

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT THROUGH THINK-PAIR-SHARE TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

This study was focused to improve students' achievement in writing narrative test through Think-Pair-Share Technique. It was conducted by applying Classroom Action Research with two cycles and six meetings. The subject of this study is Grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Teluk Mengkudu and consisted of 40 students. The instruments for collecting data used writing test for quantitative and used diary notes, observation sheet and interview sheet for qualitative. The mean of the test shows the improvements of the students' score for orientation test was (51.4), the mean in cycle I test was (66.15), and the mean in the cycle II was (74.57). Based on the data above, it can be concluded that Think-Pair-Share technique is significantly improved students' writing achievement especially in narrative test.

Key Words: Improving, Achievement, Writing, Narrative, Think-Pair-Share

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important language in the world today is English. It is considered to be important for developing and applying science and technology, as well as for increasing the international relationship and cooperation. English puts its role as a foreign language in Indonesia and become a compulsory subject from elementary school up to University level since it is an international language.

In teaching - learning process of English subject, students are required to master four skills. These four language skills are necessary to be mastered by the students. Moreover, according to Educational Unit - Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan: KTSP) 2006 of Junior High School, it is written that there are four language skills that should be achieved by the students along with the process of education, namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of those language skills, which are very important and must require in academic field is writing.

As one of the four language skills, writing has always occupied place in most English language course. Writing is the expression of language in the form of letters, symbol and words. Through writing someone can share their knowledge, conveying idea, feeling and intention to other people. The knowledge which we have until now mostly we got by reading written information or texts, whether it is books, articles, papers, etc, which are written by those who share their idea through writing.

Contrary to the fact, during the writers' experience in Teaching Practice Program (PPL), in Junior High School at SMP Negeri 3 Sei Bamban 2010, the writer found that many of students faced some difficulties when they learnt English especially writing. They could not spend their ideas in writing correctly and most of the students even cheated each other and their writings were totally similar when the teacher asked

them to write an English paragraph. It is caused by some problems, such as the students seldom practice to write composition even in their native language, the lack of vocabulary and knowledge about genre or text type, and they spend much of the time to think what they will write, because they have no idea how to write it. Then, the strategy that the teachers use to teach the students in writing does not motivate and encourage them. Even worse, many teachers got troubles to teach this skill to the students. Therefore, almost in every school we will find that this skill is seldom thought to the students.

Based on the problem above the objective of this study is to find out if there is an improvement on the students' achievement in writing narrative text through Think-Pair-Share technique.

The findings of this study are expected to be useful for:

- 1) English teacher in teaching writing through Think-Pair-Share technique.
- 2) Students in order to improve their writing ability in writing narrative text.
- 3) Researcher to improve their knowledge in writing narrative text and provide information for those who are interested in doing further research in writing.

Writing Narrative Text through Think-Pair-Share Technique

Writing is one of the skills in learning English besides speaking, listening and reading. Writing is a complex interaction of cognitive and physical factors. It allows for the creation of ideas and information with written symbols and words. Writing can be a social process and is one way of communicating with others (e.g. a note to a friend, a letter to the newspaper, a paper for a professor, or a newsletter to a parent).

To write well, people must have good capabilities in writing. Moreover, someone who wants to write the essay or story must know the steps in writing process and aspects of writing. The writer must be able to organize the ideas to construct the sentences, to use punctuation and spelling well. Besides, they must be able to arrange the writing into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and text.

At the time, when the teacher asks the students to write an English paragraph, they could not spend their ideas via writing correctly and spend much of the time to do this writing. This is due to the lack of knowledge about genres or text type. That is why, it is also important to think of students' writing in terms of we call text types. One of the kinds of text types in writing is narrative text.

Narrative is a kind of writing that tells reader a story or relates an event whether in personal experience or in a personal way. The generic structure of narrative texts is; having orientation, complication, and resolution. But, the students' ability in writing narrative text is not same for all students. Therefore, it is necessary to find a technique in teaching writing in order to improve students' ability in writing narrative text. One of the techniques is think-pair-share technique.

Think-Pair-Share is suitable to be applied in teaching narrative text and it is designed to provide students with "food for thought" on a given topics enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with another student (Frank Lyman).

