

THE USE OF MULTIMODALITY LEARNING APPROACH IN TEACHING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING: EFFECTS ON STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY

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Abstract:

This study is to describe the application of multimodality based learning approach in teaching writing descriptive text, the students' writing descriptive text ability before and after using multimodality based learning approach, then whether there is a significant effect of multimodality based learning approach on students' writing descriptive text ability. The method used is the one group pre-test post-test experimental design with a sample of 30 students (taken through purposive sampling from 174 students). Data were collected through observation and tests. The result show that the application of the multimodality based learning approach was score 88.5% (good category). The mean score of students' writing descriptive text ability before and after using multimodality based learning approach were 38.40 (poor category) and 79.2 (good category). Then, there is a significant effect of multimodality based learning approach on students' writing descriptive text ability at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu. because the table paired sample t-test pretest and pos-test is lower than 0.05(0.000<0.05). it means that hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

Keywords: Descriptive text, Multimodality Based Learning Approach, Students' writing, Writing Ability

Introduction

Writing is the one the basic skills of the English language. Writing is a process of representing language with symbols or letters. Writing is highly individual process, it can be said that writing is communication developing from our ideas. It is an important activity in our life to update knowledge. Writing is an important activity tool for academic success.

This research focuses on writing descriptive text, at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu, researcher found that tenth grade students have low abilities in writing descriptive text. Some of the main problems faced include: 1) Low learning motivation, 2) Lack of interest in writing among students, 3) Weak understanding of grammar and punctuation, and 4) Difficulty in organizing ideas according to text structure. The researcher identified significant issues in tenth-grade students' writing descriptive text ability. This conclusion is supported by observational data collected on 26 May 2025 which showed that the average scores of daily tests (50) and pre-tests (38.40) were far below the minimum passing criteria (KKM). It indicated a critical gap in students to compose writing descriptive text ability.

Consequently, the researcher conducted this study to bring significant effect on students' writing descriptive text ability by implementing the multimodality based learning approach, an adaptation of using various media or called semiotic mode such as audio, visual, linguistics, spatial, gestural and aural.

Based on this approach uses visual learning and uses image media, to explain the meaning of descriptive text ability, language features, and the generic structure of descriptive text. By multimodality based learning approach, students can better identify, description and understand about descriptive text, addressing gaps in their writing ability.

This research addresses questions about how multimodality based learning approach used in teaching writing, how the students' writing before and after taught by using multimodality based learning approach.

Literature Review

Writing Descriptive Text

a. Definition of Writing Descriptive Text

Writing is a creative process of transferring ideas into written symbols. In the sense, writing has three main aspects (Semi, 1993). The first, there is a specific goal or purpose to be achieved. The second, there is an idea or something to be communicated. And the last, there is a system to transferring ideas, namely in the form of a language system.

Writing ability is essential to learning English as a foreign language (EFL) since it helps students succeed academically (Aliyu, 2020). By writing, students can express their ideas, experiences, and imagination in writing form. Writing encourages thinking and learning. It motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection.

Particularly students must not only be able in sentence structure, have a large vocabulary, and understand grammar standards, but also have confidence in their ability to edit their own work. In order to write well, EFL students must use their language abilities to develop the primary argument, provide evidence for it, summarize the experts' concepts, and possess adequate knowledge of diction and topic selection, punctuation, create coherent phrases, and locate relevant references (Suastra & Menggo, 2020). Writing is an essential skill and challenge for students (Bram & Angelina, 2022), (Olowoyeye et al., 2022), (Olowoyeye et al., 2023).

Descriptive text is a text which is intended to describe a particular person, place, animal or thing. It is used in all forms of writing to create a vivid impression of a person, place, object or even. Its social is to describe a particular person, place, or thing. It is one genre which is demanded to master by high school students' in Indonesia.

A descriptive text is one that gives the reader the impression that they can see, hear, and feel the qualities of an object (Rahmadani, 2022)

b. Indicators of Writing Descriptive Text

There are several aspects of writing that writers use in assessing students work results such as: content, organization, vocabulary, language use/grammar and mechanics. Contents is the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, and are least two things which can measured in connection with content, the point that are presented and formal signal given the reader to guide in understanding the topic fully.

