THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROCESS APPROACH IN TEACHING WRITING VIEWED FROM STUDENTS’ LEVEL OF CREATIVITY AND ITS IMPLICATION TOWARDS WRITING ASSESSMENT

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Abstract: Writing is a complex process which needs knowledge, skill and creativity. Compared to other countries, the ability and productivity of Indonesian students in writing is still far from being satisfying. One of the proofs is that there are around 13,047 journals in Indonesian Scientific Journal Database. This number is considered very low compared to Malaysia with 55,211 journals and Thailand 58,931 journals. So far, Many attempts have been made to improve students writing skill and productivity, including making use of approaches and methods in teaching writing. This paper presentation discusses about the effectiveness of process approach in teaching writing viewed from the students’ creativity in junior high school. This is an experimental study which uses analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey’s test as the statistical methods. The result shows that though the use of process approach gives better result than product approach, the difference is not significance. Moreover, students’ level of creativity has influence to the students’ writing skills. Further, It is hoped that this paper can give significance to the development of teaching writing practice and writing assessment. The target audience of this presentation are mainly teachers, curriculum designers and book writers.

Keywords: Process Approach, Teaching Writing, Creativity, Writing Assessment

Introduction

The purpose of teaching writing in Junior High School in Indonesia, as mentioned in the Standard Competence, covers four skills which should be mastered; they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. According to Brown (2000: 339), in school, writing is a way of life. Without some ability to express yourself in writing, you do not pass the course. Across the age levels from elementary school through university graduate courses, we write in order to succeed in mastering the subject matter. Moreover, writing is an authoring skill, and so, as compared with speaking, for example needs much more planning and preparation and is not so easy to practice. In teaching writing, there are some factors which determine students’ writing skills; among others are teaching approaches and creativity. Teaching approaches play a very important role in determining the success of the teaching writing itself since different approach will give different result and effects to the students. There are several ways to approach writing in the classroom. In the very first place, it should be highlighted that there is not necessarily any right or best way to teach writing skills. The best practice in any situation will depend on the type of student, the text type being studied, the school system and many other factors. Furthermore, among many common-used approaches to teach writing, there are two approaches which are commonly used by teachers; they are product approach and process approach.

To sum up, this research is limited to teaching recount text by process approach and product approach viewed from the students’ creativity. Later, it is conducted for the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Terpadu Ponorogo in the Academic Year of 2011/2012 started from June until December 2011. The purposes of the study (1) To know whether process approach is more effective than product approach in teaching writing for the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Terpadu Ponorogo (2) To know whether the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Terpadu Ponorogo who have high creativity have better writing skill than those having low creativity (3) To know whether there is an interaction between teaching approaches and students’ creativity to teach writing for the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Terpadu Ponorogo.

Theoretical Background

Nunan (1998: 36) states that the product approach to writing is an approach which focuses on the end result of the writing activities. It is a traditional approach to teaching writing in which the students are given a model and then they are guided to imitate it in order to create a similar product (Soonpaa, 2007: 3). These thoughts imply that this approach tends to be more product-oriented and teacher-centered since the focus is writing product where teacher gives such a model to imitate. On the other hand, Soonpa (2007: 03) states that process approach emphasizes on the process the students do in producing a piece of writing by using technique such as brainstorming, exploring ideas, peer editing, and rewriting. In addition, Onozawa (2010: 154) shares an idea that process writing is an approach to writing, where language learners focus on the process by which they produce their written products rather than on the products themselves. In the end, learners surely need to and are required to complete their products, yet the writing process itself is stressed more. Further, Ghaith (2002) adds
that writing process approach requires that teachers give students greater responsibility for, and ownership of, their own learning. Students make decisions about genre and choice of topics, and collaborate as they write. From this, it can be seen that process approach tends to be students-centered and focuses more on the process than the product.

On the other hand, student’s creativity is another factor to successful writing. Writing itself is a process of thinking. Cowley (2004: 141) says that thinking creatively is all about expressing ourselves in a unique and imaginative way. The word “creativity” describes the process of bringing something new into being and that applying our creativity means being able to take unusual or innovative approaches to the common place or ordinary. According to Roy (2009) creativity is the process of generating novel ideas and is the basic force for all inventions. The process of creation involves seeing new relations between concepts and things and determining unique solutions to problems. One of some aspects in creativity is verbal creativity. Torrance in Munandar (1999b: 67) defines verbal creativity as an ability to think creatively and to measure one’s fluency, flexibility, and originality of a verbal form which deals with words and sentences. In addition, Thrustone, as quoted by Azwar (1996), states that verbal refers to any understanding towards relationship of words, vocabularies, and communication mastery.

Research Methods

This research is categorized as experimental study with quantitative approach. Further, the researcher uses factorial design to analyze the main effects for both experimental variables as well as an analysis of interaction between the treatments. This experimental research is aimed at observing whether there is an interaction between teaching approaches and students’ creativity to teach writing. The approach used in the experimental class was process approach. Meanwhile, in control group, the approach used was process approach. Moreover, each group was classified into two different levels of creativity which were high creativity and low creativity. In this research, there were two samples taken by clusters random sampling, from the total 124 populations.

