IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY THROUGH FOLKTALES

Hasriati Nur

athyadin@gmail.com

Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (STAIN) Watampone

Abstract

The objective of the research aims to find out whether the use of folktales can improve the students' writing ability or not.Quasi-experimental design was applied in this research with two classes of the students. The first class as an experimental class and the second as a control class that was given different treatment. The instrument of this research was a written test. The population of this research was the first year students of SMA Negeri 2 Watampone, academic year 2012-2013. The number of population was 420 students consisted of 14 classes. A sample of this research was taken by using cluster random sampling technique; there were 60 students as sample, 30 students in X-9 as experimental class and 30 students in X-10 as control class. Data were collected through written test administered in the pretest and posttest. The mean score of pretest in experimental class is 47.93 and mean score of posttest is 73.5. While the mean score of pretest in control class is 52.36 and mean score of posttest is 66.37. It can be conclude that there is significant difference of the students after the use of folktales in improving their writing ability.

Keywords: *writing ability, folktales*

INTRODUCTION

English is very important language used by people around the world to communicate. It is one of the reasons why there are many people learn English. Language consists of four kind of skill. They are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Writing is

one of the important skills in English, and it can help the students in learning and developing their English by expressing their knowledge, experience and the way of thinking. It can be expressed in form of essay, a paragraph, a letter, a short story and etc. Writing ability is very important for this time, and no one can obtain success without having this ability. Masdianti (2011) stated that "through writing we can convey our feeling, thought and opinion without having face to face".

Writing is one of the most difficult aspects of language skills. The ability to write involves specific skills, such as; the use of punctuation, structure of sentence, vocabulary, and organization of paragraph. According to Heaten (1988:138) whostated that "writing skills are complex and difficult to teach requiring mastery not only of grammatical and theoritical device but also of conceptual and judgment elements."

So, the teacher have to find out one way that makes the students enjoy when they do the writing and can make improving the students writing ability, and folktale also one way that can be used as a teaching material which has many advantages. Folktales have been used by many teachers from all over the world to make their students enjoy reading literature.

Folktale is a traditional story of the societies which is retold hereditarily from one generation to the next generation and usually record in written form. Most of the students are familiar with it and it can be the source of idea of writing. Folktale is a traditional narrative story, usually anonymous, handed own orally, such as fable, fairy tales, and legend. Student especially in Senior High School are interested in reading folktales because it is simple and more enjoyable than other textbook.

Based on explanation above, the objective of the research is to find out whether or not use of folktales can improve the students' writing ability. Here, the student's can improve their writing ability use folktales. The results of this research are expected to be useful information for students, teacher and people who concern about teaching method and its implementation in teaching to developing the ability to write using folktales as a teaching material.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing is one of language skills that is very important in language teaching and learning process, and has made many researchers explore and expose the implementation of various techniques in teaching and learning writing.

Jafar (1998) has conducted a research of the students' ability in paragraph development. He found that students had low ability in making new topic sentence clear for the reader, developing the idea of writing or topic idea into wider paragraph, relating from one sentence to the others. They still don't master the transitional evacuees that can be used to connect sentence or paragraph. As a result, their paragraph development lacks coherence, making the paragraph from specific to general, but they cannot conclude their sentence.

Evasanti (2009) states that the implementation of folktales in vocabulary mastery was effectively done, it succeeds the improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery by setting up the material in folktales and teaching by folktales brings improvement the students' vocabulary mastery.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher can give conclusion that folktales is an alternative material in teaching learning process to help the teachers to deliver their idea or knowledge in order that it can be understood easily by students to write in English.

A. The Concept of Writing

Basically, writing meant producing or reproduction oral message into written language. It involves an active process to organize, formulate, and develop the ideas on the papers so that the readers can follow the writes' as in oral form. Rasyid (2003) in his research defines "writing as a kind of activities where the writer put all his ideas in his mind on the papers from words to sentences, sentences to paragraph and from paragraph to text."

In Cambridge International Dictonary (1995) in Syarman (2002) "English writing meant to make marks which represent letters, words or numbers on a surface, such as a paper or a computer screen, using pen, pencil or keyboard, or to use this method to record thoughts, fact, or message."

According to Pincas (1982:4) expresses that "writing enables the human being to communicate and express their feeling and opinions, writing are a means of both communication and self expression."

Based on the definitions above, the researcher takes a conclusion that writing is an activity to share ideas, feeling, and thought into written form that is meaningful not only for the writer but also for the reader.

