

Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning Strategy to Improve the Secondary Students' Descriptive Writing Ability

Muhammad Hudri *1, Irwandi *2

**12 Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram, Indonesia
mchudory@gmail.com *1; irwandi_athaya@gmail.com *2*

Corresponding Author:

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article history:

Received

Revised

Accepted

Keywords:

Inquiry

Learning

Writing Ability

This study aims at improving the students' writing ability in English through Inquiry-Based Learning strategy. This study employed collaborative classroom action research design in which the researchers and the collaborative teacher work together in designing the lesson plan, implementing the action, observing the action, and making reflection. The subjects of this study were the second year students of MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela of the academic year 2019/2020. This study was conducted in two cycles by following the procedure of the action research i.e. planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The procedures of implementing inquiry based learning strategy in the teaching and learning writing of this study are: (1) engaging students to express their ideas in discussion activities, (2) guiding the students to investigate or observe the objects, (3) asking them to make notes of what they have investigated, (4) engaging them to make outline, (5) providing and discussing a model of text, (6) drafting rough draft based the outline, (7) revising the drafts focusing on the content and organization, (8) conducting peer editing in order to edit the grammatical aspects, (9) sharing the writing by reading it aloud in front of the class, and (10) reflecting the process of writing. The findings of the study showed that the strategy could improve the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs. The improvement can be seen on the mean score of the students writing from preliminary test, test of cycle 1 and test of cycle 2. In the preliminary, the students' mean score on writing test was only 4.5. Meanwhile, in the test of cycle 1 was 5.9 and the test of cycle 2 became 7.1.

I. Introduction

Nowadays, mastering English language both spoken and written is great of importance. English language education is claimed to be inevitable in the era of globalization and it is an inseparable part of human resource development program to increase the quality of the Indonesian people so that they are able to compete with other people from other parts of the world (Gunawan, 1988).

To be fluent in English needs a serious effort to master the four language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing along with the three language components i.e. vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Regarding the language skills, of the four language skills, writing is the most complicated language skill. The difficulties are due to the mechanics of writing, word choice, grammar, and the ability of connecting sentences to become a unified thought in written discourse. Riyanto (2001) reports that the students' problems in writing are due to some factors: lack of vocabulary, lack of English grammar understanding, and lack of practice. Writing practice has not been provided adequately so that the students lack exercises and motivation. As a result, many students get difficulties in writing.

In MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela, writing as one of the language skills that should be learned by the students got less attention from the teachers so that the students were incapable to write paragraphs well. Besides, the teachers of English at MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela commonly had

limited strategies that could be applied in the teaching of writing. They usually asked the students to arrange jumbled words to be a sentence or jumbled sentences to be a paragraph and completing a dialogue or passage, or they only gave a topic and asked the students to write about it without any adequate guidance and no model provided. The students are also asked to write a simple paragraph using their own words without their teacher's assistance. In the conventional way of teaching writing at the MTs, the students were often assigned to write a suggested topic, hand in the writing, and then got it back with mark on their mistakes. As a result, it is difficult for the students to express their ideas on paper. The students are not able to construct their words into a sentence and arrange the sentences to become a good paragraph. This condition influences the students' ability in writing paragraph.

Due to the results of preliminary study at the second year students of MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela on August 7th 2007, it was found that the students had some problems in writing. First, they did not know how to begin to write a simple descriptive paragraph. Second, they felt difficult to find ideas to write. Third, the students wrote a paragraph which presents no clear and detail information. Fourth, most of the sentences in the paragraphs were not related to the main idea and not logically ordered. Fifth, their paragraphs had many grammatical inaccuracies. Last, they were not active in the writing class.

Considering the conditions above, it is necessary to explore a strategy that can provide the students with a good learning atmosphere to take part actively in the teaching and learning process of writing. Some strategies are developed to construct a meaningful teaching and learning in writing. One of the strategies that hopefully can improve the students' ability, especially the ability of the second year students MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela, in writing a paragraph is Inquiry-Based Learning Strategy.

II. Method

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), Kemmis and McTaggart (1988). It is called CAR because the research focused on a particular problem and a particular group of students in a certain classroom. This research focused on the improving the students' descriptive writing skill at the second year students of MTs. Ar Raisyiah Sekarbela in academic year 2019/2020. The research was conducted in two cycles which went through planning, action, observing and reflecting stages.

The first step was preliminary study; the researchers designed the procedure of Inquiry-Based Learning Strategy (IBLS), arranged the lesson plan, preparing materials and media, assessment and rubric resources and set up the criteria of success. The second step was implementation. The researchers applied the planning of treating the students with Inquiry-Based Learning Strategy in teaching and learning process. The next step after implementing the action was observation stage; the researchers observe the teaching and learning process and the process of collecting data. The observation of teaching and learning process was the interaction between teacher and students, among students and activities of the teacher in the class. The teacher conducted test and interview to collect the data. Test was given to know the students' writing score. While interview was conducted to know the students response whether Inquiry-Based Learning Strategy improves their writing skills

III. Result and Discussion

A. Findings in the Cycle 1

The cycle 1 was conducted in three meetings on October 1st, 5th, and 8th, 2019. On the basis of the obtained data from the test, observation checklists, and field note, the researchers and the collaborator made analysis and reflection. It was done to see whether the implementation of teaching writing through IBL strategy was achieved the criteria of success or not. This part covers the analysis of the teaching and learning process and the analysis of the students' writing.

1) Analysis of the Teaching and Learning Process in Cycle 1

The analysis of the teaching and learning process was done on the basis of the information that was obtained from the observation sheets and field notes. The analysis presented the teacher's and the students' activities and responses during the teaching and learning process.

Based on the information obtained, it was found not all students involve actively in the teaching and learning process. For example, there were some students who did not pay attention to the teacher's explanations. They turned their attention only when the teacher asked them to do so. Other students with the initials AZ, MH, ML, MM and RG did irrelevant activities to the assigned task such as writing and drawing something in their own workbook. Moreover, some students did not speak and share ideas with another during the group discussion. They did not take part in the discussion except the teacher asked them to. Besides, many students of the groups work individually. They did not make some interaction with their group members.

