

USING DERBY COMPOSITION TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' NEWS ITEM WRITING ABILITY

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Abstract: This study analyzed ability improvement of tenth grade students of public senior high school one in Putussibau based on the usage of Derby Composition technique in News Item writing ability. Two classes used as the subjects of research, Derby Composition applied on tenth-three class, meanwhile three-phase technique, a usual teaching technique used by the teacher, applied on tenth-five class. Students' writing result analyzed based on five aspects of news item text; organization, focus on the assigned topics, accuracy of facts and illustration, spelling and punctuation, and grammar and fluency. The result indicated significance improvement in the students writing test result upon using the Derby Composition technique, compared to the student's test result without the following technique.

Keywords: *derby composition, news item*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisa peningkatan kemampuan siswa kelas sepuluh, sekolah menengah atas negeri satu di Putussibau dalam penggunaan tehnik *Derby Composition* pada kemampuan menulis teks *News Item*. Dua kelas digunakan sebagai subjek penelitian, dengan kelas sepuluh-tiga diberikan pengajaran dengan menggunakan teknik *Derby Composition*, kelas sepuluh-lima menggunakan teknik *three-phase* yang biasa digunakan guru. Hasil tulisan siswa dianalisa berdasarkan lima aspek penulisan *news item* teks, yaitu; Susunan paragraf, fokus pada topic yang ditugaskan, akurasi fakta dan ilustrasi, ejaan dan penggunaan tanda baca, dan tata bahasa dan kelancaran penulisan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan ada peningkatan yang signifikan pada hasil belajar siswa dalam hal kemampuan menulis siswa setelah menggunakan teknik *Derby Composition*, dibandingkan dengan hasil belajar siswa tanpa menggunakan teknik tersebut.

Kata Kunci: *derby composition, news item*

Writing activity has always took the most part in English teaching learning, either in the school classroom or in the English course classroom. It's the ideal condition because writing has considered important as the result of listening reading and speaking. In addition, Beth (1998:3) delivered "ask published writers where their ideas came from and, time and again, they will point to some small incident in everyday life that they enlarged, or something they read in a

newspaper or book". Without good perceptive skills, namely listening and reading, and combination of interaction between personal which involves speaking, one can not produce an idea to make writing. Another reason why writing is important, specifically in teaching learning process is that writing is one essential way to assess the student's performance, progress and intelligence. To write well, learners should have good capabilities in writing, speaking, reading and listening. Furthermore, to write about news, learners must be acknowledged the steps in news writing process.

Writing is a process of producing thought to be available which needs complex combination of skills, writers, especially L2 writers, has to concern with both high level skills and low level skills. High level skills including planning and organizing, whereas low level skills including spelling, punctuation and word choice. (Richards, 2002:303). Writing needs thinking and learning for it stimulates communication and makes thought available. When thought is written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, rearranged and changed.

According to Oshima and Hoque (2006), writing is most likely to "encourage thinking and learning when students view writing as a process". (p.27). Along in the line with Oshima and Hoque in writing process elaboration, Reid (1994) says that by recognizing that "writing is a recursive process", and every writer uses the process in a different way, students experience less pressure to be "perfect in the first time writing" and have more intention to "make experiment, exploration, revision and editing on their writing" (p. 71). However, novice writers need to practice writing or practice that involve the activity of reproduction of learned material in order to learn the conventions of spelling, punctuation, grammatical agreement and part of it (Oshima and Hoque 2006:28). Moreover, students need to write in the language through engaging in a variety of grammar practice activities of controlled situations. Last, they need to start writing within a structure of flexibility measures that include: transformation exercise, sentence combining, expansion, embellishment, idea frames and acknowledge the types of text that they are going to write in the future.

News item is a type of text which deals with non-fiction writing as stated in Beth (1998:26) with its main purpose is to inform readers about the newest of the latest information or information of the day that considered newsworthy or important. To bold this statement, Munir (2009:2) mentioned that a news item text is a text which is grouped into the text genre of narration. The main function of narration is telling stories or informing about events in chronological order. Lee (2001:31) covers that the order in the narration can be based on time, place and the events themselves.

