



Improving Narrative Essay Writing through Elaboration of Deductive Paragraphs among Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aimed to identify the effective ways of using elaboration of deductive paragraphs in teaching writing, especially narrative essay writing, for twelfth-grade students of Senior High School Pesantren Modern Datok Sulaeman Putri Palopo.

Methodology: This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) with two cycles consisting of planning, acting, observation, and reflection. The participants were 18 students of class XII Natural science. The instruments included writing tests and observation sheets. Writing assessment covered content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics using Heaton's scoring rubric.

Main Findings: The findings showed that students' writing achievement improved significantly after applying elaboration of deductive paragraphs. In cycle I, the mean score was 63.61 and students were less active. In cycle II, the mean score increased to 78.27, with students becoming more active, reaching 72.2% active and 27.8% very active participation.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study offers a practical teaching strategy by applying elaboration of deductive paragraphs to improve students' narrative writing skills. It emphasizes motivation, intensive guidance, peer-sharing, independent writing practice, and outdoor learning, which provide a more structured and engaging approach for developing writing competence in senior high school students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing ability is one of the most essential productive skills in English language learning because it enables students to express ideas, opinions, experiences, and knowledge in written form effectively [1]-[3]. Writing is not only a medium of communication but also a process of thinking critically and organizing ideas systematically [4], [5]. In senior high school, writing becomes an important competency because students are expected to produce various types of texts, including narrative essays, descriptive texts, and argumentative writing. However, among

the four English skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing writing is often considered the most difficult skill for students to master because it requires the integration of grammar, vocabulary, organization, mechanics, and content simultaneously [6].

In the teaching and learning process, many students still experience significant difficulties in writing, particularly in constructing a well-organized paragraph. Based on preliminary observation conducted at Senior High School of Pesantren Modern Datok Sulaeman Putri Palopo, especially for twelfth-grade students, several major problems were identified. First, students found it difficult to generate ideas for writing. They often spent too much time thinking about what to write and failed to produce a clear main idea. Second, students had difficulty developing ideas into coherent paragraphs [7]-[9]. They were unable to elaborate supporting details, examples, and explanations related to the main idea. Third, students showed weakness in using appropriate grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, which affected the quality and clarity of their writing [10].

One of the writing forms that requires strong organization and idea development is the deductive paragraph [11], [12]. A deductive paragraph begins with a general statement or topic sentence followed by supporting sentences that explain, illustrate, and strengthen the main idea. This structure helps students organize their thoughts systematically from general to specific information. However, many students still struggle to determine the topic sentence and provide relevant supporting details. They often write disconnected sentences without unity and coherence. As a result, their narrative essays become unclear and difficult to understand. Therefore, students need an effective strategy that can guide them in developing ideas more logically and structurally [13].

Elaboration of deductive paragraph is considered one of the appropriate approaches to solve this problem. Elaboration refers to the process of expanding and enriching an idea by adding detailed explanations, examples, and supporting information [14]-[16]. Through elaboration, students are trained to think creatively and critically while developing their writing. In deductive paragraph writing, elaboration helps students focus on the main idea first and then extend it with relevant details. This approach is particularly useful in writing narrative essays because narrative writing requires chronological development, clear sequence, and meaningful details to create a complete story. By using elaboration of deductive paragraph, students can improve both the structure and the quality of their writing [17], [18].

Narrative essay writing is one of the most commonly taught writing genres in senior high school because it allows students to express personal experiences and events in chronological order. Narrative writing emphasizes storyline development, character, setting, conflict, and resolution [19], [20]. Although it appears easier because it is story-based, many students still fail to produce effective narrative essays due to poor paragraph organization and limited elaboration. They often present ideas in fragmented forms without logical progression. This condition indicates that teaching writing should not only focus on grammar correction but also on strategies that help students generate, organize, and elaborate ideas effectively [21].