The collaborator reported that in prewriting, it was shown that 40% (equal to poor) students discussed the pictures by answering the teacher's questions, 75% (equal to good) students gathered some information related the object observing by making notes, and 50% (equal to fair) shared their ideas to others in their group and making outline in generating their idea. In whilst writing, only 45% (equal to fair) students discussed the models of descriptive paragraph with the teacher, 75% (equal to good) students wrote the first draft, 70% (equal to good) students reread and review the drafts, 45% (equal to fair) student gave comments and suggestions, 65% (equal to good) students checked their draft, and 65% (equal to good) students revise their drafts on content and organization. In post writing, 65% (equal to good) students checked the drafts, 60 % (equal to fair) proofread their friends' drafts, 65% (equal to good) students edited their drafts in terms of language use(grammar), and only 40% (equal to poor) students reflected about the learning process of making descriptive paragraph. In general, the participation of the students in the first cycle was 58% (equal to fair). The qualification of the students who participate during the writing activities in the Cycle one was shown in table 1.

Table 1. The Students' Participation during the Writing Activities in Cycle One

No	Writing Stages	Students' Activities	Categories				
			VG	G	F	P	VP
1	<i>Pre-writing activities</i>	1) Discussing the pictures by answering the teacher's question. 2) Students gather some information related the object observed by making notes. 3) Sharing their ideas to others in their group and making outline in generating their ideas.		√	√	√	
2	<i>Whilst writing activities</i>	4) Discussing the models of descriptive paragraph with the teacher. 5) Writing the first draft 6) Rereading and reviewing the drafts. 7) Giving some comments and suggestions. 8) Checking their writings. 9) Revising their drafts on content and organization.		√ √ √ √ √	√	√	
3	<i>Post writing activities</i>	10) Checking the drafts. 11) Proofreading their friends' drafts. 12) Editing the language use (grammar) of their drafts. 13) Reflecting about the learning process of making descriptive paragraph.		√ √	√	√	

M: Meeting

a.

b. Categories of the writing activities:

c.

d. Very good (VG) : 81% - 100% of the students do

e. Good (G) : 61% - 80% of the students do

f. Fair (F) : 41% - 60% of the students do

g. Poor (P) : 21% - 40% of the students do

h. Very poor (VP) : 0% - 20% of the students do

The field notes revealed that during the implementation of the actions in meeting one, meeting two, and meeting three, some problems were found. First, some students did not totally understand the teacher's explanation. The possible factor that caused the problem was the teacher's explanation was mostly in English. Second, the difficulty faced by the students mostly dealt with expressing

their ideas in English, so that their writings had some grammatical errors. Not all students were equipped with enough English vocabulary to write so that most of the times they looked up the words in their dictionaries even some of them wrote their Indonesian language version of their descriptive paragraph before they translated the paragraph into English. Erroneously, the number of dictionaries available was not sufficient with the number neither of students nor of the number of groups.

2) *Analysis of the Students' Writing*

This section presents the analysis of the students' writing in the cycle 1 and the analysis of cycle 1.

a) *Analysis of the Students' Writing in Cycle 1*

The students' writing obtained from the cycle 1 were collected and analyzed. In analyzing the students' writing, both the teacher and the collaborator discussed and scored the students' writing one by one on the basis of the scoring guide. The analysis was emphasized on three components of writing, namely: content, organization, and language use.

From the analysis, it was found that the students still made some mistakes in terms of content, organization, and language use. Most of the students' writing contents presented some details information but it was not easy to understand. Most of the students organized the ideas of their writing almost clearly but no logical sequencing. Besides, they still contained some errors of language use. The samples of errors in the students' writing in cycle one could be seen on the table 4.2.

Table 2. Samples of Errors in the Students' Writing in Cycle 1

No.	Types of Errors	Sample of the Students' Errors	The teacher's correction
1.	<i>Inappropriate use of S-V agreement</i>	It is absorb water	It absorbs water
2.	<i>The absence of article</i>	This is banana tree	This is a banana tree
3.	<i>Inappropriate word order</i>	The tree has fruit sweet	The tree has sweet fruit
4.	<i>Plural form</i>	It has some leaf	It has some leaves

The table 2 shows samples of grammatical errors the student frequently made. From the errors, it was concluded that the students still had limited knowledge of the English Grammar. For example, the students had problems with Subject-Verb agreement. Another problem dealt with the absence of articles. This happened because the articles are not commonly used in *Bahasa Indonesia*. Besides, they had problems in a good order of English noun phrases where the adjective was placed before the noun it modified. Moreover, they had problem of plural form in English.

b) *Analysis of the Results Cycle 1*

The test or observation of cycle 1 was held on October 8th, 2019. The materials remained the same as those in the preliminary. The test was administered in the third and fourth periods. The periods started at 08.20 a.m. up to 09.00 a.m. The test was administered to measure the students' writing ability after implementing the strategy in the cycle one.

Based on the result of cycle 1, it was found that the mean of the score was 5.9 of the 0 to 10 range. The results of the students' writing scores in cycle 1 are respectively summarized in table 3.

Table 3. The Results of the Students' Score in the Cycle 1

Cycle	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
<i>Cycle 1</i>	5	7.5	5.9

The table shows that the minimum and maximum scores of students score in cycle 1 were respectively 5 and 7.5. Meanwhile, the mean score of the cycle 1 was 5.9. Furthermore, the results of the students' scores of the three components of writing can be seen in table 4.

