Teaching writing through Instagram to improve students' writing skill at the first grade of SMA Negeri 15 Bandar Lampung

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research are to identify the improvements to students' writing skill, and to find which aspect has the most significant improvement. This research used a quantitative method and Repeated Measures T-test used to analyze the data. The instrument is a writing test that consists of pre-test and post-test. The result shows that students' overall mean was 68.07 In the pre-test, while the mean of the post-test was 77.64. It means that there was an increase in students' scores by 9.57 points. Moreover, the most improved aspect was grammar. The mean of this aspect in the post-test (18.6) was higher than the mean in the pre-test (15.4) with the gain of 3.2. It can be said that Instagram can be applied in teaching writing to improve writing skill.

Keyword: Instagram, Descriptive Text, Writing Skill.

I.   INTRODUCTION

In this day, technology is developing very rapidly. The development of the media has become very diverse and interesting. With the rapid development and increasingly sophisticated, social media provides many benefits in our daily lives, including in teaching and learning process. According to Manampiring (2015) Social media can help people in various aspects of need, such as aspects of entertainment, education, health, self-expression, relationships, and others. Even today, social media cannot be separated from our daily life. Social media such a necessity that must be had, teenagers are no exception. They spend a lot of time to open their social media and expressing what they think there. Therefore, social media is very suitable to be used as a place to teach writing. This time, social media users have written and expressed their ideas and thoughts on social media. By using social media also, it is hoped that it can foster students' interest in writing.

In learning a language, writing skill is one of the important aspects that must be mastered, even writing skill is taught after students master the reading, listening, and speaking skill. By mastering the writing skill, students are expected to be able to express their ideas and thoughts properly. However, Gebhard (2000) explains several problems in writing that make students' ability is low such as, (1) some students use ineffective strategies, (2) some students have negative attitudes about writing, (3) Students do not always understand or pay attention to the content of the teachers' response to their written work.

Linse and Nunan (2005:98) stated that writing is a combination of process and product. In writing students not only express their ideas and thoughts in written form but also pay attention to aspects of writing so as to produce interesting written works. Sometimes, students cannot express their ideas in written form which makes them confused about what to write down. This makes students think that writing is difficult so that writing is considered less attractive and boring. In addition, writing is not only pouring ideas that are in mind in the form of sentences and paragraphs but there are several important aspects in writing that must be considered, namely content, form, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Therefore, besides being able to improve students' ideas for writing, students must also improve their grammar, mastery of vocabulary, even punctuation marks, and other things. These are the things that must be overcome by the teacher, namely providing new things that can make students interested in writing and make them feel less bored when writing. One of the things that can be done is the selection of media that can attract students' interest to write and express their ideas. In addition, linking learning with daily life can help students be more interested in taking part in learning. And now days, social media is the closest thing to student life. With its sophistication and easy access, social media can be a suitable medium to attract their interest in writing. In addition, according to Mason (2006) social media has sufficient capacity for good official education that is in accordance with the social context of learning and develops critical thinking in students.

The choice of Instagram as media for learning can make it easier for teachers to teach writing. Interesting features in Instagram, such as the caption column, like button, tag, hashtag, comment column, and so on can attract students' interest. Students can upload photos to make it easier for students to explore the ideas they will write based on the picture, then students can use the caption column to write down their ideas. Jackson in Wahyuni (2019) said that Instagram allowed the user to write up to 2,200 characters in a single post. With this number of characters, students can write paragraphs of descriptive text, not too long and not too short. They can interact in the comments column with other students to give suggestions, and like their friends' posts to support each other. The use of Instagram can provide new nuance for students and teachers to develop creativity and teach using Instagram. Soviah and Diana (2018) also said that photo and video sharing and social networking as the two main features of Instagram are surely a good resource to make use of in a teaching and learning setting, particularly in learning writing. Other than that, we can utilize the other features. According to Brooks (2014), the hashtag is used in social media to get notice from the other user. Instagram is also very close to students' daily lives and they use Instagram to fill their spare time or as entertainment for them. By utilizing the features and strengths of Instagram, it will be easy to attract students' attention so that make Instagram suitable for writing media.

Based on the observations of researchers during field training and discussions between researcher and English teachers of SMAN 15 Bandar Lampung, students' writing skills are still very low. Writing becomes a very difficult thing for them so they are not interested in writing. In addition, considering the conditions at that time, students had to go to school online, where they studied and carried out the learning process via mobile phones. Researcher thinks that all students must have at least an Android-based phone so that they can access social media including Instagram. For these reasons, the researcher chose the title "teaching writing through Instagram to improve students' writing skills at the first grade of SMAN 15 Bandar Lampung" to increase students' ability in writing.

II. METHODOLOGY

In conducting research, the researcher must prepare a research design to collect the data. That is why research design is an important role in research. In this study, researcher conducted quantitative research to determine the use of Instagram in writing to improve students' writing skill. This study uses *one-group pretest-posttest* design. The research design can be seen as below:

<div align="center">

T1 X T2

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(Setiyadi, 2018:11)

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Notes:

T1: A test given to students to measure students' initial abilities (pretest).

