TEAM ASSISTED INDIVIDUALIZATION MODEL AT WRITING CLASS

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Abstract: Team Assisted Individualization (T-A-I) enables students to work on cooperative learning in which the higher level student acts as an assistant in charge of individually assisting other less fortunate students in a group. This model of learning is expected to help students achieve the learning outcomes effectively. By using a mix method research, this study aims at identifying the process of teaching writing using T-A-I and the effects of T-A-I towards the students’ writing skill. An embedded design is used since it needs different types of data to answer. A class of second grade students of junior high school in Kuningan are involved as participants. There were three sources of evidence, namely field notes, videotapes, and tests. The field notes and videotapes were analyzed qualitatively, while the students’ tests were analyzed statistically. Qualitatively, the finding shows that students actively involved at the eight stages of T-A-I, and quantitatively, it was found that T-A-I improves the students’ writing skill in writing descriptive text since the level of significance in paired t-test was less than the alpha (0.000 < 0.05). Based on findings from two aspects, T-A-I is helpful to enhance students’ writing ability and involve students actively in teaching and learning activity. Furthermore, it also creates a situation in which the team members play important roles to obtain their own individual achievement.

Keywords: writing, Team Assisted Individualization

INTRODUCTION

The written texts have roles as the main component in reading and writing skills as they deal with literacy. Ontario (2005, p.1) states that “writing is a powerful instrument for students to express their thoughts, feelings, and judgments about what they have read, seen, or experienced.” Furthermore, Harmers (2007) states that people are considered as literate if they are able to read and write in certain situations and for certain purposes. This implies the importance of writing dealing with literacy.

Composing a good writing is not easy. Writing as one of the four skills is considered as the most difficult and most challenging skill compared to the other skills either for most students or even for teachers. It is also considered as the complex activity since it requires some stages, namely drafting, reviewing, re-drafting and writing (Harmer, 2007). These stages require specialized skills which is not develops naturally (Brown, 2001). In short, writing is a thinking process to deliver a message in the form of text through conducting some steps before completing a final draft.

The fact that writing is the complex activity; it is a demand for teacher to provide students to meet those stages in order to compose a good written text. If there is appropriate methods, writing can be an interesting, easy, and enjoyable activity (Agustiana, 2016). To make teaching and learning activities effective, there are some methods that can be used to improve students’ writing skill; one of those methods is Team Assisted Individualization Model.

Team Assisted individualization learning model was designed by Slavin and his associate in the early 1980s. It was developed to apply cooperative learning model to solve many of the problems of individualized instruction (Slavin, 2008). Furthermore, it enables students to work on cooperative learning teams and to take responsibility for managing and checking regularly, helping each other with copies in the face of problems, and encourage each other to move forward so as to enhance student activity and creativity in classroom learning (Slavin, 2014).

Furthermore, Barrows (2002, p.15) implies that Team Assisted Individualization model is a learning model of group teaching where there is a student who is better able to act as assistant in charge of individually assisting other less fortunate students in a group. In addition, this model involves students who can act as assistants who help other students individually in obtaining and understanding the subject matter (Biggs, 2003). This model of learning would be helpful to enhance students’ writing ability and involve students actively in teaching and learning activity (Sulaiman, 2016a). By conducting a group work, this learning model is assumed to help students in learning.

Slavin (2014, p.189) describes that there are two characteristics of the Team Assisted Individualization model, namely a) emphasizing the participation and activity of the students to look for the material (information) lessons to be learned through the available materials, and b) students are required to have good communication skills as well as in group process.
skills, active student involvement starting from the first stage to the final stage of learning. Furthermore, Barrows (2002, p.15) explains the five basic elements in Team Assisted Individualization learning model, namely:

a) positive interdependence which means that every member of the group must work together to achieve common goals;
b) individual responsibility which means that each student is demanded to responsible for doing the best;
c) face-to-face which means that students work in groups facing each other and discussing.
e) Evaluation of group process in order to evaluate the group work to make the following activity be better.

