

**THE EFFECT OF JOYFUL LEARNING APPROACH ON STUDENTS'
WRITING SKILL IN NARRATIVE TEXT LAKE TOBA AT
SMAN 1 AIR JOMAN ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2025/2026**

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ABSTRACT

This study used a quantitative method with a quasi experimental research design using a non equivalent control group design. The sample consisted of 68 students from the tenth grade, divided into an experimental class and a control class. The instruments used in this study were a writing test, observation sheet, and questionnaire. The writing test was conducted through pre-test and post-test to measure students' narrative writing skills based on content, organization, grammar and tense, vocabulary, and mechanics. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 20, including the Shapiro Wilk normality test, Levene's test, and the independent-samples t-test using the Welch procedure. The findings showed that the mean score of the experimental class increased from 71.62 in the pre-test to 83.74 in the post-test, while the control class increased from 65.53 to 68.62. The hypothesis testing showed a significance value of 0.000, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. It can be concluded that the Joyful Learning Approach had a significant effect on students' writing skills in narrative text at SMAN 1 Air Joman in the 2025/2026 academic year.

Keywords: Joyful Learning Approach, Writing Skill, Narrative Text, Lake Toba, Quasi Experimental Research, English Learning

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is among the essential productive skills that students must learn in mastering English language. Writing involves students in the process of expressing their ideas, experiences, and information in an organized manner. However, writing is regarded as an intricate process since students need to control various aspects at once including vocabulary,

grammar, sentence formation, structure, coherence, and mechanics. These obstacles may hinder students from composing meaningful and comprehensible texts. At secondary school, the obstacle becomes clear since students need to compose different types of texts according to the teaching objectives and requirements of the curriculum. In reality, many EFL students face

problems in organizing their ideas in written texts. Even though they might understand the topic, they might face challenges in determining what to write, how to organize ideas in paragraphs, vocabulary choices, and proper grammar formation. As a result, the problems faced by students in writing need attention because they may hinder the production of good English texts (Jubhari, n.d.).

Another kind of writing which is necessary for students to learn is narrative text. It is essential for students to know the significance of narrative texts, because it is a kind of writing through which they can enhance their imagination and creativity in conveying their ideas through stories. Writing narrative text requires students not only to comprehend the content of the story but also to arrange it according to its structure. These structures include such elements as orientation, complication and resolution. Students are also required to use proper vocabulary, action verbs, descriptive words, time connectors and grammatical elements such as simple past tense. However, all of these demands can turn out to be difficult

for some students. First of all, some of them find it difficult to generate and develop their ideas into a story. Other students encounter problems in arranging and linking different parts of their story. Limited vocabulary and improper use of grammatical forms can also lead to such problems as incompleteness of their sentences. Thus, students' difficulties in narrative writing do not only concern their comprehension of the structure of the text, but also developing ideas (Aldayel, 2024).

The problems in writing narrative texts might also be related to the learning process applied in the class. When writing exercises are dominated by the traditional teaching process including instruction and explanation together with individual writing exercises, some students tend to be passive and lack interest in being part of the learning process. Consequently, there are few chances for students to explore ideas, interact with peers, use the language skills, and gain confidence in their writing abilities. This makes the process of writing challenging and less enjoyable for the students. Hence, the learning process must provide an atmosphere where students can actively

participate and learn from enjoyable activities. Joyful Learning might be one solution for this problem. According to UNESCO, joyful learning is a form of learning process which is enjoyable, relevant, and also provides a supportive atmosphere where students can actively participate in the learning process. With the help of a fun learning atmosphere, students can get more chances to be involved in learning activities, get engaged with others, and get motivated to write their assignments (Science, 2022).

Many scientific studies conducted earlier have proved the effectiveness of such an engaging approach in education. Students who are placed into a joyful atmosphere of learning show greater motivation, confidence, and engagement in educational process. A particular scientific study conducted regarding "Joyful Learning" revealed the fact that students were not as bored during lessons as usual and had more desire to participate in classes. It can be said that the academic achievements of students and especially their writing skills can improve greatly if they are satisfied with what they do (Lukitasari, 2022).

B. METHOD

This research employed a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental research design using a non-equivalent control group design. The research was conducted at SMAN 1 Air Joman. The population consisted of all tenth-grade students in the 2025/2026 academic year, comprising six classes with a total of 204 students. Based on the Slovin formula, the sample consisted of 68 students from two classes, namely X IPA 1 as the experimental group and X IPA 3 as the control group. The experimental group was taught using the Joyful Learning Approach, while the control group received the Conventional Learning Approach in narrative writing. Both groups were given a pre-test and post-test to measure students' writing ability before and after the treatment.

