THE EFFECTS OF PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPSH TOWARDS STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY

Ratih Ayu Wulandari[1], Meli Safira[2]

[1,2] Universitas Faletehan, Jl. Raya Cilegon KM. 06 Kramatwatu, Serang – Banten, Indonesia
Correspondent Email: [1]ratihayu.wulandari88@gmail.com
Email: [2]melisafira12@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to explore the effects of using students' personal photographs towards students' writing ability at the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten. This is a quantitative research with Quasi-Experimental design method. In this study, the researcher used essay writing tests as the instrument. The results of the study showed that: (1) The results of the pre-test t-count 2.426 > t-table 2.038 or H_1 was accepted and H_0 was rejected. It means that there were differences in the writing skills between the control class and the experimental class; (2) The results of the post-test t-count 7.831 > t-table 2.038 or H_1 was accepted and H_0 was rejected. It means that there were significant differences in the writing skills between the control class and the experimental class after being treated by using students' personal photographs as the learning media. Hence, it could be concluded that the personal photographs gave significant and influential effects towards students' writing ability at the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten. Personal photographs could be considered as instructional media causing students' interest in learning recount text since they provide visual media that allowed them to recall their memories as they were.

Keywords: Recount text, writing ability, personal photographs

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the four language skills that need to be mastered by the English students. Writing is categorized as a part of productive skills. Productive skill is defined as an important form of expression used to persuade or convince other people as well as to share ideas and feelings (Jaramillo and Medina, 2011). Through writing, students have a chance to communicate and express their experience, emotions and opinions without necessity to meet the audiences personally. Simply, anyone can get some important, and even less important, information from pieces of writing materials anytime and anywhere.

However, writing is more complicated than it seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the other skills, even for native speakers of a language. This is because writing includes not only a graphic representation of speech, but also the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way. There are various ways of how to define writing. Cole and Feng (2015) state that writing is a fundamental component of language. When a child writes, thoughts and knowledge are blended together creating a unique meaning. Consequently, students identify the skill of writing as more difficult than listening and reading. Furthermore, writing is the skill that most students are least proficient in when acquiring a new language.

Other definition comes Troia (2014) who describes that writing is a way to affords the students extended opportunities to think about, manipulate, and transform ideas and reflect on their existing knowledge, beliefs, and confusions

in written form. Because writing is a permanent and promotes more concrete and precise thinking process, it offers a unique mechanism for extending learning beyond presentations, inquiry activities, and discussion. Further, Elhabiri (2013) adds that writing is an act of communication, it is considered as a skill that needs study and practice to be developed. The ability to write is not naturally acquired; it is usually learned as a set of practices in formal institutions, or other environments setting.

From those definitions above, it could be concluded that writing is the crucial basic language skill which allows us to share information, ideas and emotions to others. Writing is used to convey specific meanings and messages. In other words, it is a process of thinking to invent ideas, then exploring and arranging them into groups of related statements and paragraphs. Since writing is considered as the most difficult language skill, students need to get intensive training on writing so that the skill would be well developed. In training the writing skill, teachers need to breakdown the types/genres of writing based on their functions.

One of the types of writing that needs to be trained to students is recount text. Recount text is one of the materials taught at the eighth grade students of Junior High School level in the Curriculum of 2013. In the Based Competence point 4.15, it is said that student are expected to compose oral and written recount texts, short and simple, about activities, events, occasion, by taking into account the social functions, text structures, and linguistic features that are correct and in context. To achieve those goals, teachers need to give detail explanation about the nature of recount text.

Recount text is a type of text that tells other people about something happened in the past of our life. This text tells the readers about one story, action or activity. Its goal is to entertain or inform the readers (Anderson: 2003). Another definition comes from Hyland (2009) who mentions that recount is a kind of genre that has social function to retell event for the purpose of informing or entertaining. Further, Setiadi et.al (as cited in Pratama, 2016) state that recount is a piece of writing that tells events in a chronological sequence. A recount is similar to a narrative text. The story may be an event or situation that took place on a particular day. The order of the events is very important. A recount can entertain and/or inform.

