

## The Effect of Individual and Cooperative Learning on Students' Writing Ability

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### Abstract

The objectives of the research are to improve students' writing ability and to enrich the effective approach for the students in improving their writing ability. This is an experimental study conducted at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang. The data were collected from 46 students as sample from 3<sup>rd</sup> semester at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang and they were divided into two classes, one class as the experiment group and the other one as the control group. The researcher used quasi experimental research design to get the data and the data are gathered through pretest and posttest of writing by using writing essay as the instrument of the research. Based on the result of t-test shows that  $t_{\text{observed}} (1.93) > (1.72) t_{\text{table}}$ . So,  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted. Mean that, teaching writing by using cooperative learning technique was more effective than teaching writing using individual learning. In teaching writing, it is advisable for lecturers to learn the approach of cooperative and individual learning, but the lecturer should facilitate cooperative learning because it makes the students more motivated in the learning process.

Keywords: *Individual, Cooperative Learning, Writing Ability*

### INTRODUCTION

Many students, especially at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang, find it hard to improve their writing ability. Neither do they understand how to express their ideas into writing, nor select suitable vocabularies for their writing. Many students in this university have some difficulties such as lack of ideas and vocabularies, lack of knowledge in writing technique, lack of practice. In addition, they do not know how to write well and the process of writing makes the students tired and bored to follow the subject that the lecturer gave through their task. Based on the result of students' final test scores in writing subject, it was that they are still low in writing ability. In other factors, the lecturers also have lack of interesting technique of writing. Moreover, they do not give the students opportunities to create their ideas, argue, opinion, and they are fearful of making mistakes in writing practice. To solve problem above, there are many strategies in teaching writing which have been put forward by some experts. Brown (2007: 402-412) states that there are nine principles for teaching skills to minimize writing difficulties. These include incorporate practices of "good" writers, balancing process and

product, account for cultural/literacy backgrounds, connect reading and writing, provide as much authentic writing as possible, frame your techniques in terms of prewriting, drafting, and revising stages, strive to offer techniques that are as interactive as possible, sensitively apply methods of responding to and correcting your students' writing, clearly instruct students on the rhetorical, formal conventions of writing.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Some studies of teaching writing by using individual learning have been conducted by some researchers such as Sakai and Conttia. Sakai (2007), states in his study of learner autonomy and teacher control, that students who received autonomy and adequate informative feedback from the teacher, would be effective in teaching result because students feel autonomous in their language learning and the result of his study they feel enjoyment in the classroom especially in writing subject. Conttia (2007) used autonomous learning for ESP in improving students' motivation in teaching writing in learning process for Hong Kong students in learner motivation and autonomy requires both researches traditions to work in collaboration to find out the patterns which govern learner motivation and autonomy. The results of her study were intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for the students.

Teaching writing by using cooperative learning have been conducted by some researchers such as Norman, Tsailing and Harmer. Norman (2005) conducted the study of cooperative learning with the students at grade five and six students at Yangeun Elementary School in Busan, South Korea. They studied the influence of cooperative learning toward students' achievement, motivation, and attitudes. The result of his study are cooperative learning has positive effects for teaching writing because cooperative learning can motivated the students for working together in the learning process. Another researcher who conducted the study of teaching writing by using cooperative learning is Tsailing (2002) who made her research on Implementing Cooperative Learning in EFL Teaching: Process and Effect in 2002, she focused on the process and effect of cooperative learning two classes of the first year Junior High School students in a rural town in central Taiwan. Her study found that the cooperative learning created positive

