THE EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE WRITING ON THE ABILITY OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF SMP KARTIKA 1-5 PEKANBARU IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

Eka Ernawati, Eliwarti, Afrianto Daud
email: ernawati.eka15@gmail.com, eliwarti@lecturer.unri.ac.id, afrianto.a@lecturer.unri.ac.id
Phone Number: 082114115825

English Study Program
Language and Arts Department
Faculty of Teachers Training and Education
Universitas Riau

Abstract: *The objective of this research was to find out whether there is a significant effect of collaborative writing on the students' ability of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in writing descriptive texts. The design of this research was pre-experimental research with one group pre-test post-test design. A single group was selected to be a sample by using cluster random sampling. There were 28 students as the sample. The instrument was writing tests used both in pre-test and post-test. Then, the data were analyzed by using t-test formula. After the data were analyzed, it was found that t-test score was 9.785 while t-table score in significance level 5% df= 27 was 2.051. Since t-test was higher than t-table, it can be concluded that alternative hypothesis was accepted. It means that "there is a significant effect of collaborative writing on the students' ability of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in witing descriptive texts". Based on the research findings, it is suggested that collaborative writing can help the students improve their writing ability especially in writing descriptive texts.*

Key Words: *Effect, Collaborative Writing, Writing Ability, Descriptive Text*

PENGARUH MENULIS KOLABORATIF PADA KEMAMPUAN MENULIS SISWA KELAS 7 SMP KARTIKA 1-5 PEKANBARU DALAM MENULIS TEKS DESKRIPTIF

Eka Ernawati, Eliwarti, Afrianto Daud
email: ernawati.eka15@gmail.com, eliwarti@lecturer.unri.ac.id, afrianto.a@lecturer.unri.ac.id
NO. HP: 082114115825

Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni
Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan
Universitas Riau

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah ada pengaruh yang signifikan dari menulis kolaboratif pada kemampuan menulis siswa kelas 7 SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian pre-eksperimen dengan satu kelompok pre-test dan post-test. Sebuah grup dipilih sebagai sampel menggunakan teknik cluster sampling. Ada 28 siswa sebagai sampel. Instrumennya adalah tes menulis yang digunakan pada pre-test dan post-test. Kemudian, data dianalisis menggunakan t-test formula. Setelah data dianalisis, ditemukan bahwa skor t-test adalah 9.785 sementara skor t-tabel dalam level signifikan 5% degree of freedom (df) 27 adalah 2.501. Karena t-test lebih besar dari t-tabel, dapat disimpulkan bahwa hipotesis alternatif diterima. Ini berarti bahwa "ada pengaruh yang signifikan dari menulis kolaboratif pada kemampuan siswa kelas 7 SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru dalam menulis teks deskriptif." Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, disarankan bahwa menulis kolaboratif dapat membantu meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa terutama dalam menulis teks deskriptif.

Kata Kunci: Efek, Menulis Kolaboratif, Kemampuan Menulis, Teks Deskriptif

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the important language skills to learn. Harmer (2004) explains that writing promotes students to focus on accurate language use. Because students think as they write, it may well provoke language development as they resolve problems which the writing puts into their minds. It can be further understood that through learn writing, the students learn how to use the language itself.

Based on the English syllabus of the VII grade of junior high school in Indonesia, the students are required to study descriptive text in the second semester. The objective of writing is producing short monologue text. As stated in the curriculum, the students are expected to be able to write short descriptive texts about people, animals and things based on context.

Nevertheless, based on the interview with an English Teacher of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru, the teacher said that students have some difficulties in writing in terms of lacking vocabulary and sentence compilation. Moreover, based on the writer's experience when she did her practice teaching at SMP Kartika1-5 Pekanbaru, she found that the students frequently make spelling mistakes in writing. In addition, they hardly discover ideas of how and what to write.

Braine and Yorozu (1998) state that writing skill is more complicated than other language skills. Writing skill requires a well-structured way of the presentations of thoughts in an organized and planned way. Furthermore, writing consists of some elements such as content, grammatical function, vocabulary, and mechanics. Eliwarti and Maarof (2017) point out that writing requires accomplishing various activities that need to be done concurrently. For instance, while expressing ideas students need to think about the appropriate vocabulary, the spelling of the words, mechanics, style as well as the correct structure to use in arranging good English sentences. Since writing is not easy, it can be said that teachers need an appropriate strategy or technique to teach writing.

In fact, first-year students of junior high school generally are still novice writers in English. It is appropriate if a teacher uses cooperative method of learning to assist students' writing. It is in line with Harmer (2004) who suggests that writing can be a cooperative activity. In the classroom, teacher and students can take advantage of the presence of others to make writing a cooperative activity, with great benefit to all those involved.

Collaborative writing can be used as one alternative strategy in teaching writing. Bruffee (1985) suggests that since writing is a process involving multiple judgments - about what to write, how to start, how to say, what we mean - learning writing collaboratively can be very effective. It can be said that collaborative writing allows students to support one another ideas about what they are going to write and how they write it.