Main characteristics in the skeleton of news item text is the emphasized of 5Ws + 1H usage. These main questions in news writing considered to be the important part to produce a good text of news item. Basically, a news item text tries to answer and reveal the face behind the questions; What, Who, Where, When, Why, and How, and how it relates to be newsworthy (Munir 2009:2). All those six questions finally reveal the body parts of news item text. The head of news item text will be answered using "What" question. The newsworthy events, containing the core information about what is going on in the text, about what the

text will talk about and what is the important event that considered newsworthy. (Maulana 2011:1). The center part of the text body will be answered using ‘When, Where, Why’ questions. In this part, writer tries to elaborate the causal of the event or problem. (Maulana 2011:1) It concerning to answer the question of how is it happened and why the event happened. Logical thinking should be applied in order to produce good news instead of presents a narratives-fictional text to the readers.

The last and important part of news item text is source of information. All two parts of news item above will be meaningless without source of information. In this part, writer presenting the testimony from the eyewitness or the official whose involved in the event. (Maulana 2011:2) This testimony will strengthen the background event and supporting the newsworthy event. This part takes place as a proof that the information is real and it is not the result of writers’ imagination or provocative thinking.

Derby composition writing or derby writing is a technique based on a strategy in writing presented by Holt in 1992 named the Composition Derby (Simpson: 2001). This technique developed by John Holt, a teacher, for his writing task for elementary-level children to help them overcome the apprehension of making spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes. The main concept of derby writing is a race. In connection with news item, derby writing is the trigger to help the students to write without any worries on content, not worry about form and writing without stopping. (Graves & Murray in Heryadi, 2011:13) emphasized that the teaching of writing should be shifted focus on content to the process and the writer itself. This view is based on the concept of free writing, which allows the students to be totally free to control their own writing, with proper control by teacher and classroom conditioning.

News item text which categorized as non-fiction writing, believed as a good starting point for students to write. As Means (1998:11) states, non-fiction is the largest category of writing. Almost everything that is neither fiction nor poetry is non-fiction. Hence, the students may have broader theme to write about and they are not asked to imagine, they only have to write fact. The real battle in writing non-fiction, especially news item is to developed clear focus (Means, 1998:11). Using derby composition, writing non-fiction hopefully will be easier because the students are not emphasized to write the clear focus first, but more focus on the process and how to start writing and beat their fear. Once the students concerned with their piece of writing, they will find their own way.

METHOD

The method of this study was experimental. Experimental method reported descriptively. In order to answer the research questions, this method tried to use naturalistic approach. Sixty four students of senior high school one in Putussibau are involved in this study. Two classes, tenth-three and tenth-five, selected as the group of sample from the total five classes consist of one hundred and fifty three students on the tenth grade. Tenth- five class selected as the control group, and tenth-three as the experimental group.

The data were obtained from pre-test and post-test score on both group of sample. The tests were given twice, with equal test question. These were done in order to gain consistency. The test itself in form of essay writing test consists of the language used in the test item was English; this considered being more focus on the subject of the lesson. The score of the writing result were administered using scoring rubric, adapted from J.B. Heaton scoring rubric, with five categories: organization (paragraph order), focus on assigned topic, accuracy of facts and illustration, spelling and punctuation and grammar and fluency. The result of the individual test score were classified using David P. Harris's individual score classification, with four level, poor, average to poor, good to average and good to excellent.

Table 1:
Individual score classification

<i>Test Score</i>	<i>Probable Class Performance</i>
8.0 – 10	Good to Excellent
6.0 – 7.9	Average to Good
5.0 – 5.9	Poor to Average
0 - 4.9	Poor

This study was conducted with the implementation of the Derby Composition technique in teaching news item writing. First, the students' individual writing result analyzed based on five aspects. Organization aspects include Arrangement of the text, including three main component of News text, and there are Newsworthy Event, Background Events, and Source. Every paragraph flows to another in a logical pattern. Focus on the assigned topics aspects include how the text is explaining clearly to the readers about the topic. All the idea or stories in the paragraph are in one direction with the topic given. Accuracy of facts and illustration aspects include All stories and details in the text are answering the 5 W + 1 H questions, and accurate. Original illustrations are detailed, attractive, and creative and relate to the text on the page. Spelling and punctuation aspects include Character and place names that the author invented are spelled consistently throughout. Commas, Pull stop, and other punctuations are written correctly. The last is grammar and fluency aspects include the Tenses most used by news are past tense and present tense, other components includes word order and vocabulary choice. Flow of sentences is considered as fluency category.