T2: A test given to students to measure the extent of acquisition after treatment (post-test).

X: Treatment before the post test

1. Population and Sample

This research is conducted at SMAN 15 Bandar Lampung, located in Bandar Lampung. The population of this study is the first grades students of SMAN 15 Bandar Lampung academic years 2021/2022. There are eight classes as the population. The average the class consisting of 29-36 students. The selection of samples can be using simple random sample. The sample of this research is X MIPA 1 class which consists of 30 students.

2. Research Instruments

The instruments of this research are writing tests. Writing test will be a pre-test where the students will be asked to write descriptive text such as based on the theme on the paper, while the post-test where the students will be asked to write descriptive text by uploading photo of place or object on the Instagram and describing it.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Result of Pre-test and Post-test

To get the required data, the researcher also run two kinds of writing tests namely pre-test and post-test. The further report of the tests' analysis result is served in the subsection below.

Table 1. Table of Result of pretest

Statistics		
Pretest		
N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		68.07
Std. Deviation		5.977
Variance		35.720
Range		20
Minimum		58
Maximum		78

Table 2. Table of result of posttest

Statistics		
Posttest		
N	Valid	33
	Missing	0
Mean		77.64
Std. Deviation		4.408
Variance		19.426
Range		19
Minimum		68
Maximum		87

It can be seen from the table above that there is an increase of students' for about 9.57 points. It is because the mean of post-test is 77.64 and the mean of pre-test is 68.07, meaning that the post-test score is higher than the pre-test score. Hence, it can be concluded that students' scores was improved after receiving the treatment through Instagram.

2. The Significant Improvement Between the Pre-test and Post-test Score

For the first research question, the researcher proposed two hypothesis testing:

H^1: there is an improvement in students' writing skills after being taught through Instagram.

H^0: there is no improvement in students' writing skills after being taught through Instagram.

To know which hypothesis that worked, it is a must to run hypothesis testing. Hence, a Paired Sample T-test was run to know the answer. The result of the analysis from SPPS can be seen in the following table.

Table 3. Table of Paired Samples T-Test

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Posttest - Pretest	10.400	5.733	1.047	8.259	12.541	9.936	29	.000

Table 3 shows the result of the computation of Paired Sample T-test in SPSS. H1 is accepted if the t-value > t-table with the level of significance at < 0.05 which means that under that situation, the H0 is rejected. However, it can be seen that the significance of the two-tailed value is 0.000. So it can be concluded that H1 is accepted while H0 is rejected since 0.000 < 0.05. Besides, it was also found that the t-value of the test was higher than the t-table where 9.936 > 2.052. Overall, it can be said that the students got significant improvement on their writing after utilizing Instagram as learning media.

3. **Mean Difference of Writing Aspects before and after Treatment**

The researcher also calculated the mean and the gain of each aspect. The result of the computation is presented below.

Table 4. Table of Mean difference writing aspects of pretest and posttest

Aspects of Writing	Mean		Gain	Sig.
	Pre-Test	Post-Test		
Content	18.1	20.9	2.8	0.000
Organization	15.7	17.9	2.2	0.000
Vocabulary	15.1	16.7	1.6	0.000
Grammar	15.4	18.6	3.2	0.000
Mechanic	3.4	4.0	0.6	0.000

From the table above, it is clearly seen that all of the writing aspects were statistically improved. Moreover, the lowest mean scores of aspect in both pretest and posttest was mechanic by having the number of 3.4 and 4.0 while the highest was content with the point of 18.1 and 20.9.

Additionally, the gain number of each aspect should be compared in order to know which of the aspects improved the most, where the finding was used to answer the second research question. It can be concluded that the aspect which get the highest increase is grammar with the score of 3.2. Last but not least, the significance of two-tailed of all aspects are lower than 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05). Hence, the H1 hypothesis of the second research question accepted that there is an aspect that improved the most which was grammar.

4. **Discussion**

All of the data have been gathered successfully by following the research process. There were five meetings used in total to run the research. In the first meeting, the pretest was given to the students as a way to identify their initial writing ability. After that, the treatment was conducted three times in the second, the third, and the fourth meeting. During this step, the researcher applied Instagram as a platform to give material and to do writing activities. Lastly, the post-test were distributed in the last meeting.

Furthermore, the collected data then were analyzed by the researcher in order to know the answer of the proposed research questions.

It can be concluded that regarding the first research question, it was found that students' writing ability was improved after being taught through Instagram since the mean of post-test (77.64) was higher than the mean of pre-test (68.07) . There is an increase of students' for about 9.57 points. This finding is supported by several evidences. The first is that Instagram can be an effective learning platform, especially in online situation. It can create enjoyable and fun atmosphere that students are interested to be active in the class's activities arranged by the teacher. As stated by Shazali, Shamsudin, and Yunus (2019) that Instagram provides a meaningful and fun learning environment for the students as they are comfortable using Instagram in completing school tasks. Moreover, the features in Instagram are easy to be used so that students have been familiar with them. Hence the students are full of enthusiasm as they feel that writing process on Instagram is more fun and easier to understand (Aliah, Nuraeni, and Shabir, 2020).