1. Writing Process

The writing process as a private activity may be broadly seen as comprising four main stages; planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Those are indicated a stages in writing for writers. Krashen in Amiluddin (2004: 20) find in his research that "many good writers in

writing draft with approaches may be interrupted by more planning and revisions to reformulate the writing with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages."

Process writing as a classroom activity involves the four basics writing stages and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher; responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing. "Process writing, in this case, as the highly structured and thus may lead the variation of teaching in responding activities. Teachers often plan appropriate classroom activities that support the learning of specific writing skills at every stage." (Seow, 1984).

2. Component of Writing

Jacobs et al (1981) in Nurhananita (2008:12) points out five significant components in writing: they are content, organization, vocabulary, language use/grammar, and mechanic.The students have to know the five components of writing. The students can make a good writing.

3. Types of Writing

Types of writing can be seen in any aspects including forms, purposes, grammatical, etc. However, in this case, the types of writing are clarified in forms aspects as the following explanations. They are narration, description, exposition, persuasion, and argumentation.

B. Narrative Writing

1. Definition of Narrative

The main focus of this study is narrative text since it is the most frequently occurred and widely used in language teaching. The essential thing in narrative is that it present story which involves characters. Additionally, it deals with events that "constitute problem for one or more the characters who are motivated to confront the problem and attempt to solve it" (Rothery, 1995:285, cited in Kusumaningsih: 2008).

Therefore, narrative writing means the production of stories or personal essays. It encourages writers to use their creativity and powers of observation to develop stories that can capture reader's imagination.

2. Kinds of Narrative

Narrative writing can be found in the fairy stories, science fiction, romance, horror stories, folktale, historical stories and mystery stories. However, narrative is generally distinguished into forms, which are fictional and non-fictional (Manfred: 2005, cited in kusumaningsih: 2008).

3. The Generic Structure and the Language Feature of Narrative

Anderson (1997: 8) states that the steps for constructing a narrative are: (a) Orientation/ exposition, the readers are introduced set the scene and participant: where and when story happen and who and what is involved in the story. (b) Complication/ rising action, the complication is pushed along by a serious of events, during which we usually expect some sort of complication or problem to arise. (c) Sequence of event? Climax, this is where the narrator tells how the character reacts to the complication. (d) Resolution/ falling action, the problems are resolved, either in a happy ending or in a sad ending. (e) Reorientation, it is an optional closure of event. It consistsof a moral lesson advice or teaching from the writer.

C. Folktale

Folktale is a story that has been passed down through the generations. Myths, legends, fairy tales and fables represent types of folktales. They normally teach a moral lesson or rationalize world events or phenomena that could not otherwise be explained at the time of the tale's origin, such as how the world came to exist. An author can write a story in the style of a folktale by following its conventions (Katherine, 2011).

Based on the definition above, the researcher can conclude that folktale is a traditional story of the societies which is retold from one generation to the next generation and usually record in written form.

1. Characteristics and Element of Folktale

There are some characteristics and element of folktales such as the story are simple and straightforward, the story always tell about magical or supernatural elements, Characters of the story represent human qualities, problems and conflicts of story are clear, the end of the story is usually happy or satisfying.

The element of folktales are setting (time and place), plot (action or events of a story), character (people or figures in a story), theme (a story's statement about life), and style and tone (how the story is written).

2. Kind of Folktales

a. Cumulative Tales: simplest tale of all tales that repeat actions, characters or speeches until a climax is reached.

b. Beast Tales/stories: tales in which most of the characters are animals. They often talk/act like humans.

c. Trickster Tales: tales in which a small, weak character outsmarts a larger, more powerful character.

d. Romance Stories: tales wherein enchantment and impossible task separate lavers and magic may reunite them.

3. The Advantages of Teaching Folktales

There are many advantages of teaching students with short work of folklore because folktales are short. It is easy to distribute copies of short tales or rhymes to a whole class, discuss them during a class period, and compare a variety of examples to different topics, without needing time for extensive reading assignments.

Then, folktales are fun. Many types of folklore are entertaining and most of us have fond memories of stories and rhymes we have known since childhood and folktales unite children and adults. There are many types of folklore have been reprinted and adapted in children's books in the past couple centuries.

METHOD

This research employed a quasi-experimental design involving two classes of students. The first class functions as an experimental class and the second class as a control class. The experimental class received the new treatment by use of folktales during teaching and learning; whereas the control class was taught with the way their teacher teach them (conventional way).

