

DEVELOPING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH OF THE GRADE VII STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 15 PALU THROUGH CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Erik Ruben

erikruben17@yahoo.co.id

(Mahasiswa Program Studi Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Pascasarjana Universitas Tadulako)

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengembangkan keterampilan menulis paragraph deskriptif siswa kelas VII A pada SMP Negeri 15 Palu melalui Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Kontekstual. Subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas VII A SMP Negeri 15 Palu. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian Tindakan Kelas yang terdiri dari perencanaan, pelaksanaan, obseravsi dan refleksi. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dua siklus. Setiap siklus terdiri dari tiga pertemuan. Untuk setiap pertemuan dalam proses belajar mengajar terdiri dari tiga tahapan yakni: kegiatan awal, kegiatan inti dan kegiatan akhir. Pertemuan pertama dan kedua difokuskan pada penjelasan materi paragraf deskriptif dan pertemuan ketiga difokuskan pada evaluasi. Data penelitian diperoleh dari hasil lembar observasi, lembar catatan dan test. Pembelajaran begitu menyenangkan karena siswa dapat menjelaskan benda yang ada disekitar mereka. Hasil test individu pada siklus 1 adalah sebanyak 19 siswa mencapai kriteria ketuntasan atau presentasi ketuntasan sebesar 54,28%. Pada siklus 2 sebanyak 27 siswa mencapai kriteria ketuntasan. Persentasi ketuntasan mencapai 77,14%. Nilai rata-rata keseluruhan adalah 75,42. hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penerapan pembelajaran dan pengajaran kontekstual efektif untuk mengembangkan menulis paragraf deskriptif siswa.

Kata Kunci: keterampilan menulis, paragraf Deskriptif, pengajaran dan pembelajaran kontekstual

Teaching - Learning process is always related to an effective strategy to generate an effective teaching. A teaching strategy is the heart of the implementation of a meaningful teaching - learning process. It means that a meaningful teaching -learning activities can be attained only by an effective strategy implemented by a teacher.

A productive class where the students are totally involved and participated in a learning process can be attained because a teacher can implement an attractive strategy to teach. It is found that many students freely express idea in a piece of paper. Moreover, the students like staying longer in the classroom to study if a teacher presents a lesson attractively.

Hence, to attain high enthusiasm of students to study is much more determined by the way teacher teaches and kind of strategy he/she employs to teach. It means an effective teaching - learning activities can be identified

through how well a teacher performs a teaching and how enthusiastic students study. Good teaching performance is always related to the teacher's ability to manage the classroom with superior teaching strategy that can bring the students totally involved in an active learning in the classroom. The teacher should make their lesson interesting.

Writing is one of the language skills that must be taught at Junior High Schools. The teaching of writing is aimed at enabling students to master the functional texts and monologue texts, paragraphs or essay in the form of procedure, descriptive, recount, report, and narrative. The work of writing is presented in the form of text types, usually known as genres, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. English teaching for the grade VII of junior high school students begin from simpler text to more complex one. The students are expected to construct a good paragraph about writing descriptive text. It

means the grade VII students of junior high school study genre/text type based on their level of age and knowledge.

As one of the junior high schools in Kota Palu, SMP Negeri 15 Palu also implements KTSP curriculum in which the students are exposed to study English through text type or genre. The students are obligated to study monolog texts such as: descriptive, narrative, report, recount and procedure text. The students are not only required to study those texts and to complete tasks from the texts, but they are also required to construct a simple text they are studying. Unfortunately, the students still have same difficulties to write simple paragraph.

The researcher has been teaching for ten years at SMP Negeri 15 Palu. He found many problems faced by the students in studying English, particularly in studying writing lesson. The students are still unable to express ideas on the paper. They are afraid of making mistakes to write. They also have problem in grammar and vocabulary. Students who do not learn grammar along with vocabulary will not able to use the language for communication. They fail to learn how words use in sentences. The problems of students in language use always appear when they construct the simple sentences. For example: "I has a friend", she is hair long". In vocabulary, they sometimes cannot differentiate parts of speech in sentences, for example; *They sudah school; She is tata usaha; and He book on the table*. The students frequently make those mistakes because their inability to distinguish part of speech in a sentence.

