

Enhancing News Text Writing Skills through the RADEC Learning Model: The Role of Reading Interest among Indonesian Vocational High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Effective writing instruction remains a challenge in Indonesian vocational education, particularly in teaching structured genres like news texts. This study explores the effectiveness of the RADEC (Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, Create) learning model in improving students' news text writing skills and examines the moderating role of reading interest. A 2×2 factorial experimental design was implemented with Grade XI students at SMKN 2 Pariaman during the 2024/2025 academic year. A total of 66 students were selected via purposive sampling, with 32 assigned to the experimental group (RADEC instruction) and 34 to the control group (conventional instruction). Instruments included a validated reading interest questionnaire and a performance-based news writing test aligned with curriculum standards. Data were analyzed using independent t-tests and two-way ANOVA. Students in the RADEC group outperformed the control group in writing scores ($M = 83.25$ vs. 72.15), $t(64) = 12.031$, $p < 0.001$. The model benefited both high- and low-reading-interest students: high-interest learners in the RADEC group scored higher than those in the control group ($M = 83.89$ vs. 71.56 , $t(64) = 3.047$, $p < 0.001$), and similar results were found for low-interest students ($M = 83.67$ vs. 69.56 , $t(16) = 7.662$, $p < 0.001$). However, no significant interaction was found between learning model and reading interest ($F(1,32) = 0.16$, $p = 0.692$). The findings highlight the RADEC model's consistent effectiveness across varying levels of reading interest, positioning it as an inclusive, student-centered strategy for enhancing functional writing in secondary education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization and digital information, effective written communication has become a fundamental competency in both academic and professional domains. Writing, as one of the four core language skills—alongside listening, speaking, and reading (Ulya & Jaya, 2015; Ulya et al., 2017)—is not merely a linguistic task but a complex cognitive process that reflects critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to organize ideas coherently (Afnita, 2022; Efrianto et al., 2024; Gani & Ulya, 2022; Rasyid et al., 2023; Ulya, 2025). It involves the deliberate construction of graphic symbols to convey meaning through structured language (Latifah & Rianto, 2024; Indriyani et al., 2019), guided by three essential components: purpose, content, and linguistic system (Semi, 2007; Tarigan, 2018; Hasani, 2013). In Indonesia, the development of writing proficiency is a central goal across all levels of education, particularly within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered, contextual, and competency-based learning.

Among the various writing genres taught in senior secondary education (SMA/MA/SMK/MAK), news writing holds a distinct position due to its emphasis on factual accuracy, structured organization, and analytical clarity. As a genre, news writing requires students to apply higher-order thinking skills through the systematic development of the 5W+1H components—what, who, where, when, why, and how—to produce informative and coherent texts (Qorib et al., 2019; Muslimin, 2021). Mastery of this genre not only enhances students' language skills but also strengthens their media literacy and civic awareness—competencies increasingly vital in the digital age where misinformation is prevalent.

Empirical evidence consistently shows that students' proficiency in news writing remains suboptimal. Zulfika (2019) found that students struggle with organizing ideas and structuring news texts logically. Similarly, Sirait, Fadisa et al., and Elvia et al. (2022) reported difficulties in content development, coherence, and engagement, often resulting in superficial or disorganized writing. These challenges are compounded by traditional, teacher-centered instructional approaches that prioritize rote learning over active engagement, creativity, and critical thinking (Tatalia, 2016; Simanjuntak et al., 2022; Widyastuti et al., 2024). Such methods often fail to stimulate student motivation or provide meaningful contexts for writing, thereby limiting learning outcomes.

To address these limitations, educators are increasingly turning to innovative instructional models that promote student agency and cognitive engagement. One such model is RADEC (Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, and Create), a structured, five-phase learning strategy designed to integrate reading and writing through collaborative and reflective practices (Ramdoni et al., 2022). The RADEC model begins with reading a stimulus text, followed by individual responses, group discussion, explanation of ideas, and culminates in the creation of a new written product. This sequential approach not only strengthens reading comprehension and critical analysis but also scaffolds the writing process by providing a clear cognitive pathway from input to output. Recent studies have demonstrated that RADEC enhances students' motivation, autonomy, and satisfaction in learning (Naura & Kartikasari, 2024; Predi et al., 2022; Putrimina & Hadi, 2022; Sopandi et al., 2021; Januaripin, 2024), making it a promising strategy for improving writing performance.

