The Use of Authentic Materials in Dveloping Students' Writing Competence (An Experimental Study at SMA Labschool Unsyiah)

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Abstract

This study aims at examining whether the use of authentic materials as a teaching material develops students' writing competence or not. Quantitative approach with pre-experimental study of one-group pretest-posttest design was applied in order to develop students' writing competence in term content, grammar, mechanics, and other aspects which were acknowledged by the students as difficulties in writing learning. The population of this study was first grade students of SMA Labschool Unsyiah, while the sample was X-IPS students. The instrument used to collect the data was test which was assessed by using analytic method suggested by Brown (2007). The result of this study confirmed that the students' scores increased after receiving the treatment. It showed that posttest scores were higher than pretest where the mean of total score of posttest is 81 while the mean of pretest is 75. Moreover, the data of both tests were analyzed by using t-test formula to find out the t-score which was gain was 4.256. Since t-score (4.256) of this study was higher than t-table (2.120), the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. The researcher concluded that using authentic materials in teaching writing develops students' writing competence.

Keywords: *Writing competence, authentic materials, develop*

## 1.	INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of crucial skills in language learning. According to Harmer (2004, p. 31), writing is one of four important language skills that has always formed part in syllabus of language teaching. Furthermore, Manchon (2009, p. 265) mentioned that writing can be considered as a tool for developing thought and self-expression. It clarifies that writing has a major role in acquiring English for students of English as a foreign language. However, writing is believed as a difficult skill to be mastered. Leki, Cumming, & Silva, (2008, p. 12) states that students who learn writing should be able to develop their writing abilities and text individually, yet writing is viewed as a single concern and individual cognitive achievement.

In this study, the researcher had done several observations and informal interviews toward the students related to writing at SMA Labschool Unsyiah in August 2016. He found that the students faced some problems, namely; (1) students were lack of interest in studying writing because the material was monotonous., (2) students got obstacles in producing and expressing the ideas because they couldn't understand the material given by the teacher because it was not related with their everyday life. In addition, the English teachers only used the text books which triggered students became bored in learning process.

The difficulties in expressing ideas are often occurred in learning writing because according to Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2000, p. 142), people who write a written text have to be able to deliver their ideas and meanings to the reader by using understandable statements. It clarifies that if students cannot develop the ideas in writing, the reader will not accept anything. In line with this, 2013 Senior High School Curriculum for English expects students to compose various genres of text which are stated in the curriculum where the students should have a complete understanding on the use, language features, and grammatical structures of the text. In the line with this, in order to create a proper composition the students are supposed to understand certain rules in writing such as using a proper grammar, a correct placement for capitalization, proper sentence organization, and so forth.

In this case, it seems that material is an important element in affecting students' writing, thus the selection of teaching material should be more concerned. According to Nematollahi & Maghsoudi (2015) there are two kinds of material that are commonly used in teaching language in these recent years. They are non-authentic material and authentic material. They also mention non-authentic material as a material that is contrived in a written form which is different from the learners' real life. In contrary, Masood (2013) mentions authentic material is brought from the real life which is presented into the classroom to avoid monotony of conventional material. It can be adopted from many sources such as newspapers, magazines, broadcasts, advertisements, cartoons, etc.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1   Definition of Writing

Writing is a way to convey ideas to other people by using written words in order to make them understand about a certain thing intentionally. Sharples (2003, p. 60) states that writing is a conscious and creative way for communication to affect readers' understanding and accept writer's ideas. Furthermore, there are certain rules in writing as Nayan (2009) states that writing requires the writer to utilize rules to compose a correct composition.

Meanwhile, writing has another definition as stated by Delano (2007) that writing is a process which consists of some complexity such as planning, drafting, self-monitoring, and revising text. In addition, Hyland (2003, p. 215) mentions that writing is a complex organization which requires the writer to be able to manipulate words and grammar. In line with this, Torrance, Waes, and Galbraith (2007, p. 219) view writing as a complex unity which involves numerous concerns, strategies, and processes, due to writing is engaged with intentionality and self-expression.

In short, writing can be inferred as a difficult process in producing words by using appropriate grammar which maintains some important steps such as planning, drafting, self-monitoring, and revising text. In order to convey idea, a

writer should have numerous requirements in writing so that readers can receive and understand the idea easily.

