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The Effect Of Differentiated Instruction On Eleventh Grade Students' Narrative Writing Skill At SMA Budi Murni 2

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the effect of Differentiated Instruction on the narrative text writing ability of grade XI students of SMA Budi Murni 2 in the 2025/2026 academic year. This study is motivated by the low ability of students in developing story ideas, organizing plots coherently, using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and constructing narrative text structures as a whole. In addition, differences in students' abilities, interests, and learning readiness cause the writing learning process to not run optimally. This study used a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design involving an experimental class and a control class. Data were obtained through pre-tests and post-tests of narrative text writing ability, then analyzed using statistical tests to determine differences in learning outcomes between the two groups. The results showed that students taught through Differentiated Instruction achieved higher writing ability improvements than students taught using conventional methods. The average score of the experimental class increased from 61.94 to 76.39, while the control class increased from 58.19 to 66.39. The results of the Independent Samples T-Test showed a significance value of 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that Differentiated Instruction has a significant influence on students' narrative writing skills. Thus, this strategy can be an effective learning alternative in helping students improve their writing skills according to their learning needs and characteristics.

Keywords: *Differentiated Instruction, Writing Skill, Narrative Text, Desain Quasi-Experimental.*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh Differentiated Instruction terhadap kemampuan menulis teks naratif siswa kelas XI SMA Budi Murni 2 Tahun Ajaran 2025/2026. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh rendahnya kemampuan siswa dalam mengembangkan ide cerita, mengorganisasi alur secara runtut, menggunakan kosakata dan tata bahasa yang tepat, serta menyusun struktur teks naratif secara utuh. Selain itu, perbedaan kemampuan, minat, dan kesiapan belajar siswa menyebabkan proses pembelajaran menulis belum berjalan secara optimal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan desain quasi-experimental yang melibatkan kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Data diperoleh melalui pre-test dan post-test kemampuan menulis teks naratif, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji statistik untuk mengetahui perbedaan hasil belajar kedua kelompok. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang diajar melalui Differentiated Instruction memperoleh peningkatan kemampuan menulis yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan siswa yang diajar dengan metode konvensional. Nilai

rata-rata kelas eksperimen meningkat dari 61,94 menjadi 76,39, sedangkan kelas kontrol meningkat dari 58,19 menjadi 66,39. Hasil uji Independent Samples T-Test menunjukkan nilai signifikansi 0,000 yang lebih kecil dari 0,05, sehingga dapat disimpulkan bahwa Differentiated Instruction memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis teks naratif siswa. Dengan demikian, strategi ini dapat menjadi alternatif pembelajaran yang efektif dalam membantu siswa meningkatkan keterampilan menulis sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan karakteristik belajar siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Diferensiasi, Keterampilan Menulis, Teks Naratif. Desain Quasi-Experimental.*

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in communication, idea expression, and the development of students' critical thinking skills. In education, language proficiency supports academic achievement by enabling students to understand and convey information effectively (Srisudarso, 2024). Among world languages, English has become an international language widely used in education, science, technology, and global communication. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) and is a compulsory subject under the Kurikulum Merdeka (Aeni et al., 2024). However, EFL learning still faces challenges because English is rarely used in daily life, limiting students' opportunities to develop their language skills, particularly productive skills.

Writing is one of the most challenging productive skills in English learning because it requires students to develop and organize ideas logically while using appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Many EFL students experience difficulties in writing due to limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and problems in maintaining coherence (Brown, 2001). Observations at SMA Budi Murni 2 also revealed similar issues. Among various text genres taught in senior high school, narrative text requires students to organize events coherently through orientation, complication, and resolution (Sinta et al., 2020). However, many students still struggle to develop story ideas, organize plots, maintain continuity, and use correct language features in their writing.

In line with the Kurikulum Merdeka, narrative writing instruction should accommodate students' diverse abilities, interests, and learning readiness. However, observations at SMA Budi Murni 2 revealed that many students still faced difficulties in developing ideas, organizing storylines logically, and maintaining motivation in writing activities. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that Differentiated

Instruction can improve students' narrative writing skills, creativity, motivation, self-confidence, engagement, and learning outcomes by addressing learners' individual needs (Khotimah et al., 2025; Wuriningsih & Agung, 2025). Therefore, Differentiated Instruction is considered a relevant approach to support the development of students' narrative writing skills.