Organization is expressing fluently in writing or to convey its ideas distinctly. Vocabulary is one of the language aspects dealing with process of writing. Language use/ grammar for the language use in writing explanation text and other form writing, involves correct usage and points of grammar or structure. And mechanics is the writing process involves a series of steps to follow in producing a finished piece of writing.

c. Language Features of Descriptive Text

According to (Wardiman et al., 2008) the language features of descriptive text are as follow:

1. Focus on one specific object focus on a particular object such as an introduction to the object to be described. And a detailed explanation or description of the attributes or characteristics of the object.
2. The use of simple present tense, and simple present tense used to state facts, habits, general truths, and permanent situations. This sentence is also often used in everyday conversation.

Pattern:

(+) S + V1 s/does

Example: They write a letter

(-) S + do/ does + not + V1

Example: I do not bring money

(?) Do/ does + V1

Example: Does she go to campus?

3. The use of adjectives, Example: Thick, long, funny, love

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that the features of descriptive text is a using simple present tense and focus and concentrates only on the aspects that add something to the main purpose of the description.

d. General Structures of Descriptive Text

The general structure of descriptive text as follow below:

1. Identification, identify phenomenon to be described.

Is part of paragraph which introduces or identifies the character to be described. It can be called general description of the subject. Usually it contains object's name, kind of the object, etc.

2. Description, describes parts, qualities, characteristics.

It is part of paragraph which describes parts and characteristics of the person or something that will be described I detail, so the readers can get clear description of the subject.

According to (Tukan & Mukarto, 2024), descriptive text has two main parts, they are identification and descriptions. Identification contains the introducing about the object that writer wants to describe, meanwhile descriptions contains the part, quality or other characteristics of the object being describe.

Multimodality Based Learning Approach

a. Definition of Multimodality

Multimodality based learning approach is defined as an approach using various media or called semiotic modes such as audio, visual, and kinesthetic (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2020), through this approach can strengthen and complement each media, in the realm of education, multimodality based learning is also often applied to various technologies such as the use of power point, learning applications installed on mobile phones, TV media, YouTube, Zoom, and various other products.

b. The Modes of Multimodality

The modes can be defined as sets of semiotic resources for making meaning (de Saint-Georges & Weber, 2013). According to (Liu et al., 2024), in language learning, multimodality based learning approach can improve efficiency and engagement by combining visual, auditory, and interactive approaches.

Meanwhile, (Gagich, 2020) stated there are five modes that teachers can use when implementing the multimodality: Visual, linguistics, spatial, gestural, and aural. The visual modes refer to the invisible element that the audience can see. It can include images, colors, alphabetical text, and font size and style. The linguistic mode relates to alphabetical text or spoken, which describes using words orally and verbally. Thus, the process of creating or comprehending meaning through word choice, spoken or written text delivery, writing or speech arrangement into phrases and sentences, and the development and coherence of individual words and ideas is know as linguistics mode (Ball et al., 2022).

The spatial mode is concerned with movement and gesture. This mode relates to a text's layout, direction, and arrangement of visual. One of the examples of modes from spatial is into graphic. Gestural mode is concerns with movement and gesture. This mode frequently refers to the speaker's body language, kinesthetic, sensuality, facial expression, and hand gestures during the talks. The aural mode describes an auditory perception of the audience. Aural modes encompass a range of audio- based content, including podcasts, music video, concert, television series, movies, and radio talk shows. Another example of aural modes can consist of the spoken tone of voice, silence, loudness of sound intensity, and accent (Ball et al., 2022).

Based on the theory above, the researcher concludes that the steps in applying the multimodality based learning approach are: first, the teacher uses a visual learning style, second, the teacher uses image media, third, the teacher explains the meaning of descriptive text, language features, and the generic structure of the text. Fourth, the teacher distributes images. Fifth, the teacher instructs students to

identify the images. Sixth, the teacher describes the images. Seventh, the teacher instructs students to write the results of the image description in the provided answer sheet. Based on these steps, it is expected that students can understand descriptive texts.

c. Advantages and Disadvantages of Multimodality Based Learning Approach

There are several advantages to using multimodality based learning approach. First, facilitating students with different language learning styles, the second, helping students to focus more in learning, third, improving students understanding, fourth, improving students' motivation, fifth, increase students memory of vocabulary, and the sixth can increase the students' confidence. However, it also has drawbacks such as disadvantage include the first limited accesss and resources, the second inadequate teacher training, and the third time issues.

Research Method

The use of a one-group pre-test post-test design is considered appropriate for a preliminary investigation, as it allows the researcher to observe changes in students' performance before and after the treatment. However, this design has a significant limitation in terms of causal inference, since it does not involve a control group for comparison. As a result, the observed improvements may not be solely attributed to the treatment, but could also be influenced by other external factors such as students' prior experience, practice effects, or the passage of time. Therefore, this limitation should be taken into account when interpreting the findings of the study.