Table 4. The Results of the Students' Score in the Components of Writing in the Cycle 1

No.	Aspects of Writing	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1	<i>Content</i>	2	3	2.4
2	<i>Organization</i>	2	3	2.3
3	<i>Language use</i>	2	3	2.4

Table 4 reveals that the mean scores of the content, and language use were identical; they were 2.4., while the mean score of the organization was 2.3. The minimum scores for content, organization, and language aspect of writings were 2. Meanwhile, the minimum scores for content, organization, and language use aspects were 3. Some students were able to dig up the content of the paragraph and some of their writings presented some details information. Besides, some students still had problems in organizing their paragraphs. Some of their paragraphs were rather logically ordered and some sentences are related to the main idea. In addition, some paragraphs the students made grammatical inaccuracies.

Based on the result of the cycle 1, it was found that the mean score of the cycle 1(5.9) was greater than the mean score obtained from preliminary (4.5). To find out whether the improvement of scores obtained from preliminary and cycle 1 significant or not, a formula for the *paired observation t-test* was applied. The paired observation *t-test* was employed to compare the students' writing score obtained from preliminary and cycle 1. The results of the testing are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Differences in Scores in the Preliminary and the Cycle 1

Preliminary	Cycle 1	Changes in Scores	
<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean Different</i>	<i>t-value</i>
4.5	5.9	1.4	13.142

Table 5 indicates that the mean differences between the scores of preliminary and of those cycles 1 were increased by 1.4. Further, the obtained *t-value* for *df* 38 was 13.142, while the table *t-value* at $p = .001$ is 3.646. It means that the obtained *t-value* was much greater than the critical or required value. Clearly, the obtained *t-value* (13.142) exceeded critical value (3.646) indicated that the difference of the two means (preliminary and cycle 1) was significance. Furthermore, the mean difference of individual writing aspects under scoring rubric were also tested used a formula for the paired observation *t-test*. The results of the testing are presented in table above.

Table 6. Difference in Scores of Writing Components in the Preliminary Study and the Cycle 1

Writing Components	Preliminary	Cycle 1	Changes in Scores	
	Mean	Mean	Mean Different	<i>t-value</i>
<i>Content</i>	1.9	2.4	0.5	5.595
<i>Organization</i>	1.7	2.3	0.6	6.000
<i>Language use</i>	1.8	2.4	0.6	7.662

Table 6 shows that there was an increase in means scores for the three writing aspects of content, organization, and language use. As presented in the table 4.6, the statistical of mean differences described that all three mean increases were significance. In terms of content, the analysis of the significance of the students' means increase of 0.5 revealed at *t-value* of 5.595, whereas the table *t* value at $p = .001$ for *df* 38 is 3.646. In next aspect of organization, the students mean for cycle 2 significance increased by 0.7, with the *t-value* of 6.000 ($p < .001$). In last writing aspect of language

use, the analysis of the significance of the students' mean increase of 0.6 obtained at t -value of 7.662. In short, the difference of the two means (preliminary and cycle 1) was significance since the obtained t -value of content, organization and language use aspects was much greater than the critical or required value.

c) Reflection

From the analysis of the teaching and learning process and the students' writing in the first cycle, the implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning strategy did not yet give satisfactory result on the improvement of students' writing ability. The students were not fully active in teaching and learning process as revealed by the observation checklist and field notes. Only 58% (equal to fair) students were active in the teaching and learning process. Besides, the mean of the students' scores did not achieve the score of greater than or equal to 6.5. The students' score were 5.9 in the range of 1 to 10. Therefore, the implementation of the action plan still needed to be improved so that it could achieve the criteria of success of this study.

The students' unsatisfactory performance was caused by some factors. First, it was caused by the teacher's explanations and instructions were mostly given in English so that the students did not understand them. As a result, they could not accomplish their tasks well. Second, it was caused by the students' low competence on grammar that sometimes they produced incorrect grammatical sentences. Third, it was caused by the teacher's low guidance given to the students in every stage of students. Fourth, it was caused by the way of grouping students. Next, it was caused by insufficient number of dictionary provided in the teaching and learning process. There were two standard dictionaries, and several pocket dictionaries in class. Some students attended the English class without any dictionaries at all.

Considering the problems mentioned above, the teacher and the collaborator made a decision to continue the action to the second cycle. The lesson plan and the preparation of the study in the second cycle were revised and improved

B. The Results of Cycle 2

Since the failure of cycle 1, the researchers went to the next cycle and carried out the cycle 2 on October 15th, 19th, 22nd 2019. Related to instructional and explanation, the teacher and the collaborator made an agreement to use Indonesian language for clarity. The teacher tried to slow down his intonation so that the whole class could understand his explanation. In addition, the teacher should give response to the students who disturbed the lesson by making noise or talking irrelevant materials.

Concerning on minimizing the number of grammatical mistakes made by the students in their descriptive paragraph writing, the teacher reminded the students about the appropriate use of word order, article, subject verb agreement or grammatical used (to be, to do, and to have), and plural forms in English.

The intensive guidance was given to the students in every stage of process writing. When the students were on task, the teacher was proactively guiding them without waiting for the students to raise questions. This was done due to the fact that even though the students found difficulties in accomplishing their task, some of them felt reluctant to ask for the teacher's help.

In terms of the way of grouping students, the teacher grouped the students who disruptive (in the Cycle 1) in different group. Finally, the approximate time to be spent for each activity in each meeting was established.

Dealing with minimizing the students on dictionary, the teacher asked the students to borrow some dictionaries from the students in different class. In relation to their problems in exploring English words in the dictionary, the teacher gave an extra time in the afternoon to teach them how to use the dictionary in order to find a word.

In addition to the preparation above, the lesson plan was also prepared before conducting the teaching and learning activities. Generally, the procedures of instruction and the procedures of assessment were the same as that of in the first cycle since the action was mainly to continue the teaching and learning process in order to achieve the criteria of success.

1) *Analysis of the Teaching and Learning Process*

The analysis of the teaching and learning process was done based on information obtained from the observation checklists and field notes. The information is about the students' participation during the teaching and learning process. From the information, it is found that during the process in three meetings of cycle 2, the students more active than they were in Cycle one. For example, they were more active during the group discussion. The new formation of the students' grouping decreased the number of students who made noises and did irrelevant activities during the group discussion. Besides, mostly all students fully pay attention when the teacher is giving explanation and the students involve activity in the teaching and learning process. The percentage of students who stay on task during the teaching and learning process can be seen in table 7.