environment and gave the students opportunities, freedom, and interactive in the classroom because cooperative learning created more friendly and supportive learning environment within which students had more opportunities and enjoyed more freedom to explore and practice the target language in writing process. Next, Harmer (2007:330) states that group writing allowed the lecturer to give more detailed and constructive feedback since he was dealing with small number of groups rather than many individual students. Individual students also found themselves saying and writing things they might not have come up with on their own, and the group's research was broader than an individual's normally was. Cooperative writing works well whether the focus is on the writing process or, alternatively, on genre study. In the first case, reviewing and evaluation are greatly enhanced by having more than one person working on a text, and the generation of ideas is frequently lively with two or more people involved that it is when writers work on their own. The previous studies cited above suggest that cooperative learning gives the students opportunity to argue in teaching learning process, and the teachers can use cooperative learning as management technique in the classroom because it can make the students enjoyable in teaching writing activities. From explanation above the researcher used individual and cooperative learning in teaching writing to improve students' writing ability by making essay since it can make students be creative, educative and enjoy whole in the learning process to expose their feeling, ideas, argue and opinions. Writing ability is personal activity as instrumental act to express emotion while expressing ideas, argue, and opinions in the piece of paper or to other person. Writing ability is one of component in English to make students become good writer because they can practice and reinforce their own English for creating feeling, ideas, argue and opinion to describe things, making story, and news. Harmer (2017:330) states that writing is used as an aided memoire or practice tool to help students practice and work with language they have been studying. Brown (2007:397) states that writing is sometimes used as a production mode for learning, reinforcing, or testing grammatical concepts. Hayes (1996) states that writing is also social because it is a social artifact and is carried out in a social setting. What we write, how we write, and who we write to is shaped by social convention and by our

history of social interaction. The genres in which we write were invented by other writers and the phrases we write often reflect phrases earlier writers have written.

Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997) state that writing is an act that takes places within a context, that accomplishes a particular purpose, and that is appropriately shaped for its intended audience. Another opinion comes from Grabowski (1986) who state that writing as compared to speaking, can be seen as a more standardized system which must be acquired through special instruction. Mastery of this standard system is an important prerequisite of cultural and educational participation and the maintenance of one's right and duties. The fact that writing is more standardized than speaking allows for a higher degree of sanctions when people deviate from that standard. Sara (2002:19) states that writing can be understood as meaning anything from forming letters to writing extended discourse. Hyland (2002) states that "Writing skill is a set of discrete, value free technical skill which included decoding and encoding meanings, manipulating writing tools, perceiving shape-sound correspondences, etc, which are acquired through formal education". There are five aspects to assess students' writing, they are; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. They are described in table below:

**Table 1: Scoring Sheet of Writing**

STUDENTS' SCORING SHEET			
Student :		Topic :	Student' Score :
Aspect	Score Level	Criteria	Score
Content	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable; substantive; thorough development of thesis; relevant to the assigned topic.	
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Some knowledge of the subject; adequate range; limited development of thesis; mostly relevant to the topic, but lacks detail.	
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of the subject; little substance; inadequate development of topic.	
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject; non-substantive; not pertinent; OR not enough to evaluate.	

Organiz ation	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression; ideas clearly stated / supported; succinct; well-organized; logical sequencing; cohesive.
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy; loosely organized but main ideas stand out; logical but incomplete sequencing.
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent; ideas confused or disconnected; lacks logical sequencing and development.
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate; no organization; or not enough to evaluate.
Vocabul ary	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range; effective word / idiom choice and usage; word form mastery; appropriate register.
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range; occasional errors of word / idiom form, choice, usage <i>but meaning not obscured</i> .
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range; frequent errors of word / idiom form, choice, usage; meaning or obscured.
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation; little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form; or not enough to evaluate.
Langua ge Use	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions; few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order / function, articles, pronouns, preposition.
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions; minor problems in complex constructions; several errors in agreement, tense, number, word order / function, articles, pronouns, prepositions <i>but meaning seldom obscured</i> .
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple / complex constructions, frequent errors of negation; agreement, tense, number, word order / function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and / or fragments, run – ons, deletions; meaning confused or obscured.
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules; dominated by errors; does not communicate; or not enough to evaluate.