The population in this study is all tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu, which consists of 6 classes with a total of 174 students. The sample was taken using purposive sampling technique, namely class X- IPS 3, which consists of 30 students.

The use of purposive sampling in this study was based on specific considerations. The researcher intentionally selected class X-IPS 3 because it was identified as having lower motivation, lower interest in learning, and lower achievement in writing descriptive text compared to other classes, based on the English teacher's information and preliminary observation. Therefore, this class was considered appropriate to examine the effectiveness of the treatment in improving students' writing ability, particularly for students with lower performance levels. However, the use of purposive sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings, as the sample may not represent the characteristics of the entire population. Consequently, the results of this study are more applicable to students with similar conditions rather than to all tenth-grade students in general.

The data collection instruments used in this study, namely the observation sheet and writing test, were validated prior to their implementation. The observation sheet, which employed a Likert scale (1–5), was developed based on the indicators of the multimodality-based learning approach and was reviewed by an expert (the English teacher) to ensure its content validity. In addition, the writing test (pre-test and post-test) was constructed in accordance with the learning objectives and relevant curriculum, and was also examined by the teacher to ensure its appropriateness and clarity. To ensure reliability, a scoring rubric was used in assessing students' writing, and consistency in scoring was maintained throughout the study. However, the instruments were not formally piloted due to time constraints, which may be considered as a limitation of this study.

Data Analysis consists of Descriptive Statistics: Used to describe the results of observations and the frequency distribution of test scores- Normality Test Conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests ($\alpha = 0,05$) to verify the normality of the data- Hypothesis Test Using the paired sample t-test in SPSS 23 software to compare pre-test and post-test scores. The hypothesis is accepted if the significance value (2- tailed) $< 0,05$.

Result and Discussion

1. Application of Multimodality Based Learning Approach on Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability

Based on the results obtained from the observational analysis of how the researcher applied the multimodality based learning approach on students writing descriptive text ability at the

tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu, out of 14 aspects observed, the researcher obtained a total score of 64 out of a maximum 70. Based on the index formula used, the calculation results show 88.5%, according to the criteria of the Likert scale listed in the table, with an interval of 80-100% categorized as very good. This indicates that the researcher has successfully implemented the multimodality based learning approach in teaching writing descriptive text. Researcher applied the multimodality learning approach based on the steps well.

2. Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability Before Using Multimodality Based Learning Approach

After got the data by given pre-test which is formed writing descriptive text ability it was found that the highest score was 55 and the lowest score was 27. From the whole data of pre-test, the researcher found the mean score was 38,40 it was categorized poor, median score was 38,43 and the mode was 39.

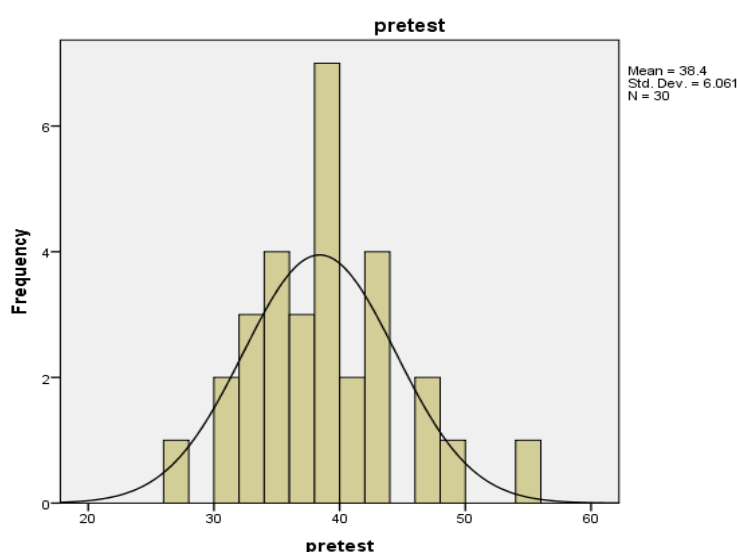
The researcher shows the specification of the calculation in the table below:

Table 1

The Score of Mean, Median, Mode on Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability Before Using Multimodality Based Learning Approach

No	Criteria	Score	Category
1	Mean	38,40	Poor
2	Median	38,43	Poor
3	Mode	39	Poor

Figure 3: Histogram of Students' Pre-test in Writing Descriptive Text Ability



Based on the histogram above, it showed that the most of the students' score is 39 consist of 6 students. it was found that the lowest score is 27 and highest score is 55. It means, that writing descriptive text ability needs to be affected by using Multimodality based learning approach.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concluded that the calculation of mean score of students' Writing descriptive text ability before using Multimodality based learning approach can be seen it is 38.40 categorized "Poor".