The data from the test were draw on to measure the significance different between the control group and experimental group. The result of significant difference will be put into formula to find out the effect size of the treatment. The further step was calculated the standard deviation squared for each group and calculated the significance difference of mean score using Perry R. Hinton's formula. To obtain the standard effectiveness of the test, the formula by Perry R.Hinton' applied. The criteria of effect size applied to find the qualification using the Daniel Muijs' criteria. The last part of the analysis was the hypothesis testing

using the result of the calculation of the significance difference of the treatment (t) compared with the table contains the standard value of t at certain value of freedom and level of confidence.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The result of the control group below shows the improvement in all aspects of news item writing after the post-test. Major improvement takes place on Organization aspects, shown on the chart as ORG, the improvement itself by 0.88 points. Minor improvement happened on code SPPCT, Spelling and Punctuation aspects, by 0.22 points. All improvement points sum up, were 0.47 points average. Improvement points were the result of the usual treatment that was used by the teacher on the same topics of writing news item text as the experimental group did.

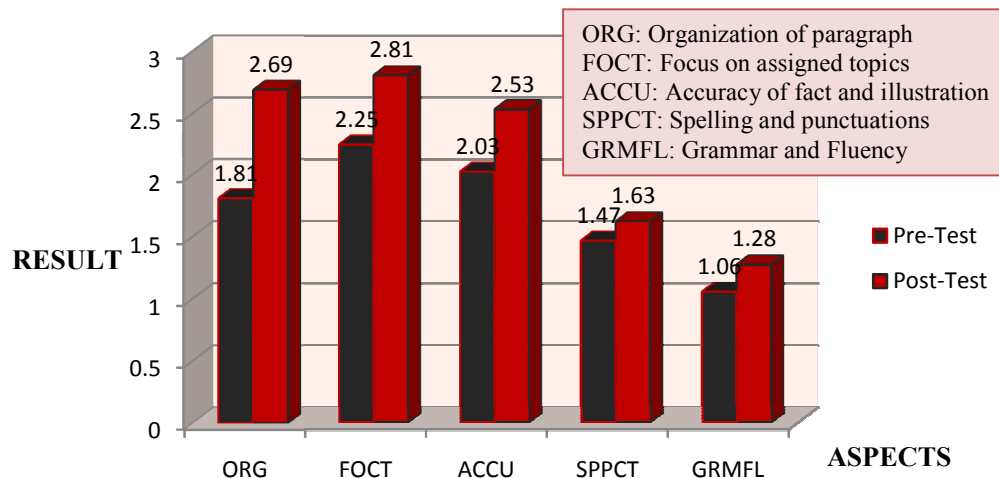


Chart 1: Control Group Result

Chart 2 below illustrates the points gained by experimental group. Overall, the improvements happens on all the aspects, in which the initial points of pre-test gained by the experimental group was higher than the control group, 2.63 on the highest peak, and the lowest peak on 1.10 while on the control group, the highest peak was 2.25 and lowest peak on 1.06. This result indicates the difference of each group was almost the same, in which it indicates a good starting point.

The result of the post-test on each group shows us the better initial understanding on the effect of using the derby composition technique in teaching news item text writing. Higher points achieved by the experimental group on the Focus on the assigned topics aspects, coded by FOCT on the chart, by 3.03 compared with 2.81, with 0.22 points difference.

The chart 2 below delivers the points gained from the test result on the control group. Major improvements happen in three aspects at a time, first in spelling and punctuation aspects, by 0.73points, second in ACCU, accuracy of facts and illustration by 0.63 points and in organization of paragraph aspects by

0.60 points. The highest peak of post-test result was on Focus on assigned topics aspects by 3.03 points and the lowest peak was on spelling and punctuation aspect by 1.83 points. All improvements points sum up resulted in 0.59 points, higher 0.12 points than the improvement points gained by the control group by 0.47 points. This early findings indicates improvements on the application of the derby composition writing technique.