According to Haring-Smith (in Suwantarathip and Wichadee, 2014) collaborative writing is involving more than one person taking participation in writing a text. It means that sharing responsibility becomes essential. In the classroom, students are instructed to work in pairs or groups to write a text. Students work together to plan, draft, revise and edit their writings.

In addition, Harmer (2004) explains that successful collaborative writing permits students to learn from each other. It gives each student of the collaboration access to others' minds and knowledge, and it imbues the task with a sense of shared goals which

can be very motivating. Furthermore, although the collaborators may have to share their best ideas (rather than keep the ideas for themselves individually), still, any less-than-successful outcome is also shared so that individuals are not held solely responsible for any shortcomings in what they produce. For these reasons, collaborative writing has the power to support the writing habit in a unique way.

The theory is supported by a study by Storch (2005). She compared individual and pair performance on short composition. The findings showed that exercises completed in pairs were generally more accurate than when completed individually. The texts produced by pairs had greater grammatical accuracy and linguistic complexity and were more succinct compared to the texts produced by an individual. It was because when students worked in pairs they got feedback from their pairs that were useful to the progress of developing the writing skills. Storch explains that collaborative writing provides students the opportunity to give and receive immediate feedback on language and this opportunity is not happened when students write individually.

Considering all ideas mentioned above, this study seeks to answer a question: is there any significant effect of using collaborative writing on the ability of the first-year students of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in writing descriptive texts?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was a pre-experimental research. There were two variables in this research; collaborative writing strategy as independent variable and students' ability in writing descriptive text as dependent variable. This research was conducted by using one group pre-test – post-test design. It means that a single group participant was measured on the dependent variable both before and after the treatment of independent variable. The researcher compared the scores in pre-test and post-test to see whether the treatment is effective or not on the students' writing ability in writing descriptive texts.

Setting and Participants

The population of this research was seventh grade students of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in the academic year 2018/2019. The total number of the population was 89 students who are divided into 4 classes, VII-1, VII-2 and VII-3.

The sample in this research was one class. It was selected by using cluster random sampling technique which means the sampling in which groups are randomly selected. The selected sample of this research was 28 students of class VII-2.

Data Collection Technique and Analysis

The instrument of this research was writing tests particularly using pictures-cued tasks. Brown (2010) explains that picture-cued tasks mean familiar picture is showed, and students are asked to write a text that represents the picture. Before applying the

treatment, the researcher administered a pre-test to find out the students' writing ability in writing descriptive text. The students were asked to write a descriptive text represents the picture. The treatment was applied for six meetings with different topic and picture in every meeting. The researcher introduced collaborative writing and divided the students into pairs which consist of one helper and one writer. A helper here means a student who is at higher writing ability while a writer is the one who is at a lower writing level. In deciding the helper and writer, the researcher asked the teacher's help to determine students who become helper and students who become writer. Furthermore, the researcher determined the classification based on the students' scores in English subject.

After applying the treatments, the researcher administered a post-test to find out whether collaborative writing is effective or not on the students' writing ability in writing descriptive text. The students were asked to write a descriptive text represents the picture. The students' writing was assessed by the three raters. After getting the data, the researcher compared the result on pre-test and post-test.

In addition, the data were analyzed by using t-test formula to answer the hypothesis. The researcher found out the complete result in SPSS including the mean, standard error mean, standard deviation, and degree of freedom. According to Syofian (2013), the criteria for testing the hypotheses is if the t-test is higher than t-table (t-test > t-table) then the null hypothesis (ho) is rejected and if the t-test smaller than the t-table (t-test < t-table) the alternative hypothesis (ha) is accepted and if the mean score of pre-test is smaller than post-test, the null hypothesis (ho) is rejected and alternative hypothesis (ha) is accepted.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The test aims to present students' writing skill in seventh aspects of writing such as the originality of the writing, the suitability of the content with the title, coherent, diction, grammar, spelling and the neatness of the writing. Each of those aspects has 1-4 score based on analytical methods of Teacher's book from Kemendiknas, Curriculum 2013. In order to get the data more objective, valid and reliable, three raters were invited to assess students' writing both in pre-test and post-test.

Result of Pre-test

After conducting the pre-test, it is found that the mean score is 62.8 for the pre-test, the median is 63.1 and the mode is 63.1 which were got by five students (17.9%). In addition, the standard deviation is 7.45 while the standard error mean is 1.40. The students' result in the pre-test shows that only one student (3.6%) who got more than 75 as the minimum standard of achievement in English subject. One student got 48.8 (3.6%) as the lowest score and one student got 83.3 (3.6%) as the highest score.

The student scores can be categorized into the table of criteria the student's score. The Table 1 represents the results:

Table 1. Samples Statistics of Pre-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Score	28	62.82857	1.409359	63.1	63.1	7.457626

Result of Post-test

After the researcher applied the treatment using collaborative writing, the post-test was administered. The students' post-test result shows that the mean score of post-test is 80.8 the median is 80.3 and the mode is 89.3 which were got by four students (14.3%). Furthermore, the standard deviation is 8.86 while the standard error mean is 1.67. Four students (14.3%) got 75 as the minimum standard of achievement in English subject and sixteen students (57.1%) got more than 75. One student got 64.3 (3.6%) as the lowest score and one student got 97.6 (3.6%) as the highest score.

