

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COLLABORATIVE
TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING
DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT THE SECONDE GRADE OF SMP
MUTIARA BANGSA**

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh teknik *collaborative* terhadap prestasi menulis siswa. Pendekatan penelitian ini adalah kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 29 siswa kelas kedua sekolah menengah pertama (SMP). Tes menulis digunakan sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *Repeated Measure t-test*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan pada kemampuan menulissiswa antara *pre-test* dan *post-test* dengan tingkat signifikansi 0,05. Hal ini menandakan bahwa teknik *collaborative* dapat diterapkan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis siswa.

Abstract. The objective of this research was to find out the effect of collaborative technique on the students' writing achievement. The approach of the research was quantitative. The subjects were 29 students of the second grade of middle school. 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 statistically difference of the students' writing ability between the pre-test and the post-test with the significant level of 0.05. This suggests that collaborative technique facilitates the students to improve their ability in writing skills.

Keywords: *writing, writing ability, collaborative technique*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of skills that has to be learned by English learners. It is a complicated skill that needs processes because many aspects should be considered. Brown (2001) states that written products are the result of thinking, drafting, and revising that require specialized skills on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions coherently into a written text, how to revise a text for clearer meaning and how to edit a text for appropriate grammar and how to produce a final product.

Based on the 2013 Curriculum for junior high school, the students need to make communicate in oral and written text. Through writing, students can deliver their arguments in many aspects or field. According to Harmer (2004), "Being able to write is a vital skill for speakers of a foreign language as much as for everyone using their own first language". Harmer(2004) states that "the students are reluctant to write because they rarely write, even in their own language". Writing is a skill that can be improved if the students want to learn it every time.

Singh and Rajalingam (2012) state that, writing is a continuum of activity starting from mechanical aspects to more complicated actions of composition writing as the final stage. Writing also has important role in evaluation of student performance at school, being particularly when they have to express the knowledge they have required as they do in tests or exams.

Based on the interview with the English teacher, most of the students have the ideas what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into words. They often get difficulties in expressing their ideas in written form. Because of the problem, the teacher should have an appropriate strategy to make students more interesting in writing. The strategy can be anything as long as the students can get motivation to express their idea in writing. Thing that teacher should be considered is the strategy have to interesting enough so that students will not feel bored. Because basically, the students or children enjoy experimenting with writing and putting their ideas down on paper (Linse, 2006). This means that enjoy the writing process is a very important aspect.

One of the strategies were proposed in this research was collaborative. Collaborative is proposed to be an effective way in teaching writing for students. Barkley et al (2005:256) stated that in collaborative writing, learning can be enhanced as a result of the act of 'doing things together, negotiating new meaning and learning from each other. Knowledge is developed and re-created by a group of people with the aim of achieving common goals or over lapping purposes. Collaborative technique is basically group working or cooperative technique to some extent. This technique may promote students to work in group, not

individual. This technique may help the students to be more active in thinking, more active in learning activity and learn how to work together and it is also help the students to solve their own problem in their individual test. The students can share their knowledge and get the new information together. Besides, it may decrease the students' pressure in writing because they are work in group.

There are several previous studies about the effect of collaborative technique in teaching writing. The first previous research conducted by Christina (2014) demonstrates the application of collaborative technique. The study proves that the use of that technique could improve students' speaking achievement. This research shows that the subjects' attitude and motivation in learning speaking about the expression of inviting, accepting and refusing the invitation through collaborative learning are very positive. Another study conducted by Shukor (2014), at The Faculty of Educational Studies in University Putra Malaysia, investigated the effects of facebook collaborative writing groups in ESL undergraduates writing performance. The researcher used treatment group and comparison group. For the comparison group, the participants were required to do writing task via face to face method and for the treatment group, the participants joined facebook group created by the researcher. The study found out that the treatment groups' score was higher than the comparison group because the students who joined in the treatment group generally enjoyed the lesson more. The study shows that social networking platforms like *Facebook* increased students' writing ability and help them perform better.

In reference to the explanation above, the writer was inspired to make a study about the effect of collaborative teaching technique as a pre-writing activity on students' writing achievement.

METHOD

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 second grade of SMP Mutiara Bangsa Bandar Lampung and the sample of the research was class VIII consisting of 28 students. The activities were started from administering pre-test, doing treatment, and administering post-test.