Moreover, they cannot construct a coherence and unity writing product. They event do not know how to begin to write. As a result, writing class is only focused on filling the blanks of incomplete sentences. It seems that the students are active completing writing tasks, but it is not actually real writing. Such writing class activity cannot encourage the students to study hard to write. This writing

teaching activities is just like the way to put the students on task without a significant writing product. As a result, most of the students have low score in writing skill. Based on the researcher's experience, the students of SMP Negeri 15 Palu have problems in expressing their idea in the form of writing.

In order to overcome students' problems in writing and to achieve the instructional objectives effectively and precisely, a teacher should be able to find and to implement a new teaching method to teach writing skill. Besides, a new writing teaching method is expected effective to motivate students to study writing skill. To implement a new method to teach writing skill, a teacher is required to have broad knowledge of teaching approach, teaching method, and teaching strategy. It is considered important because a new strategy should be in line with teaching approach and teaching method. It means that whatever a teaching an approach and a teaching method a teacher employs in teaching language skills, a teaching strategy must be in line with an approach and a method themselves.

Based on the condition, the researcher has to implement better method, so the students' problem in writing will be minimized. The method that he was thinking about is Contextual Teaching and Learning. One of the responsibilities of the English teachers at SMP 15 Negeri Palu is to find and to implement teaching method to teach English. Teacher will implement in the teaching of English should be corresponding to teaching technique. Contextual teaching and learning method is one of the teaching method in which it is considered implementable to teach language skills, particularly to teach writing skill. It is equipped with overall teaching technique to make the teaching learning activities run smoothly.

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) involves seven main components to

achieve a productive learning. They consist of constructivism, questioning, inquiry, learning community, modeling, reflection and authentic assessment. A teacher can easily implement these seven components to teach any language skills. To implement constructivism, a teacher can ask the students to construct simple sentence in their own words based on the situations in students school or class environment; for example; *observe your classroom situation carefully and make a simple sentence about it; the position of the teacher's desk, the students' attendance board, the classroom whiteboard and the students' locker.* In questioning phase, a teacher may ask the students about situation around them; for example; *how many desks do you have in this classroom?, how many students are in your class;* etc. Shortly, a teacher can implement all seven learning phases in the contextual teaching and learning to develop students' writing skill based on their need and importance.

It is clear that the relationship among the students problem in writing skill, the contextual teaching and learning, and the basic concept of KTSP curriculum relates to each other. The KTSP curriculum administers the freedom for the teacher to develop material based on the potential, students' need and environment. It means that if an environment is considered effective to develop student language skills, so the contextual teaching and learning approach is possible to implement. Moreover, to overcome the students' problem on language skills, it is possible for a teacher to bring the students to study based on the environment where the students are.

On the basis of the above consideration, the researcher considers that the more effective way to overcome the students' problem in writing skill is through the implementation of contextual teaching and learning. It is the main reason for the researcher to propose to develop writing skill of the grade VII student through contextual

teaching and learning approach at SMP Negeri 15 Palu.

Research Question

In order to make it more specific, the researcher specifies the research that he did by constructing a research problem to direct him in collecting the data from the research field. The research problem was formulated as follows.

“How is Contextual Teaching and Learning implemented in English language teaching to develop students' writing skill on simple descriptive text at class VII A SMP Negeri 15 Palu?”

Objective of the Research

The research aims at developing writing descriptive paragraph of the the Grade VII students of SMP Negeri 15 Palu through the implementation of contextual teaching and learning.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Contextual Teaching and Learning

The contextual approach is a learning philosophy that emphasizes students' interests and experiences. Johnson (2002:37) describes that Contextual Teaching and Learning helps the students discover meaning in their studies by connecting academic material with the context of their daily lives. By experiencing their material that they are doing by themselves, the process of teaching and learning can be interested. Furthermore Glynn (2004) states that CTL is a grassroots initiative that has emerged from teachers' efforts to build upon situated-cognition research and integrate into one approach a number of validated strategies that are too often employed independently of one another. Meanwhile Berns & Erickson (2001) states the main concept of the Contextual Teaching and Learning is a conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations; and motivates students to make connections between knowledge and its

applications to their lives as family members, citizens, and workers and engage in the hard work that learning requires. Therefore, through this model of learning students get the full meaning of the material that they can use in real life.