According to the explanation above, the way students interact and communicate one to another determine the success of the group in achieving the learning outcome. This leads students to be responsible for each role in group.

Furthermore, Slavin (2008) mentions the eight principles in implementing the learning model, namely placement test, teams, material, teaching group, team study, team scores & team unit recognition, fact test and whole-class units. These principles are the basic in implementing Team Assisted Individualization.

Tinungki (2015) develops the stages of implementing Team Assisted Individualization as follow:

- Placement Test in which the students are assessed their prior knowledge as the basic of grouping students.
- Grouping students in which the students are grouped based on the result of the placement test. Students are placed in small groups (4 to 5 students) who are heterogeneous to complete group assignments prepared by teachers, followed by providing individual assistance to students who need them (Colliver, 2000).
- Teaching Group which demands the teacher to explain the material briefly before the tasks given.
- Student Creative which demands the students to do their best in group working.
- Team Study which allows students to learn by them. The peer tutor plays an important role in helping the other member of the group in order to achieve the learning goal
- Fact test in which the teacher gives small test individually, for instance, by delivering a quiz.
- Team Score dan Team Recognition in which the teacher scores gained by each group then awards the best group and stimulate the lower groups to be better.
- Whole-Class Units in which the teacher and students discuss the material together to get the better conclusion

These steps would lead students to work cooperatively and structurely and aim at providing student to learn by their way in order achieve the learning outcome effectively.

Besides, by using team Assisted individualization, students would get some benefit, such as:

a) increase student cooperation in study group;
b) generate students’ self-confidence as an assistant to help other students;
c) improve the good interaction between teacher and student;
d) improve the ability to express ideas / ideas in completing the task of learning;
e) reduce the dependence of students to teachers by learning independently in acquiring knowledge;
f) provide learning experiences to students in sharing knowledge, discuss and cooperate in solving learning problems (Barrows, 2002).

Furthermore, Slavin (2008) states some advantages of T-A-I for both teacher and students as follows: 1) minimize teacher’s involvement in correcting and scoring answer, 2) The teacher will spend the time to teach the small group, 3) The students will be motivated to study the material quickly and accurately, 4) The students working in learning teams toward a cooperative goal could help one another study, provide instant feedback to one another, and encourage one another to proceed rapidly and accurately through the material.

Furthermore, Colliver (2000, p.21) explains that Team Assisted Individualization learning model can a) increase active participation and involvement of students in learning, b) improve students’ ability to explain knowledge gained to other students, c) improve the ability to argue or argue in discuss the learning tasks within the study group, d) foster student confidence in asking questions and answers, e) improving cooperation, and communication among students in study groups; f) developing critical thinking skills and analysis in learning and understanding of subject matter.

However, instead of the advantages, T-A-I has also the weakness. As stated by Slavin (2014) that a) students will have difficulty in solving and solving problems, in the process of discussion, b) the completion of the task will take a relatively long time, c) the students are less focused in listening to the explanation subject matter, and d) students in the study group will have difficulty in presenting the research results.

With regard the strenght and weakness of T-A-I, it is hopefully that Team Assisted Individualization provides students to learn in group in order to ease the students to achieve the learning outcomes.

Team Assisted Individualization has been issued among researchers. Pramestasari & Qohar (2016) have conducted a research on T-A-I which is applied in math entitled “Application Of Guided Journal in Cooperative Learning in Team Assisted Individualization Type to Support Mathematical Communication Capability Of Class Viii-A Students of SMP Negeri 2 Malang”. Through classroom action research, this study aims at describing the learning steps using the application of
guided journal in cooperative learning in the type of Team Assisted Individualization that could support the mathematical communication ability. The participants are the students of class VIII-A SMPN 2 Malang. The data gained includes (1) observation result during the learning process which was based on the observation sheet, (2) the results of field notes, (3) guided journals, (4) quiz, and (5) the results of the test at the end of cycle. The steps of the Implementation of guided journal in cooperative learning in type of Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) to support the communication skills of mathematical students were as follows: (1) placement test, (2) teams, (3) student creative, (4) team study method, (5) teaching groups, (6) whole-class units, (7) fact test. The steps could support the mathematical communication capability as seen at the end of the second cycle. The research had met the success criteria. The observation result of students’ activity indicated the category of "very good". The observation result of teacher’s activity was categorized “very good”. The quiz score of 100% was got from the students' scores with an average of 75 or more. The test score at the end of cycle showed that 82.4% of students gained the average of 75 or more, and the guided journal score indicated that 100% of the students got the average score of 75 or more.

