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The Effectiveness of Content-Based Instruction to Teach Writing Skill for Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to know the effectiveness of Content-Based Instruction approach in teaching writing skills. Pre-test and post-test are used in this study to get the data. The samples of this study consisted of 39 students, they are Class VIII H as an experimental group and class VIII I as a control group. The data were analyzed by statistical analysis. Then, The statistical calculation showed the value of T-obs was 14.206, while the value of T-table was 2.021, meaning that T-obs is higher than T-table. In conclusion, therefore, it means that the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted while the Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. It means that the implementation of Content-Based Instruction is effective to teach writing skills for Junior High School Students.

Keywords: *Content-Based Instruction, writing skill*

INTRODUCTION

According to Nunan (2003), writing is a process of thinking to invent ideas, thinking about how to express the ideas into good writing and thinking how to arrange it all into paragraphs properly and clearly. Writing is not only a physical act but also mental work which involves thinking and transferring ideas into written form with proper vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. Heaton (1998) clearly classifies five important elements in writing and he uses these elements to judge the quality of writing. Those elements are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. To create good EFL writing, in Indonesia as a non-English speaking country, becomes a great challenge and it is difficult to achieve since students face many problems in writing especially regarding to fully understand all of those five aspects listed above. Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that writing is one of the subjects that must be mastered for EFL learners and the most complex skills to be mastered.

According to Curriculum 2013, students should be able to understand and grasp the meaning of short simple functional texts such as descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure, and information report. In accordance with that condition, writing is very important for EFL

learners to improve their writing skill. Writing is important to know the message and understand what people write. Then EFL learners are also able to express their ideas in writing. In addition, since English is a foreign language here and writing is a complex skill, teachers here must be creative in creating a good atmosphere in the learning process. So students will enjoy or will be stimulated to write. Then, there will not be more EFL learners who think that English is so hard to study, especially for those who have low creativity and motivation, they will enjoy writing class because it is fun and interesting.

Furthermore, numerous studies have shown the students' problems in writing. First, a study by Fita et al. (2014) showed that the students consider writing as one of the most difficult language skills because they are demanded to express their ideas in written English appropriately. Second, a study by Tossi et al. (2014) showed that students with poor vocabulary mastery often make a mistake in selecting the appropriate words to describe the characteristics of the subject. The last, a study by Sahaja et al. (2017) found that the difficulty in terms of grammar is usually related to tenses. In constructing English sentences, time plays an important role. Different time of situation needs different tenses which also mean different types of verb. The change of words used in constructing sentences in English may confuse the students to write their writing.

To solve the problem above, the researcher would like to apply the Content-Based Instruction Approach to teach writing a descriptive text. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001: 2004) "Content-Based Instruction refers to an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or information that students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other types of syllabus". This approach can apply to enable learners to master such content and communicate them to other people. The former focuses on the contents of a particular subject matter as the basis of the learning activity organization, whereas the latter focuses on language skills.

In conclusion, regarding the reasons above, we conduct the research entitled "The Effectiveness of Content-Based Instruction to Teach Writing Skill in The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 2 Indramayu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Writing

Oshima, Alice and Ann Hogue (1997:2) stated that writing is a progressive activity. This means that when you first write something down, you have already been thinking about what you are going to say and how are you going to say it. Then after you have finished

writing, you read over what you have written and made changes and corrections.

Meanwhile, Elbow (in Brown 2001: 336) stated that writing is the two-step process in which the writer figures out the meaning firstly, then he put it into language. Writing consists of two steps; processing and producing. Writing is processing ideas, information into graphic symbols which have to be arranged according to certain conversations to for, meaningful words, sentences, etc.

From the explanations above, the writer concludes that writing is not a one-step action because writing is a process that has several steps. Thus, writing is done with two-step action, and the steps are processing and producing.

