Descriptive Text Writing: Peer Response Strategy and Students' Learning Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study research is aimed to find out whether or not (1) peer-response strategy gives a significant impact on descriptive text-ability of the students with high and low motivation; and (2) peer-response strategy and students' motivation gave interaction effect on the students' descriptive text writing. 2 classes of 10th grade consisting of 30 students each were selected through cluster random sampling as the sample which then being determined to become groups of experimental and control. Both pre-and post-tests of descriptive text writing and a questionnaire to measure students' motivation in learning were used as the instruments in collecting the data. The statistical analysis of t-test and two-way ANOVA hence used to analyze the data. The findings of this study revealed that: (1) peer-response strategy significantly influence descriptive text-ability of the students either with high or low motivation in which p-output of 0.000 was lower than mean significant difference at the level of 5% (0.05), and (2) the calculation result of p-output which reached the value of 0.142 (higher than significant difference at the level of 5%) showed that there was no interaction effect of peer-response strategy and motivation on students' descriptive text writing. Thus, this research study concluded that peer-response strategy gave a significant effect on the descriptive text writing ability of the students with both high and low motivation in learning.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is one of the compulsory subjects taught as a foreign language at schools starting from Primary to University levels. The students learn four skills of this language, i.e. speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehensively and among those skills, writing is the most essential one to acquire by the students (Husin & Nurbayani, 2017). According to De Poel & Gasiorek (2012), writing skill requires a considerable amount of language competence, especially when the language is being used as a second or foreign language for the speaker. Therefore, an effective and appropriate strategy is needed to teach the students to be able to express their thoughts in a written form. There are plethora

numbers of strategies that can be applied in improving students' writing ability and one of them is the 'Peer-response strategy'.

According to Liu and Hansen cited in Austria (2017), Peer response can be defined as an interactive strategy among the learners to get and give feedback, comments, and or critics related to their writing's draft, in which in this way, the learners themselves become the sources of information substituting the roles and responsibilities of the teacher. Thus, it builds a comfortable and trusting writing atmosphere for the learners (Liu and Hansen, 2005).

Various studies discussed peer-response strategy and students' writing ability, especially in developing descriptive text writing; one of the text types learned by Junior High School students. Muthoharoh and Anita (2018) involved 30 students of State Junior High School 14 Kota Serang, as the sample of their quantitative study on Peer-response strategy in descriptive text writing. The results of statistical analysis of both pre-and post-tests as the instruments used to collect the data revealed that t_o (7.14) was higher than t_{table} (1.67) both at significance level 5% and 1%. This finding confirmed that the Peer response strategy could be effective in developing students' descriptive text writing skills.

In their classroom action research, Yatima, et.al. (2020) also found that peer feedback could improve students' descriptive text writing ability. 11 male students of one Islamic Senior High School in Jambi participated in this research. They concluded that the application of peer feedback in descriptive text writing did not only support the students with basic materials on how to edit or revise, even more, it also stimulated their power of imagination which enables them to have a concept as the idea on what they were going to write.

Besides those two studies above, a similar study was also conducted by many other scholars, both published and unpublished (such as thesis and dissertation). Some of them who carried out peer response strategy (or using the similar term) and descriptive text writing in the last three years were including Rohmat and Sadikin (2019); Ermita, Emzir, and Lustyanti (2019); Yunita (2019); Destia (2020) and others. From those studies, the research on investigating the effectiveness of peer-response strategy on descriptive text writing of the students with high and low learning motivation was not specifically discussed, hence, this research was prepared to fill that gap.

Motivation is a prominent facet to help the teacher to improve the instructional process (Williams & Williams, 2011). Teachers who have to counter students with low motivation will find more ways and strategies to support these students so that they will be motivated and then follow the lessons actively. As Cudney and Ezzell (2017) argued that motivated students will be encouraged to produce meaningful work and having a desire for lifelong learning, that is why motivation plays a crucial role in the education process.

However, even the teacher applies varied strategies in teaching and or builds a comfortable atmosphere during the learning, still, some students are low

motivated. This is because motivation can be affected by various factors; both internal and external, which cannot be fully handled by the teacher. In this research, the writers involved the students who were first being measured for their motivation through the questionnaire. These students were divided into the ones who had the high motivation and the others who did not.

Based on the background described above, this research aimed to answer the following two research questions: (1) does peer-response strategy give a significant influence on the descriptive text-ability of the students with high and low motivation? (2) Is there any interaction effect of peer-response strategy and students' motivation on students' descriptive text writing ability?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study applied a quantitative method with a true-experimental research design. A total number of two classes of grade 10 consisting of 30 students each were selected through cluster sampling out of 4 classes with a total of 120 students. These two classes were directly assigned as experimental and controlled groups. Since the writers needed to measure the impacts of peer response strategy on descriptive text writing of the students with both high motivation and low motivation in learning, after the writers determined the sample, they were first given a questionnaire of motivation. It was a 4-scale motivation questionnaire provided consisting of 20 statements with 4 options, i.e. (1) strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Since the writers themselves designed this questionnaire, it was first validated before being distributed. The questionnaire was presented in the Indonesian language so that the respondents did not misinterpret the statements and hence, more valid results were obtained. In assessing the responses from the respondents, two raters were involved to score the results.

These scores were used to divide the students based on their motivation; high and low. In determining this decision, a theory proposed by Boric and Kubiszyn (cited in Pratiwi, 2014:47) was applied in which they argued that if the students' score in the average is greater than 3.0, it is interpreted that they have high motivation, and vice versa, if in the average, their score is lower than 3.0, then it means the students are classified as having low motivation.

