

The influence of Problem Based Learning towards students analytical exposition text writing achievement in senior high school of 14 Bandar Lampung

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ABSTRACT

Writing has been one of the four skills in language learning that is very important to master. Analytical exposition text is one of the texts that should be mastered by the senior high school students. This research aims to find out whether there is a significant difference in students' writing achievement before and after being taught with problem-based learning and to investigate which aspect improves the most after the students being taught with PBL. Adapting a quantitative approach, this research was conducted through one group pretest and post-test design. The subjects of the research were thirty-six students at Senior High School of 14 Bandar Lampung. The data were elicited through pretest and post-test in the form of analytical exposition text. The mean of both tests was analyzed using Paired Sample T-test with the significant level of 0.05. The result showed a significant difference in students' writing performance after they were taught with problem-based learning concerning the gain of their score from the first to the second test. It could be seen from the computation that the significant values of the test were lower than alpha ($0.00 < 0.05$) while the t-value (7.595) was higher than t-table (2.0301). It was also revealed that organization was the most improved aspect among the others by having the gain of 0.375. Finally, it can be said that the problem based learning method can have a positive effect on the students' analytical exposition text writing achievement.

Keywords: *Problem Based Learning, arguments, students' writing achievement.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Language has an important role in human life. We use language to communicate with each other. Communication is one of the life skills that must be acquired by humans as a social creature. Acquiring the English language as a global language is necessary nowadays. English is one of the foreign languages taught in Indonesia, among other foreign languages. English has been introduced to the students in Indonesia from elementary school until university level. Most high schools offer one to two classes a week every semester throughout the two levels of high schools, junior high school and senior high school which take three years for each. Even though they have been taught English for more than six years, students in Indonesia have not shown satisfactory results after graduation (Bahri Ys, Kirana, & Mustafa, 2017). As a language, students are expected to achieve four skills in English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

High schoolers students are usually instructed to write both in their learning process at school and in real-life situations outside the school. In applying language, delivering ideas can be done orally by speaking and written by text. The writing must be factual and valid when it comes to expressing ideas through the text. It means that in the writing process, a writer needs preparation, prior knowledge, or an authentic experience before conveying the ideas or information into the paper sheet. Writing is an important skill that will be very useful for people to communicate with others and express their feelings or ideas in a written form.

Writing is one of the language skills that are important for students to master, even more for the students at the middle school level. According to Ashraf et al. (2016), writing is one of productive English skills that should be masterly skilled by English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesia for written communication and academic writing purposes, such as letters, essays, papers, articles, journals, project reports, theses, etc. It asserted that writing has a vital role in language production used for global mediation of knowledge. Students should learn various types of writing in Indonesia, including expository, narrative, descriptive, recount and argumentative. The intermediate-level students are expected to have already equipped at least to have basic level writing skills (Spratt et al., 2005). Thus, learning to write in English well is very important for students.

As stated in Hairuddin (2018) regarding analytical exposition text writing, it has been found in the early study that the students have not been aware of the patterns in writing that they have studied in the class. The discussion points that can be elaborated from the main ideas are rarely delivered in their writing, and there are some long explanations that fail to support the main ideas. Finally, students failed to conclude their writing concisely at the last paragraph. Moreover, they found it hard to replicate the content with the appropriate expressions. With that in mind, this type of text needed to be taught with a method that can provide stages for discovery. Besides, critical thinking is the most important aspect of the argumentative text and plays an essential role in the PBL implementation. Fahim et al. (2014) reported in their study that critical thinking is regarded as the most influential factor in argumentative writing. They also concluded that having essential thinking skills in higher education is crucial and plays a significant role in understanding the learning process. Moreover, according to Reyes et al. (2008), critical thinking should enable students to read the words in a textbook and the world, such as closely examining the existing power structures and their roles within them. In addition, Murtadho (2021) stated that to read the world, students should be familiar with the practice of critical thinking and share their thoughts with others through argumentative writing.