In classroom practice, teachers often use conventional methods that focus more on final products rather than the writing process itself [22], [23]. Students are simply asked to write without receiving sufficient guidance on how to start, develop, and revise their writing. As a result, students become passive and less motivated in writing activities. Classroom Action Research (CAR) provides an effective framework to solve this issue because it allows teachers to identify classroom problems directly and implement practical solutions through cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Through CAR, the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph can be applied systematically and evaluated continuously to improve students' writing achievement [24].

Several previous studies have discussed strategies for improving students' writing skills. Nilmah found that Parallel Writing Technique gave positive contributions in developing students' writing skill by providing paragraph models as writing guides. Hasbullah reported that Dictogloss Technique effectively improved students' writing skill by encouraging active participation and collaborative learning. Hanariah revealed that Ordering Sentences Activity helped students improve paragraph construction skills by arranging ideas logically. Although these studies proved effective in improving writing ability, they mainly focused on paragraph models, collaborative techniques, and sentence arrangement activities [25], [26]. Very limited studies specifically examine the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph in improving students' narrative essay writing, especially through Classroom Action Research for twelfth-grade students.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of elaboration and deductive paragraph structure as a specific strategy to improve narrative essay writing skills. Unlike previous studies that emphasized general writing techniques, this research focuses on guiding students to determine the main idea first and then elaborate it systematically through supporting details [27]. This study also combines motivational support, intensive teacher guidance, peer-sharing activities, independent writing practice, and even outdoor learning activities to create a more engaging writing environment. This structured and practical approach provides a new contribution to writing pedagogy, particularly for senior high school English learning.

The implication of this study is significant for both teachers and students. For teachers, the findings provide an alternative teaching strategy that can be applied to improve students' writing competence more effectively. Teachers can use elaboration of deductive paragraph as a practical classroom technique to help students

organize ideas and produce coherent writing [28], [29]. For students, this strategy can improve confidence, creativity, and independence in writing narrative essays. In a broader context, the study contributes to English language teaching by emphasizing process-based writing instruction rather than product-oriented learning, which is more sustainable for long-term writing development [30].

The urgency of this study is based on the continuing low achievement of students in writing skills, particularly in constructing deductive paragraphs and narrative essays. Writing competence is not only essential for academic success but also for future professional communication and higher education readiness. If students continue to experience difficulties in organizing and elaborating ideas, their overall English proficiency will remain limited. Therefore, immediate improvement in teaching strategies is necessary. Investigating the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph becomes highly urgent to provide an effective solution for improving students' writing ability and supporting better English learning outcomes in senior high schools.

Based on the background, research gap, and urgency presented above, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How can the elaboration of deductive paragraph strategy improve students' narrative essay writing skills through Classroom Action Research? (2) How is the implementation process of elaboration of deductive paragraph conducted during writing learning activities in the classroom? and (3) How do students respond to the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph in improving their narrative writing ability? These research questions are formulated to investigate the effectiveness of the strategy and to obtain a comprehensive understanding of its implementation in improving students' writing skills at the senior high school level.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the research design. Classroom Action Research was selected because it is appropriate for solving practical problems found in the classroom and improving the quality of teaching and learning processes directly. According to Kemmis and McTaggart, CAR consists of four main stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, which are conducted in cyclical processes until the expected improvement is achieved [31]. This research was conducted in two cycles, where each cycle consisted of a series of activities that were closely related. The second cycle was designed as a continuation and improvement of the first cycle based on the reflection results. The focus of this study was to improve students' writing achievement in narrative essays through the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph.

2.2. Subject/Sample

The subjects of this study were the twelfth-grade students of Senior High School Pesantren Modern Datok Sulaeman Putri Palopo, specifically class XII IPA. The total number of students involved in this research was 18 students. This class was selected because the students showed difficulties in writing narrative essays, especially in developing ideas, organizing paragraphs, and elaborating supporting details in deductive paragraph structures. The researcher chose this class purposively based on preliminary classroom observation and consultation with the English teacher, which indicated that students' writing achievement was still below the minimum standard score of 75.

