

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE WRITING STRATEGY

Emilda Ramadona

Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP, Universitas Alwashliyah, Medan
Email: ramadone27@gmail.com

Iskandar Zulkarnain

Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP, Universitas Alwashliyah, Medan
Email: nurhayati8107@gmail.com

Meida Rabia Sihite

Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP, Universitas Alwashliyah, Medan
Email: meidarabia55@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to improve students' achievement in writing descriptive through collaborative writing. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 28 Medan academic year 2018-2019 as the subject of researcher. The subject of this research consisted of 35 students of the eighth grade. The research was conducted with classroom action research. The research was conducted by dividing into two cycles with 6 meeting for each. The sources of data were qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were collected by observation sheets, questionnaires and diary notes. Quantitative data were taken from tests, carried out at the end of every cycle. Based on the result of the data analysis there was an improvement of the result of the students' achievement in writing descriptive text from each cycle. After doing test on cycle I, there was an improvement of the result of the students' mean was 72.8 with 24 students who got successful score criteria above 70 or it was 69 % and 11 students who got unsuccessful score criteria above 70 or it was 31 %. Then, an improvement was done in second cycle after reflection in the first cycle, there was an improvement of students' mean was 77.9 with 31 students who got successful score criteria above 70 or it was 89 % and 4 students who got unsuccessful score criteria above 70 or it was 11 %. In other words, the students' achievement at writing descriptive text was improved. And based on questionnaire sheets, observation sheets, diary notes, and documentation, it showed that the expression and excitement of the students were also improved.

Keywords: descriptive text, collaborative writing strategy, writing skill

ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan prestasi siswa dalam menulis deskriptif melalui penulisan kolaboratif. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMP Negeri 28 Medan tahun akademik 2018-2019 sebagai subjek peneliti. Subjek penelitian ini berjumlah 35 siswa dari kelas VIII. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan penelitian tindakan kelas. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dengan membagi menjadi dua siklus dengan masing-masing 6 pertemuan. Sumber data adalah data kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Data kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui lembar observasi, kuesioner dan catatan harian. Data kuantitatif diambil dari tes yang dilakukan pada akhir setiap siklus. Berdasarkan hasil analisis data ada peningkatan hasil prestasi siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dari setiap siklus. Setelah melakukan tes pada siklus I, ada peningkatan hasil rata-rata siswa yaitu 72,8 dengan 24 siswa yang mendapat kriteria skor berhasil di atas 70 atau 69% dan 11 siswa yang mendapat kriteria skor tidak berhasil di atas 70 atau 31%. Kemudian, melakukan peningkatan pada siklus kedua setelah refleksi pada siklus pertama, ada peningkatan rata-rata siswa yaitu 77,9 dengan 31 siswa yang mendapat kriteria skor berhasil di atas 70 atau 89% dan 4 siswa yang mendapat kriteria skor tidak berhasil di atas 70 atau 11%. Dengan kata lain, prestasi siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif meningkat. Dan berdasarkan lembar kuesioner, lembar observasi, catatan harian, dan dokumentasi, menunjukkan bahwa ekspresi dan kegembiraan siswa juga meningkat.

Kata kunci: teks deksripsi, strategi menulis kolaboratif, keterampilan menulis

A. Introduction

English is one of the subjects that are taught in senior high schools. It is considered by students as one of the difficult subjects to learn. There are many reasons why they consider English as a difficult subject. Raimes (1983:3) mentions that when a second or foreign language is learned, it is learned to communicate with other people: to understand them, talk to them, read what they have written and write to them. Therefore, the students can be said to have mastered English if they are able to use it either receptively through reading and listening or productively through speaking and writing.

Writing is very difficult for learners in a foreign language. Therefore, it is possible that the students face many problems in learning second language writing. Richards and Renandya (2002:303) state writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. In line with it, Hamp-Lyons cited in Nunan (1991:91) states that writing is clearly a complex process and competent writing is frequently accepted as the last language skill to be acquired.