The instruments used in this study were a writing skill test, observation sheet, and questionnaire. The writing test consisted of a pre-test and post-test to assess students' ability to produce narrative texts based on content, organization, grammar and tense, vocabulary, and

mechanics. Observation was conducted during the learning process, particularly in the experimental group, to observe students' participation, attentiveness, activities, and responses to the Joyful Learning Approach. After the treatment, a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was administered to obtain information about students' responses to the implementation of the Joyful Learning Approach.

The validity of the writing test and questionnaire was evaluated using content validity based on the research objectives, indicators of narrative writing ability, and activities associated with the Joyful Learning Approach. The validity of the instruments was established through expert judgment by an English teacher and an academic supervisor. The reliability of the writing assessment was measured using inter-rater reliability because students' narrative writing was scored by two raters. The reliability coefficient was considered acceptable if it was 0.70 or above.

The data from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed quantitatively to determine the effect of the Joyful

Learning Approach on students' narrative writing skills.

The students' writing scores are classified into five levels as follows :

Table 1. Classification of students score

Score	Category
85-100	Excellent
75-84	Good
65-74	Fair
55-64	Poor
0-54	Very Poor

(Binnendyk et al., 2024)

Students' writing performance was measured using the writing assessment rubric, and the mean score was calculated using $\bar{X} = \Sigma X/N$. The improvement was examined by comparing the pre-test and post-test scores through gain scores. Before hypothesis testing, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test and Levene's test for homogeneity of variance were conducted. The independent-samples t-test was used to compare the experimental and control groups, while the Welch version was used when the variances were not homogeneous. The significance level was set at 0.05; if the significance value was less than 0.05, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted.

C. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Description of Data

Observation was conducted during the treatment of Grade X1 students at SMAN 1 Air Joman using an observation sheet to monitor the implementation of the Joyful Learning Approach and students' participation. The activities included identifying narrative text structure, changing verbs from verb 1 to verb 2, and participating in discussions. Most students actively participated, shared ideas, worked with classmates, and responded positively to the learning activities.

The writing test was administered to the experimental and control groups through a pre-test and post-test. Students wrote a narrative text based on Lake Toba, which was assessed in terms of content, organization, grammar and tense, and vocabulary. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro-Wilk test, Levene's test, and the independent-samples t-test with the Welch procedure.

Data Analysis of the Control and Experimental Classes

The students' pre-test and post-test scores were compiled and analyzed to determine the learning outcomes of the control class (X3) and experimental class (X1) in the 2025/2026 academic year. The results are presented in the following tables.

**Tabel 2. Value Learning Outcomes
Student in Pre Test Control**

No	Initial Name	Criterion				Score	Final Score
		1	2	3	4		
1	DS	3	3	3	4	13	78
2	USP	3	3	3	4	13	83
3	DS	3	3	3	3	12	72
4	MF	3	3	3	3	12	76
5	HA	2	2	2	2	8	48
6	SS	3	3	3	3	12	74
7	RI	2	2	2	3	9	57
8	AFS	2	3	3	3	11	67
9	HSR	3	3	3	4	13	81
10	CAF	2	2	3	3	10	63
11	NAA	2	3	3	3	11	66
12	SR	4	3	3	3	13	79
13	N	3	2	2	3	10	61
14	FN	2	2	1	1	6	38
15	IPS	2	1	2	2	7	43
16	DPM	2	2	2	2	8	47
17	ABS	2	3	3	4	12	73
18	MA	3	3	3	4	13	82
19	AS	3	3	3	3	12	77
20	ZA	2	3	4	3	12	75
21	MKP	4	3	4	3	14	84
22	NA	3	3	4	3	13	80
23	TPA	2	3	3	3	11	71
24	SA	2	2	2	2	8	53
25	ASP	3	4	4	3	14	86
26	KAS	3	3	2	3	11	69
27	KE	2	2	2	2	8	51
28	ARL	1	1	1	2	5	33
29	MSHS	3	3	2	3	11	68
30	AS	3	2	2	2	9	56
31	RRP	2	2	2	2	8	52
32	VR	2	2	2	3	9	59
33	ER	2	2	3	3	10	62
34	DI	3	2	3	2	10	64
Total ($\sum f_y$)							2228
Mean (y)							65,53

Based on these criteria, the students' ability in writing narrative texts after being taught using the Joyful Learning Approach was categorized as **fair**.

