Collaborative Writing in Writing Process: How Effective?

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ABSTRACT

This quasi-experimental research aims to investigate the effect of collaborative writing on students' writing skill at SMA Negeri 3 Padang Panjang. The population was 80 students of grade eleventh. The samples, which were selected by using cluster random sampling, were categorized as the experimental and control class. Each class was taught with different strategies, the experimental class was taught by using collaborative writing strategy and the control class was taught by using conventional teaching strategy. The data were collected through a writing test to gain students' writing skill on different components of writing. The results of study show that collaborative writing strategy helped students in generalizing their writing ideas. It also found that their background knowledge about the topic of the texts and field-related vocabulary effected on their writing. Furthermore, the findings apply some implication for teachers facing the effect of collaborative writing and students' writing skill.

Keywords: collaborative writing; effective; writing skill

1. INTRODUCTION

In teaching writing to EFL learners, the use of strategy become important since strategies help the teacher to facilitate the students' need in teaching writing. Strategies are also a guidance for teacher in teaching instruction to reach the goals of teaching writing. As stated by Eacott (2007), a strategy is a set of establishing practices to reach determined expectations. In other words, the use of strategy in teaching writing creates an opportunity for the teacher to facilitate the students to organize their ideas and composing them into a good writing. In line with Hedge (2000) states, the use of strategy is believed to result a gradually developing text from the series of composing process. Thus, the teacher must prepare the appropriate strategy in resulting high enthusiasm students in producing a good composition through writing process.

Many popular strategies in teaching writing can be adopted by the teacher in order to make their students success in writing compositions. One of teaching writing strategies is collaborative writing strategy. Barkley, et al (2005) states that collaborative writing describes students' work in pairs or groups to write a document together. It involved varying abilities students in completing a writing assignment (Storch, 2005). Then, he adds that in collaborative writing students may work together include all stages of writing process, started from brainstorming ideas, gathering and organizing the ideas into an outline, drafting, revising the writing until editing the writing become a better writing. The group works on each stages of collaborative writing produce better writing rather than individuals' work. It is supported by Bosley (1989), students' responsibility on each steps of collaborative writing process reaches a higher quality of writing. Besides, collaborative writing provides an opportunity to generate ideas and feedback for students error and monitor them in group working (Shehadeh, 2011; Dobao, 2012; Kesler et al., 2012; ShinWanTeow, 2014). To sum up collaborative writing give positive impact on students' performance and students' motivation in completing a writing.

Some previous studies on collaborative writing strategy have been conducted to obtain the effectiveness of collaborative writing on teaching writing (Shehadeh, 2011; Ghufron & Hawa, 2015; Jalili, M & Mohsen Shahrokhi, 2017; and Khodabakhshzadeh and Samadi, 2017). Those studies found that collaborative writing reach students' improvement on students' critical thinking and helped them in developing their writing by considering some writing aspects include organization and vocabulary, mechanics, content but not in achieving of writings' accuracy. The findings also designated that collaborative writing strategy puts on good effect on students' writing skill, students' motivation, students' vocabulary, students' comprehensive view over the topic and changing ineffective writing habits.

As mentioned above, collaborative writing explicitly gives good contribution on teaching writing process. Thus, the researcher conducted this research to find out the effect of collaborative writing strategy on students' writing skill at eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Padang Panjang. In short, this research was

aimed to investigate the effectiveness of collaborative writing strategy on students' writing skill. Furthermore, the findings of this research presented an overview into how collaborative writing strategy can be used by the students to help them in accomplishing their writing assignment. Thus, this study was guided by a research question "How effective is collaborative writing on students' writing skill at eleventh grade students in SMA Negeri 3 Padang Panjang?"

2. METHODOLOGY

This research was a quasi-experimental research. The population was 80 students of the eleventh grade at SMA Negeri 3 Padang Panjang, academic year 2018/2019. The samples, which were selected by using cluster random sampling, were XI IPS$_3$ as the experimental class and XI IPS$_2$ as the control class. Each class was taught by different teaching writing strategies, the experimental class was taught by using collaborative writing while the control class was taught by using conventional teaching strategy. Both classes had the same topic and the same length of time in teaching writing. After having eight meetings of treatment, experimentalgroup and control class did a writing post-test. The scores of both classes in post-tests were examined to determine the effectiveness of the treatment that is given in teaching writing. In this research, the validity of the test was content validity because this study was purposed to investigate the effectiveness of applying collaborative writing strategy in teaching writing. To get the content validity, the test was based on the syllabus and learning objectives. In this case, the syllabus and learning objectives become test specification. To secure content validity of the test, the researcher also had done the process of validation test experts' judgement to get a valid writing test. The reliability of the instrument was analyzed by inter-rater reliability. The reliability is the degree of the test consistently that should be measured. In this research, there were two scorers, the researcher as the first scorer and English teacher at SMAN 3 Padang Panjang as the second scorer. Then, the amounts of score were divided into two. The average score was taken as the fix score for writing test.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

