

## THE EFFECT OF JOURNAL WRITING TECHNIQUE AND STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION TOWARD WRITING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE FOURTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UNDIKSHA

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### Abstract

This study aims at investigating any significance difference between the writing achievement of students who were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique and investigating any interactional effect between the implementation of those techniques and the students' achievement motivation upon students' writing achievement. This research was a post-test only control group design which was conducted in the fourth semester students of English Education Department, Undiksha. The result shows that there is a significant difference between the writing achievement of the students taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique, where the students taught by using journal writing technique shows better writing achievement than the students taught by using conventional writing technique. In addition, there is a significant interactional effect between the implementation of those techniques and the students' achievement motivation.

**Keywords:** Journal writing technique, achievement motivation, writing achievement

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is learnt as a foreign language (EFL) where it exists in the curriculum of schools from Elementary to Senior High. The teaching of English aims at the mastery of four skills namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills cannot be separated from one to another because they are in a unity.

Writing is one of those four language skills, which is used as one medium to communicate with others, in academic field, as well as in daily life. Langan (2001) stated that writing is a

process of discovery that involves a series of steps of practices. Therefore, the assumption that writing is a 'natural gift' should not be considered, since writing is a skill that can be trained. Langan (2001) says that there are two reasons why writing skill is very important. The reasons are that, *first*, writing ability is a basic need for English learners to support their academic success. English learners are often asked to do written assignment and their English competence can also be seen from their writing performance.

*Second*, English writing skill is a practical need to support their future carrier.

Considering the above reasons, English college students or graduates should obviously have the ability to write in English well. However, some college students admitted that they found difficulties in English writing skill. They feel it difficult to find idea and they cannot develop their idea into a good coherent paragraph and the problem in grammar also worsens their writing product. Langan (2001 as cited in Lokita, 2005) states that most of the problems in writing range from the cognitive problems, (e.g. the vocabulary knowledge, the language structure and ideas organization) to psychological problem, i.e. the wrong conception about writing as a 'natural gift' skill instead of a learned skill. Psychologically, people tend to believe that a good writer is born and not made. They falsely believe that those who are called writers are blessed with their inborn ability and aptitude to write rather than that they learn the skill; and that writing should flow in simple, straight line from the writer's head onto the written page. However, undoubtedly, writing is not an easy one-step journey in which a finished paper comes out in the first draft.

Writing difficulties faced by most students in ESL/EFL classroom becomes the concern of a lot of researchers. Some researchers were inspired by this phenomenon and found an innovative writing technique named Journal Writing Technique to help students progress with their writing competencies. The researchers who are concerned with the implementation of journal writing technique in teaching writing skill are, Chow (2001) in Hsuang Chuang University, Taiwan, Pierson (2003), Boud (2001) in University of Sydney, Shin (2006) in University of Maryland Baltimore County, Tuan (2010) in National University of Ho Chi Minh City, Hiemstra (2001), Farrah (2011) in Hebron University of Palestine and many more.

Since writing is a skill that can be learnt and is similar to the skill of driving, typing or cooking, it makes sense that the more the students practice writing, the better they will write. Journal Writing

Technique makes the students keep writing at school and also at home. Langan (2001) says that one excellent way to get practice in writing, even before students begin composing essay, is to keep a daily or almost daily journal. Journaling is the activity where students can always write wherever they go. Writing in a journal will help students to develop the habit of thinking on paper and show them how ideas can be discovered in the process of writing. A journal can make writing a familiar part of their life and can serve as continuing sources of ideas for papers. Journal writing, which is a process oriented, has been widely practiced in teaching writing to improve students' writing competency and to develop their literacy skill. The way journals are used varies, but essentially it involves students in writing activity in class or for homework, after English class. From journal writing activities, students who are quieter can share their idea, feeling, thought and creativity through writing without being afraid that someone may laugh or judge them. Journal is a safe place where students can freely pour their opinion about something or a topic and at the end teacher will correct their mistakes without grading it.

Along the process of writing, students are influenced by external and internal factors where motivation is one of the dimensions that have to be considered in acquiring second language as an internal factor. In relation to the problems in writing, students are not only lack of ability in writing but also lack of motivation to write, so it will be very important to consider this internal factor.

