

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROUNDTABLE TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti apakah ada peningkatan signifikan pada keterampilan pemahaman menulis siswa setelah penerapan teknik roundtable selama lima kali pertemuan. Pendekatan penelitian ini adalah kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 29 siswa tingkat pertama sekolah menengah atas (SMA). Tes menulis digunakan sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *Repeated Measure t-test*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan signifikan pada kemampuan menulis siswa dengan tingkat signifikansi 0.05. Hal ini menandakan bahwa teknik roundtable dapat diterapkan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis siswa.

Abstract. The objectives of this research were to find out whether there was a statistically significant difference of students' writing ability after the students were taught through roundtable technique for five meetings. The approach of the research was quantitative. The subjects were 29 students of the first grade of senior high school (SMA). The writing tests were used as the research instrument. The data were analyzed by using Repeated Measure t-test. The result showed that there was a statically significant difference of the students' writing ability with the significant level 0.05. This suggests that roundtable technique facilitates the students to improve their ability in writing skills.

Keywords: *writing, writing ability, roundtable technique*

INTRODUCTION

There are four skills in English students need to acquire; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are two macro skills of language; they are receptive and productive skills. Writing is one of the productive skills students of senior high school need to master. It is because a writing skill contributes to improve communicative competence of learning the language. The process of writing refers to the act when we gather the ideas and make it until the text can be presented to the reader. According to Chaffee (1999:10) Writing represents our thoughts, feelings and experiences; and there is a purpose in every act of writing. Having a good writing skill helps students achieve their purpose in the future; apply for jobs, write academic writings, and formal letters. It is supported by Carroll (1990) who says that the most important invention in human history is writing, it provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanations, and theories.

In line with the purpose of teaching English in curriculum 2013, the teachers have to: (1) develop the ability of communication in oral and written. These capabilities include in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; (2) grow awareness of the importance of English as a foreign language to become a major tool of learning. Thus, according to Educational Unit Curriculum (K13) English is one of language skill that should be mastered by students. In writing aspect, the competence that students should be mastered in understanding the various meanings (interpersonal, ideational, textual) in a variety of written texts interactional and monologue especially in the forms of descriptive, narrative, spoof/recount, procedures, reports, newsitems, anecdotes, exposition, explanation, discussion, commentary, and reviews is needed.

However, the capability of students writing achievement regarding to the fact have been being low. This is because one of which factors, that is the technique of teaching writing. Dealing with writing for EFL students, writing is regarded as a language skill that is not easy for the students to be achieved. Even if the students are asked to produce text in their mother tongue still seems something difficult to do. It is strengthened by Byrne (1988:4) who says that writing is difficult for most people both in mother tongue and in foreign language. Most of the students have difficulty in producing a good writing. It is supported by Hall *et al*(1999) and Harris *et al.* (1998) in Waldron *et al.* (2005:25) who say that writing is perhaps the most complex of all the language skills that students must learn because there are many components to produce a piece of a good writing. The components are vocabulary, grammar, mechanic, content and, organization. Therefore, The students need ability of using vocabulary, making sentences which are grammatically correct, using mechanics appropriately, and arranging the sentences well in order to make the readers understand and gain about what they write. Students did know what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into words. When their teacher asked the students to make a composition, they were confused about expressing their ideas in written form (Wahyudin, 2012:2)

Idrus (2003:3) states that although English has been learnt for many years, we still find that senior high school graduates cannot understand and use English well both in spoken and written form. Many students complain that they have the idea what are going to write but they do not know how to put them into a paragraph coherently. They cannot link several sentences into one coherent idea. Also, Rianto (2010:51) has found that most students did not compose in a well-organized composition and also they made it in a poor language use.

In addition, based on the writers' experiences during the three years of senior high school, the problem is related to the teachers' technique of teaching reading. The technique which is used by the teachers is not quite attractive. In teaching writing skill, the teacher usually tends to ask the students to do writing individually, so that it will create competitive atmosphere in the classroom in which the students compete with each other to gain the highest score. In addition, the routine learning makes the students do not have chance to work together or share ideas in producing a piece of writing with other students. Meanwhile, the students are able to produce a piece of a good writing individually if they have gotten feedback from the others about their writing, for instance about the vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. The feedback itself can be gained when the students work together and share ideas with the other students.