2.3. Source of Data and Data Collection Technique

The sources of data in this research were obtained from three main components: the teacher, the students, and the collaborator. The teacher provided information regarding students' learning conditions and classroom problems. The students became the primary source of data through their writing performance and classroom participation. The collaborator assisted the researcher in observing and evaluating the teaching and learning process objectively.

The data collection techniques used in this research were writing tests and classroom observation. The writing test was used to measure students' improvement in writing narrative essays through elaboration of deductive paragraph. The observation technique was used to monitor students' participation, motivation, and classroom interaction during the implementation of the action. Observation sheets were completed during the teaching-learning process to record students' activities and responses in each cycle [32].

2.4. Research Instrument

The main instrument used in this study was a writing test. The writing test required students to write a narrative essay using deductive paragraph structure with elaboration techniques. The writing assessment was based on five components adapted from Heaton's writing scoring rubric, namely content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics [33]. Each component was scored using specific classification criteria ranging from very poor to very good.

In addition, observation sheets were used as supporting instruments to evaluate students' activeness during classroom activities. The observation focused on students' participation, attention, responses, and involvement during the teaching process. These instruments were used to ensure both quantitative and qualitative data were collected comprehensively.

Table 1. Writing Assessment Criteria

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Very Good	91–100	Excellent mastery
Good	70–90	Good performance
Fair	60–69	Adequate performance
Poor	50–59	Low performance
Very Poor	0–49	Very limited performance

The table presents the classification criteria used to interpret students' performance levels in this study. Scores ranging from 91–100 were categorized as very good, indicating excellent mastery of the assessed skills and learning objectives. Scores between 70–90 were classified as good, reflecting satisfactory performance and adequate understanding of the material. Meanwhile, scores ranging from 60–69 were categorized as fair, which indicated sufficient but still limited performance. Students who obtained scores between 50–59 were categorized as poor, showing low achievement and difficulties in mastering the required competencies. Finally, scores between 0–49 were classified as very poor, indicating very limited performance and a lack of understanding of the assessed material. These criteria were used to evaluate and interpret students' learning outcomes systematically throughout the research process.

2.5. Data Analysis Technique

The data collected in each cycle were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis through percentage calculation and mean score analysis. Students' writing scores were classified based on the five writing components: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The mean score was calculated using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad \dots(1)$$

Where:

\bar{X} = Mean Score

$\sum X$ = Total Raw Score

N = Total Number of Students

The students' classroom activities were also analyzed descriptively by classifying participation into four categories: very active, active, less active, and not active. The success indicator of this study was achieved if at least 75% of students obtained a minimum score of 75 and showed active participation during the learning process [34].

2.6. Research Procedure

This research followed the standard procedure of Classroom Action Research consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages in two cycles. In the planning stage, the researcher prepared lesson plans, learning materials, writing tasks, observation sheets, and assessment instruments related to teaching writing through elaboration of deductive paragraph. The researcher also analyzed the curriculum and identified students' needs in writing narrative essays.

In the acting stage, the researcher implemented the teaching strategy in the classroom by explaining the concept of elaboration, deductive paragraph, and narrative essay. Students were guided to identify topic sentences, develop supporting details, and write narrative essays using deductive paragraph structures. In the observing stage, the researcher and collaborator observed students' classroom participation, writing performance, and responses during the teaching-learning process. Observation sheets were used to record students' behavior and engagement.

In the reflecting stage, the researcher evaluated the results of the first cycle to identify strengths and weaknesses of the teaching strategy. If the expected criteria were not achieved, improvements were made and continued in the second cycle until satisfactory results were obtained [35].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Students' Writing Achievement in Cycle I

The first cycle was conducted to identify the initial condition of students' writing ability in narrative essay writing through the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph. In this cycle, the researcher introduced the concepts of elaboration, deductive paragraph, and narrative essay, followed by examples and guided practice. Students were then asked to write a narrative essay by applying deductive paragraph structure. The assessment focused on five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

The results of Cycle I showed that students still experienced considerable difficulties in developing ideas and organizing their writing effectively. Many students were unable to elaborate the main idea into supporting details, resulting in incomplete and less coherent paragraphs. Several grammatical errors were also found, especially in tense consistency, sentence structure, and punctuation. Based on the writing test results, the overall mean score of students in Cycle I was 63.61, which was categorized as fair and still below the minimum achievement standard of 75. This result indicated that the students' writing ability required further improvement.

