

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THINK TALK WRITE STRATEGY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPHS

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Abstracts: This research aims to increase students' skill to write descriptive paragraphs in grade X-3 at MA Al-Islam Jamsaren Surakarta through the implementation of think talk write learning strategy. This research is an action research done in three cycles. The subjects of this research are the students and Indonesian teacher of grade X-3 at MA Al-Islam. Data were gathered through observation, interview, test and document analysis. The data validity test used triangulation method and data resources. The techniques of data analysis employed descriptive comparative technique and critical analysis. The implementation of think talk write learning strategy can improve students' skill in writing descriptive paragraphs. The improvement of students' engagement in writing descriptive paragraphs can be seen through the students' activity during teaching learning process. The percentage of students' engagement in cycle I is 65.21%, cycle II is 82.61%, and cycle III is 96.65%. The improvement of students' writing skill in the first survey is 52.17%. Cycle I is 69.57%, cycle II is 86.97% and cycle III is 95.65%.

Key word: think talk write strategy, writing, descriptive text.

INTRODUCTION

Writing skill is the last language competence that is mastered by language learners after listening, speaking, and reading (Nurgiyantoro, 2010). As language skill which occupies the last position, writing has some advantages, like can improve the intelligence in developing initiative and creativity skill, grow the bravery and push the will and skill to collect information (Suparno & Yunus, 2007). Writing activity also very help us in conveying our idea and thought directly through language mean.

Writing is the activity of expressing one's thoughts, ideas, and feelings in written form. Writing is viewed as an activity which cannot stand itself. This activity related to another things as material mastery, the understanding research method and writing method, the use of reference resources, language mastery, the customary of drill and use of appropriate media and the choose of reader segment (Sutarno, 2008). Those things are very important in order to understand the purpose which wanted to convey well by the readers.

Writing skill is the most difficult one to master by language learners because this requires one's ability to present graphology, language structure, and words so that the writer's intent can be understood by the readers (Tarigan, 2010). Writing is seen as a complex activity (Rizkiana & Widiyati, 2018). This skill requires a writer to be able to organize the contents of the writing and express them in written form that can be understood by the readers. For that reasons, writing is a process which must be learned and not happen itself. As said by (Mandal,

2009) *writing is a creative process because it is a process of reaching out for one's thoughts and discovering them. Writing, as such is a process of meaning making.*

Descriptive text as one of genres in writing plays an important role in the formation of four other genres. This genre keeps the other genres alive (Suparno & Yunus, 2007). In addition, this text is used to prevent the readers from being bored and to add clarity and assuredness of the readers. Something that can be described is not only limited to what we see and hear, but rather also what we feel and think.

As one of the basic competencies, writing skill turns out to be difficult to be achieved by students. Most students still have difficulties when asked to describe an object. This phenomenon also occurs to students of MA Al-Islam Jamsaren, Surakarta. The survey result showed that the quality of descriptive texts of students in grade X-3 of MA Al-Islam Jamsaren was still not optimal. This was indicated by the students' scores which have not reached the minimum completeness limit (KKM), that is 75. Of the 23 students, only 12 (52.17%) who scored ≥ 75 , while 11 (47.82%) scored below the minimum completeness limit that has been set. Most students were not able to describe objects that were observed in detail, diction used was less appropriate and less varied, many errors were found in spelling and the sentence structures were also unclear.

Based on the results of observation and interview that were conducted earlier, there several factors that hampered students' competence in writing descriptive paragraphs: (1) The students could not express ideas well, (2) They could not describe an object in detail, (3) Their comprehension of sentence structures was still lacking, (4) They were not actively engaged in writing activities in the class, (5) The teacher did not use innovative learning strategy, (6) The teacher did not provide sufficient guidance and thorough supervision when students were working on their descriptive paragraphs.

Dealing with the problems above, it is necessary to make use of a learning strategy which is able to improve students' engagement in writing activities and students' writing skill in descriptive paragraphs as well. One of the efforts that can be done is to implement *think talk write* learning strategy.