The design above means that both classes (experimental and control) were given pretest to find out the students' prior knowledge. After pretest the experimental class was given treatment by using Folktales whereas the control class was given conventional way. Finally, the two classes were given the same posttest to see the students' achievement based on the material that has been learned.

This research has two variables; they are independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variable in experimental class is the use of folktales in teaching writing and the control class is use of conventional way. Dependent variable of the research is the students' writing ability.

The population of this research was the first year students of SMAN 2 Watampone, which consists of 14 classes. Each of the class consists of 30 students. The total number of students is 420. This research applied cluster random sampling that the researcher selected two classes out of 14 classes. Where X-9 was the experimental class and X-10 was the

control class. They are registered in academic year 2012-2013. The number of the sample was 60 students from two different classes.

The instrument of the research was written test used as pretest and posttest. The written test consisted of (1) pre-test to know the students' prior ability in writing before treatment, (2) post-test was administered to know the students' writing ability after given the treatment. For experimental class, the pretest was intended to find out the students prior ability in writing before giving treatment by using folktales while the posttest was intended to know the effect of using folktales to improve the students' writing ability after given the treatment. For control class, the researcher gave pretest as experimental class. Then the researcher used conventional way before giving posttest.

Procedure of Collecting Data

There were three stages of process collecting data. The procedures of collecting data were chronologically presented as follows:

1. Before giving treatment, the researcher administered a pre-test for experimental class and control class. The researcher was giving written test to the student to identify the prior knowledge of writing ability before teaching. Then, the researcher asked the students to write their holiday in interesting place. It took one meeting about 60 minutes. The pre-test intended to know the students' ability before giving the treatment.

2. After giving the pre-test, the researcher was giving the treatment for the students. The treatment aimed to improve the students' writing ability in English through folktales. It was conducted in four meeting and each meeting takes 90 minutes.

3. In experimental class researcher was giving treatments for the students. The treatments were giving to the students like explained about types of writing and how to write, explained about folktales and the components of folktales, explained how to make a narrative composition, distributed and read some example of folktales from Indonesian culture. After give explanation about the material the researcherasked the students some question related to the folktales that they have read to examine the students' understanding. Then give students 10 minute to think or imagine what they will write on the paper. After that the researcher askedthe students to make a short narrative composition. Finally, the researcher was discuss with the students' mistake in their writing and gives them some corrections, critics, and suggestions. In control class did not receive any treatments. The control group

ran the teaching learning process as they usually do daily, used the lesson plan of the school. On the other words, this group used conventional way of teaching learning process. For experimental class and control class, the researcher gave students the same content which was used in pretest. It aimed at finding out the result of teaching process.

Technique of Data Analysis

The data was collected through the tests and analyzed by using quantitative analysis. The researcher observes five aspects in writing namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use/grammar and mechanics. These five components were required in making a narrative composition.

In this research, the data collected after giving instrument of collecting data to the student. The data analyzed through quantitative analysis. To get the score, the researcer used an analytical rating scale for evaluating written language which includes the content, organization, vocabulary, language use / grammar, and mechanics on the studnets' pieces of writing.

Scoring the students' ability into the following criteria. To get the students' score in writing, the researcher applied the following scoring system based on Jacob (1981) Testing ESL Composition : A practical Approach.

The Rating Aspects of Writing

Tabel 1. Rating Aspect of Writing

No	Rating Aspects	Score
1	Content	30
2	Organization	20
3	Vocabulary	20
4	Language use	25
5	Mechanics	5
	Total	100

1. Content

   The researcher wants to find out whether the student composition was knowledgeable, substantives, thoroughly developed and relevant to the topic.

Tabel 2. Scoring Criteria of Content

Score	Classification	Criteria
30-27	Excellent to very good	Knowledgeable and relevant to the assigned topics
26-22	Good to average	Some knowledge of subject adequate range
21-17	Fair to poor	Limited knowledge of subject, little substance
16-13	Very poor	Non organization and not enough to evaluate.

2. Organization

   Organization was included fluent expression, ideas clearly stated, well organized, logically sequenced, and cohesion in writing.

Tabel 3. Scoring Criteria of Organization

Score	Classification	Criteria
20-18	Excellent to very good	Fluent expression, ideas clearly stated, supported logical sequencing well-organized
17-14	Good to average	Somewhat choppy main ideas but main idea stand out logical but incomplete sequencing
13-10	Fair to poor	Lack logical sequencing, development, non-fluent ideas confused and not communicative.
9-7	Very poor	No communicated, no organization

3. Vocabulary

   Vocabulary was to show sophisticated range, effective word / idiom choice and usage. The word placements give the intended message. Words were correctly as to their function.

