
35.	S35	60	70
36.	S36	60	70
37.	S37	50	60
38.	S38	50	60
39.	S39	50	60
40.	S40	50	60
41.	S41	50	60
42.	S42	50	60
43.	S43	50	60
44.	S44	60	65
45.	S45	65	65
46.	S46	65	65
47.	S47	65	70
48.	S48	65	70
49.	S49	65	70
50.	S50	50	60
	Mean	67,1	71,96

### Findings of the Second Cycle

Based on the result of the first cycle, the researcher continued to do the second cycle. The first cycle indicated that students' writing descriptive text was still low. It happened because of the students' got difficulties to write the generic of descriptive text and many of their writing descriptive text score still not achieve the minimum passing grade.

#### a. Planning

After findings the facts than students writing ability was not satisfied, which was proven by their post-test 1 score, the writer helped by the teacher prepare a lesson plan for the second cycle. Almost there were not significant differences with the previous lesson plan. The material still related to descriptive writing but it is focused on describing a person, place and noun/thing.

The second cycle was carried out to solve the problem found in the first cycle in which student was still difficult to produce the word and organizing their ideas into a good descriptive paragraph.

#### b. Action

The first meeting in the second cycle was held on Thursday, March 13, 2025. Attended by 50 students. The writer conducted the teaching learning process in the second cycle to get better result that was significant in enhancing writing skill in process-oriented approach in descriptive text.



#### **d. Reflection**

The result of the second post-test showed that higher of the students got the score above the minimum mastery criterion (KKM). So, it has met the first criterion of success that 75% of the students must get the score above the minimum mastery criterion-(KKM). So, the writer and the collaborator decided to stop the action.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Observation**

Based on observation conducted by the writer, was known that English teacher taught writing by analyzing the text, then she asked the students to translate and comprehend the text, after that she asked the students to make draft as some as possible with the example text that had been taught. They felt difficult in produced the words, they did not know how to generate ideas or even less organize their ideas into a good text descriptive. They need a simple text descriptive to help them in writing, something that make them motivated and felt simple in writing descriptive. Data of pre-test

Before conducting the first cycle, the researcher did a preliminary study. The preliminary study is intended to know the students improvement in writing. In this preliminary study, the researcher gave, writing test. Writing test it used to evaluate student improvement and how the result of the scores that they improved. The English teacher made 75 as minimum mastery criterion (KKM). In writing lesson. The number of students 50 from the result of writing test in pre-test, the total scores of the students writing descriptive text in pre-test was 3.355 and the mean of the students scores 67,1.

Based on the scores writing descriptive text, it is indicated that the students improvement in writing descriptive text also still low. It can be seen from the mean score of the students was 3.355 and the score of the students test was 15 students who passed score up 75. On the other hand, 35 students failed or didn't get score up 75.

Based on the analysis result, it can be concluded that the students achievement in writing descriptive text was not good yet and low.

#### **Data of Post-Test**

This test in post-test 1, writing results in the first cycle how that, the total score of students was 3,598 and the number of students who passed the exam was still 20 out of 50 students, the average score of students' descriptive text writing was 71,96. It can be seen that the score of students' descriptive text in the first cycle increased but was still low. The percentage of students' descriptive text of 20 students who succeeded and got a score of 75 or more. So, the writing in the first cycle was categorized as unsuccessful.

In the diagnostic test, students who scored 67.1. In the cycle I test, students who scored 71.96. It can be concluded that students' writing skills have increased but have not been successful. Therefore, the researcher conducted cycle II. From the student responses

and the scores of the students' written texts above, the researcher stated to continue to the second cycle with the hope that it would be better than before. The second cycle was carried out to achieve an increase in students' scores in writing descriptive texts in post-test 1.

The next to post-test 2, Based on the result of the student's writing skill, there was better improvement of students mean score from the student writing in the descriptive text to the second cycle. The mean score for the first one was 71,96. and then mean score of writing post-test in the second cycle was 76,58. it means that the students who passed the minimum mastery criterion, were 30 students if it calculates into class percentage. It indicates that the first criterion of success has been achieved. The following was the table of students writing score. It could be seen from the table above that the numbers of students who passed the minimum mastery criterion.

Also increase from preliminary study and each cycle. In the preliminary study there were only 20 students. Of the who got the score above the minimum mastery criterion, in the first cycle there were only 30 students. Of the students who got the score above the minimum mastery criterion. And in the second cycle the students who passed the minimum mastery criterion, Were 30 students. It proved that the target of the students passed the minimum mastery criterion, could be achieved

### **The Data of Documentation**

Documents study is anything written that contains information serving as proof. Document study includes some media, such as photo, the students, name in the XC- tenth grade of SMA Negeri 9 Kupang.

### **CONCLUSION**

The result of this research showed that the use of descriptive text. It was consisted of one class and 50 students as respondents, The object of this research was to English writing skill in Descriptive text. The research of this study was conducted by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the method of research. This research consists of two cycles and each cycle consisted of four steps, they were: planning, action, observation, and reflection. And then researcher to collect the data and analyze the data the researcher used the information from: observation, Pre-test and Post-test and documentation in order to support the data collected. The data analysis results showed that there was an increase in students' descriptive writing from each cycle. This is shown by the average pre-test score of 67.1. Where, there are 15 students who got a successful criteria score and 35 students got an unsuccessful score. After conducting cycle I using Descriptive text, there was an increase in results with an average student score of 71.96. Where, 20 students got a successful criteria score and 30 students got an unsuccessful criteria score. Then, making improvements for the second cycle after reflection in the first cycle, there was an increase in the average student score to 76.58. Where, 30 students got a successful criteria score and 20 students got an unsuccessful criteria score. it means that there was 4,86 points of mean improvement from the students score in the preliminary study to the first cycle and

there was 9,48 points of mean score of improvement from the students score in preliminary study to the second cycle. From this result the researcher concludes that teaching descriptive writing skill in process-oriented approach in tenth grade of SMA Negeri 9 Kupang, can improve their writing ability.

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