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INCREASING THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL AND MOTIVATION BY USING DICE GAME TECHNIQUE AT SMK NEGERI 2 INDRALAYA UTARA

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ABSTRACT

The Purpose of the study is to increase the writing skill and motivation of tenth-grade students by using the Dice Game Technique in English writing instruction, particularly in composing descriptive texts at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. This study employed Classroom Action Research conducted in Class X TKJ 1 of SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara involving 21 students during the 2024/2025 academic year. Data were collected through writing tests, classroom observations, and interviews, and the study was implemented in two cycles consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages. The results showed an increase in students' writing skill and motivation. In Cycle I, 80.95% of students reached the Minimum Mastery Criterion with a mean score of 70.76, while in Cycle II, 90.47% of students reached the criterion with an increased mean score of 77.62. In terms of motivation, students showed greater enthusiasm, active participation, confidence in expressing ideas, and engagement during the learning process. This study provides practical classroom-based evidence of integrating the Dice Game Technique within Classroom Action Research to simultaneously increase students' writing skill and motivation through an interactive and enjoyable learning approach.

Keywords: Dice Game Technique, writing skill, Motivation, Descriptive Text, Classroom Action Research

1. INTRODUCTION

In Phase E (Grade X), English learning outcomes emphasize students' ability to communicate effectively through spoken, written, and visual texts across a variety of contexts, purposes, and audiences (Mahesti et al., 2025; Oktaviani, 2024). At this level, learners are expected to develop competence in comprehending and producing diverse text types by applying appropriate linguistic features, generic structures, and communicative functions. One of the key genres highlighted in the curriculum is descriptive text, which requires students to present descriptions of people, places, or objects in a clear, structured, and coherent manner (Fadilah et al., 2023; Dhananjaya et al., 2024; Arochman et al., 2024). Genre-based pedagogy plays a significant role in supporting these objectives, as it enables students to understand how language functions within specific communicative contexts (Hyland, 2019; Emilia, 2021).

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However, the attainment of these learning goals remains challenging, particularly in writing skills. Writing is widely recognized as one of the most demanding language skills due to its complex and integrative nature. Students must generate ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, apply grammatical rules accurately, and organize information into logically connected paragraphs (Rahmat & Jannah, 2021; Torky & Ahmed, 2025; Karanjakwut, 2024). These multiple cognitive and linguistic demands often make writing a difficult task, especially for learners with limited exposure to English. For vocational high school students, writing proficiency is especially crucial as it supports both academic development and future occupational needs. Beyond classroom assignments, they are expected to use English for practical communication purposes such as writing job applications, reports, emails, and other workplace-related documents. Therefore, strengthening writing skills is essential to equip students with competencies relevant to both educational and professional contexts.

Based on classroom observations at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara, students of class X TKJ 1 demonstrated low performance and motivation in writing descriptive texts. Many students encountered difficulties in generating ideas, selecting suitable vocabulary, and structuring paragraphs coherently, resulting in incomplete and underdeveloped written work. Preliminary findings indicated that only 45% of students met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 70, highlighting persistent challenges in writing achievement. In addition to cognitive difficulties, students also exhibited low learning motivation. Writing activities were often perceived as repetitive, challenging, and time-consuming, leading to passive participation and minimal engagement. Students frequently showed reluctance to express ideas and were easily distracted during classroom activities, which further hindered their writing development.

Previous instructional strategies, including Problem-Based Learning supported by video media, did not significantly improve students' writing performance or motivation. Classroom observations, interviews, and teacher discussions revealed a lack of variation and interactivity in learning activities, resulting in low student engagement (Mustaqim et al., 2025; Purnomo et al., 2024; Rahmani, 2023). Students expressed a preference for more dynamic and enjoyable learning approaches involving games, collaboration, and active participation, underscoring the need for more engaging instructional strategies aligned with learner characteristics.

Motivation is a key determinant of success in language learning. Students' engagement, persistence, and willingness to complete tasks are strongly influenced by motivational factors (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Xiaofan & Annamalai, 2025; Sujiati et al., 2023). Ushioda (2020) highlights that motivation is shaped by classroom interaction, task relevance, and teaching strategies. When motivation is low, student participation declines and learning outcomes are adversely affected. Consequently, teachers are encouraged to design interactive, contextual, and learner-centered activities in line with the Merdeka Curriculum framework (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Game-based learning has been widely acknowledged as an effective strategy to enhance both motivation and language proficiency. Games can reduce anxiety, promote active engagement, and create a supportive and enjoyable learning environment (Yuksel & Inan, 2022). Among various game-based techniques, the Dice Game provides random prompts that stimulate creativity and facilitate idea generation in writing tasks. Its unpredictable nature encourages spontaneous thinking and helps students develop ideas more freely, particularly in descriptive writing.

