

Enhancing Students' Writing Achievement through E-Mail Exchanges on Personal Letter

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Abstract. The objective of this study was to find out whether or not there is any significant differences between teaching writing the eight grade students by using e-mail exchanges and those who are not. The method of this study was quasi experimental non-equivalent control group design. The total number of population was 278 students. The sample was class VIII.1 and VIII.2 were classified into two groups, experimental and control group. The data were collected through test. The test was writing test, namely pretest and posttest, and the results were analyzed by t-test by helping SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), the data were obtained from the pretest of the experimental group. The pretest was given before giving the treatment, and posttest after the treatment. It The writing test was about personal letter written by the students based on one of topics that they preferred. Based on the data analysis, the mean score of the posttest in the experimental group is 43.7500 and the mean in the control group is 25.9659. It means the mean score of the posttest in the experimental group is higher than the mean in the control group. The result of independent sample t-test shows that t-obtained is higher than the critical value of t-table is $16.780 > 1.664$. It could be concluded that there is any significant improvement in personal letter writing between the students who are taught by using E-mail exchanges and those who are not.

Key Words: *Enhancing Writing Achievement, E-mail Exchanges, Personal Letter*

1. Introduction

Writing is one of the skills of English that must be mastered by students and it is difficult to be learned. (Xing, 2014) states that writing is a difficult skill for native and non native speaker alike, it is complex process, because the writers must balance multiple issue such as content, organization, purpose, audience, diction, vocabulary, and mechanics. It is also about composition, transcription and review. Composition is the mental of creating ideas, identifying, and selecting words and using appropriate grammar. Transcription is the physical act of spelling, legibility, punctuation, capitalization, and indenting. Review is an overview of what has been written about the advantages and disadvantages, but often in changes to

aspects of transcription and composition. Browne (1999) states composition, transcription, and review are the writing processes that all writers use, it is important that students are introduced to each of these aspect.

In Indonesia, based on 2013 English curriculum, the students must have some functional abilities, such as they are able to understand in making a good sentence. But some of them can't do it well and it will affect in their writing achievement. In the other word, Students' writing achievement will occur well if they understand and comprehend the aspect of writing and they must pay attention with grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, indenting, and content when writing in the learning process in the classroom. The

process is difficult, not easy. In this case, they must pay attention to what aspects in writing are, that why in this research the writer wants to attempt Email exchanges to improve students' writing achievement on personal letter.

Technology in language teaching is not new added and it has been around in language teaching for decades. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 7) technology makes everything easier to be done because we can use it whenever and wherever we are and it has already been known and used as teaching and learning media. One of them is e-mail. E-mail is a facility of electronic mail. E-mail messages can be sent across different kinds of networks, both locally and globally. A side from the Internet there are thousands of local area networks and wide area networks that send millions more messages daily across various kinds of transmission cable. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 62) state that e-mail is the most used and useful in helping people and also it allows us to keep in touch with others around the world via mailing list and discussion groups, thus helping out. Most of students of this school they often access the internet for playing social network or just enough playing games on the internet. When she asked about e-mail to the some of eighth grade students, they know exactly what the E-mail is. But unfortunately, they are reluctant to open and use it for communication when accessing the internet.

English Writing Skill

Writing is a skill of English that must be learned and mastered by students and it is a primary means of recording speech. Canagarajah (2002) defines writing is the primary means of constructing new

knowledge. Writing also must be learned because it is a predictor of academic success. There are many tools for writing used by people, include stone tablets, clay tablets, wax tablets, vellum, parchment, paper, copperplate, styluses, quills, ink brushes, pencils, pens, and other tools. In writing process, surely it has the some stages to support this activity in order to can be able to write appropriately. Therefore for being more proficient writers, students move gradually from knowledge-telling to knowledge transformation. Knowledge is most typical of less proficient writers and involves writing content that could in principle also be conveyed orally. Knowledge-transformation is more complex; the writing process is used as a way to extend ideas and reasoning and as a vehicle for the development of knowledge, philosophical ideas, and personal awareness.

Writing plays two distinct which is complementary roles in the school setting. Graham and Perin (2007, p. 9) said that in the school setting, writing plays two distinct but complementary roles. First, it is a skill that draws on the use of strategies (such as planning, evaluating, and revising text) to accomplish a variety of goals, such as writing a report or expressing an opinion with the support of evidence. Second, writing is a means of extending and deepening students' knowledge; it acts as a tool for learning subject matter. It is very important to be learned because writing well is not just an opinion. Graham and Perin (2007, p. 3) state writing well is not just an option for young people it is a necessity. So, Writing is a crucial part in English because if we ignore it, it will be difficult to communicate in English in

written form. To improve the students' writing achievement, writers have to make the technique in order that to they can achieve their writing achievement. Writing achievement therefore involves development of both low level transcription and formulation skills necessary for making grammatically correct sentences appear on the page and higher level metacognitive skills associated with determining content and structure necessary to create effective text that communicates the writer's ideas Hattie and Anderman (2013). In this research the writer will design the written test to measure students' writing achievement.