Furthermore, in collecting the data, the researcher used two instruments namely writing test and verbal creativity test. Meanwhile, in analyzing the data, there are several techniques of analyses to be done; they are: (1) Data description by using descriptive analysis (2) Pre-requisite tests which includes Normality test and Homogeneity test; and (3) Hypothesis tests which includes Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Tukey Test.

The design of this research uses factorial design 2x2 by technique of multifactor Analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Discussion of Research Findings

Having done the whole process of analyzing the data by using statistical formulas, the results of the research are as follow:

1. The first hypothesis testing shows that there was no significant difference on the student’s writing competence between those who were taught using process approach and those who are taught using product approach. It may happen because of several factors. The first is that in the product approach, there is a step of studying a model. In this step, if the students who are taught using product approach can make use of this stage maximally, especially in the first stage where they learn and imitate the good model of the text given by the teacher, there is a great possibility that students who are taught using product approach can also reach good scores. Graham and Perin (2007: 20) state that the study of models provides adolescents with good models for each type of writing that is the focus of instruction. Students are encouraged to analyze these examples and to emulate the critical elements, patterns, and forms embodied in the models in their own writing. Moreover, the kind of writing evaluation in this case, writing assessment which is applied in junior high school tends to give more advantage for the product approach. Furthermore, the second possible factor is effect size. An experimental research conducted by Graham and Perin in 2007 about the effect size in the population which provides a measure of effectiveness using the effect size in the population, shows that process approach has the effect size of 0.32 while product approach, whose characteristic is similar to Study of Models has the effect size of 0.25. Both approaches are included as having mild effect. From the effect size above, it can be seen that actually process approach (0.32) has a higher effect size than Study of Model (product approach) (0.25) but the degree between the two does not differ significantly because both are included as having mild effect.

2. The result of the second hypothesis testing shows that there is a significant difference on the student’s writing competence between those who have high creativity and those who have low creativity where the mean score of the students who have high creativity (73.54) is higher than that of those who have low creativity (65.39). Thus, it can be concluded that the students who have high creativity have better writing competence than those who have low creativity. Pincas (1962: 185-6), as quoted by Harwood, says that in
product approach the learner is not allowed to 'create' in the target language at all. The use of language is the manipulation of fixed patterns. These patterns are learned by. On the contrary, students with low creativity tend to be passive. They do any kind of tasks only based on the instruction given and do not really like if they are asked to think beyond what is given. In addition, they will be reluctant to do activities which require them to think creatively. They like something simple and like being guided. Students with low creativity usually see process and challenge as burdens. The more activities they have to do, the more burdens they will have which in turns make the teacher should control them intensively. That is why, students who have high creativity have better writing ability than those who have low creativity.

3. Lastly, the result of the third hypothesis testing shows that there is an interaction between the variables, teaching approaches and student’s creativity to teach writing. In the other words, it can be concluded that the effect of teaching approaches on the student’s writing ability depends on the student’s degree of creativity. Process approach focuses more on the process. The several stages it gives students with high creativity opportunity to explore their ideas more. Students with high creativity will see this as a good opportunity to explore and develop their own fresh ideas, while students with low creativity will see this as burdens and tiring stages.

Quoting Raimes (1983), Ghaith (2002 ) states process approach gives students time to organize ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. As such, writing becomes a process of discovery for the students as they discover new ideas and new language forms to express them. Moreover, they will be more courageed in doing the writing since writing is considered as a challenge to do. Further, process approach tends to be student-centered. In this teacher-less-dominant situation, students with high creativity will get freedom and good chance to express themselves and ideas. They surely do not like to be tightly controlled by the teacher. Brown (2001: 336) defines process approach as an attempt to take advantage of the nature of the written code (unlike conversation, it can be planned and given unlimited number of revisions before its “release”) to give students a chance to think as they write. Another way of putting it is that writing is indeed a thinking process

Conclusion

This research clearly shows that process approach is more effective to teach writing for students having high creativity. In contrast, product approach is more suitable for students with low creativity because it gives opportunities for them to get the sense of good writing through the model given by the teacher. Moreover, it also can be concluded that the process approach and product approach do not differ significantly one from another in their effect on the performance. Related to the degree of the students’ creativity, it is proved that the students having high creativity have better writing achievement than those having low creativity.

Significance of the Research

Theoretically, this result of this research supports the previous research by Graham and Perin that process approach has a higher effect size than product approach even though not significant statistically. Meanwhile, practically, the research findings imply that the use of process approach can affect the students’ writing skills especially for the students who have high creativity. However, the current assessment type for both product and process approach still makes use of the same assessment type that focuses on product approach. Thus, it is important to evaluate and develop such a specific type of assessment for process approach in order to get maximum result.

Furthermore, there is also an interaction between teaching approaches and students’ degree of creativity which means that the effect of teaching approaches on the students’ ability depends on the students’ degree of creativity. Consequently, teachers are supposed to know more about their students’ condition especially their level of creativity.

To sum up, there are some suggestions addressed to the teachers. Firstly, in order to get maximum result and effect on students’ writing skills, English teachers are suggested to apply appropriate approaches by considering students’ characteristics especially based on their degree of creativity. Process approach for students with high creativity while Product approach for students with low creativity. Moreover, teachers are suggested to be more creative and innovative in using or even blending the various kinds of teaching techniques or approaches so that they can find suitable approach for the students based on the students’ characteristics. Finally, combining both approaches can be a good alternative too in order to get better effect and result of teaching writing.
Bibliography