Without disregarding the three other skills, writing may always be the most difficult for EFL learners, as Fitriati et al. (2017) stated. Many studies show that writing is a difficult skill for English Foreign Language learners (Suhartoyo et al., 2014). Regarding the difficulties, writing is the most challenging skill because it requires much concentration, conscious effort, and practice in all its steps, i.e., composing, developing, and finalizing. However, writing skills are very important in human life (Arief, 2017). As Putri (2018) reported, the challenge in argumentative text students' writing process is caused by untrained critical thinking skills. This is in line with Masduqi (2011). Indonesian students tend to be ineffective in sharing ideas in writing because of their limited use of critical thinking skills and meaningful activities. Toba et al. (2019) revealed in their research that the reasons students experience problems in writing are not only limited knowledge of writing aspects and comparison and

contrast essay itself, but also, they had own personal reasons; lack of writing practice, writing dislike, writing anxiety, negative writing perception, low writing motivation, insufficient time given in writing test, and inadequate teaching writing process taught by their lecturers.

Referring to Ariyanti (2016), for many teachers in Indonesia, teaching writing skills has been considered a challenging task because of the complexity of the writing process. Consequently, the teaching-learning writing activity in the classroom must be systematic yet interesting for the students. The teacher needs to apply an appropriate teaching method so that students can achieve objectivity in the lesson plan. Moreover, to make students able to produce a good piece of writing. An exciting class leads to high excitement among students, which can keep them interested and active in the class learning activities. A systematic yet fun atmosphere in a typical classroom makes students learn in fun ways.

Regarding the learning method that could be implemented in EFL writing classes, some learning models are joyful and attractive; one is Problem Based Learning (PBL). Compared to other traditional lecture-based learning, PBL provides real-world problem-solving stages which encourage and motivate how to learn and learn like the real world. We can get some advantages from using a method called PBL to make students interested in learning writing systematically but still drilling their critical thinking skills. Problem-based learning provides a platform for authentic English as a second language instruction for the English language learners (ELLs), that as a result can foster English language use while promoting skills such as critical thinking, interactive communication, and self-reflection also along with language arts skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking as cultural constructs (Hearn & Hopper, 2008). Ali (2019) states that PBL is both a teaching method and an approach to the curriculum. It can develop critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and lifelong learning skills. The more curious students get, the more motivated they are to be involved in the classroom activity, leading them to get more experience in critical thinking drills. It means that the teacher must emphasize the uses of problem-based learning to keep students interested in their writing productivity, which might increase their writing skills in expressing their ideas significantly in real life. By using this method, it is expected that the students can learn more manageable, and for teachers, it can be an alternative to monitoring and observing the writing process. Accordingly, teachers work hard to help students develop their writing abilities by implementing strategy and product approaches within active and cooperative learning, including Task-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, and Problem-Based Learning.

Problem-based learning is well known as a student-centred educational method aiming to develop problem-solving skills through self-directed learning as a lifelong habit and teamwork skills. PBL not only focuses on problem-solving but also is responsible for the development of other skills and attributes. PBL is defined by Hung (2013:31) as “an instructional method aimed at preparing students for real-world settings by requiring them to solve problems as the main format of instruction, practice higher order thinking skills, and self-direct as well as reflect on their learning”. There has been much previous research about teaching English as a foreign language. However, problem-based learning still got very little recognition to be implemented as one of the methods of teaching language. PBL has been implemented primarily in science rather than language teaching. Also, based on the essential stages of problem-based learning, presentation, problem analysis, research, and reporting enable the maximum development of students’ problem-solving skills (Hmelo-Silver, 2004).

A teaching and learning approach that emphasizes developing problem-solving skills through student-centred, inquiry and collaborative learning is needed (Jumariati & Sulisty, 2017).

The researchers Ermawati & Ghufon (2018) revealed in their case study that the strengths of PBL are: problem-solving skills, self-directed learning skills, reducing students' nervousness, raising students' self-confidence and motivation, raising students' responsibility in learning, easily sharing and exchanging ideas among students, making the students more active in learning, making the students explore many learning sources to solve the problems, and making the students have a positive attitude to learning. Theoretically, PBL is based on the idea of a small group collaborative learning with students actively responsible for their own learning process and for the meaningful construction of knowledge by linking it to existing knowledge (Maurer & Neuhold, 2012). Learning in such an environment increases motivation and the probability of learning by deep understanding in contrast to passive knowledge transfer. With that in mind, students in the classroom implementing the PBL method will work collaboratively with their peers to construct knowledge on the issue and problem-solving. PBL provides structured stages for discovery that will be helpful for students to internalize learning and lead to greater comprehension. Nisa et al. (2017) found in their research that PBL and the writing process combination affected the students' writing achievement after getting treatment for four days. Besides, students' perception of the implementation of Problem-Based Learning showed that more than 80% of students agreed with the statement describing that PBL helped the students generate their ideas to start their writing.