There are five strategies of Contextual Teaching and Learning that focus on teaching and learning in context. These are called as REACT (Crasword L.M, 2001) which stands for: (1) Relating; that is, learning based on real life. In this stage the students bring their experience that is relevant to a new learning situation. The concept of relating is used to activate the students' prior knowledge by providing environments. The environments could be the media of learning for students. (2) Experiencing; that is, learning based on context of exploration, inquiry, and creation or learning by doing. (3) Applying; that is, learning by equalizing knowledge and its usage. It is a contextual and learning strategy that develops a deeper sense of meaning. (4) Cooperating; that is, learning in the context of group interaction. The students always get bored if they are working individually. Working with their peers in small group most students feel confidence and can interact with others. (5) Transferring; that is, learning by using knowledge in a new context and implement what the students have learnt.

The Teaching of Writing Skill

The main reason why teach writing is that it is a basic language skill, it has the same importance as speaking, listening and reading (Harmer 1981.79). Writing as one of the four skills has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English. However, it can be used for a variety of purposes, ranging from being merely a backup for grammar teaching to a major syllabus strand in its own right, where mastering the ability to write effectively is seen as a key objective for learners. Rivers (1981.294) elaborates that writing refers to several activities which can be classified as writing down or notation,

writing in the language production, expressive writing or composition and translation. Writing is a skill that the students should practice frequently. The students will be competent in writing by practicing writing. In general, the students are expected to write effectively. Students learn and write different types of paragraphs and their specific components. In conveying their individual feelings and opinions, the students are given the opportunity to write. Through writing, the students are able to convey their ideas to other people. Ur (1991:163) explains that the main purpose of writing is how the students can express their ideas, and conveying message to the readers. To have accuracy in writing, the teacher should introduce them to the students.

Descriptive Paragraph

One of the monolog texts that the students of junior high school should be learnt is descriptive text. Wyrick. J (1984.185) describes that description creates a word – picture of person, places, objects and emotions, using a careful election of details to make an impression to the reader. Therefore, the students are describing what they see or how it looks like. In writing a descriptive paragraph; the students should know (1) the identification or clarification, (2) description of a purpose (description about historical building or particular buildings or monument), (3) description of physical appearance, and (4) description of features. The purpose of descriptive writing is to make the readers see, feel, and hear what they have seen, felt, and heard. In this case, descriptive text can be constructed by the students based on real world around them. In addition, Priyana, dkk (2008. 104) states that descriptive text describes the characteristic of a specific thing, for example a specific person, animal or object. From the definitions above, the writer concludes that descriptive text is a text which describe something include of particular person, place and things.

METHOD

The Research Design

The research was designed as a CAR (Classroom Action Research). Latief (2013:144) defines that Classroom Action Research is an effective media in improving the quality of English teachers' performance in instruction as well as students' achievement in learning English in classroom. In this case, action research change the way of the students learning by implementing the best strategy, model or approach in the process of teaching and learning. Action research was conducted based on the problem faced by the students during the process of teaching and learning.

The research design of this study was a collaborative classroom action research (CAR). The researcher directly worked together with one of the English teachers to help conducting the research as well as to cope with the students' problems, investigate and note the class, the students' actions at the teaching of writing during school hours. The research was emphasized on investigating the writing skill of the students in writing descriptive text. The form of the data was qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data were the data about teacher's teaching preparation and performance, and students' classroom practice; and quantitative data were the students' achievement in writing test.

Research Procedure

This research was done in two cycles. This research was done in four phases: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

In the planning phase, the researcher and collaborator prepared teaching equipment. There were some preparations arranged by researcher and his collaborator before doing the research. He arranged lesson, prepared the materials and syllabus. He also prepared observation checklist, field notes, writing assessment and criteria of success. All the preparations were done in the collaboration of the observer.