Tabel 4. Scoring Criteria of Vocabulary

Score	Classification	Criteria
20-18	Excellent to very good	Sophisticated range, effective word or idioms choice and usage
17-14	Good to average	Adequate range, occasional errors of words / idioms, choice, and usage, but meaning not obscured
13-10	Fair to poor	Limited range, some word and idiom choice, and usage
9-7	Very poor	Many errors of word use, little knowledge of English vocabulary

4. Language Use

Language use was consists of effective complex construction, agreement, tense, number, word order, function, articles, pronouns, and preposition in writing.

Tabel 5. Scoring Criteria of Language Use

Score	Classification	Criteria
25-22	Excellent to very good	Effective complex construction few errors of agreement, tenses, number, word-order, function, articles, pronouns, and preposition.
21-19	Good to average	Effective but simple construction minor, problem in complex construction several errors of grammar
18-11	Fair to poor	Mayor problem of simple construction frequent errors and grammar
10-5	Very poor	Virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules

5. Mechanics

Mechanics was the mastery of conversation like spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing and handwriting.

Tabel 6. Scoring Criteria of Mechanics

Score	Classification	Criteria
5	Excellent to very good	Demonstration mastery of conversation, no problem puff spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
4	Good to average	Few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but not observed
3	Fair to poor	Some errors of mechanics
2	Very poor	Many errors of mechanics

Classifying the students' score into five levels which based on the standard score of evaluation and it used the intervals the maximal score was 100 and the minimum score was 34 where if the learners get maximal score in each components in scoring system, the learners will get 100 score but if the students get minimum score each components of scoring system, so the student will get 34 score. So, based on the mean score, to know the students' writing ability in folktales before and after given the treatment, it would be classified into five categories in the following :

87-100 was classified as very good

74-86 was classified as good

61-73 was classified as fair

47-60 was classified as poor

34-47 was classified as very poor

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

The findings of this research deal with the scoring classification of the students pre-test and posttest, hypothesis testing of the paired sample containing mean score, standard deviation, and the test of significance.

1. Scoring Classification of the Students' Pre-test and Posttest

The raw score of the students writing ability obtained through tabulating the five components of writing, they are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

The students' score on the pre-test and posttest were as follows:

a. Experimental Class

Table 7. Rate percentage and frequency of the students score of pretest and posttest in experimental class

No	Classification	Range	Freq (Pre-test)	Percentage (Pre-test)	Freq (Posttest)	Percentage (Posttest)
1	Very Good	87-100	0	0.00%	4	13.33%
2	Good	74-86	0	0.00%	9	30.00%
3	Fair	61-73	3	10.00%	11	36.67%
4	Poor	47-60	11	36.67%	6	20.00%
5	Very Poor	34 – 46	16	53.33%	0	0.00%

The result of data analysis for the test on table 6 indicates that, in the pre-test there is 0 (0 %) student get very good score, 0 (0 %) students get good score, 3 (10.00 %) students get fair score, 11 (36.67%) students get poor score, and 16 (53.33%) students get very poor score.

After giving the treatment, the result of the posttest showed that 4 (13.33%) students got very good score, 9 (30.00%) students got good score, 11 (36.67%) students got fair score, 6 (20.00%) students got poor score, and 0 (0 %) student got very poor score. It means that the students' ability in writing English has improved. They are categorized in fair classification.

b. Control Class

Table 8. Rate percentage and frequency of the students score of pretest and posttest in control class

No	Classification	Range	Freq (Pre-test)	Percentage (Pre-test)	Freq (Posttest)	Percentage (Posttest)
1	Very Good	87-100	0	0.00%	2	6.67%
2	Good	74-86	1	3.33%	10	33.33%
3	Fair	61-73	11	36.67%	10	33.33%
4	Poor	47-60	5	16.67%	5	16.67%
5	Very Poor	34 – 46	13	43.33%	3	10.00%

The result of data analysis for the test on table 6 indicates that, in the pre-test there were 0 (0 %) student get very good score, 1 (3.33 %) students get good score, 11 (36.67%) students get fair score, 5 (16.67%) students get poor score, and 13 (43.33%) students get very poor score.

In the posttest there were 2 (6.67%) students get very good score,10 (33.33%) students get good score, 10 (33.33%) students get fair score, 5 (16.67%) students get poor score, and 3 (10.00 %) student get very poor score.

2. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students

The mean score and standard deviation of both classes are presented in the following table:

Table 9. Mean score and standard deviation of the students' pretest and posttest

Group	Pretest		Posttest	
	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Experimental Class	47.93	8.74	73.5	9.84
Control Class	52.36	14.71	66.37	13.29

The table above shows that, the mean score of students' pre-test for experimental class is (47.9) and standard deviation of the students is (8.74) while the mean score of students in post-test is (73.5) and standard deviation ofstudents is (9.84). For the control class, the mean score of students in pre-test is (52.36) and standard deviation of students is (14.71) while the mean score of students in post-test is (66.37) and standard deviation of students in post-test is (13.29). Both the mean score and standard deviation of experimental and control classin pre-test are almost similar, but the mean score and standard deviation of experimental and control group in post-test are different.

3. t-test and t-table Value

After finding the mean score and standard deviation, the researcher calculated whether or not both classes have statistically significant difference of writing ability at level of significance (p) = 0.05 with degree of freedom (df) = $n_1 + n_2 - 2$.

df = $n_1 + n_2 - 2$

df = 30 + 30 − 2

df = 58

Table 10. T-test and t-table of the students' pretest and post-test

Variable	t-test Value	t-table Value
Pretest	- 1.42	1.672
Posttest	2. 36	

The table above shows that, the result of that calculation shows that t-test value in pre-test is (- 1.41) and t-table value is (1.672). In this case, t-test value is smaller than t-table

value (-1.41 <1.672). It indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean score and it also indicates that null hypothesis (H0) is accepted and alternative hypothesis (H1) is rejected. However, t-test value in post-test is (2. 36). In this case, t-test value is greater than t-table value (2.36 >1.672). It indicates that the difference between those mean scores is statistically significant. It also indicates that null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The description of data collected through writing test as explained in the previous section shows that using folktales improved the students' writing ability. It was supported by frequency and rate percentage of the result of the students' pre-test and posttest from the five components of writing.

Before giving the treatment, the students were given pre-test both experimental and control class on the first meeting. Based on the students work in pretest, the researcher analyzed that on five components of writing: most of the students had low ability to express their idea in writing folktales. While most of students had difficulty to start their writing task and some of them were also confused on how to develop the topic and also they did not know what and how to tell their ideas and also they were confused how to arrange sentence into a good paragraph. Besides that, they also still had low comprehension about how to write especially about five components of writing.

After giving the pretest, the students got some treatments to write narrative text by using folktales. There, researcher was expected that the writing ability of the students would improve. Based on the students' problem in writing ability that had been appeared in pre-test, the researcher conducted treatment as long as four meetings.

Students' writing ability in both classes has improved but experimental class was better than control class. Before, the researcher conducted the treatment the students' writing ability in both classes were still very poor. It is because their lack of vocabulary, language use, and mechanic in writing. They also use Indonesian style when in their writing. They could arrange the sentence into good structures and there students did not want to write in English. But, during teaching and learning process from week to week most of the students can make a good narrative text in writing.

The result was supported by some theory. As Evasanti (2009) states that the implementation of folktales in vocabulary mastery was effectively done, it succeeds the

improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery by setting up the material in folktales and teaching by folktales brings improvement the students' vocabulary mastery. The use of folktales in learning process is not only improving students' vocabulary mastery but also improving students' writing ability.

Besides, Folktales in learning process particularly in writing was relax, easer and fun. The students' also were more attractive, and they can do all their activity together and share information each other. As Nurhayati (2007) conducted a research on the use of Folktales as an Alternative. It could raise students' interests. Based on the explanation the researcher concludes folktales can improve students' writing ability in SMA N 2 Watampone.

Related to the theory and previous related research findings, this research obviously supports the previous findings which explain that through folktales as material in teaching writing. It can help the teacher to catch students' attention in teaching learning process. It can be stated that the writing ability of the students by using folktales was improved from very poor score to good score.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the use of folktales can improve the students writing ability of the first year students of SMA Negeri 2 Watampone. It is proven by the significant difference between the score of experimental and control class after giving the treatment. The posttest score in experimental class improved significantly compare to the pretest, while the score in posttest of control class is still in the same range as the pretest. It is obviously proved by the result of the t-test in post-test which is greater than the t-table value (2.36>1.672). The researcher concluded, that the use of folktales in learning process particularly in writing was relax, easer and fun. The students' also were more attractive, and they can do all their activity together and share information each other.

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