

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AUTHENTIC AND MODIFIED MATERIALS IN TEACHING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

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Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah ada perbedaan yang signifikan pada nilai menulis siswa antara siswa yang diajar melalui materi otentik dan modifikasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dan dilaksanakan pada 32 siswa kelas VIII³ dan 32 siswa kelas VIII⁴. Test menulis digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Data dihitung menggunakan *Independent Group T-Test of SPSS*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada perbedaan yang signifikan pada nilai menulis siswa antara siswa yang diajar melalui materi otentik dan modifikasi. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari nilai rata-rata siswa pada kelas VIII³ meningkat dari 69.37 (pre-test) ke 80.04 (post-test) dan pada kelas VIII⁴ nilai rata-rata siswa meningkat dari 69.34 (pre-test) ke 82.62 (post-test). Dengan kata lain, materi modifikasi lebih baik digunakan untuk mengajar menulis teks deskriptif bahasa Inggris dibandingkan dengan materi otentik.

The aim of this research was to find out whether or not there was a significant difference of the students' writing achievement between students who were taught through authentic and modified materials. This research used quantitative approach and was conducted to 32 students in class VIII³ and 32 students in class VIII⁴. Writing test was used to collect the data. The data were calculated by using Independent Group T-Test of SPSS. The result of the data analysis showed that there was a significant difference of the students' writing achievement between students who were taught through authentic and modified materials. It could be seen from students' mean score in class VIII³ increased from 69.37 (pre-test) to 80.04 (post-test) and in class VIII⁴, students' mean score increased from 69.34 (pre-test) to 82.62 (post-test). In short, modified material was better for teaching descriptive text writing English than authentic material.

Keywords: authentic material, modified material, writing achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is very important for people to understand each other. In written communication, people write their thought and feeling to communicate with other people. Writing is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling through written form (Harmer, 2001). To communicate effectively, people must constantly adjust their writing to suit their purpose and audience. Although writing is one of the skills students need to mastery, writing is one of the difficult skills for the students. Writing is definitely “hard work” (Pearsall, 1988; Cunningham, 1988; Emmons, 2003). It means that students need to learn writing hard. Writing is difficult for the students to understand because it is more complex than speaking (Langan, 1987).

According to Suwarno (2003), students’ achievement in writing, particularly in junior high school in Indonesia is regarded as not being satisfactory, in the sense that students’ score of writing is not good enough. It is shown from their low score in English test, especially in writing. In his research, Suwarno found that mean score of the students is 4.10 in the first test before the treatment. It is far from the minimum standart score, which is 7.00. In addition, based on the pre-observation carried out by researcher, the students were mostly found to have problem in writing English. They were not interested in the material in learning English. The students said that English is a difficult subject. The students cannot understand English easily; it makes the students don’t like English.

The students are not interested in English especially in writing because the material provided by the teacher is not interesting for the students in the sense that they are hard to understand the material. The material for teaching English used by the teacher is regarded not being suitable with students' age and level. It made students feel bored when they learn English. The students don't pay attention to the explanation from the teacher. This might result in the students get the low score at the writing exam because they don't understand about the material.

There are two forms of material that can be employed in teaching and learning writing; authentic and modified material (Heitler, 2005). Authentic materials are the real texts which aim to communicate with other people. While, modified material is the material or text that is written by the teacher for teaching and learning purposes. The teacher makes a text especially for their own preparation before he/she teaches in the class. For teacher and students', using modified material is very easy because the diction and grammar which are used in modified material are easy to understand.

In this research, the researcher focused on the investigating whether there was significant difference of students' writing ability achievement between students who were taught through authentic material and students who were taught through modified material. Therefore, the researcher entitles her script *Comparative Study of Authentic and Modified Material in Teaching Descriptive Writing at the Second Year Students at SMPN 6 Metro*.

METHODS

This research was quantitative research which used *Pretest Posttest Experimental Group Design*. The population of this research was the second year students of SMPN 6 Metro which consist of 5 classes. The sample was taken by using lottery. The sample of this research were VIII3 class and VIII4, which each of them consists of 32 students.

In collecting the data, the researcher used writing test in the form of essay test as the instrument. There were two kinds of test, pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was administered in order to measure the student's writing ability achievement before the the treatment, and post-test was administered after presenting the treatment in order to know the achievement of writing ability. The tests were designed based on KTSP curriculum for the eight grade students. The time around 80 minutes were given for the students to do the writing test. The topics of the instruments were two descriptive texts based on authentic materials and modified materials.

