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English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris
p-ISSN 2086-6003
Vol 11 (1), 2018, 129-143

IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITING ABILITY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLUSTERING TECHNIQUE AT THE TENTH GRADE OF MAN 1 METRO

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Abstract. *The aim of teaching foreign language is defined in terms of four skills, there are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It clearly shows that the purpose of teaching English is enabling the students to master the four skills. Writing as one of four skill is often ignored, this may be do to a number of factors, such as time consuming of correcting, low motivation, limited time to study writing and lack of teaching technique used. These factors make the English teacher mostly neglect to teach writing. The objective of this research were to know whether clustering technique develops students descriptive text writing ability, teacher's performance, and students' participation during teaching learning process at the tenth grade of MAN 1 Metro. To see the teacher's performance and students' participation (learning process), the qualitative data was used (questionnaire and observation sheet). Meanwhile, quantitative data (students' score) was used to know students ability in writing descriptive text (learning product). This research was conducted at MAN 1 Metro. The subject of the research was students of class X.B in academic year 2010/2011. This classroom action research (CAR) was done in three cycles. Each cycle consisted of plan, action, observation, and reflection. The indicators of this research success are if the teacher got minimum 65% from the observation sheet result, 100% students were active during teaching learning process, and 80% students gain score 65 or more. Referring to the research, it can be said that clustering technique can increase students' descriptive text writing ability, teacher's performance, and students' participation during teaching learning process.*

Keywords: Descriptive Text, Clustering Technique, Writing Ability

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A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a productive skill in the written mode. It is more complicated than it seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the skills, even for native speakers of a language. This happens because writing involves not just graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way. Murcia (2000:161) states that writing skill is often perceived as the most difficult skill since it requires a higher level of productive language control than other skills. It is no wonder that EFL students think that writing is a difficult skill to be mastered because it requires many aspects of language in this production such as organization, content, language use, mechanic and vocabulary. Moreover, writing is a complex process and commonly difficult for most people.

In fact, this object is very hard to achieve. Most of the students' skill are far a way from their laerning target, because the students know or have the ideas what they are going to write but they do not know how to put them into words. They cannot build a good sentence. The following is students' test result of descriptive text at class X.A MAN 1 Metro.

Table 1: Students' Writing Score of Descriptive Text

No	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1	85-100	-	0,00%
2	75-84	1	2.5%
3	65-74	9	22,5%
4	40-64	30	75%
5	0-39	-	0,00%
	Total	**40**	**100%**

Based on the experience and the result of descriptive text writing test, during teaching learning process happened at the tenth grade students of MAN 1 Metro, the researcher who is also the english teacher of the class, show that many students could not express their ideas in written form althrough they might know

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p-ISSN 2086-6003
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what would be written. They still could not understand or create a descriptive text althrough the teacher had explained it. They were still found some grammar mistakes or inappropriate vocabulary use. Most of students were not able to construct sentence in present form. Furthermore, they were not active during teaching learning process.

Considering to the importance of descriptive text for the students to master, it is very important for the teacher to apply the best way to make the students aware on the use of the text in their daily lives. Based on the reason above, the researcher conducted classroom action research with clustering technique to improve the students' descriptive text writing ability. Clustering is a type of prewriting that allows you to explore many ideas as soon as they occur to you. Like brainstorming or free associating, clustering allows you to begin without clear ideas**.**

In reference to the background of the problem above, the writer tries to state the problem raise of this research as follow: "Can writing using clustering technique improves teacher performance, students' ability, and students' participation in writing descriptive text at tenth grade of MAN 1 Metro?"

Concept of Writing

According to Siahaan (2008:214) states that language is a set of rules that is used by native speakers as the tool of their communication. It means that language is very important role in human's life for communication. This happens because writing involves not just graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way.

Start that writing is a language skill that is used for indirect communication. The students can communicate their ideals and thought to others through a written form such as letter, massage, or invitation for communication. It is also important that communication will be successful if the reader understands what the massage means because writing is drawing the graphic symbols that represent one

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p-ISSN 2086-6003
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language in order that people can understand it. Writing is sometimes used as a production mode for learning, reinforcing, or testing grammatical concepts. (Brown, 2001:344).

In short, writing is an activity of using language in written consisting of a sentence or clause or even only a phrase to express thoughts to the reader in a written form so that it will be easily understood by the reader.

