THE EFFECTS OF TWO STAY TWO STRAY (TSTS) TECHNIQUE ON TEACHING WRITING

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Abstract

This experimental study aimed to investigate if there was any significant difference in writing ability between the students who were taught by using two stay two stray (TSTS) technique and those who were taught by using individual writing technique. Two classes of the first grade students of SMAN 4 Banda Aceh were selected randomly as the sample of the study; experimental and control groups. Each group consisted of 28 students. The instrument used in this study was a set of pre and post-tests. This study used t-test to see the difference achievement between experimental and control groups in terms of writing descriptive text. The result showed that the students in EG achieved better performance in writing descriptive text. P-value got from T-test was 0.02; it was less than the level of significance (0.05). Furthermore, the mean score of the post-test of the EG increased 13.35 points compared to the pre-test, while there was a progress of 6.67 points in the CG. The result also showed a great improvement in the five aspects of writing (content and mechanical, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. In conclusion, students' achievement in writing descriptive text improved significantly through TSTS technique.

Keywords: *Two Stay Two Stray, writing, descriptive texts.*

INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult skills to learn in English lesson among junior and senior high school students is writing. To say orally in English is easy sometimes as long as people understand what is being said by the speaker. However, writing is very difficult because there are many aspects of language that should be taken into consideration such as grammar, vocabulary, and mechanism (Harmer, 1991; Oshima & Hogue, 1997; Thornburry, 2002; Swan, 2005). Reid (2006, p. 4) refers to writing as a skill that involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the development and representation of thoughts in a structured way. Blanchard and Root (2003, p. 1) argue that writing can be difficult even in our own language. In a new language, writing is even more difficult. The good news is that writing involves skills that we can learn, practice, and master. Oshima and Hogue (1997, p. 3) also assert that writing, particularly academic writing, is not easy. It takes study and practice to develop this skill. It is important to note that writing is a process, not a product. This means that a piece of writing is always possible to review and revise.

Various methods and techniques as well as classroom activities have been applied to improve students' writing skills. However, the students' achievements are still insufficient. The Indonesian Government also has tried various policies to improve the quality of students' writing skills in English. The Government has changed the national curriculum for several times, from 1947 until Curriculum 2013 as recently applied in Indonesia (Saharuddin, 2013). Ideally, the revision is expected

to bring improvement to education system that will enhance the quality of Indonesian human resources. Regarding these curriculum revisions, a great number of teaching methods, textbooks and other teaching media have been adjusted in order to cope with the curriculum demands including English as one of the subjects taught at school.

However, if we notice the result of a survey conducted by English First (EF) in 2014 regarding the English Proficiency Index (EPI) in English non-native speaker countries, it illustrates that Indonesia is classified into the "moderate proficiency" country which ranks at the 32nd place among 70 countries. This inconvenient fact shows us that the existence of English pedagogy in Indonesia year by year is still unsuccessful in which the students failed to acquire the language, in this case English. Moreover, Hamied (1997, cited in Huda, 1999) reported that the overall students' performance in Indonesia was very low. This could possibly be caused by other factors revealed by a survey conducted by Huda (1999). He stated that based on his survey, the teachers' competence in Indonesia is still 'gloomy'. Thus, teachers should improve their competence in teaching, otherwise, students' achievement will never increase.

In teaching writing, teachers should find creative ways to design activities in the classroom that can recommend and motivate students to learn. For achieving such a situation, teachers should devise a conducive learning activity that enables students to use the target language. In line with this case, Harmer (1998) states that teachers should apply effective strategies which can encourage the students to be more active and motivated in the teaching and learning process. They should provide an environment in which students can contribute to learning activities. The activities should maximize students' use of target language as well. Therefore, this study found that TSTS was a possible technique to improve students' writing skills (Kagan, 1992; Lie, 2002; McCafferty, Jacobs & Iddings, 2006; Kagan & Kagan, 2009; Santoso, 2011; Sulisworo & Suryani, 2014). Working together is the characteristic of TSTS technique (Kessler, 1992; Johnson & Smith, 1998; Jacob, 1999; Lightbown & Spada, 2001; Crawford, *et al.,* 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Santoso, 2011).