Table 7. The Students' Participation during the Writing Activities in Cycle Two

No	Writing Stages	Students' Activities	Categories				
			VG	G	F	P	VP
1	<i>Pre-writing activities</i>	1) Discussing the pictures by answering the teacher's question.		√			
		2) Students gather some information related the object observed by making notes.	√				
		3) Sharing their ideas to others in their group and making outline in generating their ideas.		√			
2	<i>Whilst writing activities</i>	4) Discussing the models of descriptive paragraph with the teacher.		√			
		5) Writing the first draft	√				
		6) Rereading and reviewing the drafts.		√			
		7) Giving some comments and suggestions.		√			
		8) Checking their writings.		√			
3	<i>Post writing activities</i>	9) Revising their drafts on content and organization.		√			
		10) Checking the drafts.		√			
		11) Proofreading their friends' drafts.		√			
		12) Editing the language use (grammar) of their drafts.		√			
		13) Reflecting about the learning process of making descriptive paragraph.		√			

M: Meeting

i.

j. *Categories of the writing activities:*

- k. Very good (VG) : 81% - 100% of the students do
- l. Good (G) : 61% - 80% of the students do
- m. Fair (F) : 41% - 60% of the students do
- n. Poor (P) : 21% - 40% of the students do
- o. Very poor (VP) : 0% - 20% of the students do

Table 7 shows the data concerning the students' activities during the implementation of the action in Cycle two. From the table, it was admitted that the average of the students' participation in writing activities increased comparison with that in Cycle one. In prewriting, it was shown that 75% (equal to good) students discussed the pictures by answering the teacher's questions, 85% (equal to very good) students gathered some information related the object observing by making notes, and 80% (equal to good) shared their ideas to others in their group and making outline in generating their idea. In whilst writing, 70% (equal to good) students discussed the models of descriptive paragraph with the teacher, 100% (equal to very good) write the first draft, 75% (equal to good) students reread and review the drafts, 65% (equal to good) student gave comments and suggestions, 80% (equal to good) students checked their draft, and 70% (equal to good) students revised their drafts on content and organization. In post writing, 75% (equal to good) students checked the drafts, 75% (equal to good) proofread their friends' drafts, 80% (equal to good) students edited their drafts in terms of language use (grammar), and only 65% (equal to good) students reflected about the learning process of making descriptive paragraph. Generally, the participation of the students in the second cycle was 78% (equal to good).

The field notes revealed that some facts were found during the implementation of the action in the second cycle. First, since the students were given more control and guidance in the process of producing paragraphs, they were able to produce acceptable paragraphs since they are contained fewer errors than those in previous cycle. Second, most of the students could understand the teacher's explanation or instruction. It could happen because in the first time, the teacher explained or instructed in English then translated it into Indonesian. He also could raise his voice so that the whole class could hear his explanation or instruction. Third, all members of the group work cooperatively. The students who had low achievement could give their comment since each member was given a chance to do it. During the teaching and learning process, no more students made descriptive behavior or talked irrelevant matters since the teacher monitored them. In doing peer editing, each student could give his/her correction to their friends as well as their own draft. Last, the time management had also been implemented appropriately. He could apply each activity in line with the time allotment that had been set for each activity.

2) *Analysis of the Students' Writing*

This part presents the analysis of the students' writing of cycle two and the analysis of cycle 2. As in the previous cycle (cycle 1), the students' writing of cycle 2 were collected and analyzed. The teacher and the collaborator analyzed and scored the students' writing one by one. The analysis was emphasized on three components of writing, namely: content, organization and language use. From the analysis, it was found that the students could write a large number of words in their descriptive paragraph. They also could produce an understandable descriptive paragraph since the paragraph had good content and organization. However, the descriptive paragraph written by the students still had some grammatical errors, even though not as much as the errors they made in the cycle one. The samples of errors in the students' writing were shown in table 4.8.

Table 8. Samples of Errors in the Students' Writing in Cycle Two

No.	Types of Errors	Sample of the Students' Errors	The teacher's correction
1.	Inappropriate use of S-V agreement	It have long leaves	It has long leaves
2.	Singular and plural	It has some leaf	It has some leaves
3.	Inappropriate word order	Leaf long	Long leaf

3) *Analysis of the Cycle 2*

The results of the cycle 2 showed that the students' achievement in writing ability had achieved the criteria of success. From the test, it was found that the average of score achieved 7.1. In comparison with that in cycle 1, there was an improvement of the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs because the mean of the students score was 5.9. Furthermore, the results of cycle 1 are respectively summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. The Results of the Students' Score in the Cycle 2

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
<i>Cycle 2</i>	39	5.4	8.3	7.1

The table shows that the minimum and maximum scores of students score in cycle 2 were respectively 5.4 and 8.3. Meanwhile, the mean score of the cycle 2 was 7.1. Furthermore, the students' writing scores of three aspects of writing can be seen in table 10.

Table 10. The Results of the Students' Score in the Components of Writing in the Cycle 2

No.	Aspects of Writing	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1	<i>Content</i>	2	4	2.9
2	<i>Organization</i>	2	4	2.7
3	<i>Language use</i>	2	3.5	2.9

Table 10 reveals that the mean scores of the component content, organization, and language use were respectively 2.9, 2.7, and 2.9. The minimum scores for content, organization and language use aspects were 2. Meanwhile, the maximum scores for aspects writing of content, organization and

language use were respectively were 4, 4, and 3.5. Most of the students are able to dig up the content. Besides, most of the students can produce organized paragraphs. Most of their paragraphs are logically ordered and some sentences are related to the main idea. In addition, only a few of the students' paragraph that still had grammatical inaccuracies.