Components of Writing

To assess and evaluate students writing, there are many scoring rubrics that proposed by many experts one of the most widely used analytical scales for ESL writing is the composition profile in Testing ESL Writing (Jacobs in Reid). According to Smith in Reid (1993: 246) there are some criteria for good writing namely: (1) content, (2) organization (3) style (4) correctness. In line with Jacobs scoring rubric, Harris (1995:68-69) said there are five general components in writing, such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic.

Teaching Writing

According to Graves (1996:120) states that writing reinforces listening and speaking, and very commonly. However Teaching writing is not similar with teaching speaking because both of the activities are different. In speaking, the speaker can express their mind orally and the result can be evaluated directly by the reader. While in writing, the writer might have enough time to express the idea in written form.

Furthermore, there is certain particular consideration that needs to be taken into account, such as sentence organization, paragraph, arrangement, and coherence. Teaching writing means that teaching language ability and organization of ideas. More specifically it is said that teaching writing requires the elements of writing including grammar, sentence, organization, vocabulary, and mechanic in order words, teaching writing guides the students not only to write sentence in text but also to organize idea in written form.

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Descriptive Text

The subject being described is explained as clearly as possible to make the readers or listeners able to see or imagine the subject in their mind clearly as the author sees in his/hers. For instance, a student wants to describe his sister to his new friend. In his mind, he has a very clear picture of his sister, including the pointed nose and the happy chuckle of her laugh. His friend however has no past image of his sister. He or she must rely on his words. His goal, then, is to use enough carefully chosen, specific details in his description so that his friend could pick his sister out of a group of people.

Social function or communicative approach of descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place, or thing in detail or clearly. To achieve the purpose, the descriptive text will move through a different set of stages:

Identification : mention the special participant

Description : mention the part, quality, and characteristics of subject being Described.

Clustering Technique

As the study of language teaching method and procedure, they are some different ways between an approach, a method, and technique. An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. Ma'mur (2003:116) defines a method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material. A technique is implementation that when actually takes place in classroom. It means that approach is the level at which assumption and beliefs about language teaching, method is the level procedural, a technique is implementation many method in classroom. Within one approach, there can be many methods, and the technique must be consistent with a method.

Speech has complex sentences with simple words, while writing has complex words in simple sentence**.** According to Brown (2001:252) states that spoken

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language, due to memory limitations and our predisposition for "chunking' or clustering and break down speech into smaller groups of words.

Clustering is a type of prewriting that allows you to explore many ideas as soon as they occur to you. Like brainstorming or free associating, clustering allows you to begin without clear ideas**.**

The writing levels are broken into three more general levels: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. All levels are encouraged to use prewriting techniques (such as brainstorming, clustering, outlining, pre discussion of topic, pre reading, analysis of models), to determine audience and purpose in writing, to revise and to incorporate the use of dialogue journals (Reid, 1993:102).

Pre-writing, "pre" means before: pre-writing means the work done by the writer before the paragraph is actually written. It means there are several steps in pre-writing, include: choose the subject or the topic, choose an audience, decide on a purpose.

Writing / Drafting: in addition to meeting the requirements for the beginning level student

Post-writing: the student will be able to identify and mark written errors in sentences and paragraphs.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Classroom action research

The research uses the classroom action research because the researcher is the teacher in the class. Therefore, the action research can be done exactly. According to Thomas A Angelo, classroom action research is the patient, systematic study of students learning by disciplinary faculty in their classrooms. It is aimed at the producing insights and understanding that can improve teaching and learning (Suratinah, 2007:2.3). Depend on David Hopkins; classroom action research is a kind of research in which teacher look critically at their own classroom primary

