

THE EFFECT OF REFLECTIVE JOURNAL WRITING ON STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY OF NARRATIVE TEXT AT THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MAS AL WASHLIYAH 29 BINJAI

Nudia Yultisa^{1*}, Dewi Rulia Sitepu², Tri Indah Rezeki³, Susi Anggraini⁴, Efrini Panjaitan⁵
Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP) Budidaya Binjai^{1,2,3,4,5}

*Correspondence Email: nyultisa@gmail.com

Abstract

The study deals with an experimental research design which seeks for the effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text. 52 students at the tenth grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai on the first semester were taken as the samples of the study. Pre-test and post-test as the written test were given to measure whether the reflective journal writing had a significant effect toward the students' writing ability of narrative text or not. The final data then was analyzed by using Paired-Samples T Test analysis shown that the significance (sig) 2-tailed value 0.000000 was lower than the significance level (0.05) and determined that coefficient of tcounted was 18.682 signifying higher than the ttable coefficient (2.05954) with significance level (α) = 0.025 (2-tailed) with degree of freedom (df) = 25. This means that there is a significant effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai. Therefore, H_a was accepted and H_0 was rejected.

Keywords: *Reflective Journal Writing, Writing Ability, Narrative Text*

INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a foreign language means that students should master four basic language skills which are listening, reading, speaking and writing (Harmer, 2015: 16). The two language skills, listening and reading, emphasize students to receive any kind of information from the sender to the receiver. On the other hand, speaking and writing focus on producing the language in both spoken and written forms. Therefore, all of these skills cannot be separated because they are interconnected to each other.

As one of the language skills, writing particularly is needed to be learnt because of some considerations. Firstly, writing is being the important skill for academic purposes. Through writing, students can share their ideas and their knowledge about facts and opinions of what they have received. Thus, the students also can express their feeling and their experiences to others in written form. Secondly, writing contributes in fostering students' critical thinking. A research conducted by Quitadamo and Kurtz (2007: 149) entitled Learning to Improve: Using Writing to Increase Critical Thinking Performance in General Education Biology, it has revealed that students who are accustomed to write regularly could gain their critical thinking performance highly. In addition, writing can be used as a tool to measure the students' understanding of the materials given. Giving journals writing assignment, for instance, will help the students to recall their memory about the materials discussed in the learning process. As a result, students should master writing to achieve the students' academic performance, to foster their critical thinking and to measure their mastery of the materials given.

Furthermore, it more focuses on how students can learn the materials independently. Therefore, it will help the students to find their own ways in learning English and improve the students' self-regulated learning. To achieve those goals, the 2013 Curriculum is concerned to develop a number of potential of the students in order the students can be devout to the God, well-manned people, creative and being autonomous learners. One of the ways to develop the students' potential is by enhancing the students' writing skill. Thus, it also has been put by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia into one of the basic competencies in teaching and learning process.

Writing, particularly, is learnt by senior high school students through various types of texts. Each of them has different objectives whether it is used to tell the past events, or to entertain the

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reader about imaginative stories, or to describe something or others. Also, those text types are adjusted to the students' level. Due to the importance of writing, the tenth-grade students are encouraged to understand the narrative text. Moreover, it is also stated in the standard competency (Kompetensi Dasar) 4.15 of the 2013 Curriculum syllabus "menangkap makna teks naratif lisan maupun tulisan berbentuk legenda secara sederhana" in which students should comprehend the meaning of narrative text about legend stories graphically and orally. It means that the students should have good understanding of the narrative text considering social function, structure of the text and the language features correctly.

Furthermore, narrative text is aimed to entertain people about the events, legends, or imaginative stories. It is also intended to put the moral value into the stories. Nathanson (2006: 2) added that narrative text is being the most powerful tool to grab the students' attention in the teaching and learning process. Also, it can be used to facilitate the students' retention and create fun learning by using narrative text. Whereas, writing is not a simple task to do even the students should write a narrative text. It can be identified by the writer's experience during her Field Teaching Program (PPLI) at MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai. She found that students had some problems in creating their writing.