With regard to the importance of internal factor, Marhaeni (2005) states that achievement motivation is built from the readiness of individuals to receive new things. In this case, those new things are feedback given by the students themselves, guidance from their peers, and the teacher along the learning process. Students having high motivation will maximize the feedback to improve their achievement and reach their excellent goal in learning. Motivation for writing in the classroom can be developed

in several ways, such as encouraging the students to have clear and specific goals in their learning and provide activities that are challenging in terms of students' capabilities. Clear and specific goals promote self efficacy, referring to an individual's belief in his or her capability of performing a specific action and then the activities that will be given to the students are not difficult and the activities are not outside the range of their competence. From the background above, it can be seen that problems in writing are caused by the external factor of the students (writing activity) and the internal factor (achievement motivation).

Based on the result of the previous researches and theories related to journal writing technique, it can be state that journal writing technique potentially affects students' writing skill which influences the development of the students' writing achievement. Furthermore, the students' achievement motivation also gives significant effect to the students' desire in writing which influences the students' writing achievement. So, it is urgent to do a research with these variables in order to investigate the effect of both variables toward students' writing achievement. Most of the researches in this field as mentioned in the previous part of the paper, were done in other countries where English is used as second or foreign language. However, the research about journal writing technique had not been done in Indonesian EFL class especially in tertiary level. It makes this research be conducted to university students in Indonesia. English Education Department, Undiksha which produce the candidates of future English teacher is chosen to be the location of this study. It is because the prospective outcome of this research was not only directed to the population of the study but also to their future students who will probably be taught by using this technique and have improvement with their writing achievement as the result of implementing this technique.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research was designed in an experimental design called posttest-only

control group design using 2x2 factorial arrangements. According to Wiersma (1991) this design is an efficient design to be administered since it does not require pretesting. Tuckman (1999) states that, this design provides ideal control over all threats to validity and all sources' bias. The design utilizes two groups, one that experiences the treatment while the other does not, so it controls for history and maturation bias. Random assignment to the experimental or control group prevents problem of selection and mortality. In addition, this design controls for a simple testing effect and the interaction between testing and treatment by giving no pretest to either group. There are 3 variables to be studied, 1 independent variable, 1 moderator variable and 1 dependent variable. The first independent variable is writing teaching techniques (A) as treatment variables. It is classified into Journal Writing Technique and Conventional writing technique. While the moderator variable is achievement motivation (B) and this variable is also divided into two those are high achievement motivation and low achievement motivation. And the last is writing achievement (Y) as the dependent variable.

This research was done at the fourth semester students of English Education Department of Ganesha University of Education Singaraja in the academic year 2012/2013. This research was conducted in several meetings around February-April 2013. The fourth semester students were selected as the population. Before the research was started, the homogeneity test was conducted to the samples in order to check that there was no significant difference of the samples both in experimental and control groups. The population of this study was all students who took Writing III course with the total number of 168 students. There were 84 samples which were determined by using random sampling technique.

The homogeneity test used was one way ANOVA where the significance of the sample was 0.997 more than 0.05, so the students were not significantly different. For further test Scheffe multiple

comparisons was used and the result showed that there was no significant difference between each class. From those tests, it can be concluded that the samples were gained from the homogeneous population, so the samples could be used in this research. After that, a questionnaire of writing achievement motivation was administered to both experimental and control class groups. The questionnaire consists of five dimensions namely: having orientation toward success or achieving goals, anticipating failure, being innovative, having high responsibility toward the assignments, and having great interest in English native speaker.

The posttest was given in the form of essay writing as instruments to measure students' writing proficiency level in terms of fluency and accuracy. The initial writing proficiency level of the whole population of the fourth semester students was investigated from the previous writing score obtained from the lecturer of writing course. Students in experimental group were encouraged to write journal entries as much and as regularly as they could in their notebooks during the four weeks between the first meeting until giving post-test. Upon the arrival of the fourth week, the students in both experimental group and control group took the post-test, which sought to assess the impact of journal writing. In the post-test there were 3 kinds of essay development being emphasized, including descriptive essay, narrative essay and cause-effect essay. This test was focused on 5 dimensions of writing, namely: content and development, organization, grammar and structure, vocabulary and style and mechanics.

The analysis of the data was done to test the research hypotheses and to answer the research questions of this study. It was administered after obtaining the scores from posttest. Those scores were analyzed by using two forms of statistical analysis, namely: descriptive statistic analysis and inferential statistic analysis.