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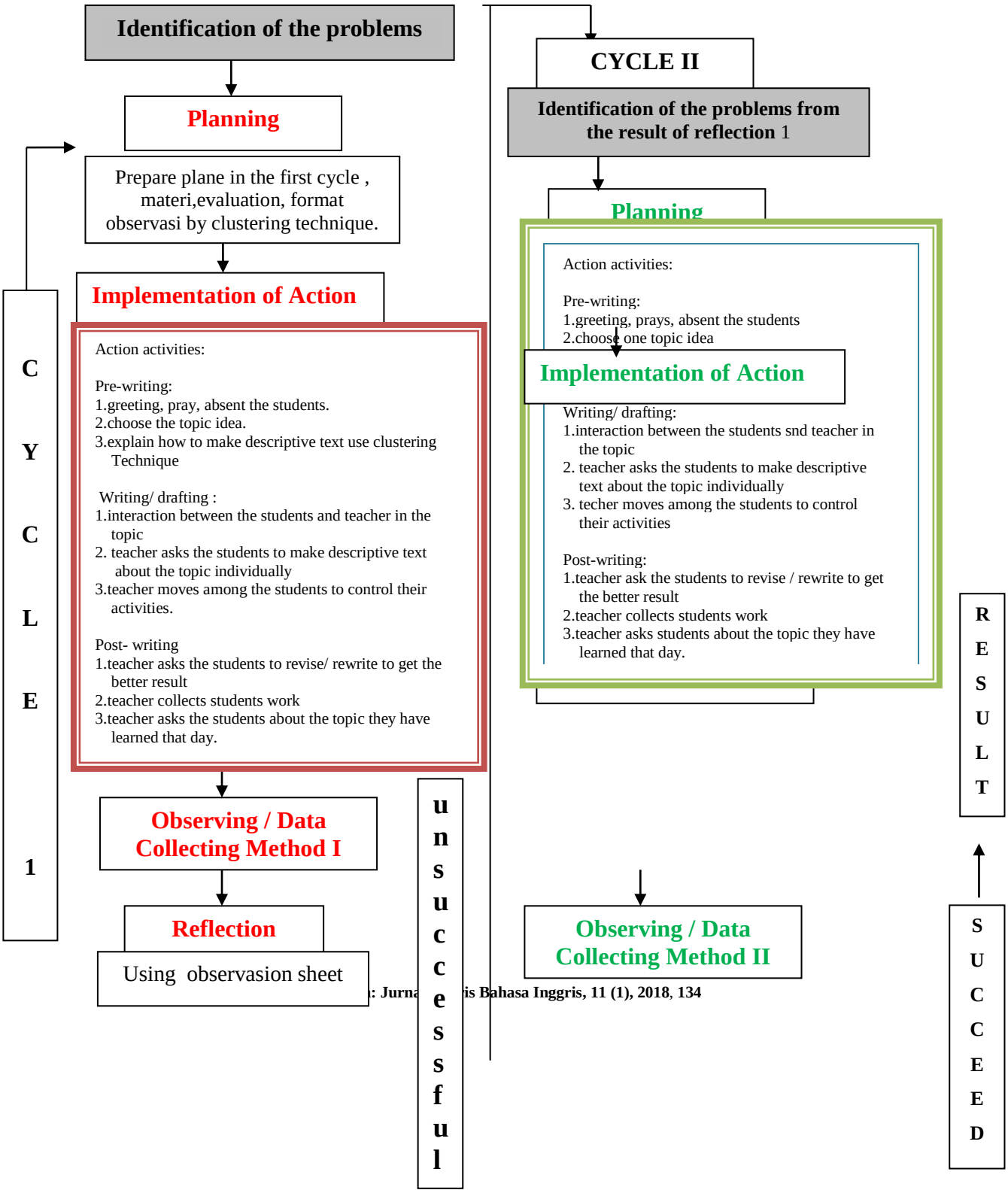
for the purpose of improving their teaching and quality of education in their school.

2. The steps in the research



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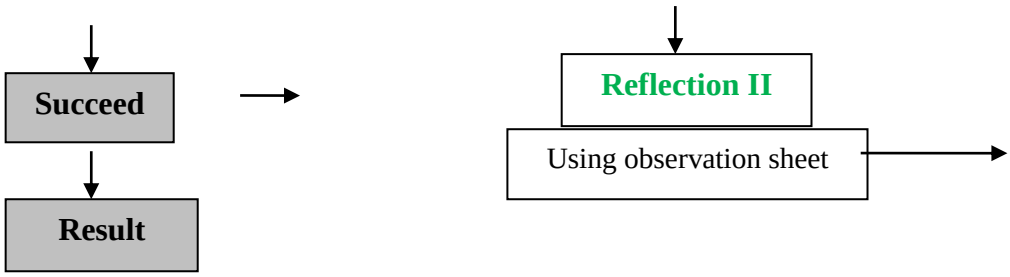

Data Collecting Instruments

1. Writing Test

The post test will be done after the treatments. After the treatment, the student will have a post test. The form and the procedure of the post text are the same as pretest.

2. Observation

Suharsimi (2007:127) states that the purpose of the observation is to explain the situation being investigated: activities, people, or individuals are involved in an activity and the relationship among them. Observation is a monitoring and recording systematically to the phenomeonon that is investigates. It means that observation is a data collection strategy in which the activities of subjects are visually examined

3. Documentation

Kusnadi (202:102) defines documentation as the method which is used to get information from the written source or documentation, (for example: book, magazine, note, and other). It means that documentation is note of information in the form of documentation.