Therefore, the factorial design was used as Fraenkel and Wallen (2012:227) explained that factorial designs extend the number of relationships that may be examined in an experimental study. They are essentially modifications or either the post-test-only control group or pretest-posttest control group designs (with or without random assignment), which permit the investigation of additional independent variables. This design allows the researcher to study the interaction of an independent variable with one or more other variables which is sometimes called the 'moderator variable'. And in this study, the moderator variable is 'students' motivation'.

The following diagram 1illustrates the design of the study:

Diagram 1
Factorial Design

Students' Motivation	Peer Response Strategy (X1)	Conventional Strategy (X2)
High (Y1)	Y1X1	Y1X1
Low (Y2)	Y2X1	Y2X2

Source: Fraenkel & Wallen (2012)

In collecting the data, the writers used pre-test and post-test. In these tests, the students were asked to describe a beautiful place that they had ever visited. The students' descriptive writing in these tests were analyzed based on 4 aspects, namely: (1) *Content:* the substance of the writing or the unity of the idea expressed; (2) *Organization*: the coherence of the text; (3) *Vocabulary:* appropriateness of the words used; (4) *Mechanism*: punctuation, capitalization, and pronoun.

In conducting the research, the writers taught the students of the experimental group descriptive text writing by applying the peer-response strategy. There were 4 stages of the writing process in this strategy that was being implemented to the students. The stages were:

(1) Pre-Writing

At this stage, the writers proposed the topic to be written to the class, raised motivation, set up writing purposes, determined readers, discussed the contents with the students and planned the writing then outlined it;

(2) Drafting

After the students got sufficient ideas to produce in the form of writing, they put the ideas on the paper quickly. The focuses of this stage were on ideas the students would like to convey to the readers, patterns, and mechanism;

(3) Revising

At this third stage, the students exchanged their writing with peers. Peers gave feedback in terms of content, language, and mechanism so that through this way it was expected that the students could develop their writing skills based on the feedback they received.

(4) Editing

At the last stage, the students were invited to review the feedback they received. They corrected the inappropriate parts with more appropriate ones. After this stage was done, the students were given time to go back and forth reviewing their writing draft until they accomplished it.

In analyzing the data, both independent t-tests were used to answer research question number 1 which was finding out the effect of peer-response strategy on students' descriptive text writing ability. Additionally, a formula of 'Two-way ANOVA' was applied to fulfill another research question which was finding out whether or not there was an interaction effect among peer response strategy and students' motivation on students' descriptive text writing achievement.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Since in this research report the writers focused only on presenting the findings of the group which was taught by using peer-response strategy, then the findings will be limited to describe the effect of peer-response strategy on high-

and-low motivated students' descriptive text writing.

Peer-response strategy affects the descriptive text writing ability of high and low motivated students

The calculation of the independent t-test of the experimental group of students taught by using peer response strategy revealed that the mean score of highly motivated students reached the value of 84.20 with a standard deviation of 2.704, and the standard error of the mean was 0.698. Meanwhile, the mean score gained by low motivated students was 69.10 with a 3.901 standard deviation, and 1.007 standard deviation error. This calculation showed that those two variances were similar in results in which p-output of 0.000 was higher than the mean significance at the level of 0.05.

Thus, it can be interpreted that there was a significant difference in writing scores achieved by the students with high motivation and those with low motivation. However, these two groups' achievements (group of students with high motivation and low) were affected by the strategy applied, namely peer-response.

The Interaction effects of peer-response strategy and students' motivation to descriptive text writing performance

The statistical analysis of Two-Way ANOVA indicated that the p-output of peer response strategy and motivation was 0.142. It was higher than the mean score at a significance level of 0.05. This result showed that there was no interaction effect between students'

writing ability using peer response strategy and their motivation.

Table 1 below presents the statistical calculation by using Two-Way ANOVA:

Table 1. Two-Way ANOVA

TWO-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Cluster_Score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4249,779(a)	3	1416,593	134,236	,000
Intercept	310248,504	1	310248,504	29399,148	,000
Teaching_Method	1349,004	1	1349,004	127,832	,000
Motivation	2877,338	1	2877,338	272,656	,000
Teaching_Method * Motivation	23,438	1	23,438	2,221	,142
Error	590,967	56	10,553		
Total	315089,250	60			
Corrected Total	4840,746	59			

a. R Squared = ,878 (Adjusted R Squared = ,871)

CONCLUSION

Referring to the findings found from the statistical calculation, this study concluded that; First, there were significant effects of peer-response strategy on both students either with high or low motivation in terms of their descriptive text writing ability. Even descriptive text writing achievements of these two groups of students (high and low motivation) were different, but both groups reached better descriptive text writing performance after being taught by using peer-response strategy.

Second, another statistical analysis of interaction among variables revealed that there was no interaction between peer-response strategy and motivation to students' descriptive text writing. However, if the students have good motivation in learning, it would be easier for them to develop their writing skills moreover if they learn by using the effective and appropriate strategy.

Overall, the findings of this research study lead the writers to give suggestions to several parties, i.e. 1) to English teachers; it is strongly suggested

that language teachers should be able to apply various teaching strategies in the classes. As English is taught as a foreign language, most students perceive this subject as one of the difficult subjects. Encouraging students to enjoy the lessons and have great motivation to learn this subject by (one of them) implementing interesting and effective teaching strategy, will give a great impact on students' achievement. Thus, the objectives of the lesson will be optimally reached. 2) to further researches; due to limited time and cost, this research still has many limitations including the total number of the sample being investigated, limited tools to collect the data, narrow variables to be investigated, etc. The writers would like to recommend to other researchers who are interested in doing a similar study to measure more students with various grades to get more valid results. The data can also be collected by using more instruments; interviews, observation, documentation to elaborate the quantitative findings wider. The investigation can also be covered more variables such as gender, age, learning styles, etc. so that the interpretations of the results can be supported by more data.

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