Descriptive analysis was done by analyzing the data from each group solely in descriptive way. It was done to measure

the central tendency or averages (median, mean and mode) and the spread of desperation (standard deviation). This measurement made use of SPSS 16 for windows. Parametric test by two-way ANOVA was used to compare mean score since the data obtained were interval data. Before two-way ANOVA was administered, the reliability of the data should be tested. After the data were proven to be normal in terms of the distribution and homogeneous, two-way ANOVA test was administered. Two-way ANOVA was used to measure the significance difference between means of experimental group and control group. The Turkey test was done to find out the interactional effect between the implementation of technique in teaching writing and the students' achievement motivation toward students' writing achievement. This test was used to prove the better group. So the researcher could make appropriate inferences about their interaction.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this discussion part, there would be four hypotheses being tested. Those were: there was a significant difference on students' writing achievement between the students taught by using Journal Writing Technique and those by conventional writing technique, there was interactional effect between teaching writing techniques (Journal Writing Technique and conventional writing technique) and the students' motivation in learning English upon students' writing achievement, there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students with high motivation taught by journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique, there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students with low motivation taught by journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique. To analyze these hypotheses, Two Ways-ANOVA and Turkey test were used when the data also processed by using SPSS 16.0 for Windows.

Descriptively the result of this study can be seen in the following table:

share or being discussed in a classroom. Tuan (2010) states that the freedom to

**Table 1. Writing Score Recapitulation**

Data	A1	A2	A1B	A1B	A2B	A2B
Statistic			1	2	1	2
$\bar{X}$	75,0	71,7	83,8	66,2	69,6	73,9
	2	9	1	4	2	5
SD	10,6	5,47	5,60	6,13	4,79	5,34
	2					
$S^2$	112,	29,9	31,3	37,5	22,9	28,5
	71	3	6	9	5	5
$X_{min}$	54	61	74	54	61	65
$X_{maks}$	91	84	91	74	77	84
Range	37	23	17	20	16	19

Based on the result of the two-ways ANOVA it can be concluded that: For the first hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted (the result of the analysis: significance value of "A" = 0.008 (sig.<0.050)). It means that there was a significant difference in the students' writing achievement between those who were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique. Looking at table 1 above, if the comparison was made between A1 and A2, then A1 obviously showed a better achievement than A2. This can be concluded from the comparison of their average score. A1's average score was 75.02, and A2's average score was 71.79. A1's average score which was higher than A2's average score showed that A1 did better in writing than A2. This also means that students who were taught by using journal writing technique (A1 group) showed better achievement than students who were taught by using conventional writing technique (A2 group). There are some reasons why journal writing technique does well in writing class. There are some reasons why journal writing technique does well in writing class. Farrah (2011) states that journal writing encourages students to keep valuable record of their thoughts, feelings, experiences, personal values and beliefs. Journal writing offers a free fear place for the students to pour their idea about the topic they want to

have some creative control over what is written seems inextricably linked to the students. Furthermore, Tuan also says that using journal fosters learning in many ways. Students who use journal are actively engaged in their own learning while having the opportunity to clarify and reflect upon their thinking. It is very important to keep writing outside the class so the students always able to express their idea to sharpen their ability in writing. The way to keep writing at home can be done by having journal which writers keep a record of ideas, opinions, and description of daily life. Journal helps writers develop their creativity (Spaventa, 2000: 168 as cited in Tuan 2010). Comparing to the use of conventional writing technique that depends entirely on classroom writing activity; the students had obligation to write only in the classroom. They used to wait for the topic given by the lecturer with anxiety while thinking about what they were going to write then. When the topic was given, the students started to feel like being pressed by their own fear since they never practice their writing skill at home. They face the activity only in the classroom even though perhaps some of them ever write outside the classroom. The first problem they had to face was the difficulty in finding idea related to the topic. This difficulty appeared because the lack of practice. They did not own the activity which made them reluctant to write. Some of them were too focus on the topic and too afraid

to make any mistakes, so that sometimes they seldom be creative. After the writing passage was done, they had to submit the product.

For the second hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted (the result of the analysis: significance value of "A\*B" = 0.000 (sig.<0.050)). It means that there was a significant interactional effect between the application of the techniques and students' achievement motivation in improving the students' writing achievement. There are some parallelism between most of students with high achievement motivation characteristics and journal writing technique. High achievement motivation students are very innovative, this is the most determinant characteristic why they can work with journal writing very well. With their innovation, they can be very independent and creative. In journal writing, students learn from every day life they face, every imagination they build. They share their opinion, give comment about certain topic, and creatively design their journal passage as attractive as possible. These kind of activities require the students to be innovative. Student find a new way of learning to write as they need to learn about everyday writing. Students with low achievement motivation who are not as innovative as the high achievement motivation will find it difficult, and as they anticipate the failure more, they will be unwilling to do it since they are afraid of making failure.