Finally, considering the features of PBL, the importance of developing the skills in argumentation, and students' difficulties in English writing learning, on the other hand, motivate the researcher to choose this method to teach writing and to find out the answers to the research questions about the improvement of students' writing skills and in which aspect would possibly be most affected.

II. METHODS

The population of this research was the eleventh-grade students at Senior High School of 14 Bandar Lampung. A class was taken as the sample with random sampling methods in this research for the experimental class. The XII IPA 2 was the sample of this research with 36 students aged 15-17. The class was determined by the researcher with simple probability using a lottery.

Furthermore, the researcher used a design for this research called *the pretest post-test design* proposed by Setiyadi (2018). A repeated Measure T-test was used to analyze the data of the first research question. Meanwhile, to answer the second research question, the researcher compared the score of each writing aspect to know which one has the most significant improvement.

There are two variables in this research. According to (Setiyadi, 2006). Variable is a noun that stands for variation within a class of objects. Such as gender, Achievement, Motivation, Behaviour, or environments. The independent variable is the problem-based learning model, and the dependent variable is the students' writing achievement in analytical exposition text.

Five meetings have been conducted in this study. The first meeting was to administer the pretest, and the next three sessions were for the treatment implementation of the PBL method. The material was based on the senior high school syllabus which was derived from the K-13 curriculum for the second grader students in SMAN 14 Bandar Lampung. In this research, the material was focused on making a short analytical exposition text. The last meeting was for administering the post-test by giving instructions to students to create a piece of writing.

This research applied one-group *pretest post-test design* and all the tests were assessed based on the writing aspects from Jacobs (1981). Then, the scores were compared to see students' progress from the first test to the second test utilizing SPSS 22.0 for windows. However, two raters examined all the students' writing from two tests. The first rater was the author herself and the second one was an English teacher. Furthermore, the results of the writing aspect were also investigated to know the improvement of each of them. The students' writing was examined with aspects of writing proposed by Jacobs (1981), which consist of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study focuses on the implementation of problem-based learning model to know the improvement of students' writing achievement in analytical exposition text. The writing tests and treatments were held directly with total 5 meetings from 4th to 27th of April 2022. The participants of this research were the 36 students of XII IPA 2, which was chosen by random sampling technique as the sample of the population of eleventh-grade students in SMAN 14 Bandar Lampung.

The first meeting was held to conduct a pretest to know students' prior ability before getting the treatment. After that, the three meetings of treatment for the teaching-learning process were conducted by implementing the problem-based learning model. the material was about analytical exposition text, which is based on the school syllabus and K-13 curriculum. Finally, the students were instructed to do a post-test at the last meeting.

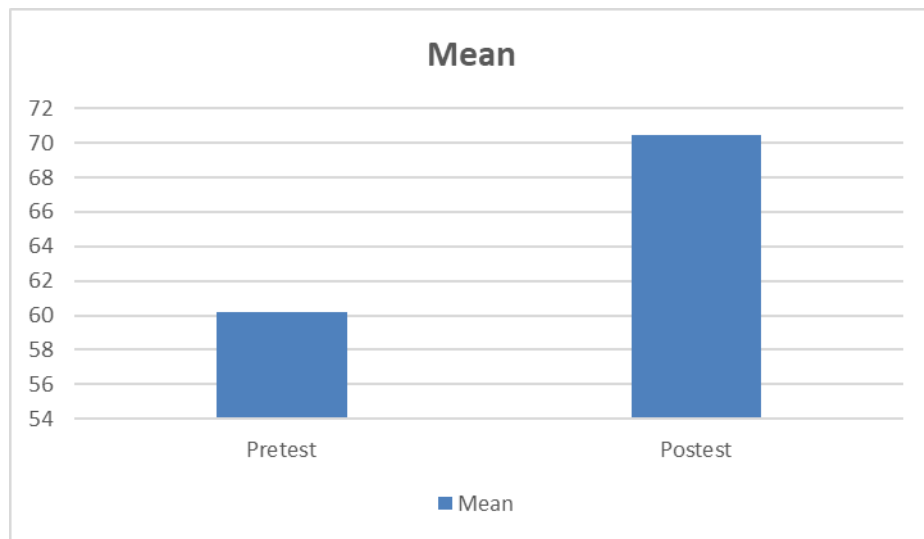
Table 4.5 Gain of Students' Writing Pretest and Posttest

	Mean	Min	Max	Gain	T-value	Sig.
Pretest	60.22	41	78			
Post-test	70.44	57	90	0.2569	7.595	.000

Based on Table 4.5 the mean of students' writing test rises from pretest to post-test. The mean scores of their writing before getting the treatment is 60.22 which is lower than the mean of students' post-test results with 70.44. By having this information, the researcher calculated the gain of the test, which came with the outcome of 0.2569. It can be assumed that students' writing was enhanced from the first to the second test. Moreover, the following graph represents the clearer increase in the test.