Susilawati (2016) finds that T-A-I is effective in improving students’ writing. This was quasi experimental research through by using a pre-test and post-test as the instrument in which the students are expected to write a descriptive text. The participants are two classes of second grade students of SMPN 4 Praya. The experimental class was treated by using Team Assisted Individualization while the control class was treated by using Roundtable technique. Based on findings, it shows that the value of (t-test) is 2.95 which are higher than the value of (t-table) which is 1.688.

Besides, Sulaiman (2016a) explores how Team Assisted Individualization can improve students’ writing ability of personal recount text to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. It is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) which involves 22 students of the tenth grade students as the samples of research. The tools of collecting data were observation checklist, field note, and written test. Based on study, it is found that T-A-I Instruction in teaching recount text was received well by the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016.

In addition, Sulaiman (2016b) has explored “The Effectiveness of Team Assisted Individualization in Teaching Vocabulary Viewed from Students’ Motivation”. By using experimental study, this study employs 60 students of a private university in Pontianak. They are grouped into two classes, namely control and experimental class. Through applying descriptive and inferential statistic (ANOVA) and Tukey Test, the findings show that T-A-I is effective to apply in teaching vocabulary.

Since T-A-I is effective to apply in some field, in this case, the writers attempt to explore how Team Assisted Individualization works at writing class which includes a) the teaching-learning process and b) the effect on the students’ writing skill. The writers focus on writing descriptive text in junior high school level. The writers expect this study would be benefit for those who are in this field including the students, teachers, lecturers, practitioners, researchers and others.

METHOD

Since this study is addressed to describe the teaching-learning writing activities when Team Assisted Individualization is implemented in EFL writing classroom and to investigate the effects of T-A-I toward students’ writing skill, this study uses a mixed methods research. Mixed method research integrates both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously during the study in order to meet with research objectives. An embedded design used when the study needs different types of data to answer (Malik & Hamied, 2014). This study is qualitative since it regards with collecting and analyzing observation data, while it is quantitative regarding with the test scores.

The writers employed 39 first grade students of a state junior high school in Kuningan. They were chosen by using convenience sampling. It is also known as Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling which is a type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). It aims at collecting information from participants who are easily accessible to the writers for study participation.

There were three sources of evidence, namely field notes, videotapes, and tests (pre-test and post-test). The first data source was field notes. Field notes were primary data to explore the teaching-learning writing activities during the implementation Team Assisted Individualization to teaching writing descriptive text. A writer became a participant observer, who involved in activities at the research site (Creswell, 2012). The writer took notes the activities during the process of teaching learning writing after leaving the setting. The second data were audiovisual materials. They were in the form of video which help the writers to understand the central phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012). The videos were taken by a camera operator. The third data were students’ tests. The tests were used to find the effect of T-A-I towards the students’ writing skill. In this study, the tests consisted of pre- test and post- test. In each test, the students were expected to create a descriptive text with the topic given.

Data collection was conducted in four meetings which were described on Table 1.
In the first meeting, the writers conducted a pre-test in order to measure students’ prior knowledge on writing descriptive text. The pre-test belonged to the first step of T-A-I which was the placement test. In this test, the students were expected to write a descriptive text in about 200 words. My pet was the topic chosen. In this meeting, the writers collected pre-test, field notes, and video. Next, in the second and the third meeting, the writers implemented the treatment to the students. Thus, the writers gained two data, namely field notes, and video. Lastly, in the four meeting, the writers conducted a post-test in order to measure students’ score on writing descriptive text after getting the treatment. In this test, the students were expected to write a descriptive text in about 200 words. A wild animal was the topic chosen. In this meeting, the writers collected pre-test, field notes, and video.