Adopted from Sara, W.C (2002:19)

Elliott (2010:360) states that individual learning is “in which students’ activities are unrelated to each other as they work toward a goal”. The advantage of individual learning is the students can be autonomy or independent learner. According to Harmer (2017:27), “Learner autonomy the

stage when students are capable of taking their own learning decisions, using study skills and different learning resources on their own without the help of teacher", learners are those who can organize their own learning without necessarily needing a teacher as to guide them. According to some experts such as Richard-Amanto and Nunan studies, there are several techniques in individual learning such as narrative text, report text, diary book, journal, essay, telling the topic, and rewrite. In this study the researcher used essay in teaching writing by individual learning. Besides it motivates for the students, the essay makes the students are able to write in the classroom. Essay can be the instrument motivation for the students' motivation as Gardner and Lambert, in Richard-Amanto (2003:114) cited instrumental motivation as a desire to use the language to obtain practical goals such as studying in a technical field or getting job. Nunan (1889:32) states that tasks and activities will encourage learners to reflect on their own learning and should be incorporated in the curriculum. These tasks and activities may help learners develop skills in self-checking, monitoring, and evaluation-skills students need to become strategic and independent learner.

Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy based on human instinct of cooperation. The concept of cooperative learning refers to instructional methods and techniques in which students work in a small group and are rewarded in some way for performance as a group. The idea behind the cooperative learning method is that when group rather than individual are rewarded, students will be motivated to help one another to master academic. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating atmosphere of achievement. Brown(2007:53) states that cooperative learning is the students work together in pairs and groups in which they share information in order to teach other's aid and they are a team whose players must work together in order to achieve goals successfully, Brown gives the explanation about the differences between collaborative and cooperative learning from definitions side. According to him, cooperative learning is sometimes though to be synonymous with collaborative learning. To be sure, in a cooperative classroom, the students and teacher work together to pursue goals and objectives. But cooperative learning is more structured, more prescriptive to

teach about classroom technique, more directives to students about how to work together in groups than collaborative learning.

To sum up, cooperative learning is similar to collaborative learning because it has one purpose that the students can learn motivated and effectively in teaching learning process. Cooperative learning is one of appropriate approaches to teach writing ability in the real class to improve students' writing ability.

The formulation of hypothesis in this research can be formulated as follow:

$H_0: r_{xy} = 0$ , the writing technique using individual and cooperative learning does not have the effect on the students' writing ability at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. It means that students would be taught by individual and cooperative learning does not have the effect in average score.

$H_a : r_{xy} \neq 0$ , the writing technique using individual and cooperative learning have the effect on the students' writing ability at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. It means that students would be taught by individual and cooperative learning have the effect in average score.

The concepts of teaching writing through Cooperative Learning and Individual Learning would be assumed to be good strategies to improve the students' writing ability. These concepts are useful to apply in the classroom and make students motivated in learning process and make students competent in writing.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang. In this research used quantitative data with quasi experimental design. To know whether there was a significant effect between the students were taught by using cooperative learning in learning writing essay and the students were taught by using individual learning. By doing the treatment and giving pre-test and post-test, the research design was different classes as the sample of the study. One of the classes as design to be experimental group and the other one is the control group. Pre-test and post-test were

administered to both groups. This design intended to investigate the effect of cooperative and individual learning on the students' writing ability. The population of this research was the students at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang. There are 184 students in 3<sup>rd</sup> semester in the academic years 2016/2017. The classes were divided into 8 classes. Each class consists of 23 students. The researcher took two classes as a sample for the research. The technique of sampling was used purposive sampling. There 46 students who would assign into two groups: one experiment group from A1 class consists of 23 students and control group from A2 class consists of 23 students.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this research, two kinds of data are collected: the score of writing ability by using Cooperative Learning and the scores of writing ability by using Individual learning. All the description of the data can be seen in the following:

**Table 2: The Description of Statistic Data**

Data	Cooperative Learning	Individual Learning
N	23	23
Max	95	90
Min	65	60
Std Deviation	8.2	6.27
Mean	79,23	73

The description of data of writing ability from cooperative learning and individual learning with 46 respondents. Ideally, the score of writing test by using cooperative learning is 34 up to 100, but the score of cooperative learning spread from 65 to 95. It means that the minimum score is 65 and the maximum score is 95. The cooperative learning with 23 respondents has following score: mean = 79.23, median = 79.37, modus = 79.21, standard deviation = 8.2 and the total score = 1812. Related to the theory, the range scores are from 34 to 100. But in the fact, the scores of writing test by using individual learning are in the range 60 to 80. It means that the minimum score



of individual learning is 60, and maximum score is 100. Individual learning, which consists of 23 respondents, has an average (mean) = 73 median = 74, standard deviation = 6.27 and total score = 1691.