The Purpose of writing

The specific explanation about the purpose of writing is proposed by McMahan et al. (1996: 8) who stated that written language is used for these following purposes:

a. To express writer's feeling: written to share a writer's feeling or express opinions.
b. To inform someone else: written to give information or describe something. The writer uses facts and reasons to get the point across.
c. To entertain the readers: written to interest the reader or appeal to emotions.
d. To persuade the readers: written convince the reader to influence and to make the reader think "the writer way".

Definition of Content Based Instruction Approach

Shih (1986: 617) states that Content Based Approach in academic writing is connected to the study of specific academic subject matter which is viewed as a means of promoting understanding of the content. Students are supposed to write something related to the text that they read or heard through lectures in class, and the writing should be focus on synthesis and interpretation (Shih, 1986: 623).

Steps on conducting Content Based Instruction Approach

According to M Shih (1986: 625) there are some specific steps in the class that using CBI in the class:

a. First activity

   The teacher writes down the words that agree with the topic in front of class. For example: dog, cat, rabbit, and bird. It means that the topic is about pets. Then, the teacher brings pictures to class. After that, the teacher asks the students to observe and

discuss the pictures with their seatmate.

b. Main activity

M Shih (1986: 625) stated that to improve students' writing skill, teacher asks the students to describe the animal and write on the paper. There are three steps applied by the students while writing the text:

1. Pre – Writing

   Prewriting is the process of determining the purpose of writing. In this step, students think about the topic to collect the ideas, determine what things to write, and prepare the concept of the text.

2. Writing the first draft

   Writing the first draft is the process of putting ideas into visible language. Students produce the draft, then continue to discover what they want to say, change and refine initial plans. Since it is difficult to attend to considerations on many levels (essay, paragraph, sentence, word/phrase) all at once, writers typically write multiple drafts that is, a first draft with revisions for important papers.

3. Revising

   Revising refers to reviewing and reworking a text. Students reread their drafts, discover what they said, match this message with what they intended to say, and rework (expand, delete, rearrange, alter) the content and structure of the written piece to make it congruent with their intension (M Shih, 1986: 630).

c. Closing activity

With the students, the teacher concludes the materials about descriptive text. Then, the teacher explains again about the main points of the materials and asks the students if they find the difficulty.

Previous Studies

The research conducted by Aisyah Sunarwan (2014). This research was to examine the Content Based Instruction (CBI) approach in teaching Speaking view from Students' Creativity. Mostafa Amiri (2014) investigated the effect of Content-based Instruction (CBI) on students' English language learning. The reseacher compared , the CBI and the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) with regard to the students' achievement in their final examination and language learning orientation. Marashi and Mirghafari (2019) compared the effect of content-based and task-based instruction in a critical thinking setting on EFL

learners' writing. This research showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups at the post-test.

METHOD

The method of this study is experimental research. The purpose of experimental research is to determine cause-and-effect relationships (Johnson and Christensen, 2000: 23). The writer chose the experimental research because it is related to the purpose of this study, which is to find out the effectiveness of teaching methods (Content-Based Instruction). In this study, the writer used quasi-experimental with the non-equivalent control group, pretest-posttest design. According to Cresswell (2008: 309), quasi-experimental design is experimental situations in which the researcher assigns, but not randomly, participants to groups because groups for the experiment cannot artificially be created. The quasi-experimental design research is used by the writer directly to do the experiment to the students of SMP Negeri 2 Indramayu. The writer wanted to know the effectiveness of whether a Content-Based Instruction approach improved students' writing skills. In this study, the writer gave the pre-test and post-test to students for data collections. This research consists of two variables that correlate with each other. The dependent variable was the students' writing skill and Content-Based Instruction approach was classified as an independent variable since it can improve the students' writing skills.