From those definitions, it could be concluded that recount text is a type of text that retells about the past events or past experiences presented in chronological order. Recount text is as a way for the writers to share events, activities, and experiences occurring in the past related to their daily lives in order to entertain or to inform the readers. Azhar (2015) mentions that recount text has some social functions as follows:

1. To retell something happened
   Recount retells past event. Recount begins by telling the reader who was involved, what happened, where this even took place and when it happened.
2. To inform something to the readers
   It informs to the readers about what happened, where this even took place and when it happened.
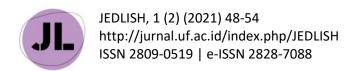3. To entertain
   Sometimes, recount retells a funny experience. It has a function to entertain the reader.

Hence, the writers conclude that the social purpose of recount text is to document a series of events and evaluate their significance in some way. It is also to give the audience a descriptions of what occurred and when it occurred. The purpose of the literary/story recount is to tell a sequence of events so that it entertains the readers. The story recount has expressions of attitude and feeling, usually made by the writers about the events.

In writing a recount text, the writers need to pay attention to the structure of the text so as to make the story is easy to read and understand. Hence, the readers will be interested in the story and read it from the beginning to the end. Anderson (2003) and Derewianka (as cited in Firmalasari, 2018) explain the generic structure of recount text as follows:

1. Orientation
   The orientation provides all the necessary background information to enable the audience to make sense of the text. To ensure that the orientation is detailed and thorough, use the words who, what, when, where, and why. The writer needs to gives information about what happened, who or what was involved, when and where the events occurred and why. An awareness of audience and purpose will assist the

author in selecting the amount of detailed needed.

2. Series of Events

In series of events, the writer writes the events chronologically. It begins from the first event, followed by the second event to the last event. The sum of events depends on the creativity of the writer. Events should be selected carefully to add to the audience's understanding of the topic. Students should be prepared to discard events and details that are unimportant or uninteresting, so that, they need to be guided to select only those events that are relevant and that can be expanded through the inclusion of specific details.

3. Re-orientation (optional)

The final section concludes the recount by summarizing outcomes or results, evaluating the topic's importance or offering personal comment or opinion. It can also look to the future by speculating about what might happen next. But, not all of recount closed by re-orientation. It is just optional.

In addition to the structure, the students need to pay attention to the language features of the recount text. According to Setiadi et. al (as cited in Pratama, 2016), the language feature of recount text are:

1. Use of noun, e.g., beach, car, picnic, etc.
2. Use of pronoun, e.g., she, he, we, they, etc.
3. Use of action verbs, e.g., went, sailed, swam, etc.
4. Use of past tense, e.g., We went to the beach last weekend.
5. Use of time conjunction, e.g., after, before, when, etc.
6. Use of adverb, e.g., happily, quickly, suddenly, etc.
7. Use of adverb of phrases, e.g., a few days ago, at last weekend, etc.
8. Use of adjectives, e.g. good, happy, funny, etc.

In order to let the students understand the recount text easily and to let them produce good recount texts, the English teachers are required to apply as interesting methods, techniques, strategies, and instructional media as possible in the teaching and learning process. Generally, there are three types of instructional media, namely audio, visual, and audio-visual media. Audio is media that can be listened to, visual is media that can be seen, and audio-visual is media that can be seen and listened to. Ruis et al. (2009) mention several advantages of using instructional media in the classroom, they are:

a. instructional media increase the learners' experiences,
b. instructional media reach everything out of the class,
c. instructional media create the possible direct interaction between learners and their environment,
d. media produce some observations conducted by the learners to achieve the teachers' aims,
e. media keep the basic, concrete and real concepts of the teaching,
f. media arise the learners' motivation to learn,
g. media integrate the experience from the concrete things to the abstract ones,
h. media avoid the learners' boredom,
i. media make the learners easily understand the materials,
j. media reinforce the students' comprehension,
k. media make the teaching-learning process more systematic.

One of the instructional media to be used in teaching recount text to the eighth grade students of Junior High School is the student's personal photograph. Photograph is a kind of visual media for students in the teaching and learning process. Photograph is something that can be seen and touched by both the students and the teachers related to the subject of the study. It is also rich with information. Wright (as cited in Pratama, 2016) states that, "…photographs can be brought to the lesson, shown and talked about…" Photograph is one of the sources of pictures that can be utilized by the teacher as a medium of teaching. According to Hornby (2007), picture can help students to find ideas or visualize what something is like.