**Tabel 3. Value Learning Outcomes
Student in Pre Test Experimental Class**

No	Initial Name	Criterion				Score	Final Score
		1	2	3	4		
1	ASP	2	3	2	2	9	55
2	JA	2	2	3	3	10	60
3	HZ	2	3	3	3	11	70
4	EMS	3	3	3	3	12	75
5	FP	3	3	2	2	10	65
6	AFY	3	3	3	3	12	75
7	FIS	2	3	3	3	11	70
8	RW	2	2	3	3	10	60
9	SS	3	3	3	4	13	80
10	CS	3	3	3	3	12	75
11	IL	2	3	3	2	10	60
12	TA	3	4	3	3	13	80
13	RR	2	3	3	3	11	70
14	R	2	2	3	3	10	65
15	DP	3	4	3	2	12	75
16	SRP	3	3	4	3	13	80
17	DARS	2	3	2	3	10	60
18	BAN	4	3	2	3	12	75
19	CD	2	2	3	3	10	65
20	RSP	3	3	3	4	13	80
21	YS	2	3	3	3	11	70
22	AW	3	3	4	4	14	85
23	A	2	3	3	2	10	60
24	DBRM	3	3	3	4	13	80
25	SF	2	2	3	3	10	65
26	MA	3	3	4	4	14	85
27	MAS	2	3	3	3	11	70
28	AOR	3	4	3	2	12	75
29	RW	3	3	3	4	13	80
30	VZ	3	3	2	2	10	65
31	RZ	4	4	3	3	14	85
32	RK	3	3	3	3	12	75
33	ASD	2	2	3	3	10	65
34	FR	3	3	3	4	13	80
Total ($\sum f_y$)							2435
Mean ($\bar{y}$)							71,62

Based on these criteria, the students' ability in writing narrative

text after being taught using the Joyful Learning Approach was categorized as **fair**.

**Table 4. Value Learning Outcomes
Student in Post Test Control**

No	Initial Name	Criterion				Score	Final Score
		1	2	3	4		
1	DS	3	3	3	4	13	80
2	USP	3	4	3	3	13	82
3	DP	3	3	4	4	14	88
4	MF	2	3	3	3	11	68
5	HA	3	3	3	3	12	77
6	SS	2	3	3	2	10	63
7	RI	3	3	3	3	12	74
8	AFS	2	2	2	2	8	52
9	HSR	2	3	3	3	11	71
10	CAF	3	4	4	4	15	91
11	NAA	3	3	3	3	12	73
12	SR	2	3	3	3	11	66
13	N	3	3	3	4	13	79
14	FN	2	2	2	2	8	48
15	IPS	2	2	3	3	10	61
16	DPM	2	3	3	3	11	69
17	ABS	2	3	2	2	9	58
18	MA	3	3	3	4	13	81
19	AS	3	3	3	3	12	76
20	ZA	4	3	2	3	12	72
21	MKP	2	2	3	3	10	64
22	NA	3	3	4	3	13	83
23	TPA	3	4	3	3	13	78
24	SA	4	3	2	3	12	75
25	ASP	3	2	2	3	10	62
26	KAS	2	3	3	3	11	70
27	KE	3	3	4	4	14	85
28	ARL	2	2	3	2	9	59
29	MSH S	1	2	2	2	7	46
30	AS	3	3	3	4	13	80
31	RRP	2	2	3	2	9	55
32	VR	1	2	2	2	7	43
33	ER	2	2	2	2	8	51
34	DI	2	2	3	1	8	53
Total ($\sum f_y$)							2333
Mean ($\bar{y}$)							68,62

Based on these criteria, the students' ability in writing narrative texts after being taught using the Joyful Learning Approach was categorized as **fair**.

being taught using the Joyful Learning Approach was categorized as **good**.

Significance values for the Shapiro-Wilk test for control pre-test, control post-test, experimental pre-test, and experimental post-test were 0.197, 0.471, 0.053, and 0.925, respectively. The significance values were above 0.05. Thus, the pre-test and post-test data from control and experimental groups were normally distributed. As a result, the normality assumption was met.

