# The effect of roundtable technique in the students' ability in writing skill on eight grade classes SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar in descriptive text

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**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh Teknik Diskusi Meja Bundar terhadap kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa kelas delapan di SMP Negeri 12 Pematangsiantar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain kuasi-eksperimental yang melibatkan dua kelompok: kelompok eksperimen dan kelompok kontrol, masing-masing terdiri dari 32 siswa. Data dikumpulkan melalui instrumen pre-test dan post-test yang diberikan kepada kedua kelompok. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata kelompok eksperimen meningkat secara signifikan dari 63,69 pada pre-test menjadi 84,81 pada post-test, sedangkan kelompok kontrol menunjukkan peningkatan yang lebih kecil dari 70,34 menjadi 80,30. Hasil uji t (t = 5,032) melebihi nilai t-tabel (1,694) pada tingkat signifikansi 0,05, menunjukkan perbedaan yang signifikan secara statistik antara kedua kelompok. Hasil ini menegaskan bahwa Teknik Diskusi Meja Bundar memiliki pengaruh positif yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan kemampuan menulis siswa, khususnya dalam menghasilkan teks deskriptif. Oleh karena itu, teknik ini direkomendasikan sebagai strategi pembelajaran kolaboratif yang efektif dalam pengajaran menulis.

**Kata Kunci: keterampilan menulis; teknik diskusi meja bundar; teks deskriptif**

**ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to examine the effect of the Roundtable Technique on students' writing ability in descriptive text among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Pematangsiantar. This research employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design involving two groups: an experimental group and a control group, each consisting of 32 students. Data were collected through pre-test and post-test instruments administered to both groups. The findings revealed that the mean score of the experimental group increased significantly from 63.69 in the pre-test to 84.81 in the post-test, while the control group showed a smaller improvement from 70.34 to 80.30. The result of the t-test (t = 5.032) exceeded the t-table value (1.694) at the 0.05 significance level, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two groups. These results confirm that the Roundtable Technique has a significant positive effect on improving students' writing skills, particularly in producing descriptive texts. Therefore, this technique is recommended as an effective collaborative learning strategy in teaching writing.*

**Keywords: writing skill; roundtable technique; descriptive text**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool used by humans to communicate. Language cannot be separated from human life because, without language, people are not able to convey what they want to say to others. By using language, people can convey their thoughts and feelings to other people. To be able to communicate with each other, the language used must be understood by them. One of the languages that is known and used by many people is English. Language is a way for humans to communicate and convey messages to others. Language is often

understood as a communication system used by humans to convey thoughts, ideas, feelings, and information to others. According to Sardjunani (2020), language is a tool to express a person's ideas, feelings, and desires toward the people with whom they are communicating or interacting. Language has various forms, both spoken and written, and consists of symbols, such as words, sentences, and other signs that have certain meanings.

In English, there are four primary skills that must be acquired, namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These four skills are interconnected and crucial for successful language learning. Reading refers to the ability to understand and analyze text, which helps broaden vocabulary and grasp context. Writing, conversely, entails the skill to express ideas clearly and in an organized manner, which is essential for written communication. Listening is a skill that allows an individual to comprehend information presented orally, whereas speaking is the ability to communicate directly with others, which requires appropriate pronunciation and intonation. The enhancement of these four skills can be achieved through various approaches, including consistent practice, the use of media, and engagement with native speakers. By excelling in these four areas, an individual will feel more confident in using English in different circumstances.

Writing is a process of transforming ideas and thoughts into written form. Writing is among the most essential skills in acquiring a language, in addition to listening, speaking, and reading. Writing is one of the four skills in English that learners need to master. Writing serves as a means for learners to convey knowledge in written form. As one of the language skills, alongside speaking, reading, and listening, writing should be taught effectively by teachers to their students. Writing is a productive skill that involves the process of organizing ideas, selecting vocabulary, and paying attention to grammar and punctuation to produce communicative written texts (Hyland, 2019).

Writing, as one of the important English skills, has to be mastered by students. It is one of the requirements for mastering English. Writing is one way to convey thoughts to other people. By writing, people can communicate with each other. To make ideas understandable to other people, a writer has to convey them effectively. Writing enables individuals to connect with others through words, letters, or symbols (Preiss et al., 2013). The process of converting thoughts into written words and refining them into coherent ideas, structure, and organization is referred to as writing. Students must articulate their ideas, feelings, or opinions in clear and correct sentences.