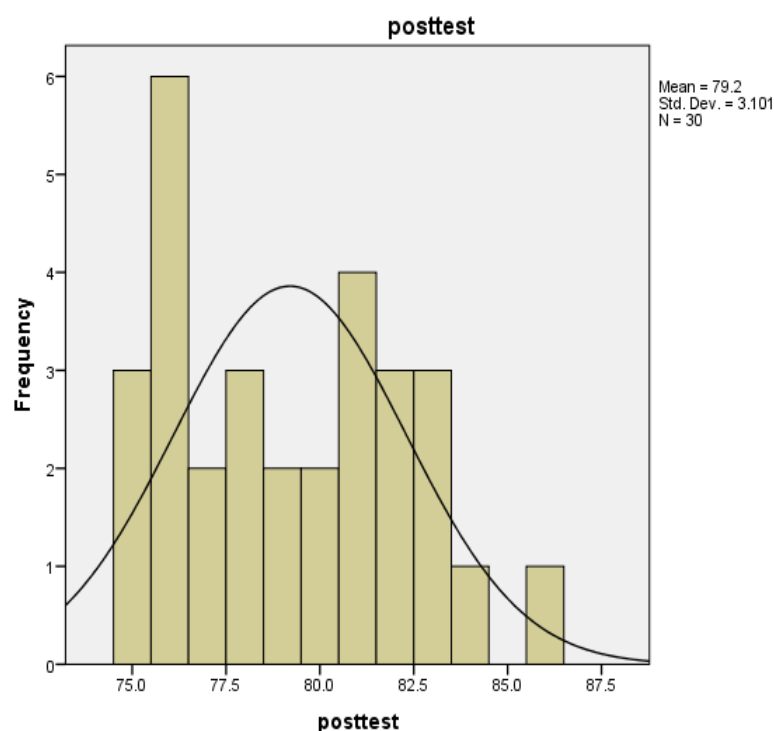
3. Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability After Using Multimodality Based Learning Approach

After collected the data by given post-test about the students' writing descriptive text ability by using multimodality based learning approach. The researcher found that the highest score was 86 and the lowest score was 75. Furthermore, the researcher found mean score was 79.20, it categorized good, median score was 79 and mode score was 76. The researcher shows the specification of calculation in the table below:

Table 2
Students' Post-test Score of Mean, Median, Mode
in Writing Descriptive Text Ability

No	Criteria	Score	Category
1	Mean	79.2	Good
2	Median	79	Good
3	Mode	76	Good

Figure 6: Histogram of Students' Post-test in Writing Descriptive Text Ability after using multimodality based learning approach



Based on the histogram above, the researcher concluded that writing descriptive text ability after using multimodality based learning approach was categorized good. It can be seen from students' frequency students' before using multimodality based learning approach score 39 were 6 students it was still category fail, and after using multimodality based learning approach were 76 that were 6 students, these were categories good. It means that multimodality based learning approach can be seen effect on writing descriptive text ability.

Then, to answer the hypothesis, the researcher used a paired sample t-test Before doing the paired sample test, the researcher was first to use the test requirement or assume a classic test.

- H_a : If significant > 0.05, the data is normality distribution.
H_o : If significant < 0.05, the data is not normality distribution The researcher shows the result of normality test on the table bellow:

Table 2
Tests of Normality Pre-test and Post-test

Description	Formulated			Explanation
	Ks	Sw	∞	
Pre-test	.200	.498	0,05	The data normal distribution
Post-test	.088	.066	0,05	The data normal distribution

Based on the results of the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov, the significance value for the pretest was .200 (0,200 > 0,05), and using Shapiro-Wilk, the significance value for the pretest was 0,498 (0,498 > 0,05). This indicates that the pretest data was normality distributed because both test yielded significances values greater than 0.05.

Furthermore, the results of the normality test for post-test show a significance, value using Kolmogorov-Smirnov of .088 (0.088 > 0,05), and using Shapiro-Wilk of .066 (066 > 0,05). These results also indicate that the post-test data was normally distributed because the significance values were greater than 0.05. It can be concluded that both the pre-test and post-test data were normally distributed, thus meeting the requirements for hypothesis testing.

Based on the result, the researcher concluded that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. It means there is any significance effect of multimodality based learning approach on students writing descriptive text ability.