Previous studies have indicated that dice-based activities positively influence

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writing fluency, vocabulary development, and student motivation (Saputra & Putri, 2021; Pratiwi, 2020). These findings suggest that the Dice Game Technique can serve as an effective alternative instructional strategy to address both writing difficulties and low motivation in EFL classrooms.

Accordingly, this study implemented Classroom Action Research to enhance students' writing skills and learning motivation through the Dice Game Technique. The integration of this technique aims to create an interactive, engaging, and student-centered learning environment that supports students in producing more effective descriptive texts while fostering higher motivation in learning English at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing is widely acknowledged as one of the most complex skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it requires learners to integrate cognitive, linguistic, and social competencies simultaneously (Hyland, 2019; Rahmat & Jannah, 2021). Writing is not merely the act of putting words on paper but involves a series of mental processes, including generating ideas, organizing thoughts logically, selecting appropriate vocabulary, applying grammatical rules accurately, and considering the audience and purpose of the text. These components must work together in order for learners to produce meaningful and coherent written communication.

For vocational high school students, writing competence holds particular importance because it supports both academic achievement and practical communication needs in future professional settings. Students are expected to write not only for classroom assignments but also for real-life purposes such as composing job application letters, reports, emails, and other workplace-related documents (Nation, 2021). Therefore, developing writing skills at the vocational level is essential to prepare students for academic success as well as for the demands of the workplace.

To address common writing difficulties, many studies emphasize the importance of instructional approaches that are contextual, student-centered, and process-oriented. Writing instruction that focuses on the process encourages learners to actively engage in various stages, such as planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Through these stages, students are given opportunities to explore ideas, refine their language use, and increase the overall quality of their writing. Process-based writing instruction has been proven effective in improving writing quality and fostering learner autonomy (Harmer, 2020; Graham et al., 2021).

However, despite the effectiveness of process-oriented approaches, challenges still remain in classroom practice. Many students experience boredom, low confidence, and limited engagement when writing activities are repetitive and lack variation. When writing instruction is delivered in a monotonous manner, students may perceive writing as a difficult and demanding task, which negatively affects their motivation and participation. As a result, even well-structured instructional approaches may fail to achieve optimal learning outcomes if students are not emotionally and motivationally engaged.

Motivation plays a crucial role in determining students' success in learning to write. Motivation influences learners' willingness to participate in classroom activities, persist in completing tasks, and overcome difficulties encountered during the writing process. According to Self-Determination Theory, motivation is driven by intrinsic factors such as enjoyment, curiosity, and a sense of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2019). When students feel interested and enjoy the learning activities, they are more likely to invest effort and take responsibility for their learning.

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In language learning contexts, motivation is also shaped by classroom interaction, task relevance, and teaching strategies (Ushioda, 2020). Writing activities that are perceived as meaningful and relevant to students' lives tend to increase their engagement and participation. Conversely, when writing tasks are viewed as monotonous or overly demanding, students' motivation declines, leading to passive behavior and low achievement. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to adopt instructional strategies that not only develop linguistic competence but also foster positive learning motivation.

Recent studies have highlighted the effectiveness of game-based learning in enhancing both motivation and language performance. Games provide a low-anxiety learning environment that allows students to experiment with language use without fear of making mistakes. Through games, students are encouraged to participate actively, collaborate with peers, and use language creatively (Yuksel & Inan, 2022; Hadfield, 2014). In EFL classrooms, game-based activities have been shown to increase students' engagement, confidence, and willingness to complete writing tasks (Kim, 2020; Hsieh & Kang, 2019).

Among various game-based techniques, the Dice Game has gained attention as an interactive instructional tool that introduces elements of randomness and creativity into learning activities. Dice games require students to respond to unpredictable prompts, which stimulates creative thinking, vocabulary use, and idea development (Saputra & Putri, 2021). The random nature of dice rolling encourages students to think spontaneously and generate ideas more freely, reducing hesitation and anxiety during writing activities.

Dice games are also considered flexible instructional tools that can be adapted to different language skills and learning objectives, including writing (Lewis & Bedson, 2008). In writing instruction, dice-based activities can be used to guide students in developing descriptive details, organizing ideas, and expanding sentences or paragraphs. Furthermore, dice-based activities help learners apply language rules spontaneously in meaningful contexts, allowing them to practice writing in a more natural and enjoyable way (Klimova, 2020).