In experimental class 1 which was taught through authentic materials, in the first treatment at the students were given a descriptive text about people entitled "*My Sister*" as the example. In the second treatment, the students were given a descriptive text about animals entitled "*Elephant*" and in the last treatment, the students were given a descriptive text about places entitled "*Candi Borobudur*". In Experimental Class 2, the researcher used the same title of the text as experimental class 1 but

using kind of modified materials. In the last meeting, before closing the meeting, the students were asked to write the summary about descriptive text.

Then, in order to see whether there was significant different, the researcher examined the students' score. The raw score were tabulated and calculated using *Independent Groups T-Test of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)* for windows version 20.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this research provided significant two tailed, $p < 0.05$. It means that there is difference on students' writing ability achievement between students who are taught by using authentic material and modified materials. In the pre-test, the result showed that the students of both experimental class 1 and experimental class 2 had the same basic ability in writing.

However, after having three times of treatment in each experimental class by using different materials, it was found that the increase of students' writing ability achievement between experimental class 1 and experimental class 2 was significantly different. The students' score in experimental class 1 increased from 69,37 (pre-test) to 80,04 (post-test). On the other hand, the increase of students' mean score in experimental class 2 from the pre-test and post-test was 69,34 to 82,62 point.

Based on the result of the research, the students who were taught through modified materials were very easy to understand the writing English lesson. In making modified material, the teacher considers about students' basic ability, so the students will be easier to understand using modified material. This finding is reasonable because the modified material is very interesting for the students and it is appropriate with students' age and level. Besides, modified material also uses easier vocabulary and simpler tenses. On the other hand, most of the students who had authentic materials treatment gain lower score than those who had modified material. They got difficulties to understand the lesson in the class.

Putri (2014) did research by using authentic and modified materials in reading skill. Based on the gain of mean score, using modified material in teaching English is higher than using authentic material. It supported the finding of the research that modified material is better for teaching English than authentic material.

Furthermore, the difference was also found on students' writing ability in content and language use. The result showed that the increase of writing ability in experimental class 2 was higher than experimental class 1 in content and language use aspects. The reasonable assumption comes from the modified(simplified) text is important in the simplification of language learning material because modified(simplified) texts are often simplified through the use of shorter sentences, reduced language features, and specified grammatical constructions (Long and Ross, 1993). It means that the

students who were taught by using modified materials from the teacher were easily able to understand the lesson.

The students are also able to write a text in correct grammatical structure. On the other hand, the students who were taught using authentic material had difficulty in understanding the grammatical structure because the text contained the authentic structure (Mardaningsih, 2015). So, the students wrote the text using grammatical error sentences. In short, the students who were taught using modified materials had better score in writing descriptive text comparing with authentic materials in content and language use aspects.

The other finding of the research comes from organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. Those aspects of writing have no significant difference on students' writing ability achievement between experimental class 1 and experimental class 2. Mechanics becomes the lowest increased aspect in both experimental class 1 and experimental class 2. Students' score in modified material was higher than in authentic material, but the gain score was not significantly different.

Referring to the result of the test, teaching English using modified materials has strength in increasing students' writing ability achievement in every aspect of writing. The results showed that the mean score of content was highest increased score from the pre-test to post-test in experimental class 2 than other aspects. During the treatment, the researcher also asked the students to create three different topic of

descriptive text (people, animals, places). Therefore, the students were able to develop the idea and write a good descriptive text.

Futhermore, the students who are taught descriptive text by using modified materials have the strongest increase in writing aspect of language use rather than using authentic materials. It can be assumed that the texts consist of simple grammar and simple structure of sentence (Mardaningsih, 2015). It proves that modified text is writing an original text from outline for the language learners. Modified materials concern on grammar points. By using a simple grammar, the students were easy to understand about the descriptive text. It caused most of students have significant increase in writing descriptive text using modified materials.

In short, both authentic and modified materials have different result in increasing the students' score in every aspects of writing ability. By considering all of the students' score of writing, it can be concluded that there is difference on students' writing ability achievement between students who are taught using authentic materials and those who are taught using modified materials.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, the researcher concludes that there was a significant different of students' writing ability achievement between students who were taught through authentic and students who were taught through

authentic and modified materials. Modified is better for teaching descriptive writing English because modified materials are easy to understand. In addition, the students who are taught using modified materials have the better increase on writing text in terms of content and language use rather than those who are taught using authentic materials.

SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the data analysis and research findings, the researcher suggests that in teaching writing English, the teacher should choose the appropriate material which is suitable for the students capability and students' age. And for further researchers, they can do the research about authentic material and modified material in different level of students. Further researchers also can conduct the research about authentic materials and modified materials in different language aspects.

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