Therefore, the problem statements of this research are formulated as follow: (1) is the implementation of *think talk write* learning strategy able to improve writing skill of students in grade X-3 at MA Al-Islam Jamsaren Surakarta to write descriptive paragraphs? (2) is the implementation of *think talk write* learning strategy able to improve students' engagement in writing descriptive paragraphs of students in grade X-3 at MA Al-Islam Jamsaren Surakarta?

METHOD

This research was conducted at MA Al-Islam Jamsaren, Surakarta. The research subjects were students of grade X-3. The focus of the research was the learning process of writing descriptive paragraphs. This was a classroom action research with three cycles. Action research can be defined as a research which is reflective, taken from real problem faced by teacher in classes in learning and teaching process, then reflected alternative the problem solving and followed by real action which is planned and measurable (Suwandi, 2011). Data were taken from learning process, informants, and documents. Data collection technique used observation, interview, test, and document analysis. Validity test employed triangulation techniques and data resource methods. For data analysis, comparative descriptive technique and critical analysis were used.

DISCUSSION

1. Skill in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs

Skill is an expertise that benefits oneself and others. Skill can only be obtained by practicing a lot (Tarigan, 2010). This also applies in writing skill. To be skilled in writing, particularly writing descriptive paragraphs, students have to go through a lot of practice. The more they practice, the better their writing will be.

(Rosidi, 2009) revealed that writing is an activity of expressing the thoughts, ideas, and feelings in written form. (Lasa, 2005) defined writing as a process of pouring ideas and thoughts with particular system in the written form. Descriptive is one of the genres that describes the observation, experience, and feelings of the writer (Akhadiah, Arsyad, & Ridwan, 1999). Writing effective descriptive is writing which aims to provide details about an object so that it can give effect to the sensitivity of imagination of the readers and listeners (Semi, 2007). Thus, the readers are made to see, experience, and feel themselves what is happening as perceived by their five senses (Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2007).

There are several steps that need to be considered so that the aims and objectives that we will convey through descriptive paragraphs can be well received: (1) determine first what to describe, (2) formulate the purpose, (3) set the objectives, (4) describe the strong parts in detail. In addition, in writing descriptive paragraphs, there are three things to consider: (1) language ability, (2) careful observation and breadth of knowledge, and (3) ability to describe things in detail that can support the accuracy and liveliness of the writing.

2. Think Talk Write Learning Strategy

Learning strategy is a planned activity that involves all aspects of learning to achieve predetermined goals (Sagala, Sari, Firdaos, & Amalia, 2019). *Think talk write* is a learning strategy that can improve activities and communication among students (Yamin & Ansari, 2008). The strategy is basically built through thinking (think), speaking (talk), and writing (write). This involves students in thinking or dialoguing with themselves after the reading process, then talking and sharing ideas with their friends before writing. This strategy can train students to think critically, be active in the learning process, be skilled in communication, be brave to opine, appreciate their friends' opinions, and learn to express the results of their discussion in a logical and systematic written form. Through this strategy, students are not only invited to think but also involved in discussion activities, deliver them (talk), and write it systematically (write). (Campbell, 1969) stated that *talk-write strategy would give student social-vocal reinforcement from their peer*. In accordance with that statement, the use of speaking and writing strategy will provide social-vocal reinforcement of the group. The activity encourages students to participate in learning. By implementing *think talk write* strategy, students utilize all competencies that involve cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

3. Improvement of Students' Skill in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs

Students' skill in writing descriptive paragraphs is improving after the implementation of *think talk write* with three cycles. The improvement is based on several criteria including: content, organization, language development, vocabulary, and mechanics.

In cycle I, the percentage of students who were skilled in writing descriptive paragraphs was 69,57% (16 students), while 30,43% (7 students) have not reached minimum completeness limit (KKM), that is 75. The result of writing that the students made showed that many students could not express ideas in a good descriptive paragraph. The development of

idea was not yet detailed. Coherence and cohesion aspects were lacking. Sentence structure was ineffective. Vocabulary was limited. Mechanics were weak. There were two efforts done to improve the situations: making students understand first how to make a good descriptive paragraph and asking teacher to explain the scoring criteria to students.

