

Improving the Eleventh Grade Students' Writing Achievement by Using Controlled Writing Technique at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 Academic Year

Moch. Basroni Rizal, Bambang Suharjito, Asih Santihastuti
English Language Education Program, Language and Arts Department, Faculty of Teacher Training
and Education Jember University
Jln. Kalimantan 37, Jember 68121
E-mail: andrearizal@yahoo.co.id

Abstract

This research was intended to improve the eleventh grade students' participation and their writing achievement by using controlled writing technique at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 Academic Year. The research design was Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of planning of the action, implementation of the action, observation and evaluation, and reflection. The research subjects were the students of class XI IPA at SMAN 2 Lamongan. The data were collected through observation and writing test and were analyzed quantitatively. Based on the result, it showed that there was an improvement on the percentage of the students who were actively involved in the writing teaching learning process by fulfilling at least three indicators. It increased from 65.7% in Cycle 1 to 75.7% in Cycle 2. Then, the percentage of the students who got score 70 or higher also improved. The improvement could be seen from the result of narrative writing test that showed 54.28% of the students achieved the target of success criteria in Cycle 1 and it increased to 77.7% in Cycle 2. Based on those results, it was concluded that the use of comic strips could improve the eleventh grade students' narrative text writing achievement.

Keywords: *controlled writing technique, narrative writing achievement, students' participation.*

Introduction

Writing is important in our life since many things around us involve writing. Harmer (2004:3) states there are some reasons why writing is important. In learning education context, it is worth remembering the exams, whether they are testing foreign language abilities or other skills, which rely on the students' proficiency in order to measure their knowledge. It means that every task which allows students to produce a piece of writing must be rated because it reflects how well the students have knowledge about certain thing. Writing in English is not easy. The students have to think about aspects of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, content and organization if they want to make a good piece of writing. As Harmer (2004:11) states, in a good piece of writing, it is expected that the spelling to be correct, the nouns and the verbs to agree with each other, and the punctuation and lay out to obey certain convention. It means, unlike other skills which ignore some errors in producing words such as reading and speaking, writing is expected to be the final result with almost no errors could be found.

Based on the preliminary study conducted through interview with the English teacher of SMA Negeri 2 Lamongan on January 30th 2014, it was found that the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Lamongan had difficulties in writing. It was proved by their previous English writing score which was still under the standard score 70 that was 65. It was also known that this school uses the Institutional Level Curriculum (KTSP). Further, based on the classroom observation, the students still had

difficulty mastering grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. The difficulties of grammar was indicated by writing incorrect sentence. For example, "Ayu a beautiful girl" instead of "Ayu is a beautiful girl". It seemed that they tend to use patterns of Indonesian which did not have the verb "to be". The lack of vocabulary made the students tend to use only certain words they have known. For example, "I like hear to music" instead of "I like listening to music". As a result, they just applied some words from the dictionary without considering the context of their sentence, and this can make the reader confused. Improper use of mechanics such as spelling and punctuation are also a problem for students. For example, "I take a bad twice a day" instead "I take a bath twice day. It meant students still had difficulty in memorizing the spelling of English words. These problems made the students had low interest to participate in writing class because they felt that they had little knowledge about English.

Referring to the problems identified as well as the causes of the problems, the researcher proposed an effective solution to solve those problems by using "controlled writing technique" as the technique in teaching writing. There were several reasons for using controlled writing technique to improve students' writing achievement. Robinson (in Allen 1965:266) suggests a way to help foreign language learners in writing by applying controlled writing. Futhermore, Sharwood (in Byrne, 1973:72) states that, the principle of controlled writing is based on an assumption that the teachers should teach one thing at a time. This means that writing which involves some aspects

must be taught separately. For example, one time a teacher just discusses about grammar in a sentence, in other time he/she teaches how to compose their sentence into to good organization.

Previous researchers found that controlled writing technique could improve the students' writing achievement. A research conducted by Komsatun (2005) conducted a research at SMAN 1 Umbulsari Jember. The results of experimental research showed that there was significant influence to the students were taught to use a type of literary technique controlled than students who were taught using free writing. The results showed that the students' score improved after being applied controlled writing technique.. Based on those researches, it can be seen that controlled writing technique can improve students' writing ability in different kinds of text.