Several previous studies support the use of dice games and gamification in improving students' writing skills and motivation. Siregar (2020) found that the Dice Game Technique significantly improved students' descriptive writing ability at the junior high school level. Similarly, Zaid (2020) reported that dice games positively influenced students' short story writing skills. Other studies focusing on games and motivation revealed that gamification and cooperative games enhanced students' writing motivation, engagement, and overall achievement (Andini, 2020; Nuraeni, 2019; Wijaya, 2021). These findings indicate that game-based techniques provide a supportive learning environment that promotes both cognitive and affective aspects of writing.

Despite these positive findings, most previous studies employed experimental or quasi-experimental research designs and tended to focus on writing skills or motivation as separate variables. Limited studies have explored the integration of dice games within a Classroom Action Research (CAR) framework to simultaneously increase students' writing skills and learning motivation, particularly in vocational high school contexts. Classroom Action Research is a reflective and cyclical approach that enables teachers to identify classroom problems and implement targeted instructional improvements (Burns, 2020; Kemmis et al., 2014). CAR has been widely recognized for its relevance in addressing practical classroom challenges and enhancing teaching effectiveness (Widodo, 2021).

Based on the reviewed literature, a clear research gap exists in the application of

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the Dice Game Technique through Classroom Action Research to address both writing difficulties and low motivation among vocational high school students. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap by implementing the Dice Game Technique within a CAR framework to increase students' writing skills and learning motivation in teaching descriptive texts at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara.

3. METHODS

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design aimed at improving students' writing skills and learning motivation through the Dice Game Technique. The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara during the academic year 2024/2025 and involved 21 tenth-grade students of Class X TKJ 1 selected through purposive sampling. The CAR followed the Kemmis and McTaggart model consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages and was implemented in two cycles. Data were collected using writing tests, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Writing tests required students to produce descriptive texts and were assessed using an analytic scoring rubric adapted from Jacobs et al., covering content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Observations were conducted using structured checklists to measure students' motivation, participation, focus, and engagement during the learning process, while interviews were used to explore students' perceptions and responses toward the Dice Game Technique. Quantitative data from writing tests were analyzed by calculating mean scores and the percentage of students achieving the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 70, with the study considered successful if at least 85% of students met this criterion. Qualitative data from observations and interviews were analyzed thematically to identify changes in students' motivation and learning behavior. Data validity was ensured through content validity, inter-rater reliability involving two raters, and triangulation of data sources, methods, and time.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The findings of this classroom action research indicate a significant increase in students' writing skills and learning motivation after the implementation of the Dice Game Technique. The increase was observed progressively across two action cycles through writing test results, classroom observations, and student interviews.

In Cycle I, the students' writing performance showed initial increase. Based on the writing test results, 17 out of 21 students (80.95%) achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 70, with a mean score of 70.76. Although most students met the required standard, several students still experienced difficulties in organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and maintaining focus during writing activities. At this stage, students began to show increased interest and participation, but their confidence in expressing ideas in written form remained limited.

Table 1. Students' Writing Scores in Cycle I

No.	Students' Code	Rater 1	Rater 2	Ave.	Test Result
1	STU.1	69	67	68	Not
2	STU.2	59	61	60	Not
3	STU. 3	73	71	72	Pass

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4	STU. 4	61	64	63	Not
5	STU.5	73	70	72	Pass
6	STU.6	80	81	81	Pass
7	STU.7	75	75	75	Pass
8	STU. 8	79	68	74	Pass
9	STU.9	73	80	77	Pass
10	STU.10	77	78	78	Pass
11	STU. 11	73	78	76	Pass
12	STU. 12	74	76	75	Pass
13	STU.13	71	72	72	Pass
14	STU.14	76	70	73	Pass
15	STU.15	66	78	72	Pass
16	STU. 16	72	71	72	Pass
17	STU.17	42	51	47	Not
18	STU.18	52	62	57	Not
19	STU.19	73	78	76	Pass
20	STU.20	74	69	72	Pass
21	STU. 21	73	74	74	Pass
	Total: Pass: 15, Not: 5				

After revising the teaching strategy and maximizing the use of the Dice Game Technique in Cycle II, a more substantial increase was observed. The number of students who achieved the KKM increased to 19 students (90.47%), and the mean score rose to 77.62. Students demonstrated better control of content development, clearer paragraph organization, and richer vocabulary use in their descriptive writing. These results indicate that the Dice Game Technique effectively supported students in generating ideas and structuring their writing more coherently.