2.1.1 Elements of Writing

The language learners are supposed to comprehend a certain regulations in order to create a good paragraph within text developing for instance using appropriate sentences building, correct placement for capitalization, proper vocabulary, and so forth. Brown (2004, p. 244) classifies that there are five aspects in writing competence, namely; organization, contents, grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary

2.2 Authentic Material
2.2.1 Definition of Authentic Material

Authentic material can be described as a material which is not created for educational purpose but this kind material can be a reliable tool for teacher because of its authenticity of language and its intimation with the language teaching (Hall, 1995 cited in Losada, Insuasty, & Osorio, 2016). In the line with this, Apsari (2014) says that authentic material is referred to the materials which is taken from real life sources and it comes with various forms namely, newspapers, magazines, songs, literatures, and materials taken from the internet.

Even though authentic materials are not created for educational purpose, this kind of material is believed to be an effective material to help the students' learning process. Hatimah, Rofiq, & Handayani T (2013) say that the use of authentic materials can help students to reduce the gap between the classroom and real-life situations and introduce them to different culture and provide chances to see where is different grammatical and the type of discourses are used.

2.3 Teaching Writing With Authentic Materials

Some previous studies show some evidences in authentic materials application. Styati (2016) mentions in her study by using picture and YouTube video as authentic materials, students are enthusiastic looking to the material and write the paragraph more active and there are significant improvements on their writing. In the line with this, Mardianingsih, Raja, & Sukirlan (2015) found that students whose taught by using authentic material are indicated get higher improvement in writing rather than students who taught by using simplified materials.

3. METHODS

The research design used in this study is quantitative research with pre-experimental approach. According to Hale & Napier (2013, p. 150), they view experimental research as a way to determine the effect on a subject to another. Furthermore, Creswell (2014, p. 188) mentions that in pre-experimental designs the researcher aims to study only a single group and brings intervention during the experiment. Thus, it means that in this design there is no control group to be compared.

Related to this research, the writer was used one-group pretest-posttest design. According to Bonate (2000, p. 1), pretest-posttest design is measured a single group under different testing condition. The first measurement is called pretest and the second measurement is called posttest which the pretest is followed

by intervening treatment. The data was collected from 17 students of X-IPS class in SMA Labschool Unsyiah. The instrument used in this research was written tests. There were two tests the researcher was conducted, the tests were designed based on the syllabus used in the school.

Furthermore, in assessing the tests the researcher used analytic rubric which is adapted from Brown (2007, p. 243).

Table 1. Analytic Rubric for Assessing Students' Writing Competence

Aspects	Score	Performance Description	Weighting
Content (C) 30 % -Topic -Details	4	The topic is complete and clear and the details are relating to the topic.	3x
	3	The topic is complete and clear and the details are almost related to the topic.	
	2	The topic is complete and clear but the details are not related to the topic.	
	1	The topic is not complete and clear. The details are not relating to the topic.	
Organization (O) 20% -Opening -Content -Closing	4	Opening is correct, content and closing are contained with information about time, date, place, contact person, and so forth.	2x
	3	Opening is correct, content and closing are almost properly contained with information about time, date, place, contact person, and so forth.	
	2	Opening is not correct, content and closing are almost properly contained with information about time, date, place, contact person, and so forth.	
	1	Opening is not correct, content and closing are not contained with information about time, date, place, contact person, and so forth.	
Grammar (G) 20% -Simple Present	4	Very few grammatical errors.	2x
	3	Few grammatical errors but it is not affecting the meaning.	
	2	Numerous grammatical errors.	

Tense Or -Simple Future Tense	1	Frequent grammatical errors	
Vocabulary (V) 15%	4	Effective choice of words and word forms.	1,5x
	3	Few misuse of words and word forms but don't change the meaning.	
	2	Limited ranged confusing words and word forms.	
	1	Very poor knowledge of words, word forms, and is not understandable.	
Mechanics 15% -Spelling -Punctuation Capitalization	4	It uses correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	1.5x
	3	It has occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	
	2	It has frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization	
	1	It is dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization	

$$\text{Score} = \frac{3C + 2O + 2G + 1{,}5V + 1{,}5M}{40} \times 100$$

Based on the rubric, the researcher will analyze five aspects of writing and calculate them in the way it is determined. In analyzing the result of the data, the writer will use statistical procedure including score frequency arrangement, mean, and t-test.