Equally important is the role of affective factors in writing development, particularly reading interest. Research consistently shows that students with higher reading interest tend to exhibit stronger writing abilities (Wahyuni, 2017; Septhin et al., 2018; Zulni et al., 2022). Reading exposes learners to diverse linguistic structures, genre conventions, and argumentative patterns, which they can internalize and transfer into their own writing (Ghufron, 2014; Dhia et al., 2021). Thus, reading interest acts as a catalyst for language acquisition and creative expression, especially in structured genres like news writing.

However, despite growing interest in both the RADEC model and reading interest, existing research has largely examined these factors in isolation and primarily in the context of general writing or narrative texts. There remains a significant gap in the literature regarding their combined and interactive effects on students' ability to write news texts—a genre that demands precision, objectivity, and structural rigor distinct from other forms of writing. Moreover, few studies have explored how students' affective characteristics, such as reading interest, moderate the effectiveness of active learning models like RADEC in writing instruction.

This study investigates the interactive influence of the RADEC instructional model and students' reading interest on news writing performance, addressing a significant gap in existing literature. The research is guided by three key questions: (1) Does the RADEC instructional model significantly improve students' news writing skills compared to conventional teaching methods? (2) Is there a significant difference in news writing performance between students with high and low reading interest? (3) Is there an interaction effect between the RADEC model and reading interest on students' news writing achievement? To answer these, the following hypotheses are proposed: H_1 —Students taught using the RADEC model will demonstrate higher news writing performance than those taught conventionally; H_2 —Students with high reading interest will achieve better writing scores than those with low reading interest; and H_3 —There will be a significant interaction between the instructional model (RADEC vs. conventional) and reading interest level (high vs. low) in shaping news writing outcomes.

By integrating cognitive scaffolding through the structured phases of RADEC (Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, and Create) with affective engagement driven by reading interest, this study offers a holistic framework for writing instruction. It moves beyond isolated examination of pedagogical strategies or learner traits, instead exploring how their interplay influences learning. The findings are expected to advance theoretical understanding of the relationship between instructional design and student characteristics, while providing practical insights for educators seeking to develop more effective, motivating, and inclusive approaches to teaching news writing in Indonesian secondary schools, particularly within the context of the student-centered Merdeka Curriculum.

2. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative experimental research design using a 2×2 factorial design to examine the interactive effects of the RADEC instructional model and students' reading interest on news writing performance. The two independent variables were (1) the instructional model, with two levels: RADEC-based instruction (experimental group) and conventional instruction (control group); and (2) reading interest, which was categorized into two levels: high and low. The dependent variable was students' news writing performance, measured through a standardized writing test. The population consisted of all Grade XI students enrolled at SMKN 2 Pariaman during the 2024/2025 academic year, totaling 450 students across fourteen classes. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select two intact classes as the sample: Class XI MP 2 ($n=32$) as the experimental group and Class XI AN 1 ($n=34$) as the control group. This sampling method was chosen based on practical constraints and pedagogical homogeneity, ensuring that both classes had similar prior academic performance in Indonesian language and had not previously been exposed to the RADEC model. Although purposive sampling limits the generalizability of findings compared to random sampling, it is appropriate in educational experimental studies where logistical and contextual feasibility must be considered. The final sample selection was further supported by normality testing of preliminary data to ensure the suitability of parametric analysis.

Two primary instruments were used: a reading interest questionnaire and a news writing skill test. The reading interest questionnaire was developed based on established constructs from the literature (Wahyuni, 2017; Septhin et al., 2018) and adapted to the context of secondary vocational education. It consisted of 20 items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Prior to implementation, the instrument underwent content validation by three experts in language education to ensure relevance and clarity. A pilot test was conducted on 30 students outside the main sample to assess validity and reliability. Item validity was analyzed using Pearson’s product-moment correlation, with all items showing significant correlation coefficients ($p < 0.05$), indicating acceptable validity. Internal consistency reliability was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.89, which indicates high reliability. The second instrument, the news writing test, required students to compose a complete news text based on a given visual and textual stimulus within 90 minutes. The writing performance was assessed using an analytic rubric aligned with the 5W+1H framework and curriculum standards, evaluating five dimensions: content completeness, factual accuracy, organizational structure, linguistic clarity, and mechanical accuracy (spelling and grammar). The rubric was validated by two subject matter experts, and inter-rater reliability was established through independent scoring by two trained evaluators, resulting in an intra-class correlation (ICC) of 0.87.