The teaching of writing skills, particularly in the context of descriptive texts, is crucial for the development of students' language proficiency. Descriptive writing not only enhances students' vocabulary and grammar but also encourages creativity and critical thinking. The Roundtable Technique, a collaborative learning strategy, has gained attention as an effective method to improve writing skills among students. This study aims to investigate the significance of the Roundtable Technique on the writing abilities of eighth-grade students at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar, particularly in crafting descriptive texts.

Research indicates that collaborative learning environments can lead to improved academic outcomes. According to Johnson and Johnson (2014), cooperative learning strategies, such as the Roundtable Technique, foster positive interdependence among students and enhance individual accountability. In this study, the Roundtable Technique is explored as a means to facilitate peer interaction and feedback, which are essential components in the writing process. By engaging in collaborative discussions, students can generate ideas, refine their thoughts, and ultimately produce more coherent and vivid descriptive texts.

Descriptive writing requires students to convey specific details about a person, place, or object, engaging the reader's senses. The Roundtable Technique encourages students to share their observations and insights, thereby enriching the descriptive quality of their writing. For instance, a student describing a local market might benefit from hearing their peers' perspectives on the colors, sounds, and smells present in that environment. Such collaborative exchanges can result in more nuanced and comprehensive descriptions, enhancing the overall quality of their written work.

Moreover, the significance of this study extends beyond the immediate classroom context. As students develop their writing skills, they cultivate essential competencies that will serve them throughout their academic careers and beyond. The ability to articulate thoughts clearly and descriptively is a valuable skill in various fields, including business, education, and the arts. By examining the effectiveness of the Roundtable Technique, this research aims to contribute to the broader discourse on innovative teaching methodologies that promote student engagement and success in writing. The Roundtable Technique in writing instruction at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar presents an opportunity to enhance students' descriptive writing skills. This study seeks to provide empirical evidence on its effectiveness, thereby informing educators about the potential benefits of collaborative learning strategies in the language arts curriculum.

The difficulties in writing stem from issues with grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure, as well as organizational challenges such as structuring paragraphs and developing ideas, and psychological factors such as lack of confidence or fear of failure. Students may also struggle with the mechanical aspects of writing, such as punctuation and capitalization, as well as understanding audience and

purpose. Common problems in writing include distraction, over-editing, perfectionism, lack of self-confidence, difficulty generating ideas, and struggling to write consistently. Specific writing challenges can involve grammar, spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure, and organization.

In writing, there are several text types, such as descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, spoof, analytical exposition, and exposition. Moreover, one of the genres taught in grade VIII of junior high school is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a type of text that is interesting to learn and write. Writing descriptive text helps students remember information about a person or an object by observing and describing it specifically in written form. Pardiyono (2006) states that descriptive text is a description of something or someone consisting of its characteristics.

Based on the teaching internship program carried out by the researcher, it was found that many students were weak in writing descriptive text. During the observation, it was found that the problem was caused by the students' lack of knowledge in writing descriptive text. Students usually face some common difficulties when writing descriptive text, namely a lack of vocabulary, which affects the choice of words they should use according to the object being described. Students also lack knowledge about the generic structure or organization of descriptive text, so they are confused about how to start writing and express their ideas, and they do not know how to form the sentences they have made into a proper descriptive text structure. They do not know what to do at the beginning of writing and have difficulty using proper sentence structure; they also do not use correct writing mechanics.

Problems in writing can be caused by various factors, both from within the writer and from the environment. Some assumptions about the causes of writing problems include lack of understanding of the material, lack of interest, lack of motivation, difficulty in composing ideas and sentences, and psychological factors such as stress and anxiety. Other factors that cause writing problems in students at school can be uninteresting teaching techniques that make students lazy and unmotivated in writing.

Teachers are capable of utilizing various cooperative learning methods to teach English, especially in the area of writing skills. One effective technique for teaching English writing skills is the Roundtable Technique. The Roundtable Technique is a learning technique in which students actively participate in learning by generating responses, solving problems, or making a contribution to a project (Kagan, 2009). The Roundtable Technique is a form of discussion that includes multiple participants; it is a cooperative learning strategy that teachers can effectively utilize to enhance students' English proficiency. One aspect it addresses is writing skills. This method is beneficial for brainstorming, reviewing, or honing a particular skill. According to Kagan (2009), the Roundtable Technique is a learning strategy in which students take the initiative by generating responses, tackling challenges, or contributing to a project. Students alternate in responding to prompts by jotting down one or two words or phrases before passing their paper to another peer, who is also engaged in the same activity. This allows students to collaborate with one another and share their ideas easily within their group.