METHOD

This study was conducted at State Senior High School (SMAN) 4 Banda Aceh. Two classes of the first grade were randomly selected as the sample. The first class was the experimental group, and the second one was the control group. The total sample chosen consisted of 56 students; 28 students in the experimental group and 28 students in control group. The two groups were homogenous in terms of language proficiency. The students of the experimental group were taught writing descriptive text by using TSTS technique, while the students in the control group were taught by using individual writing technique. To collect the data, the study used test; pre and posttests as the instrument. The pre-test was given to both groups in the first meeting, while the post-test was given to both groups at the end of teaching and learning process. In both tests, students were asked to write a composition in the form of descriptive text. The students' written texts were assessed by researchers. Scoring rubrics (content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics) were used to mark students' score. The data of the students' writing scores in pre-test and post-test of the experimental and control groups were then analyzed statistically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results of the study based on the data obtained from the students. First, the results of quantitative data collected from the pre-test and post-test of both experimental and control groups are analyzed. Second, the progress of the aspects of writing of the experimental group is presented.

Research Question 1

The first objective of this study is to find out whether there was any significant difference in writing ability between the students who were taught by using two stay two stray (TSTS) technique and those who were taught by using individual writing technique. To meet the objective, students' writing scores were analyzed statistically.

Table 1. Statistical summary of mean score of the pre-test of the experimental and the control groups.

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	28	51.04	9.49	1.79
Control	28	52.04	8.43	1.59

Table 1 shows the result of mean score calculation towards the pre-test scores of the experimental and the control groups. Based on the table above, it can be seen that the mean score of pre-test of the experimental group is 51.04. Meanwhile, the mean score of the control group is 52.04. Thus, the average initial writing ability of both groups is similar.

Table 2. Statistical summary of mean score of the post-test of the experimental and the control groups.

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	28	64.39	9.46	1.79
Control	28	58.71	7.90	1.49

Table 2 shows the result of mean score calculation towards the post-test score of the experimental and the control groups. Based on table above, it can be seen that the mean score of the post-test of the experimental group is 64.39. Meanwhile, the mean score of the post-test of the control group is 58.71.

Table 3. Statistical summary of independent sample t-test of the post-test of the experimental and the control groups.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference
0.14	0.71	2.44	54	0.02	5.68

Table 3 shows the result of independent sample T-test of the post-test of the experimental and the control groups. The table depicts that p-value is 0.02. The value is less than the level of significance (0.05). It indicates that there is significant difference of achievement in writing descriptive text between students who were taught by using TSTS technique and those who were taught by using individual writing technique. Therefore, TSTS technique can be an alternative to be applied in improving students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

Research Question 2

The second objective of this study is to identify the progress of each writing aspect made by the students after being taught by using two stay two stray technique were. The progress of writing aspects in the experimental group can be seen in the following figure:
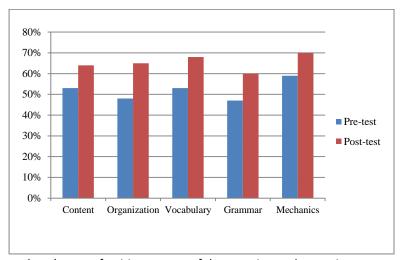

Figure 1. The students' score of writing aspects of the experimental group in pre-test and post-test.

Figure 1 shows the score of writing aspects gained by the students of the experimental group in both the pre-test and post-test which portrayed a significant improvement in each aspect of writing.

CONCLUSION

There is significant difference of achievement in writing descriptive text between students who were taught by using TSTS technique and those who were taught by using individual writing technique. The students who were taught writing by using two stay two stray technique achieved a better performance in writing descriptive text compared to those who were taught by using individual writing technique. This fact can be proven by comparing the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental and control groups. There was a progress of 13.35 points in the experimental group. Meanwhile, there was a slight progress which was only 6.67 points in the control group. In addition, the fact can be proven as well by looking at the result of Independent Sample T-Test of the post-test of both the experimental and the control groups. P-value gained in the result was 0.02. It was less than the level of significance (0.05). The students in the experimental group showed a great improvement in the five aspects of writing as well. The aspects included content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar and mechanics usage. It was found that all of the aspects increased more than 10%.

Suggestions

The result of this study suggested to those teachers who teach English lesson at Senior High School in Banda Aceh to use TSTS technique as a possible way in teaching writing. As the study was limited to Senior High School 4 Banda Aceh, it is suggested that other researchers conduct further research and more focus on all the aspects of writing rather than only focus on content, organization, lexical items, and grammar and mechanics usage. We also suggest an extension of future research to see the students' motivation by using TSTS in teaching writing.

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