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Implementing personal journal writing to improve writing recount text

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Abstract

This study set out to determine whether the writing achievement of seventh-grade students who were instructed to use personal journal writing differed significantly. This study relied on a quasi-experimental design. The technique of purposive sampling was applied. Written examinations were used in this study. The t-test was employed to assess the data. It was discovered that t-obtained (10.69) was greater than t-table (1.99) based on the outcome of the independent sample t-test, which compared the post-test results between the experimental and control groups. It indicated that students who were educated through writing in their personal journals and those who were not had very different writing achievement levels.

Keywords: Writing; Recount Text; Personal Journal Writing

1. Introduction

Writing is a communication tool for ideas, thoughts, and information. Writing is a crucial English ability because it is a means of interpersonal communication. The idea behind writing is that it is a product of the writer's mastery of syntax and vocabulary, and the students learn to write by copying and altering the teacher's models. Additionally, students can effectively convey their opinions, thoughts, and ideas by using writing, which is essential to communication and can be used to organize perception in a systematic way [1]. To sum up, writing is an essential language skill that facilitates interpersonal communication. A writer's ability to write is determined by their command of language structures. It results from the assimilation of knowledge gained from reading a variety of sources in addition to mimicking the models that educators present.

In relation to writing skills in the school, students must be able to write in a few different genres. One of these is recount text. A recount text is a text that conveys past occurrences [2]. A recount text provides the reader with historical information about a person or event [3]. The reader is intended to be informed or talked about the author's experiences. A recount text is a written work that tells the story of an incident or event from the past in the order that it happened. Recount texts are organized as follows: an introduction that gives historical background; a record of events that narrates logical steps; and a comment that represents the writer's response [4]. In conclusion, one writing skill that students should learn is how to produce recount texts. Their capacity to write well in the classroom is based on their comprehension of a range of genres, including recount texts.

Unfortunately, students still struggle to write a recount text. Junior high school students still have very poor writing abilities. The process of coming up with ideas, grammatical constructions, and organization all reveal the pupils' poor writing abilities. Recount texts are sometimes difficult for them to structure since they are unsure of where to begin or how to arrange the content. Furthermore, it can be challenging for many students to use grammar correctly, particularly when it comes to the simple past tense. Finally, Students that lack vocabulary find it more difficult to express their ideas effectively in their words, which lowers the quality of their sentences. In addition, many students struggle with

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producing texts in terms of spelling, grammar, and general structure [5]. Khairunisaak also add that junior high school pupils found it was challenging to comprehend how to apply language in a recall text [6]. Their inexperience composing recount texts and their ignorance of the recount text itself were the main causes of it.

During the process of writing, writing in a personal journal can be used to encourage pupils to create recount texts. Personal journal is among the most suggested methods for teaching writing. Marpaung explained that writing in a personal journal as a component of classroom aids students in becoming more proficient recount text writers [7]. Writing in a personal journal is primarily about the author's life and experiences. Students are able to freely express their thoughts and ideas about their everyday lives and personal experiences through writing when they keep a personal journal. Besides, Sinthianuary and Bunau claimed that students can share their ideas about how to be better through personal journals writing [8]. Writing in a personal journal can help people feel more motivated and find it easier to communicate their emotions. Amir also argued that students who keep personal journals can compose more stories [9]. Writing in a personal journal helped pupils become more proficient writers of recount texts. The focus of the study was to identify whether or not students' ability to write recount texts might be enhanced by conducting personal journals. Consequently, it is advised to employ personal journal writing to assist students who are having trouble composing recount texts.

2. Material and Method

A quasi-experimental with a pretest-posttest non-equivalent groups design was applied. This study involved seventh grade students from SMP Negeri 1 Kayuagung. The technique of purposive sampling was applied. The sample were chosen using a selection of aspects, such as having the same total enrolment, receiving instruction from the same English teacher, and having an average English score of 75. Consequently, the experimental group was classified as class VII.4, and the control group was classified as class VII.7. Both groups comprised forty students. Written tests were the only instrument utilized in this investigation. Students were required to write an essay test in which they selected one of the five offered subjects and composed a recount paragraph based on their selection. The t-test was the tool used for assessing data. The data inside the groups was assessed by paired sample t-test. The independent sample t-test was executed to figure out if there was an important impact among the two groups of participants.