The instruments used were writing tests. The writing tests was administered twice: the first was pre-test and the second was post-test. Pre-test was conducted to determine the students' writing ability before being given the treatment and post-test was given to determine 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 improve or not by looking at the results of pre-test and post-test.

According to Hatch and Farhady (1982), there are two basic types of validity: content validity and construct validity. In this research, the test has content

validity because the research her made this test based on the course objectives in syllabus of second graders students at SMP Mutiara Bangsa. 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 Jacobs et al (1981). The technique of scoring is based on five aspects. They are content, organization, grammar, vocabulary 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, *inter rater reliability* was used in this study. In this study, the first rater was the researcher and the second rater was the English teacher in the school. The result score of pre-test was 50,52, and the result score of post-test was 60,52.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After analyzing the data, the results were focus as follows:

Table 4.1. Frequency Distribution of Students' Writing Score of Pre-test and Post-test

No.	Score	Fi Pretest	Percentage	Fi Posttest	Percentage
1	43-48	9	32.14	0	0
2	49-54	10	35.71	7	25
3	55-60	7	25	2	7.14
4	61-66	2	7.14	11	39.28
5	67-72	0	0	5	17.85
6	73-78	0	0	3	10.71
Total		28	100	28	100

Table 4.1. above shows that the students' writing improved from low category to good and high category. That indicates collaborative technique facilitates students' to improve their writing achievement.

Table 4.2. The Difference of Students' Writing Descriptive Text

Mean Score of Pretest	Mean Score of Posttest	Increase
50.52	60.52	10.00

Table 4.2. shows that there is difference on the students' writing achievement through collaborative. The mean score in pre-test was 50.52 mean while, the mean score of post-test was 60.52. The increase of the mean score was 10.00. 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 4.3. T-Test Result of Pretest and Posttest.**Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Post	62.3929	28	7.32494	1.38428
	Pre	51.8571	28	5.75239	1.08710

Paired Samples 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 pretest - 1 posttest	1.05357E1	2.97498	.56222	9.38214	11.68929	18.740	27	.000

Null hypothesis is rejected if t-value > t-table with the level of significance at 0.05. From the data in Table 4.2., it could be seen that $18.740 > 2.030$ 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 statistically difference on the students' writing achievement through collaborative.

The researcher also found that through Collaborative technique, each aspects of writing of students improved. The differences of student's achievements are presented as follows:

Table4.4.The Increase of Aspects in Writing of Students' Writing Ability of DescriptiveText

Aspect of Writing	Mean Score of Pretest	Mean Score of Posttest	Gain
Content	10.20	12.16	1.96
Organization	11.14	12.91	1.77
Vocabulary	11.00	13.20	2.2
Grammar	9.98	12.09	2.11
Mechanics	9.57	11.88	2.31

Based on Table 4.4. we could see that there was an improvement in each aspect of writing after the implementation of collaborative in teaching descriptive text for two times, where the highest improvement was on the organization aspect.

Finally, according to the results above, it is concluded that the implementation of collaborative technique gives some positive effect on the students writing achievement in five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic. In other words, the result of the research proved that collaborative technique gave improvement to the students' writing skill in all aspects of writing.

Discussion

The objective of this research was to find out whether there was an effect of collaborative technique on the students' writing achievement. It could be seen that there were some positive effects of collaborative technique on the students' writing achievement in five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic. Based on the hypothesis testing, it indicated that the hypothesis proposed was accepted. The difference could be seen by comparing the mean scores of the pre-test and post test, 50.52 and 60.52. The increase of the mean score was 10.00. This improvement was because the fact that collaborative makes the students felt more enjoyed during the class and they can share their ideas with the others.

In this research, there was one class used as the sample of the research. The research was begun by conducting pre-test and was finished by conducting post-test. The students were given three times of treatments. After conducting the post- test, the result was analyzed by using SPSS. This study found that teaching writing through collaborative technique was effective.

In order to determine the basic ability of the students to write a descriptive text, the pre-test was administered in the first meeting of the research. The average score of pre-test was 50.52.