Table 2. Students' Writing Scores in Cycle II

No.	Students' Code	Rater 1	Rater 2	Ave.	Test Result
1	STU.1	74	77	76	Pass
2	STU.2	55	68	62	Not
3	STU. 3	78	81	80	Pass
4	STU. 4	70	78	74	Pass
5	STU.5	79	80	80	Pass
6	STU.6	84	84	84	Pass
7	STU.7	83	82	83	Pass
8	STU. 8	78	81	80	Pass
9	STU.9	77	86	82	Pass
10	STU.10	83	79	81	Pass
11	STU. 11	84	81	83	Pass
12	STU. 12	78	78	78	Pass
13	STU.13	82	72	77	Pass
14	STU.14	83	86	85	Pass
15	STU.15	75	79	77	Pass
16	STU. 16	80	80	80	Pass
17	STU.17	46	60	53	Not
18	STU.18	72	78	75	Pass
19	STU.19	77	82	80	Pass
20	STU.20	77	78	78	Pass

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21	STU. 21	83	80	82	Pass
	Total: Pass: 19, Not: 2				

In addition to writing performance, students' motivation also showed notable increase. Observation data revealed that students became more enthusiastic, actively participated in classroom activities, and were more focused during writing tasks. Students were willing to engage in the dice game activities, collaborate with peers, and complete writing tasks without reluctance.

Interview results supported these findings, as most students expressed positive attitudes toward the Dice Game Technique. They reported that the game helped them generate ideas more easily, reduced anxiety during writing, and made the learning process more enjoyable.

4.2 Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that the Dice Game Technique effectively increases both students' writing skills and learning motivation. The increase in writing performance across cycles aligns with the principles of process-based writing instruction, which emphasizes idea generation, drafting, and gradual refinement of writing skills (Harmer, 2020).

The increase in students' mean scores and mastery level indicates that the random prompts generated through the dice game stimulated students' creativity and encouraged them to explore ideas without fear of making mistakes. This finding supports Saputra and Putri (2021), who argued that dice games promote spontaneous language use and help students organize ideas more systematically in writing tasks.

Moreover, the observed increase in students' motivation confirms the effectiveness of game-based learning in language classrooms. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021), engaging and interactive activities can lower students' affective filter and foster a positive learning atmosphere. In this study, the Dice Game Technique created a relaxed and supportive environment, which increased students' confidence and willingness to participate in writing activities.

The findings also correspond with Yuksel and Inan (2022), who emphasized that games transform routine language tasks into enjoyable experiences, thereby enhancing students' engagement and persistence. As students became more motivated, their writing performance increased accordingly, suggesting a strong relationship between motivation and language achievement.

Overall, the results indicate that integrating the Dice Game Technique into writing instruction not only enhances students' writing skills but also strengthens their motivation to learn English. Therefore, this technique can be considered an effective and practical instructional strategy for teaching descriptive writing in vocational high school contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the Dice Game Technique effectively increase both the writing skills and learning motivation of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 2 Indralaya Utara. The research was conducted through Classroom Action Research (CAR) in two cycles, which allowed the writer to systematically plan, implement, observe, and reflect on instructional improvements. The findings demonstrate that the Dice Game Technique provided a meaningful and engaging learning experience that positively influenced students' writing performance and classroom participation.The increase in students' writing skills was evident from the quantitative data collected throughout the research cycles. The percentage of students who achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) increased significantly, from 80.95% in Cycle I to 90.47% in Cycle II. In addition, the mean writing scores showed a consistent upward trend, indicating that students were able to develop better control over key aspects of writing, including content development, organization,

vocabulary usage, grammar, and mechanics. These increases suggest that the Dice Game Technique successfully supported students in generating ideas, organizing their thoughts, and expressing them more clearly in written form, particularly in descriptive texts.

Beyond academic achievement, the Dice Game Technique also contributed positively to students' learning motivation. Classroom observations and reflective notes revealed that students became more enthusiastic, confident, and actively involved during writing activities. The game-based nature of the technique reduced students' anxiety toward writing tasks, encouraged collaboration, and created a more relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere. As a result, students who were previously passive or reluctant to write showed greater willingness to participate, share ideas, and complete writing assignments. This finding supports the notion that motivation plays a crucial role in language learning and that engaging instructional techniques can significantly enhance students' interest and persistence in learning English.

Furthermore, the use of the Dice Game Technique aligns well with the principles of student-centered learning promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum. By integrating elements of play, randomness, and interaction, the technique shifted the learning focus from teacher-centered instruction to active student participation. Students were not only recipients of knowledge but also active contributors to the learning process. This approach helped foster creativity, autonomy, and responsibility, which are essential competencies for vocational high school students in preparing for both academic and professional contexts.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that the Dice Game Technique is an effective, practical, and engaging strategy for improving students' writing skills and learning motivation in English, particularly in teaching descriptive texts at the vocational high school level. The successful implementation of this technique through Classroom Action Research demonstrates that innovative, game-based learning strategies can address common challenges in writing instruction, such as low motivation and limited idea development. Therefore, the Dice Game Technique is recommended as an alternative instructional strategy for English teachers who seek to create a more interactive, motivating, and effective writing classroom environment.

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