In addition, the comparison of students' writing tests between pretest and post-test can be seen graph 4.1:

Graph 4.1 Comparison between the Mean of Pretest and Posttest



The researcher used a hypotheses test by Shapiro-Wilk Formula to know whether the data were normally distributed or not. A level of 0.05 is used to measure the level of significance. H0 is accepted if the normality test results are higher than 0.05 (sign > 0.05). Moreover, the results of the normality test are shown in the table below:

Table 3.3 Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.091	36	.200*	.956	36	.164
Posttest	.122	36	.193	.940	36	.049

The data shown in Table 3.3 proves that both tests are distributed normally. The value of the normality test in the pretest is 0.164, while the value of the normality test in the posttest is 0.049. It can be assumed that H0 is accepted as the data from both tests are higher than 0.05, which indicates that the tests have a normal distribution.

Table 4.6 Repeated Measure T-test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig.
Posttest - Pretest	10.222	8.075	7.490	12.954	7.595	35	.000

Table 4.6 depicts the results of the computation of the value two tailed. The test's significance is 0.000, which means H1 is accepted since $0.000 < 0.05$. It proves that students' writing skills improved from pretest to posttest after being taught the PBL method. Another piece of evidence that verifies the statement is the t-value which shows a higher number than the t-table by having the results $7.595 > 2.0301$. Hence, it can be concluded that there is an improvement in students' writing after implementing PBL.

Table 4.7 Mean and Gain of Students' Writing Aspects

Writing Aspects	Mean of Pretest	mean of Post-Test	Gain	T-Value	Sig.
Content	15.36	20.69	0.364	9.466	.000
Organization	14.00	16.25	0.375	4.488	.000
Vocabulary	12.50	13.67	0.156	2.411	.038
Language Use	14.78	16.31	0.149	2.920	.006
Mechanics	3.89	4.00	0.099	1.435	.160

The gain of the writing aspects of students' results which has the most prominent value, is organization. Based on these data, the organization aspect has a moderate value comparison compared to other aspects, which is around 0.375. This is because with the implementation of problem-based learning students will understand more about what ideas they will develop from the topic. Meanwhile, the mechanic aspect, which is not too focused in this research, has the lowest gain among other aspects.

Discussion

This study focused on implementing PBL as the method to teach writing skills. By taking XI IPA 2 class at Senior High School 14 Bandar Lampung as the subject, the researcher conducts treatments by delivering analytical exposition text material with the PBL method, which were delivered in three meetings. Previously, the students were required to take a

pretest to know their initial writing ability. They were also given a posttest after the teacher finished giving the lesson with PBL. The instruction for both tests was to create a minimal three-paragraph of analytical exposition text based on the topics presented by the teacher. Additionally, the test results were analyzed to know the upgrade of their writing score.

From the statistical calculation on SPSS, it was found that students' writing improved after joining the teaching-learning process with the PBL method. The mean for post-test (70.44) was higher than the mean of the pretest (60.22) by having a gain score 0.2569. The results were supported by the fact that during the pretest students lacked knowledge about analytical exposition text. It was assumed that they did not check the material from their English teacher. As a result, they did not know how to construct an excellent analytical exposition text, especially about the organization aspect. Consequently, most of the students could not manage their ideas about the topic in delivering their opinion. They were most likely describing the topic than telling their thoughts or arguments about it. So, it made their writing to be irrelevant to the types of the text and its goal. That is why the researcher analyzed the implementation of PBL method to find out its effect on the students. As stated by (Azman, 2012), PBL is suitable for language teaching and learning and applies to all types of English courses. Furthermore, the facilitation of PBL can be modified to cover many kinds of learning activities.