Firstly, the tenth-grade students were difficult to find the ideas of their writing. The students said that they were confused about what should be written. This happened because the students were not accustomed to write regularly. Consequently, this problem was similar to the research conducted by Mukti (2016: 2) indicated that the students had limited linguistic resources, so it would be difficult for them to express the ideas in a written genre. Moreover, Saragih (2016: 3) agreed that the difficulty of writing was caused by the students' spending much time to think about their ideas. Because of the students' difficulty to organize the ideas in writing, they needed extra times to transfer their ideas to written form. These problems also caused the difficulties in writing the narrative text. Secondly, the students had very limited time to write in the classroom. The time allotment for each English meeting was only 90 minutes in a week. In fact, the students did not only write but also did plenty of activities which engage them to participate in the classroom activities. It means that the teacher should manage the classroom with various techniques in order to achieve the learning objectives. Based on the writer's observation at the school, the students needed more time to write even to learn English. On the other hand, some steps were needed in organizing a good writing such as choosing a topic, brainstorming, doing research, discovering the thesis statement, making an outline, writing, revising, editing and proofreading (Whitaker, 2017: 4). As a result, the additional time is needed in teaching writing.

Thirdly, the students got lack of grammar knowledge which are very essential in developing the student's skill in writing the text in the classroom. This mastery of grammatical understanding and structure will enhance the students' empowerment in writing class. In addition, lack of vocabularies will too cause the students' development of narrative text writing that a great master of lexical meanings may be pivotal to initiate the contents.

Because of the importance of writing and those problems in writing, the writer believes that the students need an appropriate technique to help them in improving their writing ability. In this research, the writer is interested to examine the reflective journal writing technique in determining the students' writing ability of narrative text. Based on the previous research by Henter and Simona (2014: 6), the students' achievement can be improved and the students' awareness of learning strategies can be raised by using reflective journal writing. Therefore, the writer believes that the usefulness of reflective journal writing can be raised in improving the students writing ability of narrative text.

To differentiate this research to another, writing guideline is chosen as the media to write reflective journal writing of narrative text. The media is taken because writing guideline can be an active way to have the students respond to the teacher's input, to gain the students' awareness of the subject matter with more detail way in answering and showing the real-world interaction and relevance to the questions (Gobart, 2015: 172). So far there is no one who uses writing guideline as a media in writing reflective journal even to help students in fostering their writing ability of

narrative text. On the other hand, some experts have examined the advantages of journal writing in improving the students' writing ability, but they more focus on the recount text. In fact, none of them use narrative text to examine whether the reflective journal writing encourages students in enhancing their writing ability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Concept of Writing

Writing becomes one of the productive skills in learning English that are necessarily to be mastered. It can be a medium for students to share their knowledge and convey their ideas in their mind. Furthermore, it encourages the students to express their feeling and intention to the readers in written form. To create a good writing, it emphasizes the students to have good capabilities in writing such as understanding of the English grammar, mastering various vocabularies and so on. Also, the students should know the steps in writing process, understand organizing the ideas and understand the use of punctuation.

2. Writing Skill

Writing skill is necessary to be learned in learning English beside speaking. Although both of the skills are classified into the productive skills, writing in contrast is different from speaking. In speaking skill, the speakers use their voice such as pitch, stress, and rhythm to convey their ideas. Also, the gestures and facial expression are needed to express the information clearly. Whereas, in writing skill, the writer has to rely on the words on the page to express their meaning.

3. Purpose of Writing

Writing is supposed to be an opportunity to explore something that interested in. Furthermore, the writer is able to choose the topic to be delivered based on the purpose of writing. Whitaker (2017: 2) explains that the most common purposes in writing are to persuade, analyze or synthesize and inform.

4. Process of Writing

To create a piece of good writing, the writer should follow various processes of writing. Bullock (2016: 193) stated that there are six main processes of writing:

- a. Generating Ideas and Text
- b. Drafting
- c. Assessing Draft of Writing
- d. Revising
- e. Editing
- f. Proofreading

5. Narrative Text

A text is one of the important parts in learning English. It is aimed to deliver a lot of information based on the purpose of the text and its context. Anderson and Anderson (2013: 2) stated that text can be divided into several types such as descriptive text, narrative text, procedure text, report text, exposition text, recount text, explanation text, and so on. Each of text type has different objectives whether to describe something or objects, entertain the readers about imaginative stories or legends, explain the procedure, tell the past events, explain something and others. Those text types also are learned by the students of junior high school and senior high school based on their levels. Furthermore, to increase the students' understanding of the texts, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia attaches those text types as the basic competencies that should be achieved in 2013 Curriculum. Because of the importance of learning those text type, the writer explores more about narrative text in this research.