Since it was found that there was a significant interactional effect between the techniques and students' achievement motivation on students' writing achievement, the hypothesis testing was continued to the effect of the interaction by using Tukey test. The third hypothesis showed that the value of  $Q_{obs}$  was 11.85052 and the value of  $Q_{cv}$  was 2.96. Thus, the Value of  $Q_{obs}$  was higher than the value of  $Q_{cv}$  ( $Q_{obs} > Q_{cv}$ ), it means that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted or there was a significant difference between the students' writing achievement of the students with high achievement motivation

when they were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique. Looking at table 1 above, if the comparison was made between A1B1 and A1B2, then A1B1 obviously showed a better achievement than A1B2. This can be concluded from the comparison of their average score. A1B1's average score was 83.81, and A2B1's average score was 66.24. A1B1's average score which was higher than A1B2's average score showed that A1B1 did better in writing than A1B2. This also means that students who were taught by journal writing technique who had high achievement motivation (A1B1 group) showed better achievement than students with low achievement motivation (A2B1 group). Heckhausen & Heckhausen (2008) states that motivation is a product of person and situation. Therefore for students who has high achievement motivation, their aspire to a certain goal is influenced by person factors, i.e. their high need for achievement and by situation factors (external factors) i.e. classroom atmosphere. Journal writing technique which engages students in writing at home, creates a safer situation, in which students promote their learning by writing their personal opinion toward the topic. They were not limited by any border and not worried by any comment of mistake in grammar, mechanic, organization, etc. The safe situation influences the students' enthusiasm in learning. It can be seen in the group which was taught by journal writing. The students in that group able to write more spontaneous and able to build writing idea quicker than students in control group. Students felt less pressure in expressing their opinion and thought towards their journal topic. Very often students were seen chatting very seriously about their journal and the lecturer and the students did small discussion about every prompt they got in the next meeting. They also showed a great curiosity to know why their writing was criticized in a particular aspect. Therefore, the internal factor, the need of achievement, which works on the students with high achievement motivation was generated effectively by the situation factor, ie. the

safe writing atmosphere resulted by journal writing technique. Meanwhile, in control group, the learning was restricted on the material provided by the teacher. The high achievement motivation students who were taught by conventional writing technique can not be as responsive as those who were treated by journal writing technique.

The fourth hypothesis showed that the value of  $Q_{obs}$  was 6.442232 and the value of  $Q_{cv}$  was 2.96. Thus, the Value of  $Q_{obs}$  was higher than the value of  $Q_{cv}$  ( $Q_{obs} < Q_{cv}$ ), it means that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted or there was significant difference between the students' writing achievement of the students with low achievement motivation when they are taught by using journal writing technique and conventional writing technique. Looking at table 1 above, if the comparison was made between A2B1 and A2B2, then A2B2 obviously showed a better achievement than A2B1. This can be concluded from the comparison of their average score. A2B2's average score was 73.95, and A2B1's average score was 69.62. A2B2's average score which was higher than A2B1's average score showed that A2B2 did better in writing than A2B1. This also means that students who were taught by conventional writing technique who had low achievement motivation (A2B2 group) showed better achievement than students with low achievement motivation treated by journal writing technique (A2B1 group). Unlike students with high achievement motivation, students with low achievement motivation tend to be depended on teacher assistant, since they are usually not as autonomous as students with high achievement motivation (Murray, 1938 in Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008). Therefore, conventional writing technique which involves teacher more dominantly than the students, provides a perfect classroom atmosphere for students with low achievement motivation. Meanwhile, journal writing technique which offer a daily independent chance for students to write what they think and requires the students to be autonomous and more

responsible toward their learning, creates an uncomfortable classroom atmosphere for students with low achievement motivation.

When conventional writing technique was applied, students with low achievement motivation were not asked to make journal writing. The students worked on the lecturer's assignment only. Since the students with low achievement motivation were not responsive toward autonomous learning, having topic only from lecturer for each essay genre (without being involved in daily journal writing) worked very well on them. Students wrote certain essay and submitted their paper to be marked. They did not need to bother to make other writing outside 'a must' writing they need to submitted.

Moreover, as the theory says, students with low achievement motivation are not as innovative as students with high achievement motivation. They prefer to choose very easy task in order to minimize risk of failure. Therefore, giving less responsibility to them works perfectly on their learning achievement (Atkinson and Feather, 1966). In contrast, when journal writing technique was applied, students with low achievement motivation were required to be responsible to work on their journal as often as they could. These students did their writing as an assignment but not really owned the writing since they wrote it as a course requirement only. They did not see writing as a need to share or pour their mind. This was because they tend to avoid any failure that they might make if they write any journal. So, work on 1 assignment for each genre only seen perfect for them.