The Roundtable Technique is a technique for working together by forming several groups in which each member sits at a roundtable with a piece of paper and a pencil, and each member writes down their ideas in turn. This technique helps students have the opportunity to provide ideas based on their understanding and helps them develop their ideas. The Roundtable Technique is also useful in writing activities because it encourages students to be more active, as each group member participates in contributing ideas in written form. Based on this technique, the teacher divides the students into groups and gives each group a piece of paper and a pencil. This technique also helps students learn to work together in teams and respect each other's ideas.

The purpose of this research was to determine the effect of the Roundtable Technique on students' ability in writing skills among eighth-grade classes at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar in descriptive text. The researcher discovered that the Roundtable Technique has been widely used in research and has shown successful results. Several previous studies have shown that the Roundtable Technique can significantly improve students' writing abilities. Flora et al. (2020) applied a modified Roundtable Technique combined with a process approach and found positive results in enhancing students' writing achievement in a foreign language setting. Urunami et al. (2017) combined the Roundtable Technique with the Group Grid Technique and demonstrated its effectiveness in helping students develop their descriptive text writing. While these studies confirm the benefits of the Roundtable Technique, they differ from the current research in terms of context and approach. Notably, previous research involved senior high school or university students and often used blended techniques, whereas the current study focuses solely on the use of the Roundtable Technique with junior high school students, providing a more focused examination of its impact at that educational level.

Puspasari (2018) indicated that the use of the Roundtable Technique had a statistically significant effect on students' ability to write descriptive texts. The study, which employed a quasi-experimental design with tenth-grade students at MA Pembangunan UIN Jakarta, showed that the experimental class taught using the Roundtable Technique outperformed the control class that was taught using traditional methods. With a sample of 54 students divided equally into experimental and control groups, the results were analyzed using

SPSS 20. The post-test scores revealed a notable improvement in the experimental group, with a p-value of 0.007, which is lower than the significance level of 0.05. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, confirming that the Roundtable Technique effectively enhanced students' descriptive writing skills. These findings provide empirical support for using collaborative and interactive learning strategies in writing instruction.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### *A. Research Design*

A research design is a plan of the proposed research work. It serves as a framework to conduct research, including the selection of methods, techniques, and procedures used to analyze data relevant to specific research objectives. This study employs a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental research design.

This study aims to assess the impact of the Roundtable Technique on the writing skills of eighth-grade students at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar. The participants are divided into two groups: an experimental group that receives instruction using the Roundtable Technique and a control group that is taught using conventional teaching methods. This design enables a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of the Roundtable Technique in improving descriptive writing skills.

According to Creswell (2015), quantitative research is an approach used to test objective theories by examining the relationship between variables. A theory may appear as an argument, discussion, or rationale that explains or predicts phenomena. Sugiyono (2022) states that quantitative methods involve the use of populations and samples, aiming to test predetermined hypotheses through measurable data. Creswell (2008) explains that a quasi-experimental design is used when researchers cannot randomly assign participants, as the population cannot be artificially created.

This research uses two groups: an experimental class and a control class. The experimental class receives treatment using the Roundtable Technique, while the control class is taught using conventional teaching strategies. Both groups are given a pre-test and a post-test.

After the pre-test, the experimental group participates in a series of writing lessons using the Roundtable Technique, including collaborative brainstorming, peer feedback, and guided writing exercises focused on descriptive texts. Meanwhile, the control group receives traditional instruction, such as individual writing tasks and teacher-centered explanations.

The post-test is administered to both groups to measure improvement in writing skills after the treatment. The results are assessed using a rubric that evaluates key aspects of descriptive writing, such as sensory details, organization, and coherence. Statistical analysis, particularly the t-test, is used to determine the significance of differences between the two groups.

**Table 1. Research Design**

**Note:**

Table 1. Research Design

| Group | Pre-test | Treatment | Post-test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental Class | X1 | Y | X2 |
| Control Class | X1 | – | X2 |

X1 : Pre-test for experimental and control groups
Y : Treatment using the Roundtable Technique
X2 : Post-test for experimental and control groups

### *B. Population of the Research*

Population refers to all individuals or objects that are the focus of a research study. According to Sugiyono (2022), population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects with specific characteristics determined by the researcher to draw conclusions. Ary et al. (2014) define population as all members of a clearly defined group of individuals, events, or objects.

