

Improving students' writing skills on personal recount text through diary writing

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to determine whether there was any significant improvement in students' writing skills on recount text after the implementation of diary writing. The research was quantitative, employing a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The population of the study was the second-grade students of Junior High School 24 Bandar Lampung. The sample for this research was class 8.6, which consisted of 31 students. The writing test was administered as the research instrument. The data was analyzed using the Paired Sample T-test. It was used to prove the hypothesis in this research. The result of the T-test in this research showed that the value of the significant level was lower than the alpha level ($0.00 < 0.05$). It meant that H1 was accepted, indicating a difference in students' writing skills after implementing diary writing. The difference showed an improvement after the implementation of diary writing. Thus, it could be concluded that diary writing could be applied to improve students' writing skills on recount text. Based on the result of the research, it was suggested that teachers practice using diary writing as a learning material for teaching writing since the research results had shown that diary writing could effectively improve students' writing skills on recount text.

Keywords: Writing skills, diary writing, recount text, paired sample t-test

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is the skill used to explore ideas and other communication activities. Among the four language skills, writing is the most challenging skill for second or foreign learners to master (Richards and Renandya, 2002). Writing is a complex process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words (Brown, 2001). It is a difficult skill to master because it involves several aspects. These include content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Jacobs et al, 1981). Moreover, writing is seen as a process. It focuses on the various stages of any writing process, such as putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words (Brown, 2001).

The researcher conducted a preliminary study by informally interviewing the second-grade English teacher at SMPN 24 Bandar Lampung and did the observation through class observation and interviews with several students. The English Teacher said that the students were struggling to learn English, especially to learn how to write. Some students were highly unconfident and reluctant to write for several reasons. The major reason is they find it difficult to visualize their ideas while writing. They need a lot of time to think about the idea and find it hard to visualize, thus making the learning process ineffective. Moreover, the teacher rarely asks the students to write a text. That is why an English teacher needs an appropriate technique in teaching, especially writing.

Based on the problems above, the researcher used diary writing to help students write English text appropriately, particularly in recount text. According to Harmer (2007) diary writing is a great way to express emotions and experiences. It is known as a diary because it is a writing activity that is done every day. It is good for students to practice writing by using a diary. They can practice their writing by writing in a diary. Besides, practicing diary writing will develop the student's writing skills. Furthermore, diary writing is introduced to students to familiarize them with the writing process so that they are encouraged to write frequently on their own. By keeping a diary, students will develop their writing skills, or at least they will write better daily because it gives them more opportunities to write freely whatever they want to write about. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that giving students more chances to write what is relevant to them is an active learning technique.

The researcher believed that implementing diary writing in teaching writing recount text can help the students develop their writing skills in recount text. In other words, practicing writing through the diary, will help students to familiarize themselves with the writing process.

II. METHODS

This research is an experimental study to see the improvement in students' writing skills on recount text after implementing diary writing. The instrument of this research was a writing test. The population of this research was the eighth-grade students of SMPN 24 Bandar Lampung and the sample was VIII.6 which consisted of 31 students. The researcher gave a pre-test to the students to know their initial writing skills. After giving a pre-test, the researcher conducted the treatment using diary writing. Then, the researcher gave a post-test to find out the student's writing skills after being taught by using diary writing. And the last, the researcher calculated the data to find out the result by using the Paired Sample T-Test.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

To see whether the objectives of the research can be achieved or not, the researcher analyzed the test results of the pre-test and the post-test which are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Gain of Students' Writing Scores in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Mean Score of Pre-Test	Mean Score of Post-Test	Gain
62.44	75	12.56

In Table 1, it can be seen that the mean score of the pre-test is 62.44 and the mean score of the post-test is 75. The gain between the score of the pre-test and the post-test is 12.56. It means that there is a significant improvement in students' recount text writing by using diary writing

Table 2. The Increase in Students' Writing in Each Aspect

Aspect of Writing	Mean Score of Pre-test	Mean Score of Post-test	The Increase	T-value	Sig
Content	18,95	22,68	3,73	23.479	.000
Organization	13,65	16,15	2,50	12.619	.000
Vocabulary	13,80	16,07	2,27	10.532	.000
Language Use	13,52	16,42	2,90	14.230	.000
Mechanic	2,5	3,74	1,24	18.882	.000

From the table, it can be seen the aspect of writing that improves the most after the implementation of diary writing in teaching writing recount text is content.