6. Reflective Journal Writing

Generally, a reflective journal writing requires the students to map of the students' progress and changes in their thinking about a subject or a topic or about the learning journey in which the students are engaged in. Also, reflective journal writing can be used as one of the techniques to assess the students' understanding of the learning materials. It allows the students to think critically through different cognitive processes such as prediction, brainstorming, reflection and questioning

(Rawahi and Al-Balushi, 2015: 367). Also, the reflective journal writing encourages students to express their ideas, thinking and curiosity about the world around them. Reflective journal writing can be referred to “written documents that students create as they think about various concepts, events, or interactions over the period of time for the purposes of gaining insights into self-awareness and learning” (Mansor, 2015: 507).

METHOD

This research was conducted at MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai, Jl. Jenderal Ahmad Yani No. 31, Kelurahan Kartini, Kecamatan Binjai Kota. The reason for choosing this school was due to the terms of accessibility in collecting the data. Also, the writer would like to know the tenth-grade students' writing ability of narrative text. In addition, research relating to the topic was never conducted yet at this school. And the time of the research was in Juli 2021.

This research was classified into a quantitative research. Comparing to another type of research, it emphasized the researchers to use statistical procedure that provided the information discussed in the research questions or hypotheses (Creswell, 2015: 15). On the other hand, the information showed in the statistical data could help the researchers to analyze the data, relate the variables and compare the groups. A quantitative research, moreover, focused on the possible cause and its effect between the independent variable and dependent variable (Creswell, 2015: 295). The writer examined two variables, the independent variable and the dependent variable. They were reflective journal writing as the independent variable and the students' writing ability of narrative text as the dependent variable.

The population of this research was the whole tenth grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai on the first semester in academic year 2021/2022. Each of grade divided into six classes from X-A, X-B, X-C, X-D, X-E, and X-F. Therefore, there were 148 students altogether who had been become the population of this research.

To choose the sample of the research, the writer used purposive sampling technique which selected the students into experimental class and controlled class. Based on the observation conducted on 12th July 2021, most of the students of X-B outwardly got lower scores in English test conducted by their teacher rather than those of X-D. Consequently, class X-B, consisting of 26 students, was chosen to be the experimental class and class X-D consisting of 26 students was chosen to be the controlled class.

In this study, there were two variables namely reflective journal writing as the independent variable (X) and the students' writing ability of narrative text as the dependent variable (Y). The operational definition of variables was used to explain the variables which were used in this research that to avoid misconception of variables presented in this research.

The process of collecting the data involved a written test as the instrument of the research. According to Brown (2013: 3), a test should be given to measure a person's ability, knowledge or performance in a given domain.” In this research, the writer used pre-test and post-test as the written test. The pre-test was intended to know the students' writing ability before the treatment given. While the post-test was given to measure whether the reflective journal writing had a significant effect toward the students' writing ability of narrative text or not. In addition, the topics between pre-test and post-test was different.

1. For the pre-test, the students were instructed to read a passage entitled Avengers: Endgame provided by the teacher for about thirty minutes.
2. Then, after reading the passage, the students were given 15 minutes to comprehend the contents and structures of the story.
3. Finally, they were allowed to write a reflective journal writing based on the guided questions.
4. To examine the students' writing ability of narrative test after the treatments, the writer chose a passage entitled Avengers: Endgame too for the post-test.
5. Therefore, the procedure in writing the reflective journal was similar to the pre-test procedure.

The writer collected the data by giving pre-test, giving different treatments in experimental class and controlled class and giving post-test for investigating the effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text. Meanwhile, giving different treatment was useful to obtain the significant result between experimental class and controlled class.