In this technique, a problem is posed, students have time to *think* about the problem individually, and then they work in *pairs* to solve the problem and *share* their ideas with the class. In sharing their ideas, students take ownership of their learning and negotiate meanings rather than rely solely on the teacher's authority. Think-Pair-Share helps students develop conceptual understanding of a topic, develop the ability to filter

information and draw conclusions, and develop the ability to consider other points of view.

In conclusion, think-pair-share is a suitable technique for teaching narrative text and it can motivate the students to be more active and comfort in developing their ideas. Therefore, it is expected that the use of think-pair-share technique in teaching and learning process will improve the students' writing achievement in narrative text.

Cooperative Learning

Slavin (2001) cited in Richard-Amato, et.al (2005:180), cooperative learning represents a broad range of instructional methods in which students work together to learn academic process.

According to <http://edtechkennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelarning.html>, cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each student of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of subject. Each member of team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

Mandal (2009:99), There are many kinds of Cooperative Learning, such as:

- 1. Jigsaw:** Groups with five students are set up. Each member is assigned some material to learn and to teach to his group members. The representative of the students working on the same topic gets together and discusses the important concepts and the ways to teach it to the whole class. After the practice in these "expert" groups the original groups get together and teach each other. Tests and assessments follow.
- 2. Think-Pair-Share:** This is a simple and quick technique; the instructor develops and poses questions, gives the students a few minutes to think about a response, and then asks students to share their ideas with a partner. This task gives them opportunity to collect and organize their thoughts. "Pair" and "share" components encourage learners to compare and contrast their understanding with those of another and to rehearse their response first in a low-risk situation before going public with the whole class (Kagan:1992).
- 3. Numbered Heads:** A team of four is established. Each member is given number 1, 2, 3 and 4. Questions are asked of the group. Groups work together to answer the questions so that all can verbally answer the questions. Teacher calls out a number (three) and the number three in each group is asked to give the answer. This could be used for comprehension exercises.
- 4. Three-Step Interview:** Each member of a team chooses another member to be a partner. During the first step individuals interview their partner by asking clarifying questions. During the second step, partners reverse roles. In the final step, the members share their partners' response with the team.

Think-Pair-Share Technique

Think-pair-share is one of cooperative learning technique that is developed by Professor Frank Lyman at the University of Maryland in 1981. This technique offers all students to a question or discussion topic. Lyman (1981) cited in Lie (2002:57), states that think-pair-share technique involves three steps of cooperative structure, namely thinking, pairing, and sharing. During the first step individuals think silently about a question posed by the instructor. Individuals pair up during the second step and exchange thoughts. In the third step, the pairs share their responses with other pairs, other teams, or the entire group.

Based on <http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/using-think-pair-share-30626.html>, Think-Pair-Share is designed to differentiate instruction by providing students time and structure for thinking on a given topic, enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer. This learning technique promotes classroom participation by encouraging a high degree of pupil response, rather than using a basic recitation method in which a teacher poses a question and one student offers a response. Additionally, this technique provides an opportunity for all students to share their thinking with at least one other student which, in turn, increases their sense of involvement in classroom learning.

Think-Pair-Share is the good technique to built-in or giving students much more time to think response and help each other and encouraging individual participation and is applicable across all grade levels and class sizes.

Students think through questions using three distinct steps:

- 1) **Think:** Students think independently about the question that has been posed, forming ideas of their own.
- 2) **Pair:** Students are grouped in pairs to discuss their thoughts. This step allows students to articulate their ideas and to consider those of others.
- 3) **Share:** Student pairs share their ideas with a larger group, such as the whole class. Often, students are more comfortable presenting ideas to a group with the support of a partner. In addition, students' ideas have become more refined through this three-step process.

So, Think-Pair-Share is a simple technique that is effective from early childhood through all subsequent phases of education to tertiary and beyond. It is a very versatile structure, which has been adapted and used, in an endless number of ways. This is one of the foundation stones for the development of the 'co-operative classroom.

Writing

According to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing>, writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set signs or symbols, and writing itself occurs in as a chain process, that is a process to put ideas, opinion, and combination of meaningful letters into written form. It is distinguished from illustrations, such as cave drawing and painting, and the recording of language via a non-textual medium such as magnetic tape audio. Furthermore, Harmer (2004:33) states that writing is frequently useful as preparation for some other activities, in particular when students write sentences as a preamble to discussion activities. In this case, writing is considered to be important in developing other three skills (Listening, speaking and listening).