- H_a : If the sig (2-tailed) < 0,05 then there is a significant difference between writing descriptive text ability in the pretest and posttest
H_o : If sig (2-tailed) > 0,05 then there is a significant different between writing descriptive text ability in the pretest and posttest.

In this case, the researcher used the paired sample t-test as follows:

Table 3
Paired samples t-test statistics Multimodality based learning approach

	T	DF	Sig (2-tailed)
Pair 1 Pre-test- Post-test	-34.874	29	.000

Based on the table paired sample t-test, it shows a T statistics value of -34.874 with digress of freedom (Df) = 29 (based on a sample of 30 students). the two-tailed significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.000, well below the significance level = 0.05. this proves that there was a significance difference between the average pre-test and post-test score of the data students. The negative sign on the T value indicates that the pre-test, which confirm that the multimodality based learning approach successfully improved the students writing descriptive text ability.

Discussion

The result of the observation sheet, the result of multimodality based learning approach on students writing descriptive text ability, the researcher found that the score was 88,5%. The categorized “very good”. Furthermore, the result of students writing descriptive text ability before taught by using multimodality based learning approach was 38,40 and it is categorized “fail”. While, the result of students writing descriptive text after taught by using multimodality based learning approach was 79.2.

It is included in “good” criterion. It means that there is an improvement on students writing descriptive text ability after taught by using multimodality based learning approach.

Based on the result of pretest and posttest that has been analyzed, it was known that the result of the students mean score is different. This means that students score after using multimodality based learning approach a significant effect. Furthermore, the alternative hypothesis formulated in this research is accepted, it means that, “There is a significant effect of multimodality based learning approach on students’ writing descriptive text ability at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu.

By looking the relevant studies, the researcher has reviewed “The Effectiveness of Multimodal Approaches In Learning”. (Firmansyah, 2021): The research found that the multimodal learning has been tested through the t-test to improve students’ literary psychological analysis skills. The result of the effectiveness test showed a significant difference in students’ psychological analysis abilities in general between the post- test scores of the control class and the experimental class.

With the title is “The Multimodal Approach in English Language Teaching: A Systematic Review”. Additional research demonstrated both the benefits and challenges of implementing the multimodal learning in classroom (Hendrawati, 2024). Furthermore, studies examined the efficacy of the multimodality based learning. Based on the finding above, the researcher chooses multimodality based learning approach in writing descriptive text give a very good effect to increase students’ learning outcomes in school. “The Effectiveness of Multimodality on Students’ Ability to Write Descriptive Text”, (Setyani, 2024). Teaching that incorporates multimodality such as picture, sound, and video is considered as a good instrument to support students’ in gathering details for their descriptive text. The researcher does the research about the effect of multimodality based learning on students’ writing descriptive text ability.

Based on this explanation, this research expands the understanding of the effect of multimodality based learning approach by demonstration its significant impact on overall the students’ writing descriptive text ability, particularly in the aspect of content. This complements the findings of previous studies that focused more on specific aspects. Then, the researcher concludes that the using multimodality based learning approach was very suitable used in writing descriptive text ability. In this study, multimodality based learning approach gives significant effect on students’ writing descriptive text ability. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis, the researcher concludes that the use of a multimodality-based learning approach has a positive effect on students’ writing descriptive text ability at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu in the 2024/2025 academic year. The mean score of students before the implementation of the approach was 38.40, which was categorized as “fail”, while after the implementation, the mean score increased to 79.20, which was categorized as “good”. In addition, the overall result of the implementation reached a score of 62, which was categorized as “very good”. These findings indicate that there is a significant improvement in students’ writing ability after the use of the multimodality-based learning approach.

However, this study has several limitations. The use of a one-group pre-test post-test design without a control group limits the ability to attribute the improvement solely to the treatment. In addition, the use of purposive sampling with a limited sample size may affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a more rigorous experimental design involving a control group and a larger, more representative sample to obtain more generalizable results.

The recommendations of this study are expected to be practically applicable; however, they should also take into account resource availability and teacher readiness, particularly in diverse educational settings. The implementation of a multimodality-based learning approach requires adequate facilities, such as technological tools and learning media, as well as proper teacher training to ensure its effectiveness. Therefore, schools and stakeholders are encouraged to provide sufficient support in terms of infrastructure and professional development. Furthermore, this approach has the potential to be integrated into broader curriculum frameworks and scaled up for larger populations, provided that systematic planning and adaptation to different educational contexts are carefully considered.

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