But in fact, when the researcher did field teaching training practice, it was observed that the students had a low achievement in writing descriptive, especially in VIII³ because only several of them who achieved the Minimum Criteria of Mastery (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal: KKM*). The minimum score is 70 but the students get score 69. It happened because the students were not interested and got bored in teaching and learning writing, and also the students still had an assumption that they made many mistakes in writing descriptive.

It is needed some creative and engaged strategies to solve the problem. Writing descriptive text is one of the writing problems for the students. The most difficult for them is how to describe a person or a thing since it has some rules to be followed. The students have to be able to describe based on the characteristics. Based on the observation, it was found that the students cannot write it individually because they have different ability. They need to have a group or pair discussion to share information each other. The situation initiates the researcher to conduct a research by applying collaborative writing as the method to improve students' achievement in writing Descriptive.

Collaborative writing is a group work where the students write a text based on what teacher asked and then they correct it one another. Collaborative writing is a powerful method of writing that encourages cooperation, critical thinking, peer learning and active participation toward an end product. It is meaningful interaction and shared decision making between members of a group using a common set of tools; and thus, the combination of techniques is effective in promoting improved students writing.

The Nature of writing

Writing is one of language skill which is defined by Brown (2001:335) as the graphic representation of spoken language, and that written performance is much like oral performance, the only difference lying in graphic instead of auditory signals. From the statement, it can be understood that writing means productive skill as speaking skill. Written language is produced in written form, whereas spoken language is produced in spoken and understandable with the listening way. Therefore, written language is represented by spoken language. A sufficient skill is needed to produce a good written language as stated by Brown (2001:335) that writing products are often the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills, skills that not every speaker develops naturally. In line with it, Seow cited by Richards and Renandya (2002:315) states that there are four main stages of the process of writing that is planning, drafting, revising and editing.

The Process of Writing

According to Harmer (2007: 2) the process of writing has four elements.

1. Planning

Firstly, the writers have to consider the purpose of their writing not only the type of text they wish to procedure, but also the language they use, and the information they choose to include. Secondly, experienced writers think of audience they are writing for, since this will influence not only the shape of the writing (how it laid out, how the paragraphs are structured, etc.), but also the choice of the language ,for example, it is formal or informal in tone. Thirdly, writers have to sequence the facts, ideas or arguments they have decided to include.

2. Drafting

We can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. As the writing process proceeds into editing, a number of drafts may be produced on the way to the final version.

3. Editing (reflecting and revising)

Reflecting and revising are often helped by other readers (or editors) who comment and make suggestion. Another reader's reaction to a piece of writing will help the author to make appropriate revisions.

4. Final version

Once writers have edited their draft, making the changes they consider to be necessary, they produce their final version, this may look considerably different from both the original plan and the first draft, because things have changed in the editing process, but the writer is now ready to send the written text to its intended audience.

The Genres of Writing

The word *genre* comes from French (and originally Latin) word for 'kind' or class. The term is widely used in rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and more recently linguistics, to refer to a distinctive type of text. Genres of writing are divided into thirteen types, they are:

1. Report

Social function: to describe the way things are, with reference to arrange of natural and social phenomenon in our environment.

2. News item

Social function: to inform readers, listeners or viewers about events of the day which are considered newsworthy or importance.

3. Analytical exposition

Social function: to persuade the reader or listener that something in the case.

4. Anecdote

Social function: to share with others an account of unusual or amusing incident.

5. Recount

Social function: to retell events for the purpose of informing and entertaining.

6. Narrative

Social function: to amuse, entertain and deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways. Narrative deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn finds a resolution.

7. Procedure

Social function: to describe how something is accomplished through a sequence of action or steps.

8. Description

Social function: to describe a particular person, place or thing.

9. Hortatory Exposition

Social function: to persuade the reader or listener that something should or should not be the case.

10. Explanation

Social function: to explain the processes involved in the information or workings of natural or socio cultural phenomena.

11. Discussion

Social function: to present (at least) who points of view about an issue.

12. Reviews

Social function: to critique an art work or event for a public audience.