The population of this research consists of all eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Pematangsiantar in the academic year 2025/2026. There are nine classes with approximately 32 students in each class, totaling 287 students.

Table 2. Population

| No | Class | Students |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | VIII-1 | 32 |
| 2 | VIII-2 | 32 |
| 3 | VIII-3 | 32 |
| 4 | VIII-4 | 32 |
| 5 | VIII-5 | 32 |

| No | Class | Students |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | VIII-6 | 31 |
| 7 | VIII-7 | 32 |
| 8 | VIII-8 | 32 |
| 9 | VIII-9 | 32 |
| | Total | 287 Students |

### *C. Sample of the Research*

A sample is a subset of the population selected to represent the entire group (Ary et al., 2014). According to Sugiyono (2022), a sample represents both the quantity and characteristics of the population.

This study uses purposive sampling. According to Jenson (in Rai & Thapa, 2015), purposive sampling is a method of selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives.

Two classes were selected as samples. Class VIII-4, consisting of 32 students, was assigned as the experimental class, and class VIII-2, also consisting of 32 students, was assigned as the control class. The selection was based on observations and teaching practice experiences, which indicated that both classes had difficulties in writing descriptive texts.

Table 3. Sample

| No | Class | Sample | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | VIII-4 | 32 | Control Class |
| 2 | VIII-2 | 32 | Experimental Class |
| | **Total** | **64** | |

### *D. Technique of Collecting Data*

The data were collected using tests administered to eighth-grade students of SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar. The instruments used were pre-test and post-test.

The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to measure students' initial writing ability. The post-test was conducted after the treatment to determine the improvement in students' writing skills. The experimental class received treatment using the Roundtable Technique, while the control class did not receive the treatment.

### *E. Technique of Data Analysis*

Data analysis is the process of organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data. In quantitative research, data analysis is essential to determine whether there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups.

The data were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, and t-test formula based on Ary et al. (2014).

1) Mean Score

The mean scores of both groups are calculated as follows:

a) Experimental Group:

$$Ma = \frac{\sum xa}{Na} \quad (1)$$

b) Control Group:

$$Mb = \frac{\sum xb}{Nb} \quad (2)$$

Note:

Ma : Mean of experimental group
Mb : Mean of control group
∑Xa : Total score of experimental group
∑Xb : Total score of control group
Na : Number of students (experimental group)
Nb : Number of students (control group)

2) Standard Deviation

a) Experimental Group:

$$da^2 = \sum d^2 - \left(\frac{(\sum d)^2}{Na}\right) \quad (3)$$

b) Control Group:

$$db^2 = \sum d^2 - \left(\frac{(\sum d)^2}{Nb}\right) \quad (4)$$

Note:

$da^2$ : Variance of experimental group
$db^2$ : Variance of control group
$\sum d^2$ : Sum of squared deviations
Na : Number of students (experimental group)
Nb : Number of students (control group)

3) t-test Formula

$$t = \frac{Ma - Mb}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{da^2 + db^2}{Na + Nb - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Na} + \frac{1}{Nb}\right)}} \quad (5)$$

**Note:**

t : Test of significance
Ma : Mean score of experimental group
Mb : Mean score of control group
$da^2$ : Variance of experimental group
$db^2$ : Variance of control group
Na : Number of students (experimental group)
Nb : Number of students (control group)

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *A. Results*

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the Roundtable Technique has a significant effect on students' ability in writing descriptive text. In the experimental class, the mean score in the pre-test was 63.69, indicating that the students' writing ability before the treatment was at a moderate level. After the treatment using the Roundtable Technique, the mean score in the post-test increased to 84.81. This shows a significant improvement in students' writing ability after the technique was applied. The lowest score in the pre-test was 33 and the highest score was 79, while in the post-test the lowest score increased to 62 and the highest score reached 95. This indicates that most students performed better after learning through the Roundtable Technique.

In the control class, the mean score in the pre-test was 70.34, and it increased to 80.30 in the post-test. Although there was improvement, the increase was not as significant as in the experimental class. The lowest score in the pre-test was 45 and the highest score was 89, while in the post-test the lowest score became 66 and the highest score was 91. This indicates that students' writing ability improved slightly even without the use of the Roundtable Technique.