Previous studies have shown that Differentiated Instruction effectively improves students' narrative writing skills. Research by Masyhudianti (2026) found a significant increase in students' writing achievement, with average scores improving from 62.4 to 81.7 across content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Most students also responded positively to the learning process, considering it engaging, collaborative, and suited to their learning needs. These findings indicate that Differentiated Instruction is an effective approach for enhancing narrative writing skills.

Based on these findings, Differentiated Instruction is considered relevant for narrative writing instruction because it accommodates students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. However, most previous studies have focused on qualitative or development-based research, while quantitative evidence at the senior high school level remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to empirically examine the effect of Differentiated Instruction on the narrative writing skills of eleventh-grade students at SMA Budi Murni 2 and provide practical contributions for English language teaching.

Based on the explanation above, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. Does *Differentiated Instruction* give significant effect on the narrative writing skill of the eleventh-grade students of SMA Budi Murni 2?
2. To what extent is the effect of Differentiated Instruction on the narrative text writing skill of eleventh grade students at SMA Budi Murni 2 in the 2025/2026 academic year?

Accordingly, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out whether Differentiated Instruction has a significant influence on the narrative writing skill of the eleventh-grade students of SMA Budi Murni 2.
2. To determine the extent of the effect of Differentiated Instruction on the narrative writing skill of the eleventh-grade students of SMA Budi Murni 2.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study will use a quantitative approach to collect data in the form of scores, while this study will employ quasi-experimental research. Quantitative research is a method that emphasizes the collection and analysis of numerical data to test hypotheses and measure relationships between variables (Prayuda, M. S., & Ginting, 2024). Quasi-experimental research is used when researchers have limited ability to fully control variables and must work with existing groups, such as classrooms at school (Sugiyono, 2024). This study will employ a non-equivalent control group design, involving two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Both groups will be given a pre-test to assess students' initial writing skills in narrative text. The experimental group will then be taught using differentiated instruction techniques in learning to write narrative text, while the control group will be taught using conventional teaching methods without using differentiated instruction techniques. After the treatment, both groups will be given a post-test to measure improvements in students' narrative writing skills. This design allows researchers to compare the effects of a treatment by analyzing the differences between the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups.

Tabel 1. The Quasi Experimental Design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control	O ₃	—	O ₄

Description:

O₁ : Pre-test in the experimental group

O₂ : Post-test in the experimental group

O₃ : Pre-test in the control group

O₄ : Post-test in the control group

X : Treatment using Differentiated Instruction

- : No treatment (conventional method)

This research will be conducted at SMA Budi Murni 2 Medan, located at Timor street No. 34, Medan. This school will be chosen as the research location because it has conditions relevant to the research focus, namely teaching narrative writing in English. Based on initial observations and discussions with English teachers, it will be discovered that students' abilities in writing narrative texts vary. Some students are already able to develop story ideas well, but others still struggle to organize ideas, use appropriate vocabulary, and apply appropriate grammar in narrative writing.

A population is the entirety of research subjects who possess certain characteristics and are the target of a study (Arikunto, 2013). The population in this study will be all eleventh-grade students of SMA Budi Murni 2 Medan in the 2025/2026 academic year. The total population will be 222 students. Further explanation is provided in the table below:

Table 2. Population of the Research

No	Class	Famele	Male	Total
1	XI-1	19	18	37
2	XI-2	17	19	36
3	XI-3	23	13	36
4	XI-4	20	17	37
5	XI-5	18	19	37
6	XI-6	18	19	37
Amount		117	106	222

The sample of this research consisted of two classes selected through purposive sampling. Class XI-3 was assigned as the experimental class and Class XI-2 was assigned as the control class. Each class consisted of 36 students, resulting in a total of 72 participants. The experimental class was taught using Differentiated Instruction, while the control class was taught using conventional teaching methods.