To find out whether the improvement significant or not, a formula for the *paired observation t-test* was applied. The test *t-test* formula was employed to compare the students' writing score obtained from cycle 1 and cycle 2. The results of the testing are presented in the table below.

Table 11. Differences in Scores in the Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Changes in Scores	
<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean Different</i>	<i>t-value</i>
5.9	7.1	1.2	11.900

Table 11 indicates that the mean difference between the scores of cycle 1 and of those cycle 2 were significance increased by 1.2, with the *t-value* for df 38 was 11.900 and the table *t-value* at $p = .001$ is 3.646. It means that the obtained *t-value* was much greater that the critical or required value. Clearly, the obtained *t-value* (11.900) exceeded critical value (3.646) indicated that the difference of the two means (cycle 1 and cycle 2) was significance. Furthermore, the mean difference of individual writing aspects under scoring rubric were also tested used a formula for the *paired observation t-test*. The results of the testing are presented in table in table 12.

Table 12. Difference in Scores of Writing Aspects in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Writing Aspects	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Changes in Scores	
	Mean	Mean	Mean Different	<i>t-value</i>
<i>Content</i>	2.4	2.9	0.5	7.012
<i>Organization</i>	2.3	2.7	0.4	5.454
<i>Language use</i>	2.4	2.9	0.5	4.700

The table shows that there was an increase in means scores for the three writing components (content, organization, and language use). As presented in the table 12, the statistical test of mean differences described that all three mean scores increases were significance. In terms of content, the analysis of the significance of the students' means increase of 0.5 revealed at *t-value* of 7.012($p < .001$). In next aspect of organization, the students mean for cycle 2 significance increased by 0.4, with the *t-value* of 5.454 ($p < .001$). In last writing aspect of language use, the analysis of the significance of the students' mean increase of 0.3 obtained at *t-value* of 4.700. Because the *t-value* obtained in the three aspects of writing, either content (7.012), organization (5.454), or language use (4.700) were greater than the *t*-table value (3.646 for df 38), it indicated that the difference of the two means (cycle 1 and cycle 2) was significant.

4) Reflection

Based on the results of the analysis of both teaching and learning process and the student' writing scores in Cycle 2, it could be inferred that the Inquiry-Based Learning strategy could improve the students' writing ability. This can be examined from the criteria of success defined in this study. First, the students had been more active in the teaching and learning process as seen on the observation checklists and field notes that all activities were implemented appropriately. Second, the mean score of the students' writing obtained in cycle 2 was 7.1. It was greater than or equal to 6.50. Therefore, the action research was completely accordingly.

IV. Discussion

This part elaborated the discussion of the teaching and learning writing through Inquiry-Based Learning strategy, the improvement of the students' writing ability, and the result of scoring reliability analysis.

A. *The Teaching and Learning of Writing through Inquiry Based Learning Strategy*

Based on the findings of the study, it is identified that the appropriate model of the teaching writing paragraph through Inquiry-Based Learning strategy requires the teacher to do particular strategy in each stage of process writing covering the process of prewriting, whilst writing, and post writing.

1) *Prewriting Stage*

Prewriting involved everything the students do before beginning the actual task of writing, including activating background knowledge, generating ideas, and making plans for approaching the writing task (Christenson, 2002:41). For this purpose, the teacher developed two important techniques, namely: dialogue and outlining.

Before coming to the main materials, the teacher conducted a dialogue with students. It was used as a starter in activating the students' background knowledge toward the topic discussed. In this technique, students were asked to answer a number of questions orally. This was done for two reasons: to lead the students to the topic they would study, and to facilitate the students to recall related information useful for internalizing new knowledge.

Then the teacher grouped the students into the small groups. The students were grouped on the basis of the result of the preliminary. The students were assigned into eight small groups that averagely consisted of five heterogeneous students. The main reason for placing five students in one group was that the smaller group would be more effective than the bigger one, because the small group took less time to be organized. Besides, the time allotment for the writing session was quite limited so that it was more appropriate to operate the small group discussion. This was line with Johnson *et al.* (1991) state that the shorter period of time available, the smaller group should be. After that, the groups' seating was arranged. The students' seating position was face-to-face so that they can see to one another, in order to be able to share ideas.

Working in groups is more useful than working alone. A student may ask his or her when he or she has difficulties in process of producing a paragraph. Smart students can help low students. It means that the slow students have opportunities to learn from the smart students. Salvin (1995:17) states that learning in groups becomes an activity that gets students ahead in their peer groups. He adds that the importance of group is in providing students with incentive to help each other and to encourage each other to put forth minimum effort.

To lead the students to explore for writing, the teacher used the outlining technique. Outline is a list of general and specific ideas that will be covered in the essay (Turkenik, 1999:58). He adds that outline serves as a guide to help the writer remember what he or she wants to say and organize the ideas before starting to write. Outline is more useful because it helps the writer organize his ideas and the writer should not think what to write. Eanes (1997:491) states that outline is a valuable tool in planning process especially for the students who are learning writing. In other word, there is a picture of a half draft that already has been written and developed by a writer into a paragraph or an essay. The writer just develops what he or she written in outline.

In this stage, the students were given a chance to pour ideas with guidance from the teacher. Hence, the teacher's role was a facilitator in order to help the students to explore and pour their ideas into the rough draft.

2) *Whilst Stage*

In this stage, the students begin to do drafting activity. Drafting is the process of getting ideas down on paper (Christenson, 2002:41). In relation with that, Brown (2001) also states that drafting is viewed as an important and complex set of strategies, the mastery of which takes time, patience, and trained instruction. As drafting is considered as a complex and difficult activity to do in writing process, the students then were provided with a model of a rough to help them ease the problems. The teacher used modeling and discussion technique in the editing process.

By presenting a model of text, the students could understand the form of writing they were supposed to write. In this study, they should write descriptive paragraph. That was in line with Temple *et. al*, (1988: 48) that “the best way to encourage children to explore writing - both the act of writing and the writing that is produced - is to have a plenty of models around them”. It supported by Brown (2001:347) that “by reading and studying a variety of relevant modes of text, students can gain important insight both about how they should write and about subject matter that may become the topic of their writing”. Therefore, presenting the model text become an efficient strategy that could be given in the drafting stage in order to enable the students to pour their ideas in accordance with the writing form that supposed to write.