13. Spoof

Social function: to retell an event with a humorous twist. To more concentration to the effective of using of language in written text, it is better organized based the using of genre. As Pardiyo (2006) statement that genre can be defined as the type of text which made effectively, the choice, and arrangement element of the text, and suitable grammatical patterns.

The Concept of Descriptive

Descriptive is a writing technique which aims to make the reader as though in some places that are portrayed through writing, come to feel, see and hear an event that is on descriptive writing. Writing descriptive is more interesting than other writing, because you can describe the place, character or the other you describe and the reader as though can feel, see and hear when the reader reads the descriptive writing. The purpose of descriptive writing is to describe someone, place or thing that details to the reader in form writing as though the reader can feel, see and hear through in writing.

Zahrowi (2009: 5) said that a descriptive is a text which lists or describes the characteristics of something. It means describing the characteristics of something in detail explanation of being character of someone, something or certain place. The similar definition was from Diane (1966:41)

that a descriptive writing is to create clear picture or impression of person, place or object. Descriptive is like drawing with words, writing detail about someone or something. Then, according to Anderson and Anderson (2003:26) descriptive describes particular person, place, or things. It means that descriptive is designed especially about a person, a place, or things. They also state descriptive tells about subject by describing its feature without including personal opinions. Additionally, according to Oshima and Hogue (1997:50), descriptive writing appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/ or sounds. In addition, a good description is like a “word picture”; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind.

Based on references above it can be concluded that descriptive is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. Its purpose is to describe and reveal a particular person, place or thing.

B. Research Method

This study belonged to classroom action research. Action research is utilized because it is aimed at improving outcomes of teaching and learning. It helps the teacher be more aware of the process. Classroom action research is portrayed as a cyclical or spiral process involving steps of planning, acting, observing and reflecting with each of these activities being systematically and self critically implemented and interrelated.

Action research refers to classroom investigation initiated by researchers, perhaps teachers, who looking critically at their own practice with the purpose of understanding and improving their teaching, and the quality of education.

Action research involves the collection and analysis of data related to aspect of professional practice. It has been a loop process, in the sense that the process could be repeated (reframing the problem, collection fresh data, rethinking the analysis, etc.) until found satisfied solution. Kemmis (1998) has developed a simple model of the cyclical nature of the typical action research process. Each cycle has four steps namely: planning, action, observation, reflection.

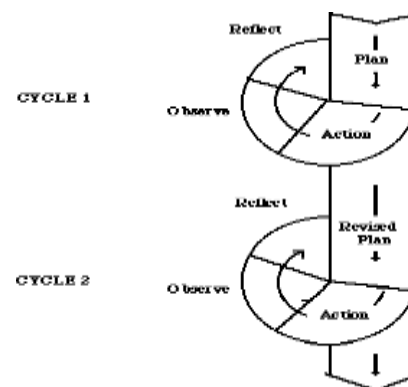


Figure 1 Classroom Action Research by Kemmis and McTaggart
Source:google

The subject of this research was the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 28 Medan academic year 2018-2019. The subject of this research consisted of one class, VIII^F class, with 35 students.

There were some procedures in collecting the data as describe d below.

1. Orientation Test

Orientation test was administered before the treatment. The function of the orientation test was to find out the mean score of students before being treated.

2. Treatment

The treatment was given to the students through Collaborative Writing Strategy in writing descriptive. The treatment was conducted in two cycles and after the treatment had been given to the students, the test was given again to find out their score in writing descriptive.

In collecting data, qualitative data (experience-based) and quantitative data (number-based) were used. The qualitative were gained by an observation within the physical activity in the classroom, questionnaire be presented for the teacher and documentation during teaching learning process. Each of them is described as follow.

1. Observation

The observation was intended to find out the observation, they are: the location, facilities, teaching and learning process, the conditions of students and student and teacher do.

2. Questionnaire

Before implementing the classroom action research, the writer had asked the teacher to know students' difficulties in learning descriptive text, and the method or kinds of

strategies usually used by the teacher in teaching descriptive text. The interview carried out after accomplishing classroom action research to know the teacher's response toward the idea of collaborative writing strategy.