Table 3. Sample of the Research

	Group	Famele	Male	Total
XI-3	Experimental	23	13	36
XI-2	Control	17	19	36
Amount		40	32	72

Instrument of Collecting Data

The instrument used in this research was a writing test. According to Sugiyono, a research instrument is a tool used to collect data systematically in order to obtain accurate and reliable results. The test required students to write a narrative text based on a given topic. Students' writing was assessed using an analytical scoring rubric covering five components: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The research employed two types of tests, namely pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was administered before the treatment to identify students' initial narrative writing ability, whereas the post-test was administered after the treatment to determine students' improvement in writing narrative texts. The scores obtained from both tests were then analyzed to measure the effect of Differentiated Instruction on students' narrative writing skill.

Technique of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS version 26. The analysis included Mean testing, Normality testing, Homogeneity testing, and Hypothesis testing.

1. Validity Test

Validity The mean calculation in this study refers to (Sugiyono, 2019) which is to add up all the scores obtained and then divide by the number of respondents. This calculation aims to provide a general overview of student learning outcomes quantitatively, thus making it easier for researchers to analyze and draw conclusions from the collected data.

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

2. The normality

The normality test will be conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed. This test is necessary because parametric statistical analysis such as the t-test requires normally distributed data.

- If < 0.05 , the data are normally distributed.
- If ≥ 0.05 , the data are not normally distributed.

3. The homogeneity

The homogeneity of variance test will be conducted to determine whether the variances of the two groups being compared are equal. This test is important to ensure that any observed differences in writing scores are due to the treatment (Differentiated Instruction Strategy) rather than unequal variability in the data. Homogeneity test is used to examine whether two or more groups have equal variance before conducting further statistical analysis, such as the t-test (Sugiyono, 2024).

4. Hypothesis Testing

After the data is declared normally distributed and has homogeneous variance, the next step is to conduct a hypothesis test. This step aims to determine whether there is a significant effect of the implementation of differentiated instruction on students' narrative writing skills. In this study, the hypothesis is tested using an independent sample t-test, since the data are obtained from two different groups, namely the experimental group and the control group. This test is used to compare the mean scores of both groups to identify whether there is a significant difference between them.

The hypothesis testing is conducted using SPSS version 25. The decision is based on the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) with a significance level of 0.05:

- If Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05, H_a is accepted and H_0 is rejected.
- If Sig. (2-tailed) $\geq$ 0.05, H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected.

Thus, the Independent Sample t-test is used to determine whether the difference in mean scores between the experimental and control groups is statistically significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine whether there was a significant effect of Differentiated Instruction on students' narrative writing skills. In this research, the quantitative data were meticulously analyzed using two distinct types of t-tests through IBM SPSS Statistics: the Independent Sample t-test and the Paired Sample t-test. The Independent Sample t-test was primarily employed as the main analytical tool to compare the post-test scores between the experimental class and the control class, thereby determining the final effectiveness of the treatment between the two groups. To further complement these findings and track internal progress, the Paired Sample t-test was subsequently utilized to measure the internal improvement within each individual class by comparing their respective pre-test and post-test scores.

To evaluate the statistical outcomes generated from these tests, a specific structural framework for decision-making was established. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) stated that there was a significant effect of Differentiated Instruction on students' narrative writing skills, while the null hypothesis (H_0) stated that there was no significant effect of Differentiated Instruction on students' narrative writing skills. The criterion for this hypothesis testing dictated that if the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was lower than 0.05 (Sig. < 0.05), H_a would be accepted and H_0 would be rejected. On the other hand, if the significance value was higher than 0.05 (Sig. > 0.05), H_0 would be accepted and H_a would be rejected.

Table 4. Results of the Independent Sample T-Test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Value	Equal variance assumed	5.153	.026	3.430	70	.001	10.000	2.916	4.185	15.815
	Equal variances not assumed			3.430	60.863	.001	10.000	2.916	4.170	15.830

Based on the result of the Independent Sample T-Test in Table 4.8, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.001, which was lower than 0.05. It indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental class and the control class. The mean difference value of 10.000 showed that the students in the experimental class achieved higher scores than those in the control class. In addition, the t-count value was 3.430 with the degree of freedom (df) of 70. Based on the t-distribution table, the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05 with df 70 was 1.994. Since the t-count value (3.430) was higher than the t-table value (1.994), the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) was rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that Differentiated Instruction gave a significant effect on students' narrative text writing skill.