Data collection was conducted in three phases: (1) administration of the reading interest questionnaire to all participants, (2) implementation of the four-week instructional intervention—where the experimental group received RADEC-based instruction involving structured reading, collaborative discussion, and guided news writing, while the control group received conventional instruction emphasizing teacher explanation and individual writing tasks—and (3) post-intervention administration of the news writing test. The collected data were analyzed in two main stages. First, assumption tests were conducted to meet the requirements for parametric analysis. Normality of data distribution was assessed using the Lilliefors test (a modified Kolmogorov-Smirnov test suitable for small samples), and homogeneity of variances was tested using Bartlett’s test. Both tests confirmed that the data met the necessary assumptions ($p > 0.05$). Second, hypothesis testing was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3—evaluating the main effects of the instructional model and reading interest—were tested using independent samples t-tests. Hypothesis 4, which examined the interaction effect between instructional model and reading interest, was analyzed using two-way ANOVA at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Additionally, reading interest scores were dichotomized by ranking total scores and classifying the top 27% as high interest and the bottom 27% as low interest, following standard practices in educational research for median-split analysis.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This study examines the effectiveness of the RADEC learning model compared to conventional methods in enhancing students' news text writing skills. The analysis compares performance outcomes between an experimental class (taught using RADEC) and a control class (taught conventionally), with particular attention to mean scores, score distribution, and variability. As shown in Table 1, preliminary data reveal notable differences between the two groups, suggesting the potential impact of the RADEC model. To rigorously assess these differences, four hypotheses were tested: Hypotheses 1–3 employed *t*-tests to compare group means, while Hypothesis 4 used two-way ANOVA to evaluate interactions between instructional methods and reading interest levels. The following table summarizes the key descriptive statistics that ground these analyses.

Table 1. Summary of News Writing Skill Scores

Analysis Results	Experimental Class	Control Class
Mean	83.25	72.15
Standard Deviation	6.82	5.92
Highest Score	98	80
Lowest Score	73	59

Based on Table 1, the following information can be concluded. First, the mean score of the experimental class was 83.25 with a standard deviation of 6.82, while the control class had a mean score of 72.15 and a standard deviation of 5.92. Second, the highest score in the experimental class was 98, while in the control class, it was 80. Third, the lowest score in the experimental class was 73, while in the control class, it was 59. To examine the effect of the RADEC learning model and reading interest on students' news writing skills, four hypotheses were tested. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were tested using t-tests, while Hypothesis 4 was tested using two-way ANOVA.

3.1.1. Hypothesis Test 1

Hypothesis: The RADEC learning model significantly influences the news writing skills of Grade XI students at SMKN 2 Pariaman.

Table 2. Result of Hypothesis Test 1

Class	Mean	N	t-value	t-table	Sig.	Conclusion
Experimental	83.25	32	12.031	1.66	0.000	H ₀ rejected, H ₁ accepted
Control	72.15	34				

Since the calculated t-value (12.031) is greater than the critical t-value (1.66) at $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the RADEC model has a significant positive effect on students' news writing skills compared to conventional methods. A deeper interpretation of this finding reveals that the RADEC model effectively transforms the writing learning process from a passive to an active and constructive experience. The five stages of RADEC—Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, Create—establish a cognitive bridge between input (news reading) and output (news text production), enabling students not only to imitate text structures but also to deeply understand narrative logic and the 5W+1H components. The discuss and explain phases promote collaboration and idea elaboration, which are crucial for developing coherent and informative writing. Furthermore, the democratic and participatory learning environment fostered by RADEC enhances students' confidence in expressing ideas in writing. These findings align with the principles of constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through active experience rather than passively received. Thus, RADEC is not merely a teaching method but a pedagogical framework that strengthens students' autonomy, critical thinking, and creativity in news writing.

3.1.2 Hypothesis Test 2

Hypothesis: The RADEC model significantly influences the news writing skills of students with high reading interest.

Table 3. Result of Hypothesis Test 2

Class	Mean	N	t-value	t-table	Sig.	Conclusion
Experimental	83.89	32	3.047	1.74	0.000	H ₀ rejected, H ₁ accepted
Control	71.56	34				

The t-value (3.047) exceeds the critical value (1.74), confirming a significant effect of the RADEC model on students with high reading interest. A deeper analysis reveals that students with high reading interest tend to have broader background knowledge and greater exposure to news text structures and language styles. Within the RADEC framework, this prior knowledge is optimally utilized through group discussions and the explain phase, where students can articulate in-depth analyses and expand their perspectives. The model grants them autonomy to explore topics more broadly, resulting in writing that is not only factually accurate but also nuanced and information-rich. In this context, RADEC acts as a mediator that fulfills these three essential needs, particularly for students who are already internally motivated.