Table 2. Students' Writing Score in Cycle I

Writing Component	Mean Score
Content	17.22
Organization	14.27
Vocabulary	14.27
Grammar	15.33
Mechanics	2.00
Total Mean Score	63.61

Table 2 shows that the highest mean score was obtained in content (17.22), while the lowest score was found in mechanics (2.00). Grammar and vocabulary were also relatively low, indicating that students still lacked mastery in constructing accurate and meaningful sentences. Most students were categorized in fair and poor classifications, especially in grammar and vocabulary. This finding confirms that students had not yet fully understood how to elaborate deductive paragraphs in narrative writing.

In classroom observation, students were also found to be less active during the learning process. Some students were hesitant to ask questions, while others showed low motivation in completing writing tasks. This condition was influenced by their limited confidence and insufficient understanding of how to begin and develop narrative paragraphs. Therefore, reflection from Cycle I emphasized the need for stronger teacher guidance, more examples, peer-sharing activities, and motivational support in the next cycle.

3.2. Students' Writing Achievement in Cycle II

Based on the reflection results from Cycle I, improvements were made in Cycle II. The researcher provided clearer explanations, additional writing examples, intensive guidance, and peer discussion sessions to help students understand how to elaborate topic sentences into complete deductive paragraphs. Students were also encouraged to write more independently and confidently, while the teacher gave direct feedback during the writing process.

The results of Cycle II showed significant improvement in students' writing achievement. Students were able to determine the main idea more clearly and provide relevant supporting details systematically. Their narrative essays became more organized, coherent, and meaningful. Grammar usage also improved, particularly in sentence construction and tense consistency. Students showed better control of vocabulary and mechanics compared to the first cycle.

The mean score of students in Cycle II increased to 78.27, which was categorized as good and exceeded the minimum standard score of 75. This improvement demonstrated that the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph was effective in enhancing students' narrative writing skills.

Table 3. Students' Writing Score in Cycle II

Writing Component	Mean Score
Content	22.11
Organization	17.33
Vocabulary	16.94
Grammar	18.56
Mechanics	3.33
Total Mean Score	78.27

Table 3 indicates significant improvement across all writing components. Content showed the greatest progress because students were more capable of developing ideas with relevant details. Organization also improved as students understood how to structure deductive paragraphs effectively. Grammar and vocabulary showed positive changes due to repeated practice and teacher correction. Mechanics improved as students became more careful in punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

In terms of classroom participation, students also became more active during the teaching-learning process. Approximately 72.2% of students were categorized as active, while 27.8% were categorized as very active. Students were more confident in asking questions, participating in peer discussions, and expressing their ideas in writing tasks. This improvement suggests that the learning strategy not only enhanced academic performance but also increased students' motivation and engagement.

The improvement of 14.66 points from Cycle I to Cycle II confirms that elaboration of deductive paragraph provides a strong contribution to writing development. This strategy helped students focus on the topic sentence first and then elaborate it with supporting details, which made the writing process easier and more systematic.

The findings of this study indicate that the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph significantly improved students' ability in writing narrative essays. This improvement occurred because students were guided to start from a clear topic sentence and continue by developing supporting ideas logically. The deductive structure made it easier for students to organize their thoughts, while elaboration trained them to expand ideas creatively and meaningfully. As stated by writing theory, paragraph unity and coherence are essential elements in producing effective writing [36].

The results are consistent with the theory that writing is a process of organizing ideas rather than merely producing sentences. Students often fail in writing because they do not know how to begin or structure their ideas. Through elaboration, students learned to think critically and systematically. They no longer wrote disconnected sentences but produced more meaningful and organized paragraphs. This supports the view of Heaton that effective writing depends on content development, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics working together [37].