The Paired Sample T-Test is a parametric statistical test used to compare two related sets of data obtained from the same group, namely pre-test and post-test scores. In this study, the test was used to determine the difference in students' scores before and after the treatment in both the experimental and control classes, in order to identify any improvement in students' narrative text writing skills after the learning process. In addition, the results of this test were also used to answer the second research problem related to the improvement of students' writing skills after the implementation of Differentiated Instruction. Therefore, the findings of this analysis serve as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of Differentiated Instruction in improving students' learning achievement.

Table 5. Results of the Paired Sample T-Test

Paired Samples Test									
Paired Differences									
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Post_Test_Experimental - Pre_Test_Experimental	15.278	7.459	1.243	12.754	17.802	12.290	35	.000
Pair 2	Post_Test_Control - Pre_Test_Control	8.472	13.029	2.171	4.064	12.880	3.902	35	.000

The Paired Samples Test showed a significant improvement in both the experimental and control classes, with significance values of 0.000 (< 0.05). However, the experimental class demonstrated greater improvement (mean difference = 15.278; $t = 12.290$) than the control class (mean difference = 8.472; $t = 3.902$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, indicating that Differentiated Instruction was more effective in improving students' narrative writing skills.

Discussion

The findings of this study showed that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction had a significant effect on students' narrative text writing skills. The results of the statistical analysis indicated that students who learned through Differentiated Instruction achieved better writing performance compared to students who learned through the conventional teaching method. In addition, students in the experimental class also experienced greater improvement in their writing ability after receiving the treatment. These findings indicate that Differentiated Instruction was effective in helping students improve their narrative writing skills.

The improvement found in the experimental class indicates that Differentiated Instruction helped students develop ideas, organize storylines, and construct narrative texts more effectively. Through learning activities adjusted to students' readiness, interests, and learning needs, students became more active and confident in expressing their ideas in written form. As a result, students were able to produce narrative texts with clearer organization, better story development, and more appropriate language use.

The findings of this study are strengthened by previous research which found that Differentiated Instruction significantly improved students' ability in organizing ideas,

composing narrative texts, creativity, motivation, self-confidence, and language use (Khotimah et al., 2025). The study explained that learning activities adapted to students' needs could create a more effective learning environment in improving writing skills. These findings are relevant to the present study, where students in the experimental class showed better improvement in narrative writing achievement compared to students in the control class.

Previous studies also showed that Differentiated Instruction was able to increase students' engagement and learning outcomes in the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Wuriningsih & Agung, 2025). The study explained that flexible learning activities encouraged students to become more active and helped them understand the learning materials more easily. These findings are consistent with the present study because students who learned through Differentiated Instruction demonstrated better writing performance after the implementation of the treatment.

Furthermore, previous research also revealed that the integration of Genre-Based Approach with Differentiated Instruction significantly improved students' writing skills, particularly in content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (Masyhudianti, 2026). The study also showed that students gave positive responses to the learning process because it was considered more engaging and suitable for their learning styles. These findings further support the result of the current study, where students in the experimental class achieved greater improvement in narrative writing skills compared to students in the control class.

Another previous study also proved that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction in EFL writing classrooms improved students' writing achievement, classroom participation, and learning motivation compared to conventional teaching methods (Pham, 2024). The study explained that instructional strategies adjusted to students' readiness and learning needs helped students become more confident in developing and expressing ideas in written form. These findings further confirm that Differentiated Instruction is an effective teaching strategy for improving students' narrative text writing skills.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research, the conclusions of this study are presented as follows:

1. Differentiated Instruction had a significant effect on the narrative writing skills of eleventh-grade students at SMA Budi Murni 2. The Independent Sample T-Test showed that students taught through Differentiated Instruction achieved better writing performance than those taught using conventional methods. This indicates that learning activities tailored to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles can effectively improve narrative writing skills.
2. Differentiated Instruction was able to improve students' narrative writing skills more optimally than the conventional teaching method. This was proven through the Paired Sample T-Test, which showed that students in the experimental class experienced better improvement in developing ideas, organizing storylines, constructing narrative structures, and using appropriate language features in narrative texts.

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