This study was conducted in the students of SMP Negeri 2 Indramayu at Class VIII H in the academic year of 2016/2017. A population of this study was all of the students at Class VIII in SMP Negeri 2 Indramayu in the academic year of 2016/2017. Knowing that the population is huge in number, therefore the writer took only 19 students or one class from all of the population as the sample of this research. In this research, the writer used the purposive sampling. According to Arikunto (2010:183), purposive sampling is the process of selecting sample by taking subject that is not based on the level or area, but it is taken based on the specific purpose. In this point, the sampel are selected to be typical, or average for a particular phenomenon.

In collecting the data, the writer used the following some steps; they are pre-test, treatment and post-test. They are described below:

1. Pre test

   Pre test was given before any treatment was given. Pre test was given to get initial score of students in writing skill. The pre test took 1x40 minutes, the students were asked to write descriptive text.

2. Treatment

The treatment was given for 2 meetings. In the first meeting teacher taught about descriptive text and the second meeting the teacher taught the students on how to use the CBI (Content Based Instruction) to improve their ability to write a descriptive text.

3. Post test

The post test was given in the last meeting, and it also took 1x40 minutes. The aimed of this test was to find out how far the improvement of the students in writing skills after getting treatment. In this test, the student was also asked to write a descriptive text. After collecting the data, the writer assessed them using a writing scoring form (Heaton, 1998). Then in analyzing the data and proving the hypothesis, the writers used statistics to calculate the means, standard deviations, and the t-test. The last step hypothesis was the use of content-based can improve the ability of students to write better descriptive texts". The goal of hypothesis testing is to discover whether or not it is accepted or rejected, which further leads to answer the research question. The formula for hypothesis acceptance or rejection is as proposed by Arikunto (2006) below:

If t-score < t-table, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected

If t-score > t-table, Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data Description

This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 2 Indramayu. The writer applied the quasi-experimental research method, and from this research the writer obtained two sets of data consisting of pre-test and post-test data. The data was taken from two classes which were samples in this research; they were control group and experimental group. The samples of research were VIII H as experimental group consisting of 19 students, and Class VIII I as control group consisting of 20 students. In this research, the writer used pre-test and post-test as instruments in gathering data. A Pre-test was administered in the first meeting in both classes. In the pre-test the writer gave the students a sheet of paper, with one picture of Giraffe, and the students were requested to write at least 6 - 12 sentences of descriptive text based on the picture. The writer gave the pre test to students in both the control group and the experimental group. The first step of this research was to administer pre-test to both groups. This allowed the writer to know the ability of students' writing before doing the treatment. In the first meeting with the students, the writer gave the students a pre-test. In this exercise some students were confused about how to start their writing and how to do

good descriptive text. In pre-test the writer found many mistakes from students' writing descriptive text, such as of writing content, organization, vocabulary and limited language use together with lack of grammar. Yet many students obtained bad scores in the pre-test.

In treatment session, the writer gave the explanation of descriptive text such as definition, language feature, and generic structure. Then, the writer introduced and gave explanation about the content based instruction approach to the students in experimental group, and introduce and gave the explanation about problem based learning method to the students in control group. The writer explained how the content based instruction approach and problem based learning method was used and helped the students make a good descriptive text. Also the writer gave the students some exercises to write descriptive text using content based instruction approach in the experimental group, and some exercise to write descriptive text using problem based learning method in the control group. The students worked individually, while the writer observed the students to make sure everything was alright. The writer gave two exercises with two different pictures in the experimental group and the control group. In the final meeting, the writer gave post-test for groups. The students were required to write descriptive text with at least 6 – 12 sentences about The Turtle. The purpose of this method was to know whether content based instruction approach is effective to improve students' writing skill of descriptive text. The writer used Hatch and Farhady (1982) to know the result of the data. The result of the test is described below:

Table 1 The Test Result

Group	Test	Criteria	Score
Experimental Group	Pre test	High Score	56
		Lowest Score	45
		Average	50.68
	Post test	High Score	85
		Lowest Score	69
		Average	79.95
Control group	Pre test	High Score	58
		Lowest Score	34
		Average	41.45
	Post test	High Score	64
		Lowest Score	36
		Average	45.3

The average pre-test score of control group was 41.45 while the average pre-test of

experimental group was 50.68. The average post-test score of control group was 45.3 while the average post-test of experimental group was 79.95. From the table, it is clearly seen the experimental group scored higher that control group: this is because the experimental group had been treated with content based instruction approach while control group had been treated with problem based learning.