Roundtable is one of the techniques that can be applied in teaching writing and can enhance learner's skills because roundtable is one of potential activities that students can aim to reach a conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solution in this activity. According to Olsen and Kagan in Richard and Rogers (2001:198) Roundtable technique is a technique in which there is a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each group. The students give responses of the questions or problems given by writing the answers on a piece of paper given in turns within a group. Since we want to give the students an understanding about writing, and want to improve the aspects of writing the teacher will divide into two steps. Students will write the answers based on what it is asked during the process. The first step will be how the students answer by writing a word, a phrase, or even a sentence with correct vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, and the second step will be focus on the content and organization or coherence. Kagan and Kagan (2009) also stated that by using Roundtable, there were two thinking skills fostered: categorization (selecting and identify the category or broader topic into specific) and evaluation.

Kagan and Kagan as cited in Jacobs (2006: 42) mentioned that in this activity, each group member has one piece of paper. Each writes an idea or paragraph, on the group's topic and then passes her or his paper to another group member who reads it and comments on the idea, continuing the story based on the questions or problems in the step. Roundtable technique can be used in teaching writing since this technique tends to facilitate the students to write different answers. By implementing this technique students write the text in correct grammar and punctuation in the first step. Then, in the second step, the students write the text not only in correct grammar and organization but also in correct content, mechanics, and word choice.

Roundtable is a way to make students be more professional in writing English. It can be inferred that roundtable technique is good to be implemented in teaching writing, especially in helping the students improve their writing ability. This research does only focus on finding out students' writing ability but also finding out whether roundtable technique significantly improve every single aspect of writing.

Referring to the explanation above, this research will try to apply roundtable technique in teaching writing on descriptive text of Senior High School students. Therefore, the objectives of this research are (1) find out how far the students' ability in writing descriptive text is significantly improved after being taught by using roundtable technique, and (2) to see the aspect of writing which improves the most after roundtable technique applied in teaching learning process.

METHODS

The approach of the research was quantitative. The design was one group pre-test and post-test design. The population of the research was students of the first grade of SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung and the sample of the research was class XI consisting of 29 students. The activities were started from administering pre-test, doing treatment, and administering post-test.

The instruments used were writing tests. The writing test was administered twice: the first was pre-test and the second was post-test. Pre-test was conducted to know the students' writing ability before being given the treatment and post-test was given to know the students' writing ability after treatment. In analyzing the data, repeated measure t-test was used to prove the hypothesis and to know whether this research was significant or not by looking at the results of pre-test and post-test.

According to Hatch and Farhady (1982:281) there are two basic types of validity; content validity and construct validity. This research, the test has content validity because the researcher makes this test based on the course objectives in syllabus of first graders students at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. In this research, the researcher asked the students to write a descriptive text to measure the students' writing ability. The researcher classified the score using writing descriptive scoring rubric by Jacob (1981). The technique of scoring is based on five aspects. They are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic.

Reliability concerns with the consistency of the gained score from a test or instrument (Setiyadi, 2006). In order to achieve the reliability of the writing of the students, *interrater reliability* was used in this study. In this study, the first rater was the researcher based on the scoring criteria (Jacobs, 1981); the second rater was the English teacher in the school. The result of reliability score of pre-test was 0.95012315 (very high reliability), and the result of reliability score of post-test was 0.86133005 (very high reliability).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After conducting the research, the researcher gathered the result of pre-test and post-test as follows:

Table 1. The Difference of Students' Writing Score in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Mean Score of Pretest	Mean Score of Posttest	Gain
63.83	74.21	10.38

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Students' Writing Score of Pre-test and Post-test

No	Score	Fi Pre-test	Fi Post-test	Category
1	43-50	1	0	Very Low
2	51-58	11	0	Low
3	59-66	4	1	Average
4	67-74	9	13	Good
5	75-82	3	13	High
6	83-90	1	2	Very High
Total		29	29	

From Table 1, it shows that there is an increase score of students' writing after the implementation of Roundtable technique. It is also supported by table 2. that students' writing improved from low category to good and high category. Also, to prove whether the hypothesis proposed by the researcher is accepted or not the researcher did hypothesis testing. The researcher used Paired Sample T-Test to test the hypothesis; and this was the result of the test.

Table 3. T-Test Result of Pretest and Posttest.