3.1.3 Hypothesis Test 3

Hypothesis: The RADEC model significantly influences the news writing skills of students with low reading interest.

Table 4. Result of Hypothesis Test 3

Class	Mean	N	t-value	t-table	Sig.	Conclusion
Experimental	83.67	9	7.662	1.74	0.000	H ₀ rejected, H ₁ accepted
Control	69.56	9				

The RADEC model also significantly improves writing skills among students with low reading interest, as indicated by the t-value (7.662) > t-table (1.74). A critical interpretation of this finding highlights that RADEC successfully overcomes affective barriers through its interactive and contextualized instructional design. Students with low reading interest often experience anxiety or boredom when engaging with lengthy texts. However, in the RADEC model, reading is positioned as the starting point of an engaging collaborative process—group discussions, Q&A sessions, and tangible product creation (i.e., news writing)—which gives purpose and meaning to reading activities. Additionally, the use of real-life, contextually relevant news stimuli (e.g., local issues or current events) makes learning more meaningful, effectively sparking interest even among initially disengaged learners. This finding is pedagogically significant, demonstrating that well-designed instructional models can address affective disparities, not just cognitive ones.

3.1.4 Hypothesis Test 4

Hypothesis: There is an interaction between the RADEC model and reading interest in influencing news writing skills.

Table 5. Result of Hypothesis Test 4

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F-value	F-table
Between A	1574	1	1574	35.75	4.17
Between B	11	1	11	0.25	
AB (Interaction)		7	1	7	0.16
Within (Error)		1409	32	-	-

The F-value for interaction (0.16) is less than F-table (4.17), so the null hypothesis is accepted. This means there is no significant interaction between the learning model and reading interest. A deeper interpretation of this result constitutes one of the study's key contributions. Although an interaction was theoretically expected (e.g., RADEC being more effective for highly motivated students), the findings reveal that RADEC functions as an equalizer in writing instruction. The model is capable of elevating students with low reading interest to nearly the same performance level as those with high interest (83.67 vs. 83.89), while still challenging the more advanced learners. This suggests that the procedural structure of RADEC—with its clear, collaborative, and product-based stages—can mitigate initial differences in motivational levels. In the context of learning theory, this supports the view that strong instructional design can reduce dependence on individual affective characteristics, at least in structured writing tasks such as news text composition. However, the absence of interaction also implies that increasing reading interest may require additional interventions beyond the RADEC model, such as school-wide literacy programs or daily reading routines.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the RADEC (Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, and Create) instructional model significantly enhances students' news text writing skills compared to conventional teaching methods. The rejection of the null hypothesis in favor of H_1 confirms that students exposed to RADEC achieved higher writing performance, regardless of their reading interest level. This outcome aligns with previous research indicating that structured, student-centered models promote deeper cognitive engagement and improve writing outcomes (Aditiawarman et al., 2025; Asmawati et al., 2023; Rachman et al., 2024). The RADEC model's sequential phases scaffold the writing process by integrating reading comprehension, critical thinking, collaborative dialogue, and creative production—components essential for constructing well-organized, factually accurate, and linguistically coherent news texts (Ramdoni et al., 2022). In contrast, conventional instruction, which typically emphasizes teacher-led explanations and individual writing without interactive input, often results in passive learning and superficial text production (Amin & Sumendap, 2022). This study thus reinforces the growing body of evidence that active learning strategies outperform traditional methods in developing complex language competencies (Aditiawarman et al., 2025).