Statistical Analysis

In data analysis technique the writer describes and analyzes the data that was collected from the pre-test and post-test research. The procedures for analyzing the data are:

1. Scoring the result of students pre-test and post-test
2. Make table of different scores
3. Calculating the Mean of the students' scores in both classes x= $\frac{\sum x}{n}$
4. Find Individual Standard Deviation = x^2.
5. Find Standard Deviation of experimental group and control group using the formula below.

   a. Standard deviation for experimental group:

$$Se = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x2}{n-1}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{1384.11}{18}} = 8{,}768$$

   b. Standard deviation for control group:

$$Sc = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x2}{n-1}} = \sqrt{\frac{1200.95}{18}} = 7.950$$

6. Calculating standard error of differences between mean.

$$S = (Xe - Xc) = \sqrt{\left(\frac{Se}{\sqrt{n1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{Sc}{\sqrt{n1}}\right)^2} = \sqrt{\left(\frac{8{,}768}{\sqrt{19}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{7{,}950}{\sqrt{20}}\right)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{(4{,}0411) + (3{,}1598)} = \sqrt{7.2039} = 2.6840$$

7. Find T-obs.

$$Tobs = \frac{Xe - Xc}{S\,(Se - Sc)} = \frac{82{,}68 - 44{,}55}{2{,}6840}$$

$$= \frac{38.13}{2{,}6840} = 14.206$$

8. The result of validity items

The validity was indicated by the correlation coefficient between item scores and

respondents' score. The researcher used validity analysis by using PESTRIP program and the results are shown in the following table:

Table 2 The Results of Validity Pre-Test in Control Group

Analysis Item	Content (X-1)	Organization (X-2)	Vocabulary (X-3)	Language Use (X-4)	Mechanics (X-5)	Total Score (Y)
∑X	282	193	189	147	41	852
∑X²	4010	1987	1921	1249	85	
∑XY	12181	8655	8506	6760	1762	
Rxy	0.73 (valid)	0.98 (valid)	0.99 (valid)	0.97 (valid)	0.40 (valid)	

Table 3 The Result of Validity Post-Test in Control Group

Analysis Item	Content (X-1)	Organization (X-2)	Vocabulary (X-3)	Language Use (X-4)	Mechanics (X-5)	Total Score (Y)
∑X	297	201	191	172	41	902
∑X²	4475	2071	1891	1626	85	
∑XY	13647	9285	8885	8158	1869	
Rxy	0.92 (valid)	0.90 (valid)	0.97 (valid)	0.97 (valid)	0.60 (valid)	

Table 4 The Result of Validity Pre-Test in Experimental Group

Analysis Item	Content (X-1)	Organization (X-2)	Vocabulary (X-3)	Language Use (X-4)	Mechanics (X-5)	Total Score (Y)
∑X	309	213	204	200	43	968
∑X²	5037	2423	2240	2110	101	
∑XY	12939	8962	8609	8378	1820	
Rxy	0.80 (valid)	0.94 (valid)	0.96 (valid)	0.76 (valid)	0.86 (valid)	

Table 5 The Result of Validity Post-Test in Experimental Group

Analysis Item	Content (X-1)	Organization (X-2)	Vocabulary (X-3)	Language Use (X-4)	Mechanics (X-5)	Total Score (Y)
∑X	463	331	297	362	71	1524
∑X²	11438	5847	4754	6895	262	
∑XY	37428	26736	24096	29060	5649	
Rxy	0.98 (valid)	0.95 (valid)	0.68 (valid)	0.96 (valid)	0.80 (valid)	