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C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Result of Observation, Interpretation, and Analysis Cycle 1

After the teaching learning process, the teacher and the rater discussed everything that happened in the teaching learning process. The students' participation, teacher's performance, and the result of students' work were includes in the process teaching learning. They can be explanation as follows.

a. Learning process **Table 1: observation Sheet Result Cycle**

Note:

Vs	: very satisfactory	; the teacher achieved 95% result of target
S	: satisfactory	; the teacher achieved 80% result of target
Su	: sufficient	; the teacher achieved 70% result of target
U	: unsatisfactory	; the teacher achieved 50% result of target
Vu	: very unsatisfactory	; the teacher achieved 30% result of target

b**.** Learning Product

At the first cycle in teaching writing descriptive text using clustering technique, the average score of the students 65, 75 with student's pass 62,5 %. to know comparison before and after cycle I. It is illustrated a table below:

Table 2: the result treatment in cycle I

Note	Before Treatment	Cycle I
Highest Score	80	85
Lowest Score	40	45
Average Score	58,67	65,75
Student's Pass	42,5%	62,5%

After looking at the table, we know there is progress average score from 58, 67 to

No	Aspect	Vs	S	Su	U	Vu
1	Constructivism	√				
2	Inquiry		√			
3	Questioning				√	
4	Learning Community			√		
5	Modeling	√				
6	Reflection			√		
7	Authentic Assessment		√			
	Percentage	28,57	28,57	28,57	14,29	0
	Total			100%		

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p-ISSN 2086-6003
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65, 75. There is an increase 7, 08 points. KKM (Material Mastery Criteria) is ≥ 65 and score < 65 have not reach pass yet.

Table 3: Score distribution of cycle I

No	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Note
1	85 – 100	2	5%	Pass
2	75 – 84	9	22,5%	Pass
3	65 – 74	14	35%	Pass
4	40 – 64	15	37,5%	Failed
5	0 – 39	-	-	-
Total		**40**	**100%**	

In reference to the data at cycle I above, there were only 25 students who scored 65 or more. It means that the result in the first cycle had not fulfilled the indicator yet, that was 65% of the students score 65 or more. Therefore, the teacher should apply the second cycle

c. Reflection

Based on the result, it can be said that clustering technique has positive effect to the students in teaching learning process. It can be seen from the result at the first cycle. Although the students who got score more than 65 only a few, there is increase in it.

Although there is increasing of the result from the first cycle, but the teaching learning process by using clustering technique has achieved minimal competence standard of the research yet. This failure can be seen that students who got score more than 65 less than 30 students.

Result of Observation, Interpretation, and Analysis Cycle II

After the teaching learning process, the teacher and the rater discussed everything that happened in the teaching learning process. The students' participation, teacher's performance, and the result of students' work were includes in the process teaching learning. They can be explanation as follows.

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a. Learning process

No	Aspect	Vs	S	Su	U	Vu
1	Constructivism	√				
2	Inquiry		√			
3	Questioning				√	
4	Learning Community			√		
5	Modeling	√				
6	Reflection		√			
7	Authentic Assessment		√			
	Percentage	28,57	42,85	14,29	14,29	0
	Total			100%		

Table 4: observation sheet result at cycle II

b. Learning Product

At the second cycle in teaching writing descriptive text using clustering technique, the average score of the students 70, 72 with student's pass 70%. It is illustrated a table at cycle II:

Table 5: the result treatment in cycle II

Note	Siklus II
Highest Score	89
Lowest Score	50
Average Score	70,72
Student's Pass	70%

After looking at the table, the highest score at cycle II 89, the lowest sore 50, and the average score of the students 70, 72 with students pass 70%. The score distribution of cycle II can be seeing at table 10.

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Table 6: score distribution of cycle II

No	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Note
1	85 – 100	6	15%	Pass
2	75 – 84	15	37,5%	Pass
3	65 – 74	10	25%	Pass
4	40 – 64	11	27,5%	Failed
5	0 – 39	-	-	-
Total		**40**	**100%**	

c. Reflection

After analyzing the result of learning product, the researcher did reflection on the research. She and the teacher discussed each activity that happened during teaching learning process to know the weakness on this cycle. The weaknesses that happened in the learning process and learning product were as follows

Students' participation. In reference the result of questionnaires, it could be notice that most of the students were active during teaching learning process although they felt that the explanation given by the teacher was still not clear. They did not get experience from the technique used by the teacher still could not make them easier to make descriptive text.