Additionally, the use of Instagram can activate students' creativity in writing. It can encourage students to think more about the information that they want to deliver. The pictures provided in their post make them able to reflect the detail. As Candra, Pratama, and Hartono (2020) said that Instagram can attract the students to be more creative to start writing and to develop their ideas because it is easy to write a description when they see the actual picture. It was easy for them to develop their own ideas into text by seeing the picture. Added by Rinda, Novawan, Miqawati (2018) some students become more creative because they are inspired by others' ideas and opinions posted previously in Instagram. Students were able to open many sources including photos and videos shared on Instagram. Those can be used as references in writing and revising.

Furthermore, concerning the answer of the second research question, the gain number of each aspect should be compared in order to know which of the aspects improved the most. Based on table 4.11, it was found that the students were able to use grammar properly because the aspect which gets the highest increase is grammar with the score of 3.2. They put more attention to the grammar as they were given feedback by their friends through personal message or comment.

The students are inspired to participate and connect with their peers (Khalitova and Gimaletdinova in Sallamah and As Sabiq, 2020). Then, they used this opportunity to give feedback to their friends that at the same time gave them advantage. As stated by Rinda, Novawan, Miqawati (2018) that students took benefit from their peers' feedback when they used Instagram to produce writing in terms of grammar. Most of the students didn't realize that their writing contained incorrect grammar. It was difficult for them to identify any errors until their friends pointed out through comment or direct message.

The second reason that why students' grammar awareness could improve is that they can see their friend's work. They tended to imitate their friends in arranging words and sentences. It was proved by the statement from Shazali, Shamsudin, and Yunus (2019) that grammatical structure can be improved by reading other people's posts. Hence, students can learn how to use word class in creating sentences by their friends' posts then make sense of the used grammar. Moreover, besides getting the correction from their friends, reading other students' writing can also build their consciousness to the grammar error. As Nurdiansyah and Abdulrahman (2020) believe that the students have free access to see everyone's writing, which also automatically provides a good chance to check their peers' mistakes. Hence they can prevent the same errors in their own writing.

In addition, the reason why grammar can be the most improved aspect is that in the learning process students are asked to analyze the examples that have been given and they are asked to find simple present

tense sentences in the text, then students are also asked to make their own simple present tense sentences. It makes students pay more attention to the use of simple present tense when writing descriptive text.

Moreover, there are several new points discovered in this research. Most of the researchers only focused on the students' improvement in general by seeing the total mean score in both pre-test and post-test. On the other hand, in this research, detailed information of the result was given by analyzing the improvement of writing aspects. Besides, by having the data of the increase of each aspect, the researcher can provide this research with a new finding that is language use as the most improved aspect. In conclusion, the utilization of Instagram could help students improve their writing ability. Their scores in all aspects of writing were increased after following the learning process through this platform.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Referring to the discussion of the research findings in the previous chapter, the researcher comes to the following conclusions:

Instagram can be used to teach writing as it can affect students' writing positively. Students' writing ability was improved after getting the treatment in Instagram. In the pretest, students' overall mean was 68.07 while the mean of posttest was 77.64. It means that there was an increase in students' scores by 9.57 points. The reason behind this finding is that Instagram can create lively and enjoyable learning so the students eager to be involved in the writing activities. Besides, the use of Instagram can stimulate their creativity in composing entertaining and meaningful writing.

The students' scores in all aspects of writing were increased. However, the most improved aspect was grammar. The mean of this aspect in posttest (18.6) was higher than the mean in pretest (15.4) with the gain of 3.2. It is because the students gave feedback to each other. Moreover, they could also read other students' works and could get input from their posts. Hence the students were aware of their grammar especially tenses and sentence structure.

In reference to the conclusion above, there are several suggestions for English teachers and further researchers which are described in the following paragraphs.

First suggestion for English teacher, English teacher should use Instagram to create enjoyable and effective learning process as students will be more active in the class. Using Instagram can bring a new atmosphere of teaching and learning writing. Besides, the feature in Instagram is suitable to teach writing. Teacher can use Instagram as media to share materials and students' writings.

The post on Instagram can be easily seen by other users. Hence, the teacher should be able to control students' activities during the learning process. It is suggested that teacher has to always remind the students to use appropriate words whether in comments sections or in the text that they make.

The second suggestion for further researcher, In this research, the researcher only used Instagram post as the platform for students to create their writing. Hence, it is suggested that other researchers can investigate the use of the other features in Instagram like reels and stories in teaching other language aspects such as speaking, reading, and listening.

In this study, student assignments are uploaded to their own accounts. So, further researchers can try to ask students to upload their assignments to the class account that has been created so that student assignments are collected into the same account. This will make it easier for teachers and other students to find other friends' assignments.

This research only focused on Instagram, so other researchers are suggested to compare this social media with other online platforms such as WhatsApp or Facebook in order to give variation in online teaching.

This chapter has discussed the conclusion of the research and the suggestion for both English teacher and further researcher. Hopefully, the recommendation given can be useful for both sides.

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