Data were analyzed based on each type. The field notes and videotapes were analyzed qualitatively, while the students’ tests were analyzed statistically. The qualitative data are analyzed based on qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2009) as seen in Diagram 1.

Firstly, the writers organized and prepared the data, namely field notes and videos. Secondly, the writers read the field notes and observe the videos. Afterwards, the writer coded the data in order to ease the interpretation. In this step, the writer identified the teaching and learning writing process by using T-A-I. Lastly, the writers presented the evidences of every activity of each meeting into a written form.

Diagram 1. Qualitative Data Analysis

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The process of teaching-learning writing activities by using Team Assisted Individualization

There were eight stages in implementing Team Assisted Individualization learning model which were implemented in three meetings. The first meeting of study was placement test as the pre-test. The second meeting and the third meeting included teaching group, student creative, team study, fact test, team score & recognition and whole class unit with different topic to discuss. Based on field notes and video data analysis, the process of teaching learning activities by using T-A-I would be described as the following.
The first step is placement test. In the placement test, the students write a descriptive text about their pet in about 200 words in 60 minutes. The students work by themselves in composing the text. This aimed at measuring students’ writing skill before having the treatment. Besides, the result of pre-test was also used to group students based on their level. Group heterogeneity includes gender, race, religion, level of ability (high, medium, low), and so on (Colliver, 2000). Thus, this study used students’ level of ability which was shown by the students’ score of writing a descriptive text as the basis of grouping the students.

The second step was team. The students were grouped into eight. Thus, the eight top students become the leader of each group while the rest of students became the member of group which was based on their writing score. This is in line with Barrows (2002) that T-A-I model is a learning model of group teaching where there is a student who is better able to act as assistant in charge of individually assisting other less fortunate students in a group. Furthermore, since there were 39 students at class, one group consisted of four students while the other seven groups consisted of five students. This is as what Colliver (2000) states that students are placed in small groups (4 to 5 students) who are heterogeneous to complete group assignments prepared by teachers, followed by providing individual assistance to students who need them.

The third step was teaching group. In the teaching group, the writer provided a descriptive text as a model to learn. The writer and students identified the text which covered the general purpose, generic structure and linguistic features of the text in about 15 minutes.

The forth step was student creative. In the student creative students identified a descriptive text in group including the generic structures and linguistics features. In this case, the high level students became a peer tutor who helped the other students to achieve the learning model. This is in line with Biggs (2003) that Team Assisted Individualization involves students who can act as assistants who help other students individually in obtaining and understanding the subject matter. Furthermore, T-A-I enables students to work on cooperative learning teams and to take responsibility for managing and checking regularly, helping each other with copies in the face of problems, and encourage each other to move forward so as to enhance student activity and creativity in classroom learning (Slavin, 2014).

The fifth step was team study. In this step, each group composed a descriptive text. Students worked together as a team, discussed the topic given and shared as well as developed their ideas to compose a good descriptive text. This is in line with Slavin (2008) that the students work in their teams on self-instructional curriculum materials covering main idea, reference, lexical meaning, and meaning based on the context, detail information, and parts of the text. These activities show the cooperation among students in learning groups in discussing and completing learning tasks as well as obtaining information sharing experiences (Slavin, 2014). Group learning is dependent on the social structured exchange of information between learners in groups (Richard and Rogers, 2011). Thus, each student played important role to bring the group success.

Next is the sixth step which was team score. In team score a representative of each group presented the text that had been composed, orally, in front of the class. Afterwards, the writer scored the students and gave reward for the group who achieved the highest score at that meeting. Criteria are established for team performance, namely a high criterion as a “super team”, a moderate criterion as a “great team”, and a minimum criterion as a “good team” (Slavin, 2008).