In cycle II, the percentage of student who were skilled in writing descriptive paragraphs was 86.97% (20 students), while students who have not reached KKM were 13.03% (3 students). After cycle II, students were more skilled in expressing ideas in detail and using effective sentences and good grammar. The result obtained through the implementation of cycle II exceeded the minimum completeness, that is 75%. Even so, there was little weakness in cycle II. The effort done to cope with the problem was asking teacher to explain the use of correct spelling because some students' writing had problems with spellings.

The percentage of students who were skilled in writing descriptive paragraphs was 95.65% (22 students), only 1 student (4.35%) who scored below KKM. Students were able to develop the framework that has been made into a good descriptive paragraph. Spelling errors were rarely found. The content of the writing can represent the object described. Vocabulary selection was precise and varied. In addition, the development of language and organization were well established.

4. Improvement of Students' Engagement in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs

There are three aspects of students' engagement focused in this research. Those are students' engagements in thinking, talking and writing.

In cycle I, the percentage of students who were engaged in the learning process was 65.21% (15 students), while less engaged students were as many as 34.79% (8 students). The observation done in the cycle I revealed that most students did not show seriousness and engagement in the learning process, the courage of students to present the results of discussion was still lacking, students lacked confidence in reading their own writing, interaction within the group was not visible, and learning steps applied were not fully understood by students.

To deal with the problems, teacher was asked to: (1) be more assertive towards students who paid less attention, (2) instill confidence in students and to inspire students to be actively involved in learning, (3) give rewards, (4) be more communicative, and (5) fully understand the steps *think talk write* learning strategy.

In cycle II, the percentage of students who were engaged in the learning process was 82.61% (19 students), while less engaged students were 17.39% (4 students). In cycle II, students better understood the steps of *think talk write* learning strategy and students' interaction in discussion was increasing. Students looked confident in delivering opinions and presentation in front of the class. Students were more enthusiastic in participating in learning. To improve the result, teacher was asked to (1) be more intensive in monitoring the students during learning process and (2) be able to effectively manage discussion time.

In cycle III, the percentage of students who were engaged in the learning process was 95.65% (22 students), while less engaged student was only 4.35% (1 student). The success achieved in cycle III was seen from students' activities in thinking, talking and writing. Their engagement in the discussion increased sharply. Almost all students competed to read the results of their writing. All groups presented their results of discussion. Discussion took place well. Students no longer hesitated to give opinions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the research, the conclusions are: (1) the implementation of *think talk write* learning strategy is able to improve students' skill in writing descriptive paragraphs. This can be seen from an increase in the percentage of students' writing scores in each cycle. In cycle I, the percentage of success was 69.57% (16 students). In cycle II, the percentage increased to 86.97% (20 students), and in cycle III, it reached 95.65% (22 students). This percentage was calculated from the number of students achieving minimum completeness limit (KKM), that is 75 and (2) the implementation of *think talk write* learning strategy is able to increase students' engagement in writing descriptive paragraphs. This was shown from the increasing percentage of the number of students who met the achievement indicators determined both from cycle I to cycle II and from cycle II to cycle III. The percentage of students' engagement in cycle I was 65.21% (15 students), in cycle II was 82.61% (19 students), and in cycle III was 95.65% (22 students).

Based on the conclusions above, the suggestions are as follow: (1) teachers are expected to be selective in choosing strategies or methods in learning, (2) teachers need to increase their knowledge and understanding of various learning strategies that can be used in learning, (3) students are expected to play an active and serious role in learning activities, (4) students should utilize all potential they have for their own learning achievement, (5) students should practice writing diligently so that the writing they produce is of higher quality, (6) schools are expected to provide opportunities and full support to teachers to implement a more innovative learning strategy, and (7) other researchers related to this learning strategy can use the result of this study as one of references for their research in the future.

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