Students' personal photographs refer to the photos they took previously by their own or with the help of others. Usually, students take their photographs when they have special occasions in their daily lives, for example their birthday, holiday with other family members, or

shameful bad experiences. Students also like to take photographs when they meet their idols or see beautiful sceneries around them. The photographs are then saved as memories, whether they experience something good or bad. Then, they can take a look at the photographs days later. By looking back at the photographs, students may recall their past experiences in detail. They can describe past events, people, places, or things as they really like. According to Raimes (as cited in Safitri, 2017), picture can bring the outside world into the classroom, i.e., students can imagine something from the outside and write it in a written form. Further, Raimes mentions that photographs provide a shared experience in the classroom, a need for common language forms to use in the classroom, a variety of tasks, and a focus of interest for students. Students tend to be interested in something eye-catching like real photograps.
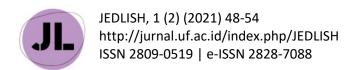
Photograph also encourages students to brainstorm words and ideas before they write it in more details. This means that through photographs, students will have sense to think critically about the interpretation of image and write it in ideas. Students' personal photographs are valuable sources to be used in writing because students could use the pictures they took to develop sentences and organize them chronologically. This is supported by Ahola (as cited in Safitri, 2017) who states that photographs can help students to remember the details about people, places and events. Moreover, by using photographs, students can express their ideas creatively as well as write them from their personal experiences. Hence, the use of photographs in the teaching learning process is hoped to give positive effects towards students' abilities in writing, especially when they are required to retell their past experiences which then forms the recount text.

There have been many studies inquiring the use of photographs in writing classes. A study by Indah (2010) was conducted to prove whether the use of photograph was effective in teaching writing recount text to the eleventh year students of SMAN 1 Batangan Pati in the academic year of 2009/2010. The researcher used a quasi-experimental research design. In selecting the sample, the researcher used random sampling technique. The researcher chose two classes as the samples, namely XI IPA 2 as the control class and XI IPA 1 as the experiment class. The researcher

used writing test as the instrument to collect the data. She gave pre-test and post-test. She analyzed the data by using statistical analysis. She used t-test formula to find out the effectiveness of using photograph in teaching writing recount text. The result of the data shows that the t-obtained value (12.85) was greater than the t-table value (1.98) by applying 0.05 level of significant. It means that the use of photographs in teaching writing recount text to the eleventh year students of SMAN 1 Batangan Pati in the academic year 2009/2010 was effective.

Another study was conducted by Widarti et al. (2014) which purpose was to know whether the use of real picture series was effective in teaching recount text to the tenth year students of SMAN 2 Sungai Ambawang, West Kalimantan in academic year 2013/2014. This research applied a pre-experimental research design in one group pre-test post-test design. The sample of this research was the students of class XB consisting of 26 students. The instrument used to collect the data was a writing test. The pre-test was given by the researcher before the treatment, while the post-test was given after the treatment. The data analyzed statistically. To prove the effectiveness of using the real picture series in teaching recount text writing the researcher applied the ES (Effect Size) formula. The result of the data shows that the effect size was 2.6. Therefore, it could be concluded teaching writing recount text through the real picture series is strong effective.

In 2016, Pratama conducted a similar study which purpose was to find out the effectiveness of using photograph towards students' skill in writing recount text at the eight year students' of Nusantara Plus Junior High School. The method used was a quasi-experimental research. The study was carried out in two classes, namely experimental and control classes. The subject of the study was the eighth grade students, and the samples were 8-3 as the experimental class and 8-2 as the control class. The instrument used was test. The researcher gave the writing test in pre-test and post-test. The technique used in collecting the data was quantitative data with t-test. The result of the study showed that the use of photograph in teaching writing recount text was effective. It could be seen from the result of calculation that the students' score in experimental class was higher than the students' score in control class. The mean score of post-test in experimental class

was 75.64. Meanwhile, the mean score of post-test in control class was 57.11. Furthermore, based on the statistical calculation with the significance level of 5% and 1%, it showed that t-observation was higher than t-table, that was 2.00<5.95>2.65. Therefore, it could be concluded that there was significant different between the students' score in learning writing recount text by using photograph and the students' score in learning writing recount text without using photograph at the eight year students of SMP Nusantara Plus Ciputat.

Those three previous studies proved that photographs were effective in improving students' writing ability, especially in writing the recount text. However, this study was different from the previous ones since the subject and the place of this study were different. This study was conducted at the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten using printed photographs put in the wall of the class.

METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative research using a quasi-experimental design. Quasi-experimental research design examines whether there is a causal relationship between independent and dependent variables. Simply defined, the independent variable is the variable of influence and the dependent variable is the variable that is being influenced (Loewen & Plonsky, 2016). In other words, the independent variable is expected to bring about some variations or changes in the dependent variable. In this study, students' personal photographs refer to the independent variable, while students' writing ability is referred to as the dependent variable.

Nunan (2003) points out that the features of quasi-experimental design are: (1) there are both pre-test and post-test; (2) there are experimental and control classes; and (3) the subjects are assigned non-randomly. In the pretest and post-test design, the experimental group takes part in some type of treatment or intervention which can consist of single or multiple training sessions. The design also includes a pretest and a post-test, in which both the experimental and control groups participate. The purpose of the pretest is to ensure the comparability of the two groups prior to the treatment, whereas the post-test allows the researchers to determine the immediate effects of the treatment on the outcome variables (Rogers and Revesz, 2019).

In this study, the instruments used were writing tests. In conducting the study, the researchers used a pretest to both experimental and control classes. In the pretest, the students were required to compose a text telling about their last Eid Al-Fitr. After that, both classes were taught about the recount text. The teacher used different instructional media in each class. The experimental class was given treatment in the form of personal photographs as the media, while the control class was taught by using conventional media. At the end, the researchers gave a post-test to both classes in which they were required to compose a recount text retelling about their unforgettable moments.

The population of this study was the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten consisting of five classes, while the samples consisted of two classes namely VIII-C (30 students) as the experimental group and VIII-D (30 students) as the control group. In total, there were 60 students as the samples of the study.

There were two hypotheses to test as follow:

Pretest Hypotheses:
H0 : $\mu 1 = \mu 2$
H1 : $\mu 1 \neq \mu 2$

Posttest Hypotheses:
H0 : $\mu 1 = \mu 2$
H1 : $\mu 1 \neq \mu 2$

H0   : Null hypothesis
H1   : Alternative hypothesis
$\mu 1$: Students' ability in writing recount text who are taught by using personal photographs

$\mu 2$: Students' ability in writing recount text who are taught by using conventional media

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study were broken down into two parts according to the pre-test and post-test hypotheses. The results of the students' writing pre-test were analysed and then the researcher obtained data in the form of descriptive and inferential ones. Below are the results of the descriptive data of the writing pre-test:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic for Pre-Test

Group	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Control	30	40	85	58.67	11.517
Experi-mental	30	45	85	62.63	10.726

According to Table 1 above, it could be seen that there were two groups of students as the samples of the study. Each group consisted of 30 students. In the control group (class VIII-D), the pre-test mean or average score was 58.67 with the standard deviation was 11.517. On the other hand, the pre-test mean or average score of the experimental group (class VIII-C) was 62.33 with the standard deviation was 10.726. It indicated that the results of the writing skills (especially in writing recount text) of VIII-C students were better and the texts were more interesting than the students of VIII-D.

Table 2. Hypothesis Test of Pre-test

Group	t-count	t-table	Result
Control Experimental	2.426	2.038	H_1 Accepted

The researcher calculated and analyzed the data from the writing pre-test by using SPSS Version 25.0. And then, it was found that t-count 2.426 > t-table 2.038 or H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected. There were differences in the writing skills between the control class and the experimental class. The students of the experimental class (VIII-C) achieved higher writing skill scores compared to the control class (VIII-D).

Below are the results of the descriptive data of the writing post-test:

Table 3. Descriptive Statistic for Post-test

Group	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Control	30	40	85	61.50	12.328
Experi-mental	30	70	95	81.00	7.358

According to Table 3 above, it could be seen that there were two groups of students as the samples of the study. Each group consisted of 30 students. In the control group (class VIII-D), the post-test mean or average score was 61.50 with the standard deviation was 12.328. On the other hand, the post-test mean or average score of the experimental class (VIII-C) was 81.00 with the standard deviation was 7.358. It indicated that the results of the writing skills (especially in writing recount text) of VIII-C students were much better and the texts were much more interesting than the students of VIII-D. The condition after being treated by using the students' personal photographs showed that the average value of the experimental group (VIII-C) was much higher than that of the control group (VIII-D).
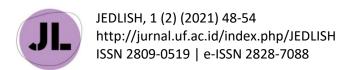
Table 4. Hypothesis Test of Post-test