4.   RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION
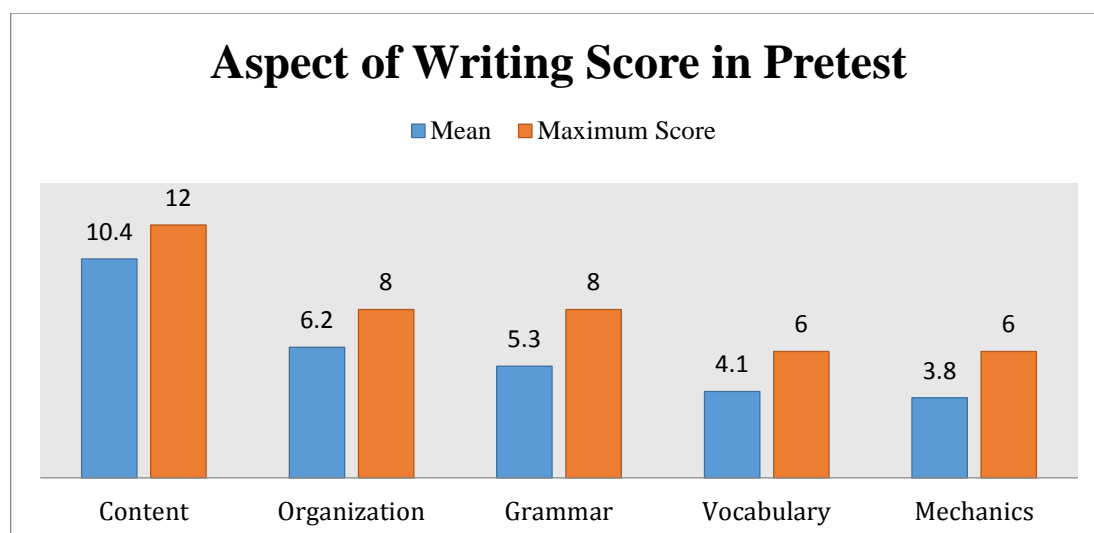## 4.1   Pretest Result

Figure 1. Mean Diagram of Each Aspect of Writing Competence in Pretest

Based on diagram above, the mean of all students' writing aspect in pretest were lower than maximum score of aspect of writing. The students obtained 10.4 of 12 points for content, 6.2 of 8 points for organization, 5.3 of 8 points for grammar, 4.1 of 6 for vocabulary, and 3.8 of 6 for mechanics. In conclusion, the highest writing aspect was on content with the lowest difference with maximum score 1.6 points and the lowest writing aspect was on grammar with the highest difference with maximum score 2.7 points.
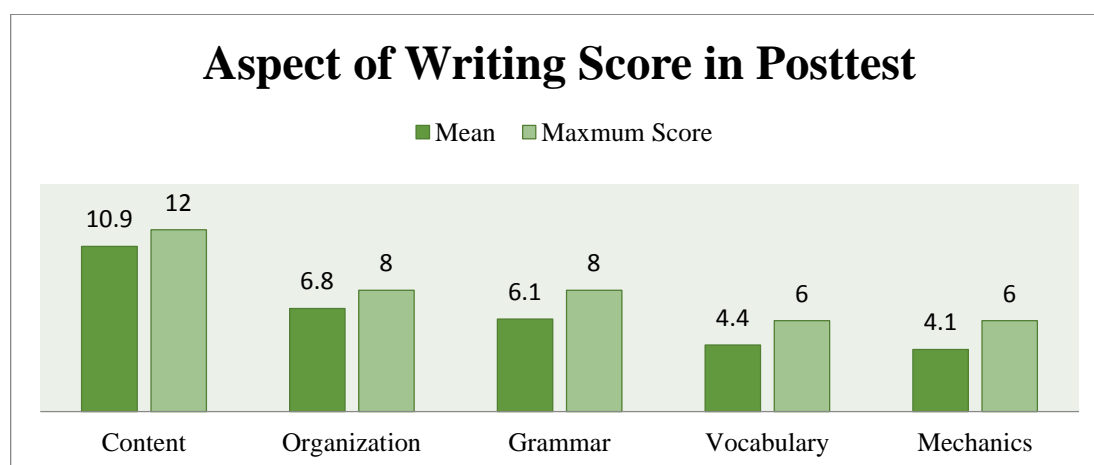
4.2 Posttest Result

Figure 2. Mean Diagram of Each Aspect of Writing Score in Writing

The diagram above displayed the score of students' writing score in the posttest. Based on the table and diagram, the students got better scores compared to the pretest even though they did not reach the maximum score in all aspect of writing. The students obtained 10.9 of 12 for content, 6.8 of 8 for organization, 6.1 of 8 for grammar, 4.4 of 6 for vocabulary, and 4.1 of 6 for mechanics. The highest writing aspect score was on content and organization which were both of them had the same score difference with maximum scores namely, 1.2 points and the lowest score was on grammar with 2 points difference with the maximum score.