The RADEC model proved effective for both high- and low-reading-interest students. High-interest learners benefited from the model's emphasis on discussion and critical analysis, which allowed them to further develop their ideas and refine their writing. This finding is consistent with studies showing that motivated readers transfer their engagement into more elaborate and coherent written expression (Wahyuni, 2017; Zulni et al., 2022). More significantly, even students with low reading interest showed marked improvement under RADEC, suggesting that the model's interactive and collaborative nature can compensate for initial disengagement. This supports research by Naura and Kartikasari (2024) and Fadil and Ramadhan (2023), who found that structured peer interaction

and meaningful tasks can stimulate motivation in less-engaged learners. However, the absence of a significant interaction effect between the RADEC model and reading interest (H_4 not supported) indicates that while both groups improved, the degree of improvement did not differ significantly. This contrasts with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which posits that intrinsic motivation should amplify the effectiveness of autonomy-supportive models like RADEC. One possible explanation is that the structured, guided nature of RADEC minimized the motivational gap, making it equally effective across affective profiles—a finding that challenges assumptions about the necessity of high intrinsic motivation for optimal learning.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the integration of cognitive and affective dimensions in writing instruction. While RADEC was originally conceptualized as a cognitive scaffolding tool (Ramdoni et al., 2022), this research demonstrates its capacity to also influence affective engagement—particularly in stimulating reading interest and participation among reluctant learners. This dual impact positions RADEC as a holistic pedagogical framework that bridges constructivist learning theory and socio-emotional engagement models. Practically, the findings suggest that educators can implement RADEC across diverse classroom contexts, including heterogeneous classes with varying levels of reading motivation. Teachers can begin by selecting relevant, real-world news stimuli, guiding students through structured questioning (Answer), facilitating small-group discussions, and supporting the drafting and revision of news texts (Alwi et al., 2025; Boeriswati et al., 2021; Naini & Ulya, 2025; Ramadhan et al., 2025; Ulya et al., 2022; Wulandari, 2025). The model is adaptable to different class sizes and resource availability, especially when combined with digital tools such as online articles, videos, or collaborative writing platforms.

Despite these contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small ($n=66$) and drawn from a single vocational school using purposive sampling, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, reading interest was measured via self-report questionnaire, which may be subject to social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment. Third, the study did not control for teacher effects, as different instructors delivered the experimental and control treatments, potentially introducing variability in implementation fidelity. Finally, the dichotomization of reading interest into high and low groups, while methodologically common, may oversimplify a continuous and multidimensional construct.

Future research should explore the long-term effects of RADEC through longitudinal or repeated-measures designs, examining whether gains in writing performance and reading interest are sustained over time. Additionally, studies could investigate the model's applicability in other writing genres (e.g., argumentative or expository texts) or educational levels, including junior secondary or higher education. Qualitative approaches—such as interviews or classroom observations—could further illuminate students' experiences and perceptions of the RADEC process. Moreover, research could examine the role of digital media integration within the RADEC framework, particularly in enhancing access to authentic news materials and fostering multimedia literacy.

This study provides robust evidence that the RADEC model is a powerful and inclusive strategy for improving news writing skills in vocational education. Its effectiveness across varying levels of reading interest underscores its potential as a universally applicable pedagogical tool. By fostering active engagement, collaboration, and structured creativity, RADEC aligns well with the goals of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum and offers a practical, theory-informed pathway for transforming writing instruction in diverse classroom settings.

4. CONCLUSION

This study provides compelling evidence that the RADEC (Read, Answer, Discuss, Explain, Create) instructional model significantly enhances students' news writing skills compared to conventional teaching methods. The findings reveal that students taught using RADEC—regardless of their reading interest level—achieve substantially higher writing performance. Notably, both students with high and low reading interest benefit significantly from the model, demonstrating its effectiveness across diverse learner profiles. However, no significant interaction was found between the RADEC model and reading interest, indicating that the model's impact is consistent and does not depend on students' initial motivation to read. This positions RADEC as an inclusive and equitable pedagogical strategy capable of narrowing achievement gaps in writing performance. These results underscore the importance of shifting from passive, teacher-centered instruction to active, student-engaged learning models in Indonesian language education. The structured, collaborative, and process-oriented nature of RADEC supports the development of critical thinking, coherent idea organization, and linguistic accuracy—core competencies required in news writing and aligned with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed: (a) For educators, teachers are encouraged to adopt the RADEC model in teaching functional text genres, particularly news writing; (b) For policymakers and curriculum developers, the RADEC model should be formally recognized and integrated into teacher guidelines and instructional materials for Indonesian language learning at the secondary level; (c) For researchers, future studies should explore the long-term impact of RADEC on writing development through longitudinal designs. Additionally, research could investigate its effectiveness in other writing genres (e.g., argumentative or expository texts), across different educational levels, and in combination with digital learning tools. In sum, this study affirms RADEC as a powerful, inclusive, and scalable model for improving news writing instruction in vocational and general secondary education, offering both theoretical insights and practical value for advancing language teaching in Indonesia.

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