Group	t-count	t-table	Result
Control Experimental	7.831	2.038	H_1 Accepted

For the post-test hypothesis, the researcher calculated and analyzed the data from the writing post-test by using SPSS Version 25.0. And then, it was found that t-count 7.831 > t-table 2.038 or H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected. From the data of the two groups, it could be concluded that there were differences in the results of the writing skills between the control class and the experimental class in which the experimental class (VIII-C) achieved higher writing scores compared to the control class (VIII-D) after being treated by using the students' personal photographs. Referring to the two hypotheses, it could be concluded that the personal photographs gave significant and influential results towards students' writing skills of the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten. Personal photographs could be considered as instructional media causing students' interest in learning recount text since they provide visual media that allowed them to recall their memories as they were.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Referring to the results of this study, it could be concluded that in the pre-test results, there are differences in students' writing ability (especially in writing recount texts) between the control class (VIII-D) and the experimental class (VIII-C). In other words, H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected. Further, from the post-test results, it

could be concluded that there are differences in students' writing ability (especially in writing recount texts) between the control class (VIII-D) and the experimental class (VIII-C) after the teacher uses students' personal photographs as the treatment in the experimental class. In other words, H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected. Hence, we can say that the personal photographs can have a significant effect on students' writing ability since they provide interesting visual media for the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Pandeglang, Banten in the teaching and learning process.

The further similar studies on the field of teaching English writing skills need to be conducted to give more insights for the English teachers so as to let the teaching learning process become more interesting and enjoyable for both the teachers and the students. Therefore, students will get maximum results in their learning process.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Mark & Kathy Anderson. (2003). *Text Types in English 1-2*. Australia: Macmillan Education Australia PTY. LTD.

Azhar, Syaiful. (2015). *Analysis of Generic structure of Recount Text (The Study of Fourth Semester of STAIN).* Salatiga.

Cole, J., & Feng, J. (2015). *Effective Strategies for Improving Writing Skills of Elementary English Language Learners.*

Elhabiri. (2013). *Teaching the writing skills through literary texts: case of 2nd year EFL students at Djilali Liabes University.* Magister dissertation. Algeria: University of Tlemcen. Retrieved from: http://bibfac.univ-tlemcen.dz

Firmalasari, Ayu. (2018). *An Analysis of Generic Structure on Recount Text Written by Tenth Grade Students of SMA 8 Kota Jambi in the Academic Years 2017/2018. Unpublished thesis. Jambi: Batanghari University.*

Hornby, A.S. (2007). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hyland, Ken. (2003). *Second Language Writing.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, Ken. (2003). *Genre and Second Language Writing*. The United State of America: The University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, Ken. (2009). *Teaching and Researching Writing*. Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited.

Indah, Dwi Nur. (2010). *Improving Writing Recount Text by Using Photograph.* Unpublished Thesis. Semarang: IKIP PGRI Semarang.

Jaramillo and Medina. (2011). *Adolescents' Awareness of Environmental Care: Experiences when Writing Short Descriptive Texts in English.* PROFILE Vol. 13, No. 1, April 2011. ISSN 1657-0790. Bogotá, Colombia. Pages 11-30.

Loewen, S., & Plonsky, L. (2016). *An A-Z of applied linguistics research methods.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nunan, David. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Pratama, Shendy. (2016). *The Effectiveness of Using Photographs towards Students' Skills in Writing Recount Text.* Unpublished thesis. Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah.

Rogers, John & Revesz, Andrea. (2019). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs.*

Ruis, Nuhung et al., (2009). *Instructional Media.* Jakarta: Center for Development and Empowerment of Teachers and Education Personnel.

Safitri, Hilda. (2017). *The Use of Personal Photograph as Media in Teaching Writing Descriptive Text to the Second Grade Students of MTS Negeri Gowa.* Unpublished thesis. Makassar: UIN Alauddin.

Troia, G. (2014). *Evidence-based practices for writing instruction* (Document No. IC-5). Retrieved from University of Florida, Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform Center website: http://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/tools/innovation-configuration

Widarty, Desy Yunita Sari, et. al., (2014). *The Use of Real Picture Senses in Teaching Recount Text Writing.*