From the results of pre-test, the researcher found out the capacity of the students. They were still lack of knowledge of writing aspects. For instance, the students had an idea or knew the content but they were still confused to express their ideas into words or sentences. It was also found that the students still made simple mistakes in using grammar. The students also could not find some proper words in English. From the organization aspect, the students were not able to compose a product of writing in a well-organized composition. They were confused to organize the paragraph coherently. Besides, they also made mistakes for the mechanic aspect, such as omitting the use of full stop and comma. Generally, the students did not know how to compose a good text in pretest; they tend to write what came to their mind.

Therefore, the researcher conducted treatments and gave them material that was relevant to students' capacities. The results of this research also proved by the previous research (Nura(2003: 71) who says that writing is an activity. Writing was not merely symbolized spoken language. Writing is a person's way to express him/herself and to adapt to the society. Through writing, readers will understand the writer's way of thinking. It means that writing can be a reflection of the writer's mind. After being taught by collaborative technique, the students could improve their ability of writing in all aspects of writing regarding to the results of posttest. The aspects of writing are content, grammar, vocabulary, organization, and mechanic. There was an improvement on organization. It was because the teacher guided the students step by step, on how to make sentences from the words produced in the brain storming process, and how to develop sentences and compile paragraphs.

In grammar, the researcher explained the rule of grammar after giving examples first, from given materials about descriptive text, specifically describing animals. In this case, the students were taught about the use of simple present tense and structure. In aspect of vocabulary, the students were able to use some vocabularies on their writing exercise, e.g. adjectives, nouns, and pronouns. It was because brain storming is a technique for gathering ideas. The students are asked to write what they thought about a topic, through this process the students' vocabulary increased unconsciously, because they get new words from other students.

In aspect of mechanic students made a little improvement. This happened because collaborative technique did not specifically discuss the mechanic to the students. Whilst, them in or improvement happened in aspect of content, in this case, the students already had an idea or knew the content but they were still confused to generate their ideas into words or sentences. As a result, the students' achievement in terms of content was low. Therefore, collaborative technique facilitated the students to elaborate their idea. In fact, collaborative 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 findings was supported by the previous study (Christina (2014), demonstrated the application of collaborative technique. The study proved that the use of the technique could improve students' speaking achievement. This research shows that the subjects' attitude and motivation in learning to speak about the expression in of inviting, accepting and refusing the invitation through collaborative learning were very positive. In this research the researcher used collaborative technique to improved students' writing skill.

In addition, a study conducted by Yasinta (2014), used collaborative technique towards students' writing skill in recount text. The subjects of this study were the second-grade students of SMP Al- Zahra Indonesia. Based on her findings, the approach proved that collaborative was helped the students build critical thinking skills and creativity of students. Different from the previous one, in this research she used collaborative technique to improve students writing skill in descriptive text.

According to the findings of the previous research above and in this research, it proved that there were some positive effects of collaborative technique on the students writing achievement in five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic. It could be concluded that the application of collaborative could help the students to generate and write a descriptive paragraph effectively and creatively.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The objective of this research is to find out there is an effect of collaborative technique on the students' writing achievement. In relation to the results of the study, it was concluded that:

Based on the result of this research, collaborative technique can be used to increase students' writing skill and it also improves the students' skill in five aspects of writing namely: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic. In addition, the vocabulary has the highest score than other aspect. It is because there is a list of words which makes them easier to choose appropriate words, so they can make their sentence well.

Suggestions

In reference with the conclusion above, the writer gives some suggestions as follow:

1. For English Teachers

- a. English teachers are suggested to apply collaborative technique as one of the alternative ways to increase the students' writing descriptive text. This is because this technique can be used to help the students who still have the problems in expressing their ideas in written form to generate their ideas related to the topic.
- b. English teachers are also suggested to use media in teaching writing while the treatments, such as: pictures, videos, and posters. It is because most of the students get bored easily if the teachers only give them a list of questions.
- c. The mechanic aspect was the lowest achievement among the other aspects of writing. The teacher should discuss the aspect of writing especially mechanic aspect during the treatments.

2. For further research

- a. This research, focused on the increase of students' descriptive text writing ability. The researcher suggests other researchers to find out the effect of collaborative technique in other skills such as reading, listening and speaking.
- b. In this study, descriptive text was employed as the media to measure the improvement of students' writing ability after the implementation of collaborative technique. Further researchers can try to apply collaborative in different type of texts, hortatory, discussion and report text by way of illustrations.

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