Nevertheless, during the treatment, the researcher gave one sample of an analytical exposition text to demonstrate how the writer could write a well-supported opinion by analyzing the problems related to the topic. In PBL, the problem comes first, and an essential element of PBL is that content is introduced in the context of complex problems that imitate real life (Boud and Feletti, 1997). To make sure that the students understood the lesson, the researcher gave several questions to be answered by the students. By having this activity, students were motivated to be engaged with the learning process. Kam and Chi (2007) observed students' extra-curricular activities via PBL and noted that PBL is motivated by learning outcomes such as acquiring knowledge and skills.

Besides, the results also indicated the improvement of the aspects of writing. The analysis showed that organization was the aspect which improved the most among the others. The mean for organization was statistically increased from 14.00 on pretest to 16.25 on posttest. The gain for this aspect was 0.37500, higher than the other aspects.

Several reasons became the evidence. First, in line with Hairuddin (2018) regarding the analytical exposition text writing, it has been found in the preliminary study that the students have not been aware of the patterns in writing that they have studied in the class. Hence, after learning with PBL, the methods which provided the students with the discovery stages in a problem-based method could develop the organization effectively by elaborating the main ideas of their arguments. In other words, the students can be more focused on their attempt to solve the problem related to the topic after experiencing the problem analyzing or discovery stages with the PBL method. In the posttest the students concluded their writings and tried to give a reiteration consisting of a conclusion or persuasion which is the character of this typical text. The students could also improve their creativity since the method focuses on how they analyze the topic with their experience in learning with a problem-based learning method.

Secondly, students were allowed to construct their writing freely. By using PBL, the limitation of the answer was erased. It is in line with Hmelo-Silver (2004) in PBL, student learning centres on a complex problem that does not have a single correct answer. They were encouraged to develop their content as good as possible because they can give their perspective. As stated by Ekinici (2018), PBL helps students to use different kinds of media tools while learning a new subject and gives learners the chance to learn and share wherever and whenever they want as it creates dynamism in learning. Hence, it allowed the students to get more chances to elaborate the outline. They could take much time in considering the ideas and information to be put on their writing. As a result, they thought of several possibilities of answers or arguments and chose the best one to be developed more on their writing.

In conclusion, the teaching-learning with PBL could improve students' writing competence. Five out of five aspects of writing were enhanced with organization as the most upgraded aspect among the others. The students were encouraged to manage their organization clearly as they had experienced the scenario in a classroom with PBL implementation. Besides, students were interested to learn writing on PBL because there is no single correct answer to the problem in discussion of their writing. The learning activities could also be more flexible by using the benefits of PBL method. Nevertheless, mechanics was the only aspect which got the lowest gain score. Only several minor errors of mechanics were made by the students. It caused the results of mechanics on both tests to be only little improved.

Briefly, this chapter has explained several points related to the results of the research. Those are the implementation of learning with PBL, results of writing pretest, results of writing post-test, the gain of writing test score between pretest and post-test and discussion of findings.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

It was believed to be the most improved aspect among the others. Having the gain of 0.375, the mean jumped from 14 on pretest to 16.25 on the posttest. The use of problem-based learning had the students to be more structured in arranging the ideas by considering the relevance of the arguments.

The implementation of problem-based learning can create a fun yet a students centered learning atmosphere because the students can experience a discovery scenario in the teaching-learning process. It also gives a positive impact to the students' achievement of writing, particularly organization aspect. According to the data which have been analyzed above, the use of problem-based learning as the method for teaching writing can improve students' writing competence especially in constructing an analytical exposition text. The students got higher scores after getting the treatment in which the mean of posttest (70.44) was higher than the mean of pretest (60.22). The score of the t-value of the result analysis was above the t-table ($7.595 > 2.0301$). The increase happened because the implementation of problem-based learning could provide situations as stimulation for students to think critically, which is beneficial in developing their ideas. As a result, the students were able to construct their writing flexibly. Likewise, the discovery stages in problem-based learning can be flexible and adjusted in any kind of writing type.

Suggestion

The teacher should be able to modify the learning activities to focus on the language skills that will be assessed. In conducting writing skills research, the teacher should set the writing practices more than the other skills in language learning to minimize the interference of other skills being investigated in the research. Besides, the advantages provided in problem-based learning methods, such as critical thinking skills, should be utilized optimally by the teacher, especially in teaching writing. Some students might find it hard to link their hypotheses or arguments to the class discussion, and they tend to be reluctant to participate in the learning activities in the classroom. Hence, it is suggested that teachers give motivation and reinforcement to the students during the learning process. Finally, the researcher can investigate the use of problem-based learning to teach other skills such as listening, reading, and speaking.

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