Those problems happened because they did not like learning English. Based on the informal interview with some students outside of class, many students thought that English was difficult. Therefore, the teacher had to provide or create situation that made them have curiosity. She should encourage them to make question related to the lesson since there were some students who still felt shy to ask question to their friends/ teacher when they did not know about something.

Teacher's performance. In line with the result of teacher's assessment observation sheet. It could be seen that many students were reluctant to ask question related to the teacher explanation. Therefore, the teacher should create situation that could make them have curiosity.

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Result of Observation, Interpretation, and Analysis Cycle III

After the teaching learning process, the teacher and the rater discussed everything that happened in the teaching learning process. The students' participation, teacher's performance, and the result of students' work were includes in the process teaching learning. They can be explanation as follows.

a. Learning process

No	Aspect	Vs	S	Su	U	Vu
1	Constructivism	√				
2	Inquiry	√				
3	Questioning		√			
4	Learning Community		√			
5	Modeling	√				
6	Reflection	√				
7	Authentic Assessment	√				
	Percentage	71,42	28,58	0	0	0
	Total			100%		

Table 7: observation sheet result at cycle III

b. Learning Product

At the third cycle in teaching writing descriptive text using clustering technique, the average score of the students 77,62 with student's pass 90%. It is illustrated a table at cycle III:

Table 8: the result treatment in cycle III

Note	Siklus III
Highest Score	95
Lowest Score	55
Average Score	77,62
Student's Pass	90%

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p-ISSN 2086-6003
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After looking at the table, After looking at the table, the highest score at cycle III 95, the lowest sore 55, and the average score of the students 77,62 with students pass 90 %. The score distribution of cycle III can be seeing at table 14.

Table : score distribution of cycle III

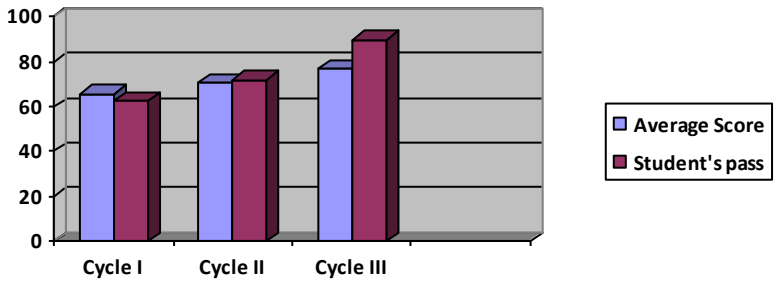
No	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Note
1	85 – 100	15	37,5%	Pass
2	75 – 84	11	27,5%	Pass
3	65 – 74	10	25%	Pass
4	40 – 64	4	10%	Failed
5	0 – 39	-	-	-
Total		**40**	**100%**	

c. Reflection

Most of the students were active during teaching learning process. They had been more excited in learning English since the teacher could motivate them. They followed the lesson in learning seriously and asked question or give comments to the teacher if they found something outlandish.

In reference to the result of teacher's assessment observation sheet in cycle II, it could be seen that the teacher had been already able to use clustering technique during teaching learning

Furthermore the increasing score in each cycle can be seen in the graph below.



CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

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Conclusion

Referring to the discussion of the research findings on the previous chapter, the researcher come to these following conclusions.

1. Clustering technique can increase students' descriptive text writing ability. Clustering can create situation of the class alive. The students are involved in the teaching learning process since the material given has correlated to their daily activities. It makes them easier to understand the material.
2. Clustering technique can improve teacher's performance. Clustering helps teacher develop aspects that are needed in the process of teaching such as pre writing, drafting writing, and revising writing.
3. Clustering technique can improve students' participation. It is approved by the result of questionnaires that 90-100 % students were achieving during teaching learning process. Clustering technique applies learning community that makes students more active.

B. Suggestion.

Referring to the data in the previous chapter and the conclusions, some suggestion are recommended

1. Considering the advantages of clustering technique, it is suggested that the English teacher of the class apply clustering technique as an alternative way in teaching descriptive text. It is supported by the result finding that clustering technique not only help teacher improve the students' descriptive text writing ability but also teacher's performance and students' participation.
2. The teacher should reinforce the students about correct grammar especially present tense. She should reinforce them to do more frequently practice in using present tense, especially in writing descriptive text.
3. The teacher is expected to be motivate the students in order to be exited in learning English since many students regard English subject is difficult to learn. Based on the informal interview with some students in the outside of the class,

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p-ISSN 2086-6003
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many students said that they did not like learning English because it was difficult to understand.

4. The last but not least, the teacher should monitor the students well while do their works since there is a chance for those who lazy to cheat their friends' work.

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