During the treatment, the writer asked the students in the experimental class to write reflective journal writing based on the guided questions. After they wrote the reflective journal writing, they should submit their assignments on a piece of paper. Whereas, the students in the controlled class were asked to do written exercises and answer the questions based on the narrative text given.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Data

In the previous section, there was mentioned that the data of the study conducted in two groups but with similar test; the data of the students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai in academic year of 2021/2022. Both data could be gained by giving related test to the students. After collecting and checking the students' responses within the writing test, the writer gave scores on each test.

The result of the tests was scored and displayed on tables in Appendix V and Appendix VI. Then, the writer calculated the mean of X (score in experimental group) and Y (score in control group) based on the obtained data by using SPSS 28.0 program.

Table 1. Paired Samples Statistics (Experimental Group)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	64.3077	26	14.17538	2.78002
	Posttest	75.1923	26	12.68706	2.48814

From the data on table in Appendix V, it was obtained that the scores of students' pretest and posttest in the testing of writing ability of narrative text for experimental group that was taught by applying the reflective journal writing strategy were different. The mean score of students in the pretest was 64.31 with the lowest score = 38 and the highest score = 88. Meanwhile, the mean score of students in the posttest was 75.19 with the lowest score = 50 and the highest score = 95.

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics (Control Group)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	56.8077	26	13.81888	2.71011
	Posttest	68.0769	26	12.89007	2.52795

From the data on table in Appendix VI, it could be seen that the scores of students' pretest and posttest in the testing of writing ability of narrative text for control group that was taught conventionally through a small group discussion were different. The mean score of students in the pretest was 56.81 with the lowest score = 30 and the highest score = 80. Meanwhile, the mean score of students in the posttest was 68.08 with the lowest score = 45 and the highest score = 90.

B. The Data Analysis

The data found and displayed on tables were valuable to be used in seeking the finding of this study. Since this study aims to find out the effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai in academic year of 2021/2022, the writer used the scores of both tests to analyze the effects between them. As what have stated in the previous section, the data was in the form of scores and processed statistically by using SPSS 28.0 program, before proving the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was

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accepted or rejected through utilizing the Paired-Samples T Test analysis, the writer also investigated the normality and homogeneity testing on the SPSS 28.0 program.

C. Prerequisite Test Analysis Results

1. Normality Analysis of Data Distribution

Based on the case processing summary by using SPSS 28.0 program, it was obtained the normality analysis of data distribution through Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis. The result was provided on the following table.

Table 3. Tests of Normality
Kolmogorov-Smirnov^a

	Groups	Statistic	df	Sig.
Student's Scores	Posttest - Experimental	0.126	26	0.200*
	Posttest - Control	0.133	26	0.200*

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

From the tests of normality through Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis above, it was got that the significance value on posttest in the experimental group was $0.200 > 0.05$, and the significance value on posttest in the control group was $0.200 > 0.05$. For the reason that both values were higher than the level of significance (0.05), it could be concluded that the data was in normal distribution.

2. Homogeneity Analysis of Data Variances

Based on the case processing summary by using SPSS 28.0 program, it was obtained the homogeneity analysis of data variance where the result was provided on the following table.

Table 4. Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene Statistic	df ₁	df ₂	Sig.
Student's Scores	Based on Mean	0.000	1	50	0.994
	Based on Median	0.009	1	50	0.925
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	0.009	1	48.483	0.925
	Based on trimmed mean	0.000	1	50	0.991

From the test of homogeneity of variance above, it was got that the significance value at "Based on Mean" column was $0.994 > 0.05$. Owing to the fact that the value was higher than the level of significance (0.05), it could be concluded that the data variance was homogeneous.

D. The Data Analysis of Hypothesis

The writer applied the Paired-Samples T Test analysis by using SPSS 28.0 program to find out the effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai in academic year of 2021/2022. The results of the analysis on the experimental group were displayed into tables and graphs below.