Hyland (2002:6), states that writing as a textual product, a coherent arrangement of elements structured according to a system of rules. In this case, the rules of writing are concerned more with correctness of form over function. It means that texts or written text have a structure, they are orderly arrangement of words, phrases, clauses and sentences, and by following the principles which guide the correct arrangement of elements.

Furthermore, Writing can be regarded as a mental process which forms an idea to express. This idea can be a personal view of description to begin writing. Some people say that writing is a special gift because not everyone can write well. Elbow (1998) defines that writing is the skill to develop the thinking. Thinking is characterized by the ability to record the factors involved, to classify then put them in order or write is a way of communicating a message to a reader for a purpose. Purpose for writing, through varied can be categorized into four major groups: to express yourself, to provide information for your reader, to persuade your reader, and to create a literary work.

Based on the explanation above, writing is a process where a writer needs his ability in transforming what he/she thought, the knowledge on what the writers, but understanding on the purpose of his/her writing.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by applying Classroom Action Research. An action research is an observation of activity that appears consciously on the teaching that is done systematically to collect data on everyday practice and then to analyze it in order to make some decisions about what the future practice should be.

The subject of this study was the Grade VIII of SMP Negeri 1 Teluk Mengkudu. They were six classes of VIII grade students, there are from VIII-1 up to VIII-6. Each class consisted of 40 students. The writer chooses VIII-1 class as the subject of this study. The reason for choosing this class because it was found that there are some problems in students' writing achievement. The objective of this study is to find out if there is an improvement on the students' achievement in writing narrative text through Think-Pair-Share technique. Stephen Kemmis in O'Brien (2001) has developed a simple model of the cyclical nature of the typical action research process. Each cycle has four steps, namely the cycle of plan, action, observation, and reflection.

The instruments that used in collecting the data in this study were quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative was used to described what we can be counted or measured and can be considered in objective way. The quantitative data were achieved from the students' test score from test I to test III to asses the students' achievement in narrative writing.

The qualitative data was used to describe the data that are not receivable to be counted or measured in an objective way. In this study the qualitative data were achieved from observation sheet, diary notes and interview sheet.

Observation sheet was used to investigate the situation and the problem found during the teaching and learning process. Diary notes were used to note personal evaluation about the situation of the class while teaching-learning process related to progression achieve. Interview was used to investigate the improvement of teaching and learning process for both teacher and students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved quantitative and qualitative data, which had done for three weeks. The quantitative data were taken from writing test, and the qualitative data were taken from observation sheet, diary notes, and interview sheet.

The data were taken from one class that was VIII-1 of SMP Negeri 1 Teluk Mengkudu which consisted of 40 students. It was conducted in two cycles and every cycle consisted of four steps of action research, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The first cycle was conducted in three meetings including test in the first meeting and cycle I test. The second cycle was conducted in three meetings including cycle II test. So, there were six meetings in this study.

The quantitative data were taken from the test result during conducted this research in six meetings. There were three tests in this study, namely test I that is done in the first meeting, test II that is done in the third meeting in cycle I, and test III that is done in the six meeting in the cycle II.

The score of the students in every meeting showed improvement continuously. The mean of the student's score in writing achievement in narrative text by applying Think-Pair-Share technique in test I was 51.4, test II 66.15, and test III 74.57.

Cycle I (Three Meetings)

In cycle I, there were four steps that should be done and cycle I was done in three meetings. The steps in conducted this study were as follows:

a). Planning

Planning is concerned with action or arrangement of doing something. In this phase, the writer prepared the material that was related to the teaching and learning process. Planning helped the direction of this study, so that the writer can select the most appropriate tools in collecting and analyzing the data. The plan phase consists of some steps, as follows:

1. Preparing lesson plan consists of the steps of the action.
2. Preparing the media, things and tools needed in teaching learning process, such as text book, example of narrative text, dictionary, etc.
3. Preparing the research instruments, such as diary notes and observation format to observe the teaching and learning process.
4. Preparing the tests for evaluation.

b) Action

In the cycle I, the writer taught the narrative text for three meetings. At the first meeting, the writer told the students the goal of the study. The writer explained about the definition, generic structures, and the language features of narrative text in the classroom. Then, the writer taught by applying Think-Pair-Share technique and gave the test in the end of the first meeting (Test I).