H$_o$: The students who were taught by using collaborative writing did not have better result in writing skill than those who were taught by using conventional teaching strategy.

H$_a$: The students who were taught by using collaborative writing had better result in writing than those who were taught by using conventional teaching strategy.

The students' score in writing test, which is called as the data, were normally distributed and homogenous. Then, the data was calculated by using independent sample T-test in which the value of t$_{observed}$ was compared to the value of t$_{table}$. If the value of t$_{observed}$ is higher than t$_{table}$, it means that H$_a$ will be accepted. However, if the value of t$_{observed}$ is lower than t$_{table}$, it means that H$_a$ will be rejected.

The statistical analysis of students' writing test in experimental and control class by using independent sample T-test through SPSS program is described as below:

Table 1. The Summary of T-Test Analysis of Writing Test in Experimental and Control Class

Data	Collaborative Writing	Conventional Teaching
	N : 26	N : 27
	μ : 81.35	μ : 74.26
t$_{observed}$	4.819	
t$_{table}$	1.675	
Conclusion	t$_{observed}$ > t$_{table}$ H$_a$ accepted	

From the table above, it can be seen that t$_{observed}$ (4.819) is higher than t$_{table}$ (1.675) with the level of significance 0.05. It means that the students who were taught by using collaborative writing had better result in writing than those who were taught by using conventional teaching strategy. In this case, alternative hypothesis (H$_a$) is accepted, while null hypothesis (H$_o$) is rejected.

Then, the table also showed that the mean score of the students who were taught by using collaborative writing (81.35) is higher than those who were taught by using conventional teaching strategy (74.26). Thus, it indicates that collaborative writing, as one of teaching writing, resulted better writing than conventional teaching strategy. It might happen because the students in experimental class got more opportunities to think critically and objectively about a topic. By discussing the topic in their group, the students learn how to generate their ideas.

As a matter of fact, there are several points why collaborative writing give benefit to students' writing. The first reason is collaborative writing may help a group of students to use the potential strength of all its members to accomplish their work (Widodo, 2006). While one of the members may be good at organizing the ideas, the other one may have good knowledge of vocabulary. In this regard, students learn from each other while they are working on different tasks. Each student may accomplish one section of assessing in regard with his/her area of strength. The second reason is, in accomplishing writing project, the students gain some advantages from each members of group to obtain reviews on their writing project. By pairing different learners with different proficiency levels together caused the transferring of different kind of the knowledge among pairs and finally learners made their own knowledge from the obtained knowledge. In line with Dobao and Blum (2013) who state that the experimental class students had more opportunities to interact with their groups and communicated their thoughts and ideas regarding the content and form of their writing tasks, paragraph organization, cohesion, coherence, grammar, mechanics, etc. Third, collaborative writing encourages students to consider their audiences. When there is a group and students pose their opinions in

that group and receive feedback on those opinions, they conclude that how is others reaction toward their opinion. Last, the students can evolve their critical thinking skill when they completed their writing collaboratively. In their groups, students will enroll how to figure out their writing or others in order to develop their critical thinking step by step (Nelson & Murphy, 1992). In addition, Stapleton (2001) states that critical thinking can be built-up through students' prior knowledge and familiarity content that caused their argumentation on a case become strength and depth.

As a result, collaborative writing strategy can be used as a teaching writing strategy in order to build a better learning atmosphere for students and sustain the students with the experience of writing collaboratively.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that collaborative writing had significant positive effect on EFL learners' writing skill. The findings of this study can be most useful to English teachers who aim at implementing collaborative writing tasks language classes. The findings of this study were challenges for them in using collaborative writing and they could compare the benefits of this collaborative writing if it is compared to other writing strategy. Then, teacher trainer can get some advantages from the result of this study. As collaborative writing proved to have significant effect on EFL learners writing skill, they can adopt the procedure used in this study and train language teachers to implement this mode of writing in their classes.

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