Table 5. Paired Samples Test (Experimental Group)

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest - Pretest	10.8846	2.97088	0.58264	9.68465	12.08458	18.682	25	0.00000

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From the Paired-Samples T Test analysis above, it was got that the significance (sig) 2-tailed value was 0.000000, then to find out the effect of variable X on Y, the value was compared whether it would be higher or lower than the significance level (0.05). That it was obtained $0.000000 < 0.05$ therefore H_a was accepted and H_0 was rejected. Additionally, the Paired-Samples T Test analysis above determined that coefficient of t counted was 18.682 signifying higher than the table coefficient (2.05954) in Appendix VII with significance level (α) = 0.025 (2-tailed) with degree of freedom (df) = 25, which it shown that H_a was accepted and H_0 was rejected. To see the analysis result as further, here below the writer displayed a line graph and a pie chart showing the coefficients of the paired samples test analysis on the experimental group above.

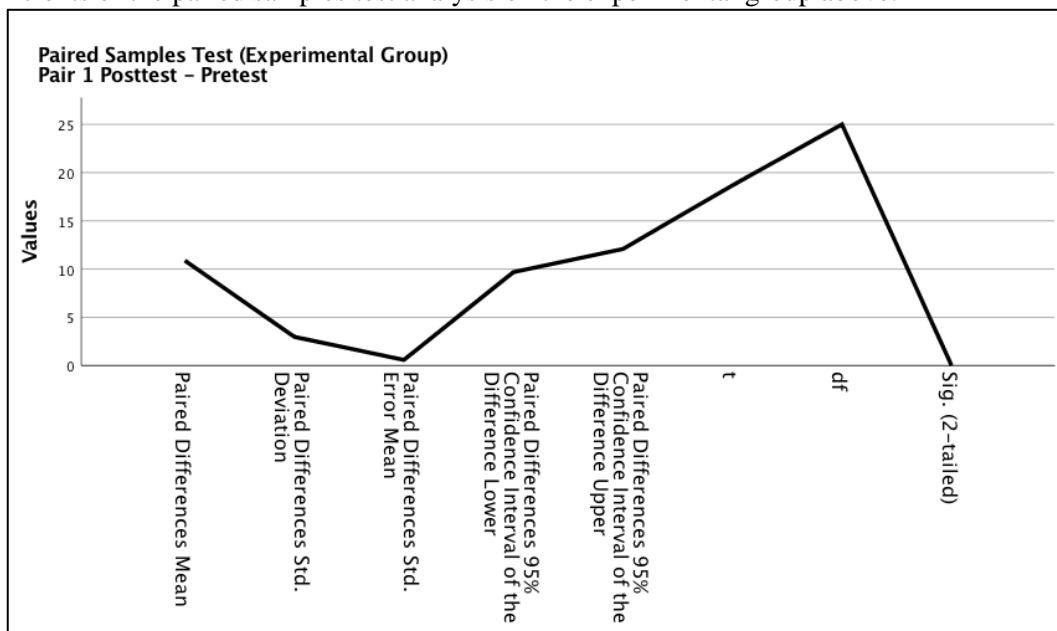


Figure 1. Paired Samples Test (Experimental Group) Line Graph

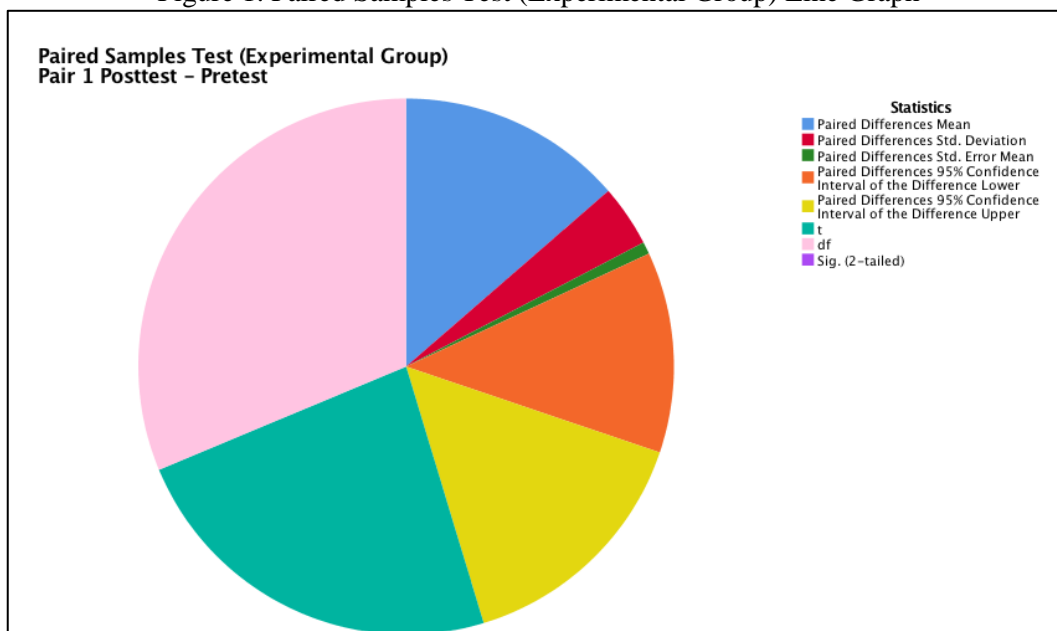


Figure 2. Paired Samples Test (Experimental Group) Pie Chart

On that account, this information indicated the hypothesis of the study was accepted that there is a significant effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai in academic year of 2021/2022.

Contents of Discussion Results

The finding of the problems above has been analyzed by the writer after her study at MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai specifically at the 2021/2022 tenth-grade students through formulas and several theories relating to the study. Through utilizing the SPSS 28.0 program, it was obtained that the scores of students' pretest and posttest in the testing of writing ability of narrative text for both experimental and control group that was taught by applying different strategies were different. In the experimental group, the mean score of students in the pretest was 64.31 with the lowest score = 38 and the highest score = 88. Meanwhile, the mean score of students in the posttest was 75.19 with the lowest score = 50 and the highest score = 95. In the control group, the mean score of students in the pretest was 56.81 with the lowest score = 30 and the highest score = 80. Meanwhile, the mean score of students in the posttest was 68.08 with the lowest score = 45 and the highest score = 90.