Definition of E-mail

E-mail is a communication tool used by people to connect people to people in the world. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 62) said that E-mail is one of the most used and useful information and communication technology (ICT) tools around today. E-mail development is an outcome technology that is valuable for human beings. The development e-mail has the relationship with information and communication technology (ICT) development that is very essential in this era for supporting a modern life. Dudeney and Hockly (2007) said that there are some argumentative reason for the fact that information and communication technology (ICT) is necessitated in this era:

- 1) Internet access-either in private homes or at internet cafes-is becoming increasingly available to learners.
- 2) Learners are growing up with technology, and it is a natural and integrated part of their lives.
- 3) English, as an international language is being used is technologically mediated context.

- 4) Technology, especially internet, presents us with new opportunities for authentic task material, as well as access to a wealth of ready-made English language teaching (ELT) materials.
- 5) The internet offers excellent opportunities for collaboration and communication between learners who are geographically.
- 6) Technology is offered with publish materials such as course book and resource book for teachers.
- 7) Learners increasingly expect language schools to integrate technology into teaching.
- 8) Technology offers new ways for practicing language and assessing performance.
- 9) Technology is becoming increasingly mobile.
- 10) Using a range of information and communication technology (ICT) tools can give learners exposure to and practice in all of the four language skills speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Therefore the use of technology in developing language skill is good way because technology is very simple to use and familiar in social life.

Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 62) once of the biggest advantages of using email with learners from the teacher's point of view is that the technology is relatively simple to use, and most of our learners will already be familiar with it. E-mail gives us the ability to contact any person in the world in a matter of second. Electronic mail means communication in written form between one people to another people with computer terminal or personal computer. Clark (2003) said that electronic mail (email) is a reliable and exceptionally fast means of message

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communication between human users equipped with computer terminal or personal computers. After discussing what the meaning of email, now we will discuss the types of mail, the views of the services provided, there are three types of emails that are currently used, namely POP3 mail, Web-based Email, and IMAP.

Email has a function as a tool to send or receive mail, and data that can be attached to the letter. Even more data in the form of digital data is not a real file. The data can be sent via email including data typing, music, video, images, software programs and other digital data. Cornick (2015) electronic mail (email) Computerized communication function that enables users to send and receive messages almost instantly.

E-mail Exchanges

E-mail exchanges are the activity done by people to communicate and exchange some information each other. In abroad, e-mail exchanges term is known as keypal project defined as a medium to improve students' skill and cultural awareness. Son and O'Neill (1999) in e-mail exchanges activity in classroom, the teacher becomes as a facilitator who can allow students to analyze their own errors, learn from their mistakes, and adapt their strategies. During e-mail activities, the teacher can be an observer or a mediator to be called upon when students need him/her. Students are encouraged to assume more responsibility for their own progress and move toward independence as writers. In an e-mail project, the teacher's main role is to explain objectives, introduce materials and procedures, and then monitor each student's progress while giving appropriate feedback on the student's work. In the case of team

teaching projects, the teacher also has a role to collaborate with other teachers of classes in different places so they can work together, sharing information to improve their teaching methods. Talking about the usefulness of e-mail exchanges, there are much usefulness that we can take from it especially for writing. Son and O'Neill (1999) state that e-mail activities would be facilitated by students participating in an orientation stage which would focus on use of the e-mail system, typing skills and the peer editing approach and for error correction.

Personal letter is personal communication in writing form connecting everybody in order to communicate each other in certain context, by using language that is not standard. Gherwash and Paiz (2014) personal letters are used in certain contexts as a means of personal communication. Personal letter may differ with other kinds of letter, such as personal letter different with business letter that avoiding flaming, jargon and clichés are often present in personal letter. Fry (2012) state many elements that we need to be aware of in business letters, such as the avoidance of jargon and clichés, are quite often present in personal letters. Personal letter plays important roles including how to structure the letter itself, because different context will different structure of the letter, it will discuss a few of the conventions that are common across different contexts of the letters.

Writing Personal Letter through E-mail Exchanges

E-mail as electronic mail we can be sent across different kinds of networks, both locally and globally and it useful for helping us to do personal communicate in written

form. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 62) state e-mail is the most used and useful in helping people and also it allows us to keep in touch with others around the world via mailing list and discussion groups, thus helping out professional development. Everybody often use E-mail to writing letter especially personal letter, personal letter write in informal style. Personal letter sometimes sent to a close friend so that why personal letter will have different level of formality with another kinds of letter such as job vacancy and businessletter. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 63) an email writing to enquire about job vacancy will have a different level of formality to an email sent to a close friend. Writing personal letter on the paper may differ when we are writing personal letter through E-mail exchanges. Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 63) state that many learners will already have a personal or work email account that they will be willing to use for their language class work, but others may need help with setting up a new email account.

