

NATURAL APPROACH-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR RAISING STUDENTS' WRITING ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan mencari tahu apakah pembelajaran berdasarkan Natural Approach mampu meningkatkan pencapaian menulis siswa. Penelitian ini menerapkan desain kuantitatif kuasi-eksperimental dengan grup pre-test post-test yang hanya satu. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa ada peningkatan di dalam pencapaian itu. Mempertimbangkan penemuan ini, dapat disimpulkan bahwa aktifitas-aktifitas itu menguntungkan untuk siswa dalam hal pencapaian menulis. Oleh karenanya, guru dan perumus kurikulum diharapkan melihat Natural Approach sebagai pendekatan yang seharusnya dipertimbangkan, terutama jika tujuannya adalah membuat pencapaian menulis siswa lebih baik. Namun demikian, harus dicatat bahwa, dikarenakan keterbatasan yang dimiliki penelitian ini, penelitian yang lebih jauh perlu dilaksanakan, terutama, penelitian yang berkaitan dengan penerapan jangka panjang dari Natural Approach, skill dan level lainnya.

Kata kunci: Natural Approach, pencapaian menulis.

This research aimed at finding out if Natural Approach facilitates students to improve their writing achievement. It applied the quasi-experimental quantitative design with the single-group pretest-posttest. The result showed that there was a statistically significant improvement of the writing achievement with the significant level 0,05. This indicates Natural Approach is beneficial for students in terms of writing achievement improvement. Therefore, the teachers and curriculum formulators are expected to perceive Natural Approach as an approach that should be taken into account, particularly if the purpose is to make students' writing achievement better. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, due to the limitations of this research, some further research needs to be conducted, in particular, the research with respect to the long-term application of Natural Approach, other skills, and levels.

Keywords: Natural Approach, writing achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Javed, Juan, and Nazli (2013), Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2014), Huy, (2015) instill that writing skill is essential. Learning the way of coherently writing an effective text is not easy. It is the achievement of cognitive development that is extremely different from the acquisition of speech. It also needs systematic training along with executive attention in order to be able to successfully relate multiple writing processes to representations. Additionally, fluency is associated with the language proficiency having a lot to do with L2/FL writing (Ruiz-Funes, 2015). The perception of succeeding in writing is really necessary for being someone with good comprehension (Keskin, 2015).

Krashen (1983:126) instills to what extent an approach fulfils the requirements for the best input and lays learning in a proper position are very important to understand. It indicates that it is really necessary to know how much an approach contributes to students' learning before the application. Among the approaches is Natural Approach (NA). NA was proposed by Tracy Terrell and Stephen Krashen. The principles constituting this approach derive from the five hypotheses of Krashen (Terrell, 1977, 1986; Krashen, 1983:138-139; Krashen and Terrell, 1983:59). The focus is primarily on the acquisition of the ability of communication in the target language (Krashen and Terrell, 1983:58).

NA is perceived as an approach contributing to second/foreign language

learning to an extent (Abukhattala, 2013; Aksu and Gonul, 2014). This approach should be picked out when facilitating learners with topic freedom is the goal (Krashen, 1983:138).

Briefly speaking, the variables of this study are NA-based activities and the writing achievement. This study intended to figure out whether such activities can raise students' writing achievement since there is no previous research relating Natural Approach to the writing achievement specifically.

Research Questions

The writer formulated the following research question:

1. Can Natural Approach-based activities increase students' writing achievement?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing

Written communication starts to be learned by the students when they begin to interact with others at school. At this point, the writing skill is more difficult than other skills. Sometimes, even a native speaker encounters some difficulty and perceives it as "complicated and tricky situation" (Javed, Juan, and Nazli, 2013). Principally, the writing skill requires a presentation of a thinking frame with good structure in an organized and planned fashion (Braine and Yorozu, 1998).

According to Huy (2015), writing types fall into the following four categories that the writer perceives as the common ones; exposition, argumentation, description, and narration.