3. Results and discussion

The experimental group's paired statistics show that the pre-test mean was 71.62 with a standard deviation of 6.22, and the post-test mean was 84.47 with a standard deviation of 4.43. The experimental group's pre-test and post-test mean differences were 12.85, with a standard deviation of 5.18 and a standard error mean of 0.82. The paired samples t-test result showed that the value of t-obtained was 15.66 at the significant level $p < 0.00$ in two-tailed testing with $df = 39$, the critical value of t-table = 2.02. Students in the experimental group gained their writing skills since the value of t-obtained was greater than the critical value of t-table ($15.66 > 2.02$). See Table 1.

Table 1 The Result of Paired Sample

Paired Differences									
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean			Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest_Exp - Pretest_Exp	12.8500	5.1878	0.8203	11.1909	14.5091	15.666	39	0.000
Pair 1	Posttest_Con - Pretest_Con	7.7250	3.8762	0.6129	6.4853	8.9467	12.604	39	0.000

The pre-test mean for the control group was 66.42 with a standard deviation of 2.88, while the post-test mean was 74.15 with a standard deviation of 4.19, as determined by paired statistics. The control group's mean difference between the pre-test and post-test was 7.72, with a standard deviation of 3.87 and a standard mean error of 0.61. The paired samples t-test result showed that the value of t-obtained was 12.60 at the significant level $p < 0.000$ in two-tailed testing with df

= 39, the critical value of t-table = 2.02. The control group's students' writing proficiency increased because the value of t-obtained was greater than the critical value of t-table ($12.60 > 2.02$). See Table 1.

After conducting a two-tailed test with $df = 78$ and a critical value of t-table = 1.99, the group statistics of the independent samples t-test revealed that the value of t-obtained was 10.69 at the significant level $p < 0.000$. Students who received learning through personal journal writing had greatly improved writing achievement than those who did not, as indicated by the value of t-obtained (10.69), which was higher than the critical value of t-table (1.99). See Table 2.

Table 2 Summary Statistic of Independent Sample t-test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means						
						Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F		Sig.	t	df				Lower	Upper
Post-tests	Equal variances assumed	0.024	0.877	10.698	78	0.000	10.3250	0.9651	8.4036	12.2464

In experimental group, writing recount texts could be a better writing accomplishment for students who were instructed in using personal journals. Students' writing can improve when taught using personal journal writing for several reasons. Engaging in personal journal writing allows students to express their thoughts, reflect on experiences, and develop a more personal connection to the writing process. According to Marpaung, personal journal writing encourages students to actively write about their experiences in English, fostering a deeper understanding of the language (7).

Additionally, there was an enhancement in the control group's writing performance from the pupils. There were several reasons why students who received instruction in the traditional way could enhance their writing abilities. First, the teacher guided the students to understand the rules and techniques of recount writing in a step-by-step manner. This makes it easier for students to learn. Second, if students had questions or found something confusing, the teacher helped them right away. This means they could get quick answers and better understand how to write recount texts. Third, the teacher showed examples and demonstrates how to write well. This made it easier for students to see what a good recount text looks like and helped them improve their own writing.

The analysis of the independent sample t-test identified that students who were taught by personal journal writing discovered an important impact in writing skill. Personal journal writing can enhance students' writing skills through systematic processes. Students could improve the quality of their learning practices by expressing their honesty, self-improvement, and self-discovery through personal journal writing. The students were able to identify what they wrote when they used their personal journals to write recount texts, starting with an idea and concept of the recount text itself. Practice writing in their personal journals was enjoyable for the students. The personal journal writing gave them the guidelines for what kind of writing they should produce, so that they did not have to concentrate just on the longer text and terminology when they wrote their recall.

This aligns with Marpaung's research, students are encouraged to actively convey their experiences in English when taught writing recount texts through personal journal writing [7]. Sudirman emphasizing that writing in a personal journal allows students to communicate their openness, self-awareness, and progress in an effort to enhance the quality of their learning experiences [10]. Amir explored that since writing is so strongly connected to daily life, it is believed that keeping a personal diary will help students develop a habit of writing. They may write from personal experience or from their routines [9]. To sum up, the students' personal journal writing provided them with an exciting setting in which to learn English writing because they were able to write more frequently and enjoyed it, which improved their writing skills.

4. Conclusion

Following instruction in personal journal writing, the experimental group demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in writing achievement for recount texts. Students' writing skills were positively impacted, as seen by the considerable mean score difference between the pretests and posttests. Comparing to the students' post-tests of the two groups, it was discovered that students who received instruction through personal journal writing revealed substantially greater writing achievement than those who did not. It meant that students in seventh grade got benefit greatly from using personal journals to write recount text better.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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