9. Reliability of the test

The writer could continue to Reliability process if all the validity processes are valid. The researcher used reliability analysis by using PESTRIP program same as the

validity because they were related to each other. To analyze the reliability, first, all the students' scores were put into the program, then the significant level 0,05% was entered. Then, the scores were collected and the correlation coefficient was calculated. The results are shown in the following tables:

Table 6 the result of reliability pre-test in control group

Item	Xi-1	Xi-2	Xi-3	Xi-4	Xi-5
∑X	1.78	6.56	7.10	8.87	0.05
N	20				
K	5				
∑Si²	24.36				
St²	1.73				
	0.88				

Table 7 the result of reliability post-test in control group

Item	Xi-1	Xi-2	Xi-3	Xi-4	Xi-5
∑X	3.40	2.68	3.52	7.73	0.05
N	20				
K	5				
∑Si²	17.38				
St²	1.73				
	0.90				

Table 8 the result of reliability pre-test in experimental group

Item	Xi-1	Xi-2	Xi-3	Xi-4	Xi-5
∑X	0.62	1.95	2.76	0.26	0.20
N	19				
K	5				
∑Si²	5.79				
St²	1.74				
	0.86				

Table 9 the result of reliability post-test in experimental group

Item	Xi-1	Xi-2	Xi-3	Xi-4	Xi-5
∑X	5.92	4.48	0.95	2.00	0.23
N	19				
K	5				
∑Si²	12.78				
St²	1.74				
	0.89				

10. Count degree of freedom (df) to determine T-table Df = $(n_1-1) + (n-1)$

$= (19-1) + (20-1)$

$= 37$

11. Determining T-table

Which has significant value 0.05 and df 37 is 2.021

12. Comparing the result of T-table and T-obs

T-obs = 14.206

T-table = 2.021

The value of T-obs is higher than T-table (T-obs > T-table)

C. Test of the Hypothesis

There are two hypotheses in this research; Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) and Null Hypothesis (Ho). The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected when the value of T-obs is higher than the value of T-table. The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is rejected and Null Hypothesis (Ho) is accepted when the value of T-obs is lower than the value of T-table.

Before concluding the statistics analysis process of research, the following steps were condcuted; the writer collected the scores from both control and experimental groups, and put all the scores to the PESTRIP program. After that, the writer analyzed all of the points such as validity, reliability, T-obs, mean, average and all about the statistical processes.

Based on statistical analysis, the value of T-obs is 14.206 while the value of T-table is 2.021. Then, the value T-obs is higher than T-table and Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted while Null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. So, content based instruction approach is effective to improve students' writing skill of descriptive text.

The writer had undertaken the research in SMPN 2 Indramayu to investigate the effectiveness of content based instruction approach on students' writing skill of descriptive text. In this research the writer chose two classes as the sample. The writer had chosen the non-random samples, of VIII I as the control group and VIII H as the experimental group. The writer chose both classes from the same grade.

In the first meeting, pre-test was given by the researcher to the students. Some students were confused about how to start their writing and how to do good descriptive text. In pre-test the writer found many mistakes from students' writing descriptive text, such as of writing content, organization, vocabulary and limited language use together with lack of grammar. Yet many students obtained a bad score in the pre-test.

The next step was for the writer to introduce content based instruction treatment

only to the students in the experiment class. In the next meeting the students received the treatment and implemented content based instruction approach in writing descriptive text. A further meeting was held so that the writer could administer the treatment again to make sure the students were familiar with the approach.

Finally, the last step was post-test. The writer gave the picture on a sheet of paper to each students. Both classes got the same picture. In that case, post-test was aimed to investigate the comparison between pre-test before the treatment and post-test that had been given treatment, to see if content based instruction approach in experimental group is effective to improve students' writing skill. Also post-test aimed to know the difference between the score of experimental group that was given the treatment and control group pthat was not.