2. Method

Researcher used an experimental method, one of a quasi-experimental design which are pretest and posttest non-equivalent control group design. Creswell (2012) Quasi-experiments include assignment, but not random assignment of participant to groups. The quasi-experimental design involves an experimental group and a control group both given a pretest and posttest and the subjects were not randomly assigned to groups. The population of this study was the eighth grade students with a total numbers 278 students. The sample was taken by using purposive sampling, researcher choose class VIII.1 for the experimental group

consisting of 40 students and class VIII.2 for the control group consisting of 39 students, total 79 students.

Kind of the test that was given to the students was achievement test. Achievement test was a measurement which was designed to be an indicator of student progress relatives to specified learning goal. The test was given to the sample of this study to measure their writing achievement. In this study, writing test was used. It consisted of the pretest and posttest to know whether the students' writing achievement increases or not. The pretest was given to the students in order to know the writing achievement of the students before giving the treatment. Then, the posttest was given to the students in order to know the writing achievement of the students after giving the treatment. Before the test was administered to the sample, the test was tried out to the students who were out of the sample to find out validity and reliability of the test. In this case, the writer chose class VIII.3 as the non-sample class in giving try-out because their English proficiency is more or less similar to the sample. For conducting the writing test, the writer asked the students to write personal letter correctly. This test contains their ideas expressed on the personal letter form and some topics had offered by the writer to be chosen by them before writing their personal letter.

The writer validated and calculated the students' score by using Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient. For calculation of the reliability of the test, she used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 17.0 for windows. According to Boyle and Fisher (2007, p. 75)

define should have a reliability coefficient of at least 0.70 and preferably 0.80.

The writer used one of type validity named content validity because it referred to extent to which a test measures a representative sample of the subject matter content. Therefore, before the test was administered to the sample, the test was tried out to the students who were out of the sample to find out validity and reliability of the test.

3. Finding and Discussions

The data of the experimental group and control group were analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Science to find out the difference between pretest and posttest. There were three statistical analyses used by the writer in this study: (1) the statistical analysis on the results of pretest and posttest of the experimental group and control group by using one group design (paired sample t-test), (2) the statistical analysis on the posttest of the experimental group and control group by using independent sample t-test. The Statistical Analyses on the Result of the Pretest and Posttest of the Experimental Group and the Control Group by Using Paired Sample Ttest. The mean score of pretest in experiment group was 24.5312 and the mean score of posttest in experimental group was 43.7500. The mean score of pre control group was 1.19322 and the mean score of post control group was 25.9659. As a result, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference after the students were taught by using e-mail exchanges.

Percentage of overall scores of the experimental and control group, for Pretest none of students (0%) was in very good category in pretest of experimental group

and control group, 1 student (2.5%) was in good category in pretest of experimental group and none of student was in good category in the control group, 14 students of experimental group (35%) were in average category and 8 students of control group (20.51%) were in average category, 25 students of experimental group (62.5%) were in poor category and 30 students of control group (76.92%) were in poor category, and 1 student (2.56%) was in failed category. For posttest, 3 students of experimental group (7.5%) were in very good category and none of students of control group (0%) was in good category, 35 students of experimental group (87.5%) were in good category and 2 students of control group (5.12%) were in good category, 2 students of experimental group (5%) were in average category and 9 students of control group (23.07%) were average category, none of students of experimental group (0%) was in poor

The Statistical Analysis of the Experimental Group and Control Group by Using Independent Sample T-Test. Based on analysis of independent sample test (see table 18), the t-obtained of the posttest in the experimental and control group was 16.780. At the significant level of $t < 0.05$ in two tailed testing and degree of freedom was 77, the critical value of t-table was 1.664. It could be stated that there was a significant difference between the students' pretest and posttest in improving their writing achievement in writing personal letter by using e-mail exchanges. As a result, it could be concluded that there was any significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students who were taught by using e-mail exchanges and who were not.

4. Conclusion

The students who were taught by using e-mail exchanges had better writing achievement than the students who were not taught by e-mail exchanges. By using e-mail exchanges, the students can improve their writing achievement in writing personal letter. It means that there was any significant difference between the students who were taught by e-mail exchanges and who were not. The result of this study is the students who were taught by email exchanges had progress in writing especially in writing personal letter. The students in the experimental group made much progress. It could be seen on the result of the posttest of the experimental group, which is higher than the result of the pretest. It happened because treatment that the writer gave to the students was effective to make them understand in learning English especially in improving their writing achievement in writing personal letter.

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