Second meeting, the writer explained about narrative text and gave an example of narrative text and asked the students to identify the generic structure and the language features. Here, the writer taught by using Think-Pair-Share technique. The writer poses a question/topic to the students and the writer gave the student's time to think about the topic individually, and then the writer asked them to work in pairs to solve the problem and last they share their ideas with the class.

In the third meeting, the writer explained about narrative text in more detailed and asked them to write a narrative text individually (Test II) the title was “My Holiday”. It was meant to evaluate the result of students’ work.

c) Observation

Observation was done in the classroom while the teaching and learning process runs. It was intended to record the behavior, attitude, performance, and all activities during the action. In this phase, the writer was observed the using of Think-Pair-Share as the technique, in order to give the comprehension and to improve the students’ achievement in writing narrative text and the data were taken from diary notes, observation sheet, and interview.

d) Reflection

Reflection was the evaluation or the feedback process form of the action. In this phase, the data taken from observation during teaching-learning process concerning with the result. All the weakness and the strength written on the diary notes and the data were taken from observation sheet, interview and the tests conducted were used to improve the weakness and keep the strength for the next cycle.

Cycle II (Three Meetings)

In this cycle the weakness or the problem that found in cycle I was solved in order to get the improvement in the process and in the result. This cycle also consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. There were three meetings in the action of cycle II. The second cycle was arranged as follows:

a) Planning

1. Preparing the lesson plan.
2. Preparing the teaching media that are needed for the teaching and learning process.
3. Preparing the test for the second cycle.
4. Preparing the observation sheet that is used to know the students’ responses and class condition as a whole and also to see if there are any improvements.
5. Giving motivation to the students to write well.
6. Giving responsibilities to all groups to lead the discussion well and do the task.
7. Giving more chance to in-active students to give their opinions or suggestions.
8. Asking all the members to participate in the group presentation.

b) Action

There are many activities to do in cycle II and it was done in three meetings. Based on the reflection in the first cycle, the writer taught the students to write narrative text by applying Think-Pair-Share technique.

In the fourth meeting, the writer asked the students what narrative text is, and gave them an example and identified the generic structures individually. Here, the writer asked the students’ about their difficulties in narrative writing and asked them to search a narrative text from other sources.

In the fifth meeting, the writer gave a familiar story of narrative text that the students already know about the story. Then, the writer asked the students to sit in

group and asked them to make narrative text by applying Think-Pair-Share technique. Then, they present it in front of the class.

In the sixth meeting, the writer reviewed students' understanding about narrative writing and Think-Pair-Share technique. Then, the writer gave them test III in which make narrative text the title "The Story of Lake Toba" and that was the last test to know their improvement score.

c) Observation

The observation was still done in this cycle. The activities of the students were observed and they showed that most of their writing was much better than in the cycle I. The students more active in finishing their writing and they were look more enthusiasts in learning.

d) Reflection

Having evaluated the students' narrative writing, the writer found that the students' score showed the improvement. Based on the observation and the result of their writing, the writer concluded that the students' narrative writing improved with Think-Pair-Share technique. The students' score in the second cycle had increased than in the first cycle.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESSTIONS

After analyzing the data, it was found that there was an improvement in the students' writing achievement from test I (orientation) to test III. It can be seen from the students' score were increased in each cycle. There were six meetings in this study that consisted of three meetings in each cycle. This consisted of three tests in which the score of each test kept improvement continuously. The mean of the students' score in orientation test was 51.4, cycle I test was 66.15, and cycle II test was 74.57. It is also proved by the diary notes, observation sheet, and interview sheet results which indicate improvement in the teaching and learning process from cycle I to cycle II.

Based on the result of the data, the conclusion is that the use of Think-Pair-Share technique significantly improved students' achievement in writing narrative text in SMP NEGERI 1 TELUK MENGGUDU.

The finding of this study showed that the Think-Pair-Share technique improved the students' achievement in writing narrative text. There are some suggestions offered to improve a better skill in education. The suggestions are:

1. It is important for the teacher to apply an appropriate technique in teaching writing such as, Think-Pair-Share technique in order to improve the students' achievement in writing especially in narrative text.
2. It is also suggested to the readers who interested in writing narrative text through Think-Pair-Share technique, because it will bring you into a good understanding in writing.

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