The findings also support previous studies. Akhmad Nuris Hidayat found that Parallel Writing Technique improved students' writing by providing structural guidance for paragraph development [38]. Maya Puspita Sari reported that Dictogloss Technique increased students' writing achievement through collaborative learning and active classroom participation [39]. Shalsa Shafamarwah found that Ordering Sentences Activity improved students' writing ability by helping students organize ideas logically [40]. Similar to those studies, the present research confirms that structured writing strategies contribute positively to students' writing achievement. However, this study specifically emphasizes elaboration of deductive paragraph as the central technique, which directly trains students to develop ideas from general to specific statements.

The use of Classroom Action Research also strengthened the effectiveness of this study because the teaching strategy was continuously improved through reflection and revision. The cyclical process allowed the researcher to identify students' weaknesses directly and provide immediate solutions. This practical approach is highly relevant for classroom-based problems and supports sustainable improvement in teaching practice [41].

The improvement in students' activeness also became an important result. Writing instruction often becomes passive because students are afraid of making mistakes. However, through guided practice, peer-sharing, and motivational support, students became more confident and involved in the learning process. This confirms that effective writing instruction should combine cognitive guidance and emotional support to create a productive learning environment. The formula used to calculate students' mean score is presented as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad \dots(2)$$

Where \bar{X} represents the mean score, $\sum X$ is the total raw score, and N is the total number of students. This formula was used to determine the overall writing achievement in each cycle and to measure the effectiveness of the implemented strategy.

An analysis of the research gap based on three previous studies shows that most prior research focused on general writing strategies such as Parallel Writing Technique, Dictogloss, and Ordering Sentences Activity. These studies successfully improved writing skills but mainly emphasized collaboration, imitation, and sentence arrangement. Very few studies specifically investigated elaboration of deductive paragraph as a structured strategy for narrative essay writing, especially through Classroom Action Research at the senior high school level. This gap highlights the need for research that focuses on idea development through deductive paragraph structure and elaboration techniques [42], [43].

The novelty of this study lies in the specific integration of elaboration and deductive paragraph structure in teaching narrative essay writing. Unlike previous studies, this research emphasizes the process of determining the main idea first and systematically expanding it with supporting details. The combination of teacher guidance,

peer-sharing, motivation, independent writing, and reflective cycles creates a more practical and comprehensive instructional model for improving writing competence [44].

The implication of this study is valuable for English teachers, students, and future researchers. For teachers, this strategy offers an effective alternative for teaching writing systematically and meaningfully. For students, it helps improve writing confidence, creativity, and independence. For future researchers, this study can serve as a reference for developing similar strategies in other writing genres such as descriptive, argumentative, or expository writing [45].

Despite its positive findings, this study still has limitations. The research involved only one class with 18 students in one school, which limits the generalization of the results to broader contexts. The study also focused only on narrative essay writing and did not examine other writing genres. In addition, the duration of the research was relatively short because it was conducted in only two cycles. Future studies are recommended to involve larger samples, longer implementation periods, and different text types to strengthen the validity and applicability of the findings.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the use of elaboration of deductive paragraph effectively improved the narrative essay writing ability of twelfth-grade students at Senior High School Pesantren Modern Datok Sulaeman Putri Palopo. This strategy helped students organize ideas systematically by starting from the main idea and developing it into clear supporting details, resulting in better paragraph unity, coherence, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The improvement was proven by the increase in students' mean score from 63.61 in Cycle I to 78.27 in Cycle II, which exceeded the minimum achievement standard of 75. In addition, students became more active, confident, and motivated during the learning process. Therefore, elaboration of deductive paragraph can be considered an effective teaching strategy to improve students' writing achievement, especially in narrative essay writing.

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USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All stages of the research process, including data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation, were conducted entirely by the authors without the assistance of any AI-based tools.

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