Table 3. Paired Sample Test

Paired Samples Test

Pair	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
1 POST-TEST - PRE-TEST	12.5	2.6005	.4671	11.6107	13.5184	26.902	30	.000

Table 3, shows the calculation results for the two-tailed values. We can see that the significance of the test is 0.000. It can also supported by evidence that the hat verified those statements was the t-value which showed a higher number than the t-table by having the result $26.902 > 2.0423$. It means that H1 is accepted. It indicates that the treatments given by the researcher had a better beneficial impact on the students' improvement in writing recount text. It can be said that using Diary Writing has significantly improved the students' writing skills in writing personal recount text in

the eighth grade of SMPN 24 Bandar Lampung.

Discussion

This section discussed the research findings. From the result explained before, it was found that there was a significant improvement in students' writing personal recount text after teaching by using diary writing. Based on the statistical calculation on SPSS version 2.5, it was a significant improvement in students' writing recount text. The researcher analyzed the students' scores to know whether there was an improvement in students' writing achievement. The result showed that the mean score of the pre-test was 62.44 and the post-test was 75. The improvement of the means score was about 12.56. It can be seen from the fact that during the pre-test, the students were still confused about recount text.

The results of this research showed that diary writing was effective in teaching writing recount text. This was proved by all the data computations in the research findings. The students' achievement of writing recount text in the post-test was higher than in the pre-test after they were given the treatment. From the pre-test to the post-test, students got improvement in their writing. According to Widyoninsti (2023) Diary writing provides a low-pressure environment where students can practice all the stages of writing, from planning to revising and editing. This regular practice can lead to significant improvements in their overall writing skills. It can be seen from the comparison between the students; pre-test and post-test scores. It concluded that there was a significant improvement in students' writing skills in recount text after they were taught to use diary writing.

The improvement of students' writing skills was also seen in students' understanding of content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics in writing. The highest score increase was found in the content aspect. In other aspects, there is also a high increase but not too significant in the comparison results. In line with this research, the most prominent improvement in students' diary writing results was seen in the content section, where there was a significant difference. Before the treatment, the students did not know what they wanted to write and were confused about finding the ideas. After the treatment, most of the students responded positively to the researcher's feedback. Students also felt that writing a diary was easier because they could write anything. The treatments also improved the students' motivation, encouraging them to overcome weaknesses.

An example showed that diary writing can improve students' writing skills by looking at aspects of writing divided into contents, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Students with initial CRM in the pre-test scored 55, and in the post-test scored 75. According to his pre-test, he was inadequate for organization, and his vocabulary was not good enough, but the meaning was obscured. For the mechanics, there are many errors of punctuation and capitalization. Errors dominate his grammar; almost all texts do not use simple past tense. And in the post-test, he did the best. For the organization, he added some details after the main idea. The ideas included are excellent, but the mechanics are still not good because of the capitalization and punctuation. He already knows how to use tenses better than the pre-test for grammar.

In other words, diary writing can be an alternative way to improve the students' writing ability, specifically in the recount text. Writing a diary can be a fun learning activity, especially in writing, because the students can get more practice and write freely without fear of being judged, which motivates them to produce good writing. Further, keeping a writing diary enhanced the students'

motivation in writing, which also influenced their achievements. Therefore, writing a diary has successfully improved students' writing skills in recount text.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

The implementation of diary writing in the teaching and learning process of writing is believed to be an effective way to improve the student's writing skills. Diary writing was introduced to students to familiarize them with the writing process. Therefore, they would be encouraged to write frequently on their own. Based on the data obtained from the observation, the researcher wrote the diary by following the stages: Planning, drafting, revising, and editing. It could be proven that the researcher also guides the students before they start to write a diary. The researcher asked the students to make a draft before combining it into diary writing. Furthermore, the student's writing skills toward implementing diary writing showed good composition and progress. In this case, the students could organize and generate ideas for a good diary story. Students feel free to express their feelings without feeling judged. Researchers can build a good relationship with the students by giving feedback after they write their diaries. Therefore, the researcher claimed that diary writing is a good alternative to teaching writing, especially for teaching writing recount text.

Suggestions

The English teacher could use diary writing as learning material for teaching writing since the research results have shown that diary writing can effectively improve students' writing skills in recount text. The teacher should be more creative in delivering the material, such as explaining the material by showing her feelings to the students. Diary writing is very useful for students. The researcher suggests the students keep writing diaries even though there is no task from the teacher to enhance their critical thinking and reflection. Future researchers are recommended to continue and improve the implementation of diary writing by providing students with additional diary assignments and exercises focused on the simple past tense. Since writing is a skill, the more students write, the better their writing will be. In this research, the most increased writing aspect was the content aspect, while the lowest aspect was the mechanic aspect. The researcher suggests further researchers pay more attention to mechanic aspects of writing skills to increase.

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