The seventh step was fact test. In fact test the writer conducted a quiz by giving students oral questions regarding descriptive text. As stated by Slavin (2008) that the students are given three-minutes facts (usually functional text test facts). The last step was whole class unit. In the whole class unit the students and teacher summarize the material which had been discussed in that class. As stated by Slavin (2008) that at the end, the teacher reflects the material with students.

According to findings, teaching and learning activities by using Team Assisted Individualization fulfill the needs of either principles as well as the characteristics of T-A-I.

The effects of the implementation of Team Assisted Individualization towards the students’ writing skill

This section presents the result of the students’ pre–test and post-test data analysis. This section aims at identifying the influence of Team Assisted Individualization toward Students’s writing skill in writing descriptive text. The pre test was conducted in the first meeting of teaching –learning writing activities to examine the Students’ prior writing skill in writing descriptive text. On the other hand, the post test was conducted in the last meeting of the teaching-learning writing activities to examine the Students’ writing skill in writing descriptive text. Data were analyzed statistically through three different tests, namely normal distribution test, homogeneity of variance test and comparing means test by using SPSS 20 for windows.

The first test conducted was the normal distribution test which aims to find whether the data normally distributed. The criterion of normal distribution is when the probability is higher than the level of significance 0.05 (p>0.05). Whereas, if the probability is lower than 0.05 (p<0.05), the distribution of students’ score is not normal. Normality data result can be seen in this following Table 2.
The homogeneity of variance test was used in the study was the Levene statistic. The level of significance is set at 0.05. If the asymptotic significance is greater than 0.05, the data are assumed to be equal and homogeneous. The result of the homogeneity of variance test which was shown in Table 3 proved that the data is equal and homogeneous since Sig value is 0.123 which is higher than the alpha (0.05).

The third test was dependent t-test in which the pre-test and post-test score are compared. This test aimed at identifying whether Team Assisted Individualization is effective to apply in writing class. Based on Table 4, level of significance (2-tailed) was 0.00. Since the level of significance in paired t-test was less than the alpha (0.000 < 0.05), then it is proved that Team Assisted individualization improves the students’ writing skill in writing descriptive text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnova</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 2. Test of Normal Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene Statistic</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,438</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>.123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest–Posttest</td>
<td>-71,938</td>
<td>6,1540</td>
<td>.7463</td>
<td>-70,4487–73,4278</td>
<td>-70,4487</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This finding is in line with Susilawati (2016) who has conducted Team Assisted Individualization towards students’ writing skill. The finding shows that T-A-I is effective in improving students’ writing skill. Furthermore, Sulaiman (2016a) finds that Team Assisted Individualization improved students’ ability in writing personal recount text. Thus it can be said that T-A-I is considered one of alternative teaching instruction that is effected to be implemented in writing class.

CONCLUSION
Based on findings from two aspects, Team Assisted Individualization would be helpful to enhance students’ writing ability and involve students actively in teaching and learning activity. Furthermore, T-A-I can also creates a situation in which the team members play important role to obtain their own individual achievement. Thus, in achieving learning outcome, team members must help their teammates. Besides, in T-A-I instruction, the awards that given by the teacher encourage students to act better. The only way the team can succeed is to ensure that all team members have learned, so the team members’ activities focus on explaining concepts to one another, helping one another practice, and encouraging one another to achieve the learning goals (Slavin, 1995). Furthermore, the teacher efforts in guiding students in learning provide students ways to achieve a better understanding on the material. It is in line with Richards (2002) that the cooperation among members and under guidance from the teacher will bring students getting better achievement. The guiding involved giving clear explanation during conveying learning material.

To conclude, considering that the Team Assisted Individualization model affects the students’ writing skill in writing descriptive text, therefore, it is recommended that the other researcher conduct a research deeper in the same field with different context. Furthermore, since this study was conducted only in one
In addition, regarding to writing process, team assisted individualization model consisted of many stages in the process of implementation. However it is recommended that the students involve in every stages to develop the quality of their written product.

REFERENCES


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