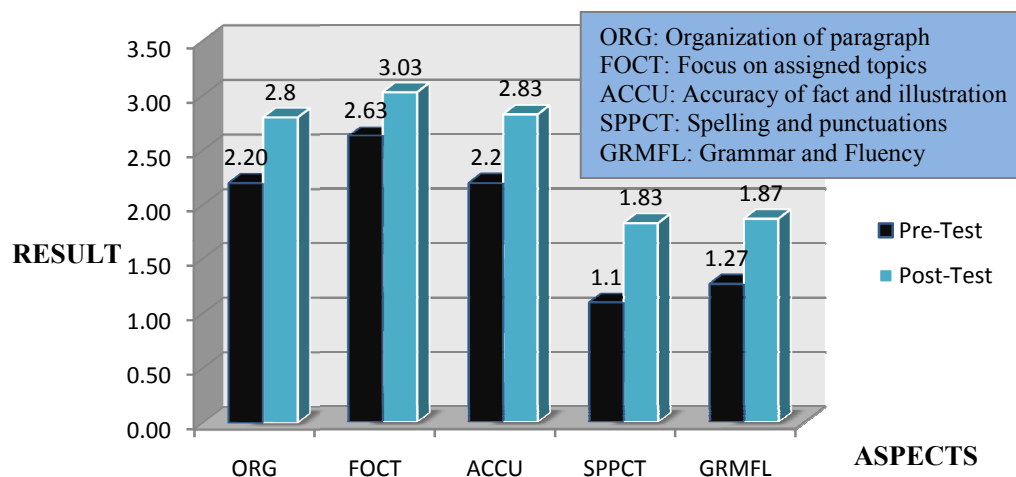


Chart 2: Experimental Group Result

In the news item writing, pre-test and post test on each group were given. Analysis of the test result was started by calculating all the score obtained by the students on the pre-test and post-test, based on their group; control group and experimental group and find the mean score. Mean score of the pre-test on the control group was 43.13, and the experimental group was 46.67. Mean score of the post-test on the control group was 54.69, and the experimental group was 60.17.

According to the criteria by Harris (1969), the score from 0 until 4.9 classified as poor, and the score from 5.0 until 5.9 classified as poor to average. The finding shows that the pre-test on both groups was classified as poor, because the score for both groups was under 50. The result of post-test on control group was classified as poor to average and experimental group was classified as average to good. The finding shows the bigger interval on the experimental group by 13.5 on 11.56 for control group.

Table 2
Students' Score on Writing Test

	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference	D ²
Control Group	43.13	54.69	11.56	181.25
Experimental Group	46.67	60.17	13.5	239.17

The result of the calculation of the students' mean score shows that the experimental group interval is higher the control group has accomplished. In order

to find the weight of the impact of the treatment, the standard deviation for each group has calculated and put into formula to find out the significance difference of mean score.

The standard deviation of experimental group was calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 S^2 &= \frac{\sum D^2 - \frac{(\sum D)^2}{N}}{N} & S^2 &= \frac{7175 - 5467.5}{30} \\
 &= \frac{7175 - \frac{(405)^2}{30}}{30} & S^2 &= \frac{1707.5}{30} \\
 &= \frac{7175 - \frac{164025}{30}}{30} & S^2 &= 56.92 \\
 & & S &= \sqrt{56.92} \\
 & & S &= 7.54
 \end{aligned}$$

The standard deviation of the control group was calculated using the formula as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 S^2 &= \frac{\sum D^2 - \frac{(\sum D)^2}{N}}{N} & S^2 &= \frac{5800 - 4278.13}{32} \\
 &= \frac{5800 - \frac{(370)^2}{32}}{32} & S^2 &= \frac{1521.87}{32} \\
 &= \frac{5800 - \frac{136900}{32}}{32} & S^2 &= 47.56 \\
 & & S &= \sqrt{47.56} \\
 & & S &= 6.89
 \end{aligned}$$

From the calculation above, the result of the standard deviation from control group was 47.56 and the standard deviation squared was 6.89. the standard deviation of the experimental group was 56.92 with the standard deviation squared by 7.54. the result of these calculation was used in the later calculation of significance difference of mean score.

After find the result of the standard deviation, therefore the calculation of significance difference of mean score has done as follows:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum X_1^2 - \frac{(\sum X_1)^2}{n_1} + \sum X_2^2 - \frac{(\sum X_2)^2}{n_2}}{(n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1)} \right) \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{13.50 - 11.56}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{56.92 + 47.56}{(30 - 1) + (32 - 1)}\right) \left(\frac{1}{30} + \frac{1}{32}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1,94}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{104.48}{60}\right) \left(\frac{31}{480}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1.94}{\sqrt{(1.74)(0.06)}}$$

$$t = \frac{1.94}{\sqrt{0.11}}$$

$$t = \frac{1.94}{0.32}$$

$$t = 6.0625$$

The value obtained from the calculation was 6.0625. This value was compared later with the t value with the default number on certain level of freedom and confidence. Follow calculation was to obtain the effect size value. The obtained effect size value was 0.7

$$ES = \frac{M_e - M_c}{S_c}$$

$$E S = \frac{60.17 - 54.69}{6.89}$$

$$E S = 0.7$$

Discussion

From the data analysis the researcher found that the use of derby composition technique in teaching news item text writing to the tenth grade students of SMA N 1 Putussibau in academic year 2011/2012 was effective in writing. During the treatment the researcher found that most of the students were able to write without any hesitation. They were really enthusiastic in the writing process, also they were interested when they provided with the video media in order to help them to find the facts supporting their writing. Positive attitudes

indicated by the students during the treatment. Those positive improvements comes from the technique which allowed them to write anything that the students know. The students feel free because this technique is newly applied and this technique allowed them to do so. Besides those good effects that happened in classroom, the researcher also found some problems in the process of applying this technique of teaching.