Through the tests of normality through Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis above, it was got that the significance value on posttest in the experimental group was $0.200 > 0.05$, and the significance value on posttest in the control group was $0.200 > 0.05$. For the reason that both values were higher than the level of significance (0.05), it could be concluded that the data was in normal distribution. Moreover, through the test of homogeneity of variance above, it was got that the significance value at "Based on Mean" column was $0.994 > 0.05$. Owing to the fact that the value was higher than the level of significance (0.05), it could be concluded that the data variance was homogeneous.

The Paired-Samples T Test analysis was used to find out the effect of variable X on Y, it was got that the significance (sig) 2-tailed value was 0.000000. Furthermore, coefficient of tcounted was 18.682 signifying higher than the ttable coefficient (2.05954) and it was obtained that significance (sig) 2-tailed value $0.000000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_a was accepted and H_0 was declined.

CLOSING

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to determine whether reflective journal writing significantly affects the students writing ability of narrative text. The problems that had been identified by the writer were including that the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai found some difficulties in organizing their ideas in writing and had limited time of writing in the classroom. Moreover, the students were lack of grammar knowledge and vocabularies.

From the result of this study, the writer concluded that there is a significant effect of reflective journal writing on students' writing ability of narrative text at the tenth-grade students of MAS Al Washliyah 29 Binjai in academic year of 2021/2022. Prior to that, the writer had worked on the prerequisite test analysis; the normality and homogeneity tests. From the tests of normality through Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis, this could be obtained that the data was in normal distribution for that both significance values were higher than the level of significance (0.05); the significance value on posttest in the experimental group was $0.200 > 0.05$, and the significance value on posttest in the control group was $0.200 > 0.05$. Also, from the test of homogeneity of variance, it was acquired that the data variance was homogeneous because the significance value at "Based on Mean" column was 0.994 was higher than the level of significance (0.05).

On top of that, the Paired-Samples T Test analysis shown that the significance (sig) 2-tailed value 0.000000 was lower than the significance level (0.05) and determined that coefficient of tcounted was 18.682 signifying higher than the ttable coefficient (2.05954) with significance level (α) = 0.025 (2-tailed) with degree of freedom (df) = 25, which those results shown that H_a was accepted and H_0 was declined.

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