4.3 Pretest and Posttest Score Comparison

The mean scores were retrieved based on the total scores of the students divide with the number of students. As the result, the researcher found that the mean score of pretest score was 75 and the mean score of posttest was 81.
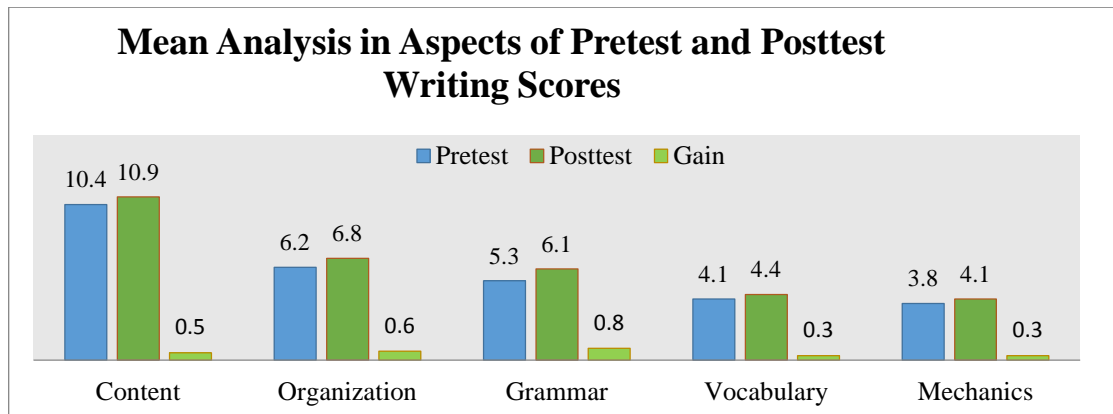

Figure 3. Mean Diagram of Each Aspect of Writing between Pretest and Posttest

Based on the diagram above, it can be concluded that each aspect of students' writing was increased after the treatment was applied. Moreover, the highest improvement was on grammar with 0.8 points and the lowest improvement was on vocabulary and mechanics with 0.3 points.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

In this study, T-test will be used to determine the significant differences between pretest and posttest. The level significance used is 0.5. Based on the suggestion of Arikunto (2010, p. 395), the formula to the differences is as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

As the result, it was found that the result was 4.256 from statistical t-test analysis. Then, the result was compared with t-value at the level of significant 0.05 (2.120) for two tailed test. The t-test was higher than the value of t-table (4.256>2.120). In the other words, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. Based on the result above, it was shown that using authentic materials in teaching writing can improve students' writing competence especially in announcement text writing.

4.5 Discussion

The outcome of data analysis showed that the alternative hypothesis was accepted. It means using authentic materials in teaching can improve students' writing competence. It was found that the total score of posttest was higher the pretest total score.

The use of authentic materials as teaching material was able to develop students' writing competence of announcement text. It can be seen from the difference score between pretest and posttest where the mean of pretest was 75 and the mean of posttest was 81. It was shown that there was an improvement in students' writing competence where the difference score was 6.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESSIONS

This study is focused on the comparison between students' score based on the aspects of writing before and after they were given treatment. This study also purposed to determine whether the use of authentic materials as a teaching material develops students' writing competence or not.

The writer would like to suggest the teacher to use authentic materials as teaching material to develop students' writing competence because by using this kind of material, students motivation in studying writing can be increased. Moreover, the teacher should give some enrichment in basic skill the students' needed in writing so they can develop their writing efficiently. In addition, the teachers should guide the students how to collect information in within the materials given by giving adequate instructions. The researcher also expected to the other researcher to use authentic materials in different form toward other students in different education level and other language basic skill. This research only focused on the use of authentic materials in announcement text writing. Therefore, he suggested to the other researcher to conduct other studies on various genres of texts.

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