The students 'score can be categorized into the table of criteria the student's score. The table 2 represents the results

Table 2. Samples Statistics of Post-test

	N	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Score	28	80.825	1.675442	80.3	89.3	8.865607

Result of T-test

After conducting the post-test, the data were analyzed by using t-test formula to find out whether the hypothesis is accepted or not. The researcher found out the complete result in SPSS including the mean, the variance, standard deviation, standard error mean, and degree of freedom that can be seen on the table 3.

Table 3. Result of T-test
Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Post-test – pre-test	17.996	9.732	1.839	14.223	21.770	9.785	27	.000

From the table 3, it was found that the standard deviation was 9.732. After obtaining the standard deviation, the standard error can be calculated. The standard mean was 1.839.

Based on the data analysis, it shows that the mean different was significant. The value of t-test was 9.785 while the values of t-table on the df (degree of freedom) 27 was 2.051 with the level significant (α) = 5%. Therefore, the result of t-test was higher than the result of t-table. The level of significance was 9.785 > 2.051. It means that the alternative hypothesis regarding the effect of collaborative writing was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, there is a significant effect of using collaborative writing on the ability of the first year students of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in writing descriptive texts.

Discussion

In this research, it was found that the mean score of post-test was higher than pre-test (80.83 > 62.83). It indicates that that the student's scores after receiving the treatment have significantly improved compared to their scores before the treatment. Moreover, the difference between before and after the treatment reached a significant level after being examined by t-test. The data analysis showed that t-test was higher than t-table (9.785 > 2.051).

The result indicates that using collaborative writing is an effective technique on writing a text, especially descriptive text. In other words, collaborative writing is obviously effective in improving students' writing ability. Thus, the answer of the formulation of the problem is there is a significant effect of collaborative writing on the ability of the first year students of SMP Kartika 1-5 Pekanbaru in writing descriptive texts. The result corresponds to the finding of the previous studies that collaborative writing did help improve students' writing ability. (Ramadhani, 2017; Mulyani, 2014; Aminloo, 2013; Supiani, 2011)

After doing all the steps in the treatment, the researcher found some strengths of using collaborative writing. First, since the students wrote in pairs, it helped them to gathered ideas. Collaborative writing permits students to help each other. They can transfer and assimilate their ideas. Collaborative writing afforded students the opportunity to give and receive immediate feedback from their pairs (Storch, 2005). Second, it helps students feel enjoy to write descriptive texts. Collaborative writing is reducing anxiety (Dornyei, 2001; Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1994). Third, collaborative writing promotes social skills development. As students interact with their pairs, students built their social skills and see each other as resources rather than

competitors (Dale, 1997). They became cooperative rather than individualistic. They develop a tolerance for others' opinions.

Collaborative writing is an alternative strategy to teach writing which helps students enjoy writing descriptive texts. Most of the students were active during the teaching and learning process because collaborative writing permits them to work in pairs to discover ideas to be written. Collaborative writing facilitates authentic learning in which learning is an active process.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the data analysis, it was found that collaborative writing was effective to improve students' writing ability especially in writing descriptive texts. It can be seen from the students' mean score on post-test (80.83) was higher than the students' mean score on pre-test (62.83). Then, it was found that the value of t-test (9.785) was higher than t-table (2.051). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected.

It can be concluded that collaborative writing can be an alternative strategy to assist students' writing. Collaborative writing helps students to discover and assimilate ideas to be written as they work in pairs. In addition, it helps students feel enjoy and reduce their anxiety in writing.

Suggestions

Based on the finding of this study, the students are suggested to use collaborative writing to gather ideas or the content of their writing. Students need to keep writing in order to accustom themselves. Moreover, students need to pay attention to the teacher's explanation. Thus, they can understand generic structure, social function and language feature of a text.

In addition, during the treatment it was found that students had some weaknesses in terms of grammar, spelling and punctuation. They need to learn more about grammar, read more to increase their vocabulary and memorize the words to increase their spelling in writing. They also need to pay attention to their capitalization and punctuation in writing.

It is also suggested that the teacher may use collaborative writing as an alternative strategy to improve the students writing ability in writing texts, especially descriptive texts. Then, the teacher should control and manage the students when they are working in pairs or groups so that the learning is effective. The teacher's role is necessary to train and guide the students in the teaching learning process.

Since the lowest score in post test is the grammar and the spelling, the teacher is suggested to teach more about the grammar and train the students to practice more in writing. Further, the teacher is suggested to ask the students to read and write more so they can use spelling, punctuation, and capitalization correctly.

Lastly, other researchers are suggested to use collaborative writing to help students in writing especially descriptive text. Considering the methodology of the research, the researcher suggests using control group and experiment group as the samples. They may also use other experimental research design and conduct a study on the use of collaborative writing in writing other kinds of writing. In addition, they should organize the time as good as possible in conducting the research effectively in order to get satisfied result.

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