The following eight are the goals of writing learning for students (Graham and Perin as cited in Graham, 2008:3):

1. Communicating with others
2. Informing others
3. Persuading others
4. Learning content material
5. Entertaining others
6. Reflecting about self
7. Responding to literature
8. Demonstrating knowledge

Barkaoui (2007) infers these points should be taken account of for writing teaching: a) Process Writing b) text modeling c) audience d) awareness e) feedback f) frequent practice g) motivating students h) teacher attitudes and expectations i) learner autonomy and self-assessment

Natural Approach

Abundant proof imply a lot of teachers, but neither native speakers nor language learners, perceiving effective communication as near perfection in structure and phonology lead the students to complete catastrophe (Terrell, 1977).

Krashen's (1983:10-30) hypotheses from which the tenets of Natural Approach are derived (Krashen and Terrell (1983:57-58) are as follows:

1. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis
2. The Monitor Hypothesis
3. The Input Hypothesis
4. The Natural Order Hypothesis
5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

With respect to Krashen and Terrell (1983:58) and Terrell (1977), the tenets are:

1. Comprehension First, Production Later
2. Stage-Emerging Production
3. Communicative Activities in the Process
4. Interesting and Relevant Topics
5. Focus-on-Form Written Assignment
Error-Correction, not Oral
Communication-Correction

Natural Approach and Writing

In English as a foreign language, writing learning has been a very important matter in education which holds numerous functions including being a process to proper writing. Writing is a fundamental form of communication. Through such learning, students understand the way of expressing themselves better (Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman, 2014). As for Natural Approach, it provides natural learning through its principles (Krashen and Terrell, 1983:58). Learning is more effective and meaningful if it is not disconnected from real life (Westera, 2011). Writing classes should be in relevance to the society and culture in which the students are in order to make their engagement better (Lo and Hyland, 2007). Involving communicative activities in learning is proven better for students (Ahmad and Rao, 2012).

METHOD

There was no control class in this research, only one experiment class. In other words, it is quasi-experimental quantitative research because it also dealt with the comparison of the two groups of scores. The design was "one-group pretest-posttest".

Hatch and Farhadi (1982:22) instill a quasi-experimental design is in line with the real experiment of the nature of our language characteristics, and according to Setiyadi (2006:131-132), the quasi-experimental method which uses the pretest-posttest design is the suitable one for this sort of study. The following describes the design of this study:

T1 X T2

T1 : Pretest
 X : Treatment (NA-Based Activities)
 T2 : Posttest
 (Setiyadi, 2006:131-132)

Source of Data

The source was the scores for both types of tests, i.e. pre-test and post-test.

Population and Sample

The population was the students of the English Education Department of Lampung University who were in the fifth semester. It was taken since they were learning intermediate English lessons. Therefore, the tests suited them. So, the writer considered this study important.

The sample was thirty-five students at one class. The technique used in this study was Random Sampling Technique. The students were perceived as homogenous because they were not classed by English skill.

Instrument

The instrument was only the writing tests.

Validity and Reliability

Writing Test Validity

Hatch and Farhady (1982:251) perceive a test as valid if the measurement is right, of the object to be measured, and in line with the criteria. They highlight the two types of validity, i.e. content and construct, as the principle types. For that reason, the writer figured out those two types of validity of the tests.

A. Content Validity

Content validity relates to how representative and comprehensive a test is. It shows if the test has enough of these two characteristics from the perspective of the measured entity. Content validity focuses on the sufficiency of the sample and merely how the test looks. The writer picked out the materials in accordance with the College

Standard Curriculum in order for the tests to fulfill this type of validity.

B. Construct Validity

Construct validity is about whether or not a test goes with the theory in relation to the measured entity (Hatch and Farhady, 1982:252). In this study, the five writing aspects adapted from Heaton's (1991:146) were applied.

Writing Test Reliability

This reliability is a measurement of how consistent the result is of the same test administered at a different moment in similar circumstances (Hatch and Farhady, 1982:243). This research exercised the inter-rater reliability. There were two raters. Rank-orders correlation was employed to calculate the reliability. The formula is as follows:

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

(Hatch and Farhady, 1982:206)

ρ : Coefficient of Rank Correlation

N : Number of the Students

D : The Difference of Rank Correlation

Σ : Constant Number

The following is the result:

Table 3.3 The Pre-Test Writing Reliability

Reliability	N
.992	35

Table 3.4 The Post-Test Writing Reliability

Reliability	N
.994	35

In reference to the table, it can be said that the tests were both very reliable.