Some students still stayed idle when they asked to start to write. They write only few words even though the facts on the video and the direction of the test is clear. The reason why they write in such a little amount of words is the students did not know the vocabulary and lack of grammar. It makes them hesitate to write.

At the beginning of the lesson, researcher wrote in the whiteboard “DERBY”, and asked the students about the meaning of the word. After some of the students’ answers, researcher explained to the students the meaning of “DERBY” and the function in writing learning. They were enthusiastic when studying using Derby Composition Technique. It could be seen from the students’ seriousness in writing and some questions about their writing task. This condition made the researcher easy to guide the students in learning through this technique.

In the process of data collecting, both of these groups were given the same pre-test and post-test in form of written test of news item text. The treatment using Derby Composition technique was only given to the experimental group. The control group was taught using technique that is usually used by the English teacher. Derby Composition technique itself provides the students in a writing race guided by the researcher. The class divided into two groups and they write about the topic given by the researcher. In order to help the students in writing non-fiction (News Item text), the researcher provides them with a video contains the facts and details of the event according to the topic that has been given. After the students watch and write notes about the video, the derby writing was begun. They have to write in three parts, in first ten minutes they write about the newsworthy events, second ten minutes the students write about the background events, and the last ten minutes they write about the source or eyewitnesses testimonials about the events.

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Early data interpretation on the students result on five aspects of news item writing shows improvements on majority of the aspects. Both control group and experimental group has significant improvement score on their post test result, compared with the pre-test result. Better improvement score gain by experimental group by 0.59 points, 0.12 points higher than the control group points by 0.47. These early finding indicates a good starting point on the application of derby composition writing technique in news item text. The result shows improvement on certain aspects, mainly on focus on assigned topics and accuracy of facts and illustration aspects.

From the data analysis, the mean score from experimental group of pretest is 46.67 (poor). After giving the pre-test, researcher administer the treatment that was teaching writing using derby composition technique to the 30 samples. After the class was given the treatment, the post-test is conducted. The mean score of post-test is 60.17 (average to good). The mean score from control group in pre-test is 43.13 (poor). After giving the pre-test, the post-test is conducted without treatment. The mean score of post-test is 54.69 (poor to average). The computation of the students mean score of pre-test and post-test interval shows that the experimental group interval is higher, by 13.50 than the control group interval by 11.56. It indicates that Derby Composition technique is effective to teach news item writing.

Since the obtained t value is higher than t -table ($6.0625 > 1.6706$), at degree of freedom 60 ($df=60$) and at 95 % of confidence ($p= 0.5$) it means that teaching news item text writing using derby composition technique for the first year students of SMA Negeri 1 Putussibau in academic year 2011/2012 has significantly increase the students' writing achievement. Thus, it proves that the alternative hypothesis (Teaching news item writing by using derby composition can improve the writing ability of the tenth grade students of SMA N 1 Putussibau in academic year 2011/2012) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Teaching news item writing by using derby composition cannot improve writing ability of the tenth grade students of SMA N 1 Putussibau in academic year 2011/2012) is rejected.

Based on the calculation of the effect size of the test, the result shows values of 0.7. Refers to the table of effect size criteria Muijs (2004: 145), the qualification of the effect size value of <0.8 was considered as strong effect. The result of this calculation shows that the application of derby composition technique in writing news item text has a strong effect.

These findings indicated that the increasing of students' achievement in writing is influenced by writing teaching and learning process using Derby Composition technique. It means the treatment by using derby composition in teaching news item writing changes the students' achievement and brings the positive effect toward the students' achievement.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study showed the positive effect of the usage of derby composition technique in students' news item writing ability. Mainly, the analysis indicated that majority of the students has improvement on their test result. Their

assessment result shows some improvements in their ability in writing news item text. This study also identified a strong effect on the effect size based on the mean score between both groups. Bigger positive improvement based on the test score gained by the experimental group rather than control group. Hence, it could be recommended that in order to improve the students' writing ability in news item test, the technique could be applied to help the students gain more freedom in writing. in addition, the students should have more drill and deals with variety of appropriate technique to improve their ability in writing.

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