From the theories as mentioned above and previous studies, it was revealed that controlled writing technique contribute effectively in improving students' writing skill as well as students' participation in writing class. To confirm the results of previous studies, therefore an action research in different setting entitled "Improving the Eleventh Grade Students' Writing Achievement by Using Controlled Writing Technique at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 Academic Year" was conducted.

The problems of the research were: (1) How can the use of controlled writing technique improve the eleventh grade students' participation in writing teaching learning process at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 academic year?; (2) How can the use of controlled writing technique improve the eleventh grade students' narrative writing achievement at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 academic year?. Then, the research objectives were: (1) To improve the eleventh grade students' participation in writing teaching learning process at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 academic year; (2) To improve the eleventh grade students' writing achievement at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 academic year.

Research Methodology

The design of this research was classroom action research that was done collaboratively with the English teacher by adapting the cycle model of the action research from Lewin in Elliot (1991:70) with a sequence of steps namely planning of the action, implementation of the action, observation and evaluation, and reflection. This research was conducted at SMAN 2 Lamongan and it was chosen purposively. The research subjects were 35 students from class XI IPA at SMAN 2 Lamongan. The data collection method applied in this research were writing test and observation. Writing test was used to collect the data about students' writing achievement, while observation was used to collect the data about students' participation.

Concerning with the scoring method, the researcher applied analytical scoring method to evaluate the students' writing test. There were five aspects of writing that were evaluated in this research, namely grammar, content, mechanic, vocabulary, and organization. The scoring guide used in this research was adapted from Hughey, et.al

(1981:89-108). Then, the results of observation in the form of checklist were analyzed by using this following formula that was adapted from Ali (1993:186).

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes: E = the percentage of students who were active
n = the number of students who were active
N = the number of students

Then, the results of writing test in the form of students' scores of narrative writing were analyzed quantitatively by using this formula that was adapted from Ali (1993:186).

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes: E = the percentage of students who got score ≥ 70
n = the number of students who got score ≥ 70
N = the number of students

The criteria used to evaluate the success of the action were: (1) at least 70% of the students were actively participated during the narrative writing teaching learning process; (2) at least 70% of the students achieved the target requirement score that was ≥ 70 in the writing test.

Research Finding and Discussion

This research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle was done in three meetings. The actions were given in the first and second meeting and the writing test was given in the third meeting. The research findings were based on the results of the observation and the writing test. The observation was done during the descriptive writing teaching learning process by using controlled writing. The observation in the form of checklist was used to record the students' participation. The indicators observed were: (1) paying attention to the lesson; (2) asking question to the teacher; (3) doing the exercises; (4) discussing the exercise with the class actively.

In Cycle 1, the result of the observation showed that there were 60% of the students who were active in meeting 1 and 71.4% in meeting 2. While the passive students were 40% in meeting 1 and 28.5% in meeting two. This high percentage of passive students came up because most of the students did not fulfill indicators (2) asking question to the teacher and (3) answering teacher's question. Then, from the result of students' descriptive writing test in Cycle 1, it was known that only 54.28% of the students who got ≥ 70 . It meant that the result of the students' writing test had not achieved the target yet.

Dealing with the low percentages of the students who had not achieved the target yet, there were some aspects that influenced the results of the action in Cycle 1. First, the students had difficulties in writing gramatically correct sentences in the aspect of tense. Second, still had difficulties in words comprehension. It might be due their lack of English vocabulary . In addition, there were some

students who felt sleepy because the action was done in the last school hour.

To solve those problems, the teacher gave more explanation about controlled writing technique even though it was been explained in teaching learning process besides, the researcher also explained more about simple present tense. Then, the researcher gave feedback to the students about their writing test in Cycle 1. Besides, the researcher asked the students to bring the dictionary to help them in comprehending some difficult words. In addition, the researcher gave more time for the students' discussion and the researcher gave explanation about using controlled writing and pattern simple present tense to make the students more understood about controlled writing and pattern simple present tense. Then, the researcher gave more interesting topic for the next cycle so that the students did not feel sleepy.

After the actions were done in Cycle 2, it was found that the students' participation and their writing achievement had been improved. The percentage of students' participation was increased from 76.2% in meeting 1 to 81.4% in meeting 2. While the passive students were 23.8% in meeting 1 and 21.2% in meeting two. This percentage of passive students was lower than the percentage in Cycle 1. But, there were still only three indicators that contributed well to this research. The students only fulfilled indicators (1) paying attention to the lesson, (4) discussing, and (3) doing the exercises. Meanwhile, indicators (2) and (3) answering teacher's question were not optimally done because not all of the students had chance to ask questions and not all of the students were asked questions by the teacher. Then, from the results of writing test in Cycle 2, it was known that there were 77.7% of 27 students who got ≥ 70 in writing test. From the results of Cycle 2, it could be said that the results had successfully achieved the target criteria of this research. Therefore, the actions were stopped.