The above phenomenon is in line with some theory of achievement motivation. Kurt Lewin and David McClelland theorized that motivation can be oriented toward avoiding failure or toward achieving success. In relation to that, Atkinson (in Atkinson and Feather, 1966) theorized that people with a low need for achievement anticipate failure more than they do success, in contrast to people who seem to have a high need for achievement. This means that, students

with low achievement motivation tend to do things to avoid failure. This explains why the low achievement students like to be depended on teacher assignment, because they do not want to make mistake in making other writing other than that.

#### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The research aims at investigating four hypotheses, those are: a) there was a significant difference in writing achievement between the students who were taught by Journal Writing Technique and those by conventional writing technique, b) there was an interactional effect between the implementation of teaching techniques (Journal Writing Technique and conventional writing technique) and the students' achievement motivation upon students' writing achievement, c) there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students with high achievement motivation taught by Journal Writing Technique and those by conventional writing technique, d) there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students with low achievement motivation taught by Journal Writing Technique and those by conventional writing technique.

The result showed that, **a) for the first hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted** (significance value of "A" = 0.008 (sig.<0.050)). It means that there was a significant difference in the students' writing achievement between those whose were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique, **b) for the second hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted** (significance value of "A\*B" = 0.000 (sig.<0.050)). It means that there was a significant interactional effect between the application of the techniques and students' achievement motivation upon students' writing achievement, **c) for the third hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted** ( $Q_{cv (0.05)} = 2.96$ ,  $Q_{ob} = 11.85052$ ,  $Q_{ob} > Q_{cv}$ ).

It means that there was a significant difference between the students' writing achievement of the students with high achievement motivation when they were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique, **d) for the fourth hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted** ( $Q_{cv (0.05)} = 2.95$ ,  $Q_{ob} = 6.442232$ ,  $Q_{ob} < Q_{cv}$ ). It means that there was significant difference between the students' writing achievement of the students with low achievement motivation when they were taught by using journal writing technique and those by conventional writing technique.

Based on the findings which have been described above, this study has implication as follows: a) Journal writing technique is an effective technique to be implemented in English class especially to improve students' writing achievement. By implementing this technique, the students are encouraged to keep writing everywhere. This technique helps the students to feel free to share their idea, opinion and feeling about certain topic. It gives freedom to the students to have some creative control over what is written by them. Using journals fosters learning in many ways. Students who use journals are actively engaged in their own learning while having the opportunity to clarify and reflect upon their thinking. Due to their journaling activity where the students were truly engaged with writing activity, the concept that writing is a difficult and complex activity will bit by bit vanish. Comes from those advantages offered by journal writing technique, this technique should be used in writing class to improve students' writing achievement. b) The students with high achievement motivation were proven to be more effective if they were taught by using journal writing technique because this technique could challenge the students to give their fullest potency. It is very essential to have writing activities outside the class so the students always able to express their idea to sharpen their ability in writing. Since they were common with writing activity even at home, they could easily get idea when

lecturer gave any topic to be written. For teacher in writing class who face high achievement motivation students, this technique is so much better to be used along the course. Since those who have high achievement motivation are challenged to show their best by making the journal regularly. It, later on, will affect their writing achievement. c) The students with low achievement motivation were proven to be more effective if they were taught by using conventional writing technique. Conventional writing technique which involves teacher more dominantly than the students provides a perfect classroom atmosphere for students with low achievement motivation since they tend to depend on teacher assistant. They prefer to choose very easy task in order to minimize risk of failure. Therefore, giving less responsibility to them works perfectly on their learning achievement.

Based on the research findings, the discussion and the conclusion, several suggestions are proposed, those are: a) It is suggested for the lecturer of Writing Course III to implement journal writing technique as an alternative technique in writing class because this technique has been proven to be an effective technique to improve students' writing achievement. b) Since achievement motivation has significant role in contributing to students' writing achievement, the lecturer is expected to know the level of their students' achievement motivation since it will influence the choice of teaching which will be implemented. Besides that, the lecturer should increase the students' achievement motivation in writing so that the students can reach their optimum ability in writing. c) The other researchers are expected to research the effect of journal writing technique and achievement motivation toward other aspects of language skills (reading, grammar focus, vocabulary). d) For other researchers who want to conduct research to improve the quality of writing achievement, it is recommended to do further research with different writing approach and characteristics of the students. It perhaps will be conducted in different locations,

different levels, different problems, and different socio-cultures.

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