Furthermore, the result of the t-test calculation was 5.032, which is higher than the t-table value of 1.694 at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that the difference between the experimental class and the control class is statistically significant. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. It can be concluded that the Roundtable Technique significantly improves students' ability in writing descriptive text.

### *B. Discussion*

The strengths and weaknesses of this research compared with previous relevant studies are as follows:

First, the present research was conducted in a direct classroom setting, allowing the researcher to observe students' interaction and participation during the implementation of the Roundtable Technique. In contrast, Putri (2020) conducted the study during online learning in the COVID-19 pandemic context.

Second, both this study and Sinaga (2017) used a quasi-experimental research design involving experimental and control groups. This design enables a comparison of the effectiveness of the Roundtable Technique with conventional teaching methods. However, this research was conducted specifically at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar, whereas Sinaga (2017) did not specify the research setting in detail.

Third, this research was conducted at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar, while Fatmawati et al. (2025) conducted the study at SMK Harapan Babalan Pangkalan Berandan. In addition, Fatmawati et al. (2025) used classroom action research with two cycles involving both qualitative and quantitative data, whereas this study used a quantitative quasi-experimental design.

Fourth, this research focuses on descriptive text writing, while Rosmiyati and Noviati (2022) focused on narrative writing. Additionally, this study was conducted at the junior high school level, whereas their study was conducted at the vocational high school level.

Fifth, this study uses a quasi-experimental design with two groups, while Yaqin & Halim (2023) used a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. This research involved 64 students divided into two groups, whereas their study involved only 30 students. The quasi-experimental design used in this study provides a more robust comparison between groups.

Sixth, this study was conducted only at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar, while Pasaribu et al. (2023) conducted their research at SMP Swasta Taman Asuhan. In addition, this study involved 64 students, while their study involved 44 students.

The objective of this research was to determine whether the use of the Roundtable Technique significantly improves students' ability in writing descriptive text at SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar. The

researcher used two classes: class VIII-2 as the experimental class and class VIII-4 as the control class. A pre-test was administered to both classes to measure students' initial ability. Then, the researcher provided treatment for two meetings. The experimental class was taught using the Roundtable Technique, while the control class was taught using conventional teaching methods. After the treatment, a post-test was administered to both classes to measure the effect of the technique.

The findings revealed that the application of the Roundtable Technique significantly improved students' writing ability in descriptive text. The experimental class showed a substantial improvement from the pre-test (M = 63.69) to the post-test (M = 84.81), while the control class showed a smaller improvement from 70.34 to 80.30. The t-test result ($t = 5.032 > t\text{-table} = 1.694$, $p < 0.05$) confirmed that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant.

These findings support the theory of Kagan (1994) on cooperative learning, which emphasizes collaboration and equal participation in group activities. The Roundtable Technique provides opportunities for students to share ideas, generate vocabulary collaboratively, and organize their thoughts more effectively. In contrast, conventional teaching methods provide less opportunity for active participation, resulting in lower improvement.

The implementation of the Roundtable Technique demonstrates several strengths, particularly in promoting student interaction and improving writing quality. Students become more active and are able to support each other in developing ideas. However, this technique also has some weaknesses, such as creating a noisier classroom environment due to group discussions. Therefore, teachers need to provide clear instructions to ensure that learning remains effective and conducive.

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of the Roundtable Technique on students' ability in writing descriptive text at the eighth-grade level of SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the Roundtable Technique has a significant effect on students' writing ability. This is supported by the analyzed research results. After learning descriptive text using the Roundtable Technique in the experimental class, it was found that the technique is effective in improving students' writing skills.

The result shows that the degree of freedom (df) is 62 ($df = Na + Nb - 2$; $32 + 32 - 2 = 62$), and the t-table value at the 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test is 1.694. The mean score of the experimental class (Ma) was 21 with a standard deviation (da) of 3.184, while the mean score of the control class (Mb) was 10 with a standard deviation (db) of 1.560. These results indicate that the use of the Roundtable Technique has a greater effect compared to the conventional method.

Furthermore, the result of the t-test calculation shows that the obtained value ($t = 5.032$) is higher than the t-table value (1.694) at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. It can be concluded that the use of the Roundtable Technique has a significant effect on students' ability to write descriptive text in the eighth grade of SMP N 12 Pematangsiantar.

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