The findings of this research are in line with some experts suggestions on the use of controlled writing technique in teaching writing. As Raimes (1983: 95) says, the use of controlled writing technique has been suggested as a technique to be used to help students develop their writing skills. It means that controlled writing technique can be used as a technique due it function in helping students develop their writing skills. There are so many benefits in using controlled writing technique as a technique in teaching writing. Raimes(1983:96) states that controlled writing technique can help students to describing characters using adjectives. Besides, technique can help students to practice expanding vocabulary because there were so many new vocabulary that are used by to write a paragraph. The results of students' writing showed that most of the students got high scores for the aspect of organization which is related to the generic structures of descriptive paragraphs. In addition, controlled writing technique bring a not boring atmosphere into the class. It was proved by students' participation which improved from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2.

Further, previous researchers found that controlled writing technique could improve the students' writing achievement. A research conducted by Byrne et. al (1984:24) proved that controlled writing technique can improve the students' interest and motivation and students' analytical exposition writing ability. Besides, another research that was conducted by Komsatun (2005) concluded that there was a significant effect of using controlled writing technique on the eleventh grade students' spoof writing achievement at SMAN 1 Umbulsari Jember in the 2009/2010 academic year. Based on those researches, it can be seen that controlled writing technique can improve students' writing ability in different kinds of text.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that teaching writing by using controlled writing technique can improve the eleventh grade students' participation and their writing achievement in teaching learning process at SMAN 2 Lamongan in 2014/2015 academic year. It could be seen from the result of observation. It was known that the students' participation in teaching learning process increased from 65.7% of the students in the first cycle to 75.7% of the students in the second cycle who were active during the teaching learning process. Then, the improvement of the students' writing could be seen from the percentage 54.28% in Cycle 1 and it increased to 77.7% in Cycle 2. Those results had achieved the standard requirement that was targeted in this research.

Considering the research results, some suggestions were given to these following people. First, the English teacher It is suggested that the English teacher uses controlled writing technique more frequently as an alternative technique in teaching writing to improve the students' writing achievement. Furthermore, it is also necessary for the English teacher to know his or her students' level of language proficiency in order that the teacher can choose the appropriate type of controlled writing technique that will be applied to improve the students' writing achievement maximally. Second, the students are expected to be able to write their writing better by using controlled writing technique as their technique. The last, the future researchers are suggested to use the result of this research as information in conducting the other classroom action researches by using controlled writing technique. Besides, the result of this research also be used as information to conduct experimental research by comparing controlled writing technique with the other kinds of technique. It is also suggested for the future researcher to be careful in choosing the technique so that it can be used effectively. If the future researcher wants to observe the students' participation, it is suggested for him/her to modify the indicators of observation that related to the steps of teaching the skills.

References

- [1] Ajeng, N. 2003. *Improving Writing Achievement of Grade X9 Students and Their Active Participation Through Controlled Writing Technique at SMA Muhammadiyah 3*

Jember .

[2] Ali, M. 1993. *Strategi Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: PT Angkasa.

[3] Arikunto, S. 1998. *Prosedur Penelitian: Satuan Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta. PT. Rineka Cipta.

[4] Elliot, J. 1991. *Action Research for Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

[5] Fadloeli, O. 1986. *Buku Materi Pokok Writing IIA*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka

[6] Farbrain, G and Winch, C.1996. *Reading, Writing and Reasoning*. New York: Open University Press.

[7] Heaton, J. B. 1988. *Writing English Language Test*. New York: Longman Inc.

[8] Hughes, A. 2003. *Testing for Language Teachers (Second Edition)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[9] Ploeger, K.M. 2000. *Simplified Paragraph Skills*. Lincolnwood: Contemporary Publishing Company.

[10] Raimes, A. 1983. *Techniques in Teaching Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. .

[11] Wingersky, Joy, Jan Boerner and Diana Holguin Balogh 1999. *Writing Paragraph and Essays Integrating Reading, Writing, and Grammar Skills*. (Third Edition). Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