3. Diary Note

Diary notes were done by the researcher to note personal evaluation of the situation in the class while teaching and learning process. Diary notes were used to describe the researcher's feeling and thoughts about the teaching and learning process. It recorded everything that happened during teaching learning process including reflection and evaluation of the implementation of collaborative Writing in writing descriptive text.

4. Test

The test was given in Cycle I and Cycle II. The test was conducted after implementing collaborative writing strategy. It was to measure students' understanding in learning descriptive text.

C. Result and Discussion

The quantitative data were taken from the results of writing tests which were administered in two cycles. There were five meetings conducted. The results of the test could be seen in the following table:

Table 1. The Students' Writing Test Scores

Orientation Test	Cycle I	Cycle II
Total	2358	2729
Mean	67.5	77.9

The qualitative data were taken from observation sheets, questionnaires, and diary notes.

a. The classroom atmosphere when teaching and learning process

The classroom atmosphere was described by using observation sheet.

b. Questionnaire

There was one session when the questionnaire was administered and the students' gave their responses to the statements in the questionnaire. It was intended to find out of their difficulties.

c. Diary Notes

Diary notes were written by the researcher

in every meeting when conducting the research. Diary notes were used to describe the researcher's thoughts and feelings about teaching learning process included the reflection and evaluation in teaching learning in writing descriptive text. The researcher voted whether the students were paying attention to the teacher when teacher explained the lesson and also noted the students who were active to answer the question during the lesson.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the data, it was found that the students' achievement in writing descriptive text before applying the collaborative writing strategy was low. It was showed from the mean of Pre-Test was 67.3. Where, there was only 15 student who got successful score criteria above 70 or it was only 43 % and 20 students who got unsuccessful or it was 57 %. The students' achievement in writing descriptive text improved after applying collaborative writing strategy. The result of the data analysis showed that there was an improvement of the result of the students' achievement in writing descriptive text from each cycle. After doing Test on cycle I, there was an improvement of the result of the students' mean was 72.8. Where, 24 students who got successful score criteria above 70 or it was 69 % and 11 students who got unsuccessful score criteria above 70 or it was 31 %. Then, an improvement in second cycle was done after reflection in the first cycle, there was an improvement of students' mean was 77.9. Where, 31 students who got successful score criteria above 70 or it was 89 % and 4 students who got unsuccessful score criteria above 70 or it was 11 %. In other words, the students' achievement in writing descriptive text improved and based on questionnaire sheets, observation sheets, diary notes and documentation, it showed that the expression and excitement of the students were also improved. Then researcher implemented the collaborative writing strategy in Post Test cycle I and cycle II. By using collaborative writing strategy the students were active, enthusiastic, and joyful to follow the teaching and learning process.

Having seen the result of the study, the following suggestions are offered to be considered.

- a. For the teachers of English, they should apply technique in teaching writing especially writing descriptive text so that the students can be more active, enthusiastic and enjoyable during teaching learning process.
- b. The students should practice their writing of descriptive text in terms of developing and improving their writing descriptive text because writing descriptive text is very important in writing achievement.
- c. To other researchers, as the information to get the good method to improve the students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

E. References

- Anderson, Mark and Anderson, Kathy. (2003). *Text Type in English 3*. Australia: MacMillan.
- Brown, H. Douglas. (2001). *Teaching by Principle*. San Francisco: Longman.
- Harmer, Jeremy. (2004). *How to Teach Writing*. England: Pearson.
- <http://grammar.about.com/od/c/g/Collaborative-Writing.htm> Retrieved on August, 28th 2018
- Nunan, David. (1988). *The Learner-Centred Curriculum: A Study in Second Language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. (1997). *Introduction to Academic Writing* (2nd Ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Pardiyono. (2006). *12 Writing Clues for Better Writing Competence*. Yogyakarta: Andi Offset.
- Raimes, Ann. (1983). *Technique in Teaching Writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Seow, A. (2002). The Writing Process and Process Writing. In J. C. Richards and W.A. Renandya (eds.), *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (pp. 315-320). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Zahrowi, Ahmad. (2009). *Descriptive Text*. <http://descriptivetext.PAZEDU.mht>