In addition, the presentation of the text should be followed by discussion. Through discussion, the students could comprehend the writing form and the organization of ideas into writing. However, the teacher should give her guidance by asking questions so that the students had an understanding on the model text.

In this stage, the students were also guided to revise their draft. Revising is a process of rethinking and changing what is written (Calderonello & Edwards, 1986). Writers rethink and rewrite the first draft forming the second draft. It was done in order to get a clearer and more coherence draft. Smalley *et.al*, (2001) stated that in revising stage, the students are really rethinking or reseeding their draft. Revising is evaluating what they have already written. As they reread their rough drafts, students make changes – adding words, substituting sentences, deleting words or phrases, or moving them.

In revising the students’ draft, the teacher used modeling and peer revising activity. Before coming to the real peer revising activity, the students were supplied with a simple of rough draft and revising guiding questions. Then, they were asked to check the sample draft whether it contained a topic or not, to identify supporting details by checking all the sentences in a simple draft whether they referred to topic sentence or not, and finally, the students were also asked to recognize the order of the sentence.

After that, the students were brought to the real peer revising activity by exchanging their own paragraphs with other. The peer revising strategy was chosen to train the students to assess their friends’ work independently and to encourage the students’ self-confidence. In line with this, Harmer (2000) stated that peer works give the students chances for greater independence. Through peer revising activity, students worked together without the teacher controlling every move, they took some of their own learning decision to accomplish the task and they could work without pressure of the whole class listening to what they did.

3) Post Writing Stage

According to Troyka (1987: 63), editing focuses on surface features. When the writers edit, they check the technical correctness of their writing.

In this stage, the teacher used modeling and peer editing strategy. A model was shown to the students on how to edit a draft using editing guiding questions. After the students had been well trained in editing paragraphs through the sample given, then, the students were brought to the real editing activity. They were asked to do peer editing activity by exchanging their own paragraph with each other. This was aimed at training the students to give feedback to their friends’ drafts for correctness in terms of language use (grammar). Brown (2001) states “peer editing is a true sharing process”. Through this strategy, the students learnt to be better writer and better reader. Besides, it enabled the students to have a close relationship.

In this stage, the students also did publishing. The students were given a chance to publish their final writing. This is in line with what Vacca and Vacca (1998) stated that publishing is a fun activity. Publishing is very important for students as it provides an opportunity for them to share their writing product with real audience of their classmates and other students.

Thompkins (1994) proposed some ways to share students’ writings such as reading it aloud in class, displaying it on bulletin board, or reading it to students in other class. In this study, the teacher preferred to publish the students’ writing by reading it aloud in front of the class.

Other aspects considered that had given a significant contribution to the students’ improvement during the process of the teaching and learning writing paragraph were: (1) clear instruction and

explanation, (2) grammatical explanation, (3) intensive guidance, (4) the way of grouping, and (5) the need of dictionary.

In giving instruction and explanation, the teacher used English and Indonesian. It was done to avoid misinterpretation and to enable students to understand the instructions and also to accomplish the task more easily. Gebhard (1996) states that clear instruction can help the students on task.

Another important aspect was grammatical explanation. The teacher explained grammatical aspects with more examples, especially, those used more frequently in composing their paragraph, such as subject verb agreement, article, and word order. This was done on the basis of the fact that, the students had low ability in transforming Indonesian sentences word for word into English equivalent. Besides, the teacher devoted his time to identify the errors in the students' writing and explained them.

In relation to intensive guidance, the fact showed that even though the students found difficulties in accomplishing their task but some of them felt reluctant asking for the teacher's help. For this purpose, when the students were on task, the teacher proactively asked problems without waiting for students to raise questions.

Putting students in groups working is very important as it does not only make the task livelier and more enjoyable, but it also makes sure that the students see that writing is cooperative work. In writing groups, students meet and can share in producing compositions (Hamp – Lyons & Heastey, 1987).

The inability of the students to organize their ideas was mainly caused by the insufficient vocabulary they had. Therefore, the need for dictionary was a must in order to help the students enrich their vocabulary so that a sentence with more appropriate word could be produced. Cohen (1990) states that dictionary is good for checking those words that are not readily understood from context. Similarly, Nation (2000) states that dictionary can help learners with understanding.

Dealing with the students' participation during the teaching and learning process, it was found than in first cycle, some students did not implement all activities seriously, only 58% of the students who involved actively in the writing activities. Meanwhile, in the cycle 2, 78% of the students were done well the teaching and learning activities. The improvement of the students' participation in the writing activities can be seen in Figure 1.

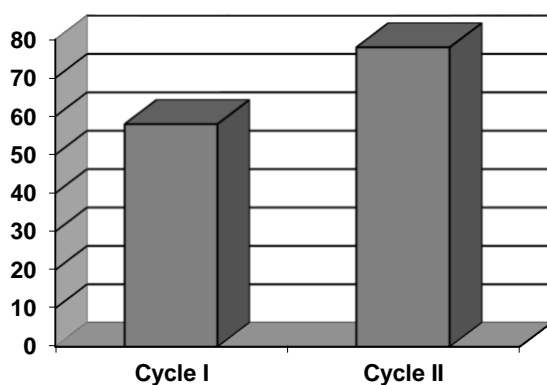


Fig. 1. The Improvement of Students' Participation

B. The Improvement of the Students' Writing Ability

The students' writing ability of descriptive paragraph can be improved by Inquiry-Based Learning strategy. The improvement can be examined from the results of the students' writing based on the writing task given at the end of the cycle. Before this teaching strategy is employed, the students encounter many difficulties in English writing. Their writing contains many errors and mistakes in content, organization, and language use. Trained with the teaching descriptive writing by using Inquiry Based Learning strategy, the students can produce quite comprehensible descriptive paragraphs, as the content and organization of the paragraphs have been improved meanwhile the number of errors of language use has been reduced.