Normality Test

The procedure of the normality test data analysis was done using SPSS version 20. In order to find out the results of the research, the researcher used the Shapiro Wilk test using SPSS version 20 with the level of significance predetermined at 0.05. The normality test results are shown in the table below:

Table 6. Results of the Normality Test

Tests of Normality							
Kelas		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Hasil	Pretest A (Kontrol)	0,093	34	0,200 [*]	0,957	34	0,2
	Posttest A (Kontrol)	0,076	34	0,200 [*]	0,97	34	0,5
	Pretest B (Eksperimen)	0,156	34	0,035	0,938	34	0,1
	Posttest B (Eksperimen)	0,051	34	0,200 [*]	0,986	34	0,9

Table 5. Value Learning Outcomes Student in Post Test Experimental Class

No	Initial Name	Criterion				Score	Final Score
		1	2	3	4		
1	ASP	2	3	3	3	11	70
2	JA	3	3	4	2	12	72
3	HZ	3	2	4	3	12	74
4	EMS	4	3	2	3	12	75
5	FP	3	3	3	3	12	76
6	AFY	4	3	2	3	12	77
7	FIS	3	4	3	3	13	78
8	RW	3	3	3	4	13	79
9	SS	4	3	3	3	13	80
10	CS	3	3	3	4	13	80
11	IL	3	4	3	3	13	81
12	TA	3	2	4	3	13	81
13	RR	3	3	3	4	13	82
14	R	3	3	4	3	13	82
15	DP	4	3	3	3	13	83
16	SRP	4	3	3	3	13	83
17	DARS	3	3	4	4	14	84
18	BAN	3	4	4	3	14	84
19	CD	3	3	4	4	14	85
20	RSP	4	3	3	4	14	85
21	YS	4	4	3	3	14	86
22	AW	3	4	3	4	14	86
23	A	3	3	4	4	14	87
24	DBRM	4	3	4	3	14	87
25	SF	3	3	4	4	14	88
26	MA	4	4	3	3	14	88
27	MAS	3	3	4	4	14	89
28	AOR	4	4	3	3	14	90
29	RW	4	3	3	4	14	90
30	VZ	3	4	4	4	15	91
31	RZ	4	3	4	4	15	92
32	RK	3	4	4	4	15	93
33	ASD	4	4	3	4	15	94
34	FH	4	3	4	4	15	95
Total ($\sum f_y$)							2847
Mean (y)							83,74

Based on the table above, the total score obtained by the students in the experimental class was 2,847, with an average score of 83.74. Based on these criteria, the students' ability in writing narrative texts after

The value of significance in all the cases is greater than 0.05. Thus, the data is normally distributed. It means that the data meets the assumption of normality and can be subjected to further statistical analysis.

Homogeneity Test

A homogeneity test was done to establish whether the variances of the control group and experimental group were equal. The test chosen was Levene's Test with 0.05 level of significance.

Table 7. Results of Homogeneity Test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Nilai	Based on Mean	7,281	11	66	0,28
	Based on Median	15,166	11	66	0,4
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	15,166	11	49,06	0,4
	Based on trimmed mean	17,025	11	66	0,28

The test was performed using Levene's Test as a significance level of 0.05. Based on the calculation of the post test scores, the significance value was greater than 0.05. Therefore, the variances of the two groups were considered homogeneous.

Analysis Of Data

Hypothesis Testing (T-Test)

Hypothesis testing was done to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference in the performance of students in narrative writing among the experimental and control classes.

The mean score of the control class rose from 65.53 in pretest to 68.62 in posttest, while the mean score of the experimental class rose from 71.62 in pretest to 83.74 in posttest. These findings suggest that the rise in the experimental class was higher than that in the control class.

As per the normality test, the data were normally distributed. The homogeneity test revealed that the two sets of data did not have homogenous variances. As such, the Welch test of the independent-samples t-test was utilized.

Table 8. Results of Welch's Independent Sample T Test

Group	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Control Post Test	34	68.62	6.199	48.402	<0.001
Experimental Post Test	34	83.74	6.199	48.402	<0.001

According to Table 8, the significance value was less than 0.001. Since the significance value was smaller than 0.05, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. This

means that there is a statistically significant difference between the students' narrative writing performance of the experimental and control groups.

The experimental group had a higher post-test mean score of 83.74 compared to the control group's mean score of 68.62. This means that the Joyful Learning Approach significantly affects the students' writing skills of narrative texts at SMAN 1 Air Joman.

H_0 : There is no significant effect of the Joyful Learning Approach on students' writing skills in narrative text.

H_a : There is a significant effect of the Joyful Learning Approach on students' writing skills in narrative text.