Data Collection Technique

In order to collect the data, the writer analyzed the pre-test and post-test writing, and calculated the scores.

Data Analysis

Writing Test Data

The following five aspects should be considered while the students wrote: content, judgment, language use, style, and mechanics.

Below is the percentage of each aspect:

- 1) Content : 30 %
- 2) Judgment : 20%
- 3) Language use : 25%
- 4) Style : 20%
- 5) Mechanics : 5%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Students' Writing Achievement

A. The Result of the Pre-Test

Table 4.1 Statistics of the Pre-Test

N	Valid	35
	Missing	0
	Mean	61.44
	Std. Error of Mean	.930
	Median	61.50
	Mode	66
	Std. Deviation	5.578
	Variance	31.11
	Range	1
	Minimum	22
	Maximum	51
	Sum	73
		2212

The table informs that the mean of the pre-test is 61.44. As for the median, it is 61.50.

B. The Result of the Post-Test

Table 4.3 Statistics of the Post-Test

N	Valid	35
	Missing	0
	Mean	73.22
	Std. Error of Mean	.961
	Median	74.00
	Mode	76
	Std. Deviation	5.767
	Variance	33.263
	Range	23
	Minimum	61
	Maximum	84
	Sum	2636

The table bears the information that the mean is 73.22 and the median is 74.

C. The Comparison of Both Results

Below is the comparative table:

	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean
Post-Test	73.22	35	5.767	.961
Pre-Test	61.44	35	5.578	.930

The table implies that the students' writing achievement improved after the treatment. The mean increased from 61.44 to 73.22.

DISCUSSION

The Students' Writing Achievement

The research question is whether Natural Approach-based activities can increase students' writing achievement. The answer is Natural Approach-based activities can increase students' writing achievement. This finding answers some library studies about Natural Approach (Abukhattala, 2013; Bahrani, 2013; Aksu and Gonul, 2014).

Abukhattala (2013) instills the teacher's individual situation should base the adaptation of Natural Approach. The activities in this research which benefitted the students in terms of the writing achievement were in line with Abukhattala's (2013) instillation.

Bahrani (2013) infers some modification is needed to change input into that necessary for SLA. There are various sources on the basis of techniques and activities for the sake of the provision of comprehensible input.

In terms of the writing achievement, the study of Parham *et al.* (2013) is in support of the finding of this research. Parham *et al.* (2013) compared Natural Approach which had been modified to GTM. It was found that Natural Approach surpassed GTM in the respects of listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Contrasting the research above, there are several studies, in some ways, opposing Natural Approach. Zafar (2009) goes against Krashen by saying that there has not been proper explanation at the monitor hypothesis, especially in terms of variations and functions. Moreen and Soneni (2015) are also critical of the hypothesis with the affirmation that there is not sufficient clarity in it.

This finding also refutes Syomwene (2016) holding view that such examples as relevant and interesting ones do not lead to an effective process. Likewise, it rebuts Liu (2015) who criticizes Krashen for the monitor model and the input hypothesis. Additionally, it contrasts the finding of Koosha and Yakhabi (2013) that, in regard to the needs of EFL learners, communicative activities do not fit in the cultural values. Ashari and Zarrin (2014) also aver the billow of problems resulting

from such teaching includes the lack of time, resource availability, and material inappropriateness.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSION

This study has led to the conclusion that Natural Approach-based activities can contribute considerably to students' better writing achievement. To put it another way, this study has established some proof that Natural Approach can really be positive for students' writing achievement.

SUGGESTIONS

The following are the suggestions the writer has made out of the finding, with respect to Natural Approach and the writing achievement:

1. Natural Approach should be perceived as a solution for the low achievement issue in writing classes.
2. More activities underlain by Natural Approach tenets should be applied in the wake of the realization that such activities are able to increase students' writing achievement.

As for the suggestion regarding the potential further research deriving from this study, the writer recommends considering a broader range of activities, different sorts of tests and levels, a bigger sample and population, and a longer length of time.

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