The next test to know the effectiveness of teaching writing by using Cooperative Learning compared teaching writing by using Individual through statistical hypothesis:

$H_0: r_{xy} = 0$ , teaching writing using individual and cooperative learning does not have the effect on the students' writing ability at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. It means that students would be taught by individual and cooperative learning does not have the effect in average score.  $H_a: r_{xy} \neq 0$ , the writing technique using individual and cooperative learning have the effect on the students' writing ability at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. It means that students would be taught by individual and cooperative learning have the effect in average score indicates that  $t_{observed} (1.93) > (1.72) t_{table}$ , so  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted. It means teaching writing using Cooperative Learning is more effective than teaching writing using Individual Learning. The t-test observed had already been found the post-test t-test count was 1.93, and t-table was 1,72. So, to find the answer that the research was significant or not, the t-test observed was compared with the t-table value. The result of statistic calculation of post-test indicates that  $t_{observed} > t_{table} (1.93 > 1,72)$  is significant. So,  $H_a$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected. It means that the students' who learn writing essay through cooperative learning scores that is higher than the students' who learn writing the essay by individual learning. Teaching writing by using cooperative learning in experiment class, it has got a better result and gave highest influence on students' writing ability. But, in control class thought by using individual learning, it has got a good score but, with not high influence on students score.

The result finding showed that the results of students using Cooperative Learning are able to make writing essay. It is in line with Norman on his research, which indicated the cooperative learning has positive effects for teaching writing because cooperative learning can motivated the students for working in the learning process. The finding also conducted Tsailing (2002),

who focused on the process and effect of cooperative learning two classes of the first year Junior High School students in a rural town in central Taiwan. Her study found that cooperative learning creates positive environment and give the students opportunities, freedom, and interactive in the classroom because cooperative learning create more friendly and supportive learning environment within which students have more opportunities and enjoy more freedom to explore and practice the target learning in writing process.

Teaching writing by using Cooperative Learning had a positive effect to the students that they get learning experience, how to write well by making essay. This is because Cooperative Learning concept had been motivated and interesting. While individual learning concept students felt bored because they did everything lonely. So, the effect gave the students the different product. Although they were using same theme, the result of the test got differences in writing subject. The results of Individual Learning, the students felt hard to write well in making essay and the words just imitate. The results of Cooperative Learning, the students were motivated and they were able to describe a story, giving opinion and argue based on their own word. Furthermore, the students who got treatment Cooperative Learning have more ideas to exposure and express in writing the essay. While in writing through Individual Learning, the students felt hard to write.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the analysis of the data, the researcher draws conclusion by showing the average score for the experiment class was 71,1 for the pre-test and 79,23 for the post-test. The average score for the control class was 67,45 for the pre-test and 73 for the post-test. It means that there is a significant effect of the students' in writing essay. Each class has different score. The score of the experimental class is higher than the control class. In the result of post-test of experiment class was 79,23 which where higher than the control class 73. It means that writing an essay by using cooperative learning is better than the writing essay by using individual learning. The result of the calculation using the t-test showed that  $t_{\text{observed}} (1.93) > (1.72) t_{\text{table}}$ . It can be concluded that there is a significant effect in the students' writing score in 3<sup>rd</sup> semester at Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang between students who

have been taught writing the essay by using cooperative learning.

On the basis of recent research findings, it is advisable to provide some recommendations to lecturer as follows: 1) It is better for the lecturer to teach by using cooperative and Individual Learning because it motivates the students to write better. 2) In teaching writing by using Cooperative and Individual Learning, lecturers should be tightly monitoring their students. The lecturers should have a role as facilitator in conducting writing in the classroom, but the students' roles are as students' center. 3) The lecturers roles is to support students as they carry out meaningful literacy activities involving the full process of writing, and to provide instructional materials and activities that meet and challenge a students' language production level and provide access to standards-based academic content and 4) In teaching writing, both Cooperative and Individual Learning have better use essay because it makes the students easy in writing process.

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