The evidence that the students' writing ability had an improvement can also be seen from the mean score of the writing test given to the students, either in preliminary, cycle 1, or cycle 2. The results of the computation of the descriptive statistics of the students' score are respectively summarized in Table 13.

Table 13. The Students' Mean Score in Writing

Mean		
<i>Preliminary</i>	<i>Cycle 1</i>	<i>Cycle 2</i>
4.5	5.9	7.1

Table 13 shows that mean scores of the students' writing achievement in preliminary was 4.5 in a 0 to 10 scale. In cycle 1, the average score of the students' writing ability increased slightly to 5.9 in a 0 to 10 scale. This was a slight increase of improvement. Meanwhile, then, the mean score of the students' writing of cycle 2 increased to 7.1 in a 0 to 10 scale. This is a sharp increase of improvement. The improvement of the students' average score in preliminary, cycle 1, and cycle 2 was illustrated in Figure 2.

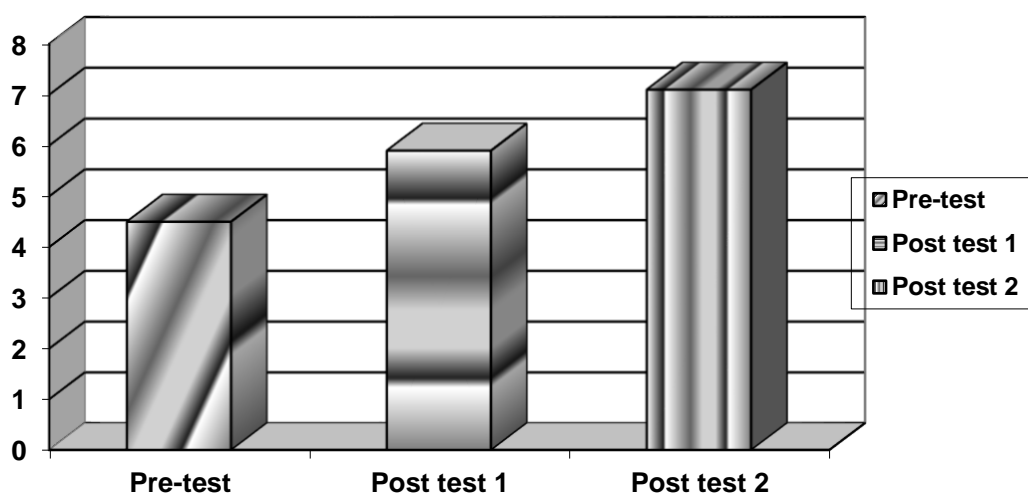


Fig. 2. The Improvement of Students' Score in Writing

Based on the improvement of the mean of the students' scores from preliminary, cycle 1, and cycle 2, it could be concluded that Inquiry-Based Learning strategy can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph.

The improvement of the students' ability can specifically be seen from the students' score for the three components of writing. Based on the description of the scoring guide used in assessing the students writing, the mean score of three component of writing in the pretest, cycle 1, and cycle 2 can be illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14. The Students' Mean Score in Aspects of Writing

Writing Aspects	Mean		
	Preliminary	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
<i>Content</i>	1.9	2.4	2.9
<i>Organization</i>	1.7	2.3	2.7
<i>Language use</i>	1.8	2.4	2.9

Related to the content of writing, in the preliminary, most of the students writings are relevant to the topic but not quite easy to understand. The students had trouble in digging up the content of the paragraph; so, there was only little substance that could be express in their writing. However, in the cycle 1, some of the students are able to dig up the content of the paragraph; and some of their

writings present information with some details. Meanwhile, in the cycle 2, the most of the students are able to dig up the content; so, most of their writings present information with details in parts of the paragraph. The table 14 showed that the main score in the preliminary, cycle 1 and cycle 2 for the component of content were 1.9, 2.4, and 2.9. It was evidence that the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph in term of content increased.

Dealing with organization, it the preliminary, most of the paragraphs are not logically ordered and the sentences of the paragraph are not related to the main idea. Whereas, in the cycle 1, some students still have problems in organizing their paragraphs. Some of their paragraphs are rather logically ordered and some sentences are related to the main idea. Meanwhile, in the cycle 2, most of the students can produce organized paragraphs. Most of their paragraphs are logically ordered and some sentences are related to the main idea. As displayed in table 4.14, the mean score in the pretest and cycle 1 for the component of organization are 1.7 and 2.3, while the mean score in cycle 2 for the organization component is 2.7. This means that the ability of the students in organizing ideas developed better than before the strategy implemented.

The last writing component of the scoring guide is language use. In the preliminary, most of the students made several errors in terms of language use. Most of their paragraphs contained some grammatical errors. In the posttest 1, some paragraphs the students made consisted of grammatical inaccuracies. Meanwhile, in the cycle 2, only a few of the students' paragraph that still had grammatical inaccuracies. The data in Table 4.14 shows that the mean score in pretest for language use component is 1.8, and the main score in cycle 1 and cycle 2 for language use aspect were 2.4 and 2.9. By analyzing the main scores, it could be concluded that the students' ability in language use mastery improved.

To sum up, the improvement of the mean scores in three components of writing can be illustrated in the following Figure 3.