Based on the Welch independent-samples t-test, the significance value was < 0.001 , which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. It can be concluded that the Joyful Learning Approach had a significant effect on students' writing skills in narrative text at SMAN 1 Air Joman.

FINDING

The data gathered in this study were obtained from observation and writing tests conducted during the implementation of the Joyful Learning Approach among Grade X students at SMAN 1 Air Joman. The observation showed that the learning process was conducted according to the planned procedure. Students actively participated in discussions, explored narrative texts, identified text structures, changed verb forms from V1 to V2, and organized story paragraphs.

The writing test results showed that the mean score of the control group increased from 65.53 in the pre-test to 68.62 in the post-test, while the experimental group increased from 71.62 to 83.74. Thus, the experimental group improved by 12.12 points, compared to 3.09 points in the control group. Furthermore, the Independent Samples T-Test showed a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. These results indicate that the application of the Joyful Learning Approach had a significant effect on students' narrative writing skills at SMAN 1 Air Joman in the 2025/2026 academic year.

These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies. Sotlikova and Winarsih (2026) found that interactive and supportive classroom activities improved students' narrative writing scores and increased their confidence and participation in learning. Similarly, Arif (2024) reported that active and meaningful learning activities through Project-Based Learning improved students' writing skills in content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Purwanti (2021) also found that enjoyable and active learning through Project-Based Learning significantly improved students' narrative writing skills, particularly in students' interest, participation, and ability to organize ideas. These findings support the present study, in which the Joyful Learning Approach involved active, enjoyable, and interactive learning activities that encouraged students to participate and improve their narrative writing performance.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study revealed that the application of the Joyful Learning Approach influenced students' narrative writing skill

positively. It was evident from the fact that the experimental group scored better in the post-test with the mean of 83.74 compared to 71.62 in the pre-test and control group of 68.62 compared to 65.53. In addition, the significance level of 0.000, which was less than 0.05, confirmed the statistical influence of the approach on students' ability. These results prove that the application of the Joyful Learning Approach improved students' narrative writing ability. This study result was compatible with the concept of Joyful Learning, which is the theory that advocates learning that was fun, meaningful, and motivating in order to make students become active participants in the process of learning. Moreover, the result of this study was in agreement with the previous findings of Islam and Manuhutu (2025) that engaging pre writing activities facilitated idea development and narrative elements organization among the students and Darmayanti et al. (2024) whose study shows that fun materials, like Indonesian folktales, increase narrative writing skill of the students.

D. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings and data analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Joyful Learning Approach had a significant effect on students' narrative writing skills at SMAN 1 Air Joman in the 2025/2026 academic year. The mean score of the experimental class increased from 71.62 in the pre-test to 83.74 in the post-test, showing an improvement of 12.12 points. Meanwhile, the control class increased from 65.53 to 68.62, showing an improvement of 3.09 points. These results indicate that the improvement in the experimental class was greater than that in the control class.

The hypothesis testing showed a significance value of 0.000, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted, indicating a statistically significant difference in students' narrative writing performance between the experimental and control classes. The experimental class obtained a higher post-test mean score of 83.74 compared to 68.62 in the control class, supporting the effect of the Joyful Learning Approach on students' narrative writing performance.

The observation results showed that the implementation of the Joyful Learning Approach followed the planned learning activities. Students actively participated in discussions, explored narrative texts, identified their generic structure, changed verbs from V1 to V2, organized story paragraphs, asked and answered questions, shared ideas, and worked with classmates. They also responded positively and remained actively involved throughout the learning process.

The findings were also related to the initial problems faced by the students, particularly difficulties in developing ideas, organizing paragraphs, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and applying grammar in narrative writing. The Joyful Learning Approach provided varied and interactive activities that encouraged students to participate, organize their ideas, and practice writing. The use of the Lake Toba story, which is familiar and related to local culture, also helped students understand the story and develop their ideas.

The instruments were examined through validity and reliability procedures. The writing test and questionnaire received expert

judgment from an English teacher and an academic supervisor. Students' writing was assessed based on content, organization, grammar and tense, and vocabulary. The data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive analysis, normality and homogeneity tests, and hypothesis testing.

Overall, the Joyful Learning Approach provided a positive learning experience and was followed by an improvement in students' narrative writing scores. The significant hypothesis test result indicates a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the research hypothesis that the Joyful Learning Approach affects students' writing skills in narrative texts at SMAN 1 Air Joman was supported by the findings of this study.

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