From the pre-test result, the writer found from experimental group, A-14 got a score of 45 (almost the lowest score) and her score in post-test was 89. A-14 showed significant improvement from pre-test to post-test, and she also got high gain of 38. In pre-test she made so many mistakes including content, lack of ideas, organization of the text, limited vocabulary, language use and mechanics such as punctuation, capitalization, and she wrote less than 12 sentences. In short, she did not know how to write descriptive text: she did not even write in paragraphs. In post-test A-14 got a score of 83 a huge improvement from her score of 45 from pre-test. In post-test she made better paragraphs, her descriptive text was good, such as content of text, organization, improvement of her vocabulary, better language used, and she demonstrated her ability to write such as capitalization, space etc. Based on the above case, it showed that content based instruction is effective to improve students' writing skill.

Based on pre-test and post-test result, the writer found the student who obtained the highest score was A-1, who had a pre-test score of 56 and post-test she gets score 85. The descriptive text that she wrote in pre-test and post-test were both good, and she was given the highest score because some aspects of her text demonstrated considerable skill, such as content of text, good vocabulary, and structured organization of her text. Even though she made some mistakes such as not putting words in their correct place, nevertheless she showed improvement in writing descriptive text under the effectiveness of content based instruction approach. From pre-test to post-test, she gained 29 point.

Based on the explanation above, the writer assumed that the students got a low score because the students did not know about descriptive writing clearly, how to write descriptive text with a generic structure, they lacked vocabulary, lacked ideas, and lack

of language use in good paragraph skills. However, when the writer gave the treatment, their writing skills of descriptive text improved positively. The improvement of the students' writing descriptive text can be seen from their text, in the pre-test dominant of students didn't write more than 6 sentences because they were confused to generate the ideas, but in the post-test students could write the descriptive until 12 sentences because the students improved their English knowledge (especially in vocabulary). So, the data have shown the students are good in writing descriptive text, even though there are some students do not improve in their writing skill. The teacher needs some methods to improve students' potential in writing skill.

The statistical calculation showed that the pre-test average in experimental group was 50.68 with the lowest score at 45 and the highest score at 56. The pre-test average in control groups was 41.45, with the lowest score of 34 and the highest score of 58. The post-test average in experimental group was 79.95, with the lowest score of 69 and the highest score of 85. The post-test average in control group was 45.3, with the lowest score at 36 and the highest score at 64. From the data, the writer noticed that content based instruction approach is effective to improve students' writing skill of descriptive text.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The effectiveness of Content Based Instruction approach can be seen in pre-test score and in post-test score from experimental group. There is a significance difference between Class VIII H (experimental group) and Class VIII I (control group) after the researcher conducted a quasi-experimental research.

The statistical calculation showed that the pre-test average in experimental group was 50.68, with the lowest score was 45 and the higher score was 56. The pre-test average in control group was 41.45, with the lowest score was 34 and the higher score was 58. The post-test average in experimental group was 79.95 with the lowest score was 69 and the higher score was 85. The post-test average in control group was 45.3 with the lowest score was 36 and the higher score was 64. The average of post test score in both experimental group and control group are different: the average of the post test score in the experimental group was higher than that in the control group.

Aside from the average, the result of content based instruction can be seen from statistical analysis. The statistical analysis showed the value of T-obs was 14.206, while the

value of T-table was 2.021, meaning that T-obs is higher than T-table. In conclusion, the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted while Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. Content Based Instruction approach is effective not only in term of students writing skill score improvement but also enrichment of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics toward students' writing skill for descriptive text at the eighth grade students of junior high school in SMPN 2 Indramayu.

Suggestion

The writer hopes this research can be useful for English teachers, students, schools and future researchers. Here are some suggestions that seem to have emerged from the research that was undertaken: The teachers should give more attention to the student's writing skill in teaching and learning process and the students have to learn and practice more to improve their writing skill. And the last for researchers, the writer suggests to analyze deeper about the writing skill and CBI (Content Based Instruction) and find other solution to help students in writing.

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