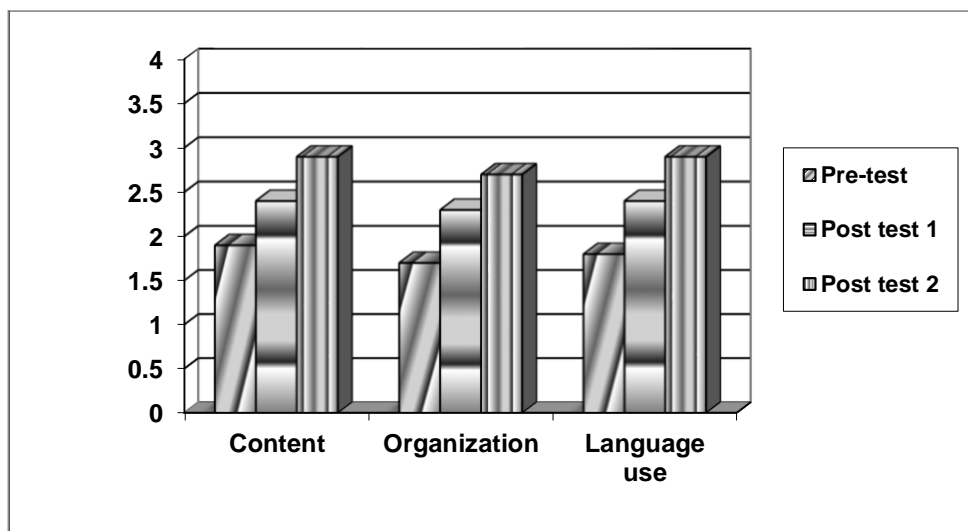


Fig. 3. The Improvement of Students' Score in Aspects of Writing

To find out whether the scores produced by the two raters were consistent or not, a set of scores were correlated and then interpreted using the scale taken from Weigle (1994). The computation of the reliability of the scores involved each pairs of the scores produced by the two raters in the each components of writing. In the present research, the process of the computation covered 16 pairs of the scores (each pairs of the preliminary scores and each pairs of the post-test). The results of the computation are summarized in table 4.15.

Table 15. The Summary of the Result of the Scoring Reliability Analysis

Coefficient of Reliability (<i>r</i>)								
Preliminary			Cycle 1			Cycle 2		
<i>C</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>L</i>
.870	.743	.735	.838	.763	.729	.755	.741	.756

p. Notes:

q. *C* = Content

r. *O* = Organization

s. *L* = Language use

The table shows that the lowest coefficient of interrelation reliability (*r*) obtained from the computation were .729, and the highest was .870. Based on Weigle’s scale of inter-rater coefficient correlation, it could be interpreted that the obtained coefficient indicated the high positive and high positive interrelation reliability. In other words, the scores produced by the two raters were consistent (not significantly different)

V. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion of the study, it can be concluded that the Inquiry-Based Learning strategy can improve the students’ ability in writing descriptive paragraph. It can be seen on the mean score of the students writing from the preliminary, cycle 1 and cycle 2. In preliminary, the students' mean score in the writing test is only 4.5. In the cycle 1, it was 5.9. Furthermore, in cycle 2, the mean score became 7.1.

Besides, it gave the students opportunity for greater independence. Through peer revising and editing activities, they can work together without the teacher’s control and they can take some of their own learning decision to accomplish the task. Furthermore, the strategy also requires the students to work cooperatively. It stresses the need of group working to solve problem, to get the variety of feedback or responses to the problems. It enabled students to share their ideas one another, to learn to listen to and to respect their peer’s opinions in group learning.

In addition, the implementation of this strategy also gave a positive change on the students’ interest in learning English. The writer noticed that a few of the students, who at the beginning of his teaching liked to escape from the class, were already active in all activities set during the learning process.

The appropriate model of Inquiry-Based Learning strategy are: (1) engaging students to express their ideas in discussion activities, (2) guiding the students to investigate or observe the objects, (3) asking them to make notes of what they have investigated, (4) engaging them to make outline, (5) providing and discussing a model of text, (6) drafting rough draft based the outline, (7) revising the drafts focusing on the content and organization, (8) conducting peer editing in order to edit the grammatical aspects, (9) sharing the writing by reading it aloud in front of the class, and (10) reflecting the process of writing.

VI. Suggestion

To follow up the findings of the study, some suggestion are recommended for English teacher, for Islamic and / or Junior High students, and for the future researchers.

A. For the Teachers

As it is acknowledged by most teachers, especially by English teachers that teaching writing is the most difficult aspect in language teaching, the researchers, therefore, want to share the “Inquiry-Based Learning strategy” as one of the many alternatives strategy that can be used in teaching writing. He confidently suggests English teachers to apply this strategy to their writing classes, especially to the classes that have problems in writing lessons.

Next, in implementing the strategy, teachers should consider the following considerations. First, before teaching, the teacher should prepare instructional media, design instructional procedures, and design the procedures of assessment. Second, the teacher should clarify their instructions and explanations in *Bahasa Indonesia* because it is still a hard work for the level students to understand. Third, during the process of writing, it is better for the teachers to use the outlining technique for exploring and generating ideas, modeling for providing examples of how the students top compose, revise, and edit draft. Forth, the teachers need to explain grammatical aspects with more examples, especially, those used more frequently in composing paragraph, such as subject verb agreement. Fifth, the teachers should arrange the students' group in such a way in order to make the students work cooperatively. Sixth, the teachers need to intensify guiding the students in every stage of writing process when the students are on task. It is important because in reality even though the students find difficulties in accomplishing their tasks, some of them feel reluctant asking for the teacher's help. Finally, the teachers should equip students with a dictionary. The fact that the inability of the students to organize the ideas was mainly caused by the insufficient vocabulary they already mastered. Therefore, the need for dictionary is a must in order to help the students to enrich their vocabulary, so that sentences with more appropriate word used can be produce.

B. For Islamic and / or Junior High School students

The most obvious way to become a good writer is by practicing writing. In learning writing, students need special effort to find an appropriate technique in order to able to be an independent writer. For this purpose, students are recommended to practice writing descriptive paragraphs with various topics outside the class hours, using Inquiry-Based Learning applied in the study. To have the paragraph right, they can ask their peers on even their teacher to proofread the paragraph.

C. For the Future Researchers

The recommendation for the future researchers is that Inquiry-Based Learning strategy be implemented and developed in elementary. However, in the implementation the strategy, the teacher should give more guidance and data sources such as interesting pictures, a large number of vocabulary, and simple models of writing

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