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 pretest	63.83	29	9.438	1.753
posttest	74.21	29	5.984	1.111

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 pretest - posttest	-10.379	4.814	.894	-12.210	-8.548	-11.611	28	.000

Null hypothesis is rejected if $t\text{-value} > t\text{-table}$ with the level of significance at <0.05 . From the data in Table 3, it could be seen that $11.611 > 2.045$ and $0.00 <$

0.05. Therefore, for the hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted. It means that there was an improvement of students' writing of descriptive text after the implementation of Roundtable technique in teaching writing.

The researcher also found out that through roundtable technique, students improved each aspect of writing. The researcher scored the students' writing based on the writing aspect and the scoring criteria adopted from Jacob (1981). The differences of students' achievements are presented as follows:

Table 4. The Increase of Students' Writing of Descriptive Text

Aspects of Writing	Mean Score of Pretest	Mean Score of Posttest	Increase
Content	19.13	22.96	3.83
Organization	12.72	15.44	2.72
Vocabulary	15.17	16.89	1.72
Language Use	13.31	15.51	2.2
Mechanics	3.13	3.37	0.24
Total	63.46	74.17	10.71

Based on Table 4, we could see that there was an improvement in each aspects of writing after the implementation of roundtable technique in teaching descriptive text for three times where the highest improvement was on the aspect of content.

Finally, according to the results above, it is concluded that the implementation of roundtable technique can significantly improve students' writing of descriptive text. In other words, the result of the research proved that roundtable technique gave improvement to the students' writing especially in terms of content.

Discussion

In the pre-test, it has found that students made mistakes even to simple mistakes in grammar. The students who were confused and did not know some words in English they would look up to the dictionary but they did not find the proper word for the context. From the organization, the students were confused to organize their paragraphs coherently. The students also made many mistakes for the mechanic aspect, they always omit to use full stop at the end of the sentence. Overall, the students did not know how to compose a good text in pretest; they tend to write what came to their mind.

After the students were taught by roundtable technique, their achievement significantly improved. The aspect that improved the most was content aspect, because during the treatment students were guided step by step to choose and select the right topic sentence for each paragraph. In aspect of mechanic students made a little improvement among other aspects, this happened because this technique more focused on content and did not specifically discussed the mechanic. In fact, roundtable technique does not only improve student's writing in descriptive text, but it also helps students to improve their writing of other texts and other skills.

The finding of this research was also consistent with the previous researches conducted by (2011), Ambarawati (2013), and Sartika (2013), the students gained much improvement after the implementation of roundtable technique for their writing scores. Interestingly, the improvement of students' scores happened not only in descriptive text as it is used in this research, but also in other types of text as it had been tested in the previous researches. In addition, from the previous study and in this research roundtable technique can improve students' scores not only in writing, but also in other English skills.

According to those three previous researches, they found that roundtable technique improves students' writing ability mostly in aspect of content. Also, in this research the students' writing ability significantly improved mostly in aspect of content. This happened because roundtable technique more guide the students in content aspect, such as leading the students to choose the thesis and topic sentence. Therefore, roundtable technique can improve students' aspect of writing mostly in aspect of writing.

From the explanation above, it is concluded that the implementation of roundtable technique can significantly improve students' writing especially in terms of content and also other English skill.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In line with the data analysis and discussion, the conclusion can be drawn as follows: (1) Roundtable technique can significantly improve students' writing ability in all aspects of writing. It is proved from the statistical result in the previous chapter it can be seen that t-value (11.611) was higher than t-table (2.045) and the significant value (0.00) lower than 0.05. (2) Roundtable technique is very useful to improve students' writing of descriptive text especially in content aspect. It is proved by the mean score was improved from 19.14 (pretest) to 22.97 (posttest). The suggestions for both English teacher and further researcher can be drawn as follows: (1) English teachers may start using roundtable technique by focusing on certain aspect of writing to increase. (2) When the students are asked to write on the board step, English teachers are better to limit the question not only based on grammar but also the structure of the text. (3) The mechanic aspect was the lowest achievement among the other aspects of writing. For this reason, the teacher should apply effective strategies for improving this aspect. (4) This study asked the students to write or to list words, further researcher can try to ask the student to write one short paragraph for each student in given amount of time. (5) In the step of writing the text further researcher can give extra special time for selecting the words from the list first, according to the structure of the text. (6) Obviously, the students' scores were still low in mechanics aspect. Thus, the further researcher is suggested to out another strategy to improve students' writing particularly in terms of mechanics.

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