In the implementation of action, the researcher conducted and implemented contextual teaching and learning. The researcher implemented the action based on the lesson plan; he also gave the evaluation (test after each cycle) to the students. The research was done into two cycles. Every cycle consisted into three meetings. The first meeting and the second meeting focused on teaching the material of descriptive paragraph, the third meeting focused on evaluation. During the acting phase, the researcher performed pre-activity, while-activity and post-activity.

In the phase of observing, based on the model done by Kemmis and Mc Taggart, the observation was done the same time when the teaching and learning process or treatment was done. The objective of observation was to recognize and record the teacher and the students activities. To help the researcher in this phase, another English teacher (Rosmaya, S.Pd) acted as a collaborator.

In the phase of reflecting was done in the end of each treatment or cycle. Reflection was an activity of evaluation the implementation of planning. If the criteria had been achieved, then the cycle would be stopped, otherwise the cycle would be repeated by making come changes in the next cycle until the criteria would be achieved.

Setting of the Research.

The research subject was the grade VII A students that consisted of thirty-five (35) students. The class had been selected due to its low ability in performing writing skill. The researcher as the English teacher in that class had the obligation to improve the quality of teaching and learning process so that the students' learning result would be better. The research was done at SMP Negeri 15 Palu. It is located on Jl.H. Hayun No. 111 Palu.

Kinds and Source of the Data

The kinds of data of this research were qualitative and quantitative data. As have been mentioned before that qualitative data is the data about teacher's teaching preparation

and performance, and students' classroom practice; and quantitative data is about students' achievement in writing test. The researcher took qualitative data from the teacher teaching preparation and performance, and students' classroom practice; and quantitative data were about students' achievement in writing test

Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher collected the data through the observation to the teacher's planning. They were the data about teacher's teaching administration; lesson plan, and teaching media before the teacher does the research. The next source of the data was from the teacher teaching performance; the way teacher begins the lesson, runs the lesson, and closes the lesson; it was taken from the teaching learning process. The following data were taken from students' classroom participation into the classroom activities and students' classroom practice when the teaching learning process is going on. The last data were taken from the evaluation or writing test session.

Research Instrument

The researcher used four instruments to collect the data. They were observation checklist, field notes and writing test. Observation checklist was used to identify and to obtain data on students' participation in the classroom, and the teacher's teaching steps. The observation was also needed to monitor the on-going learning process class performance as well as teacher's activities during the teaching learning process. Field notes were used to take data about the researcher activities in doing the research. It was done by the collaborator and the researcher to obtain data from actual events in the classroom. The last was the test; it is intended to measure student's achievement in writing skill. Kind of writing test that the researcher used in this research was simple descriptive paragraph. The test was given to the students at the end of the meeting.

Criteria of Success

The students are considered to be success in writing descriptive paragraph. The criteria of success that the teacher and the collaborator is going to use in this research is that each students should be able to achieve ≥ 75 . Then, the percentage of the classical achievement is $\geq 75\%$.

DATA AND DISCUSSIONS

Data Presentation

The findings and discussion of implementation Contextual Teaching and learning in teaching descriptive text. Before implementing the Contextual Teaching and Learning, the researcher and collaborator prepared the things that was needed in the teaching and learning process

a. Cycle 1

In the cycle 1 the meeting was held in three meetings. The first meeting focused on teaching descriptive text. The researcher introduced the students dealing with generic structure and language future of descriptive paragraph. In the second meeting, he continued with the explanation of descriptive text, and in the third meeting was focused on evaluation.

Planning

The researcher and her collaborator prepared some preparation before the actions were carried out. One of the preparations was employing contextual teaching and learning sources. The other preparation were planning Lesson plan consisted of time allocation, standard competence and basic competence, indicator, teaching objectives, teaching materials, teaching method, teaching procedures used by the researcher, teaching resources, and evaluation.

Action

In implementation of action in cycle 1, the meeting was conducted into three meetings. First meeting was conducted on Monday, April, 13th, 2015. The meeting was held in three steps namely pre-activity, while-activity and post-activity. The meeting was adjusted based on

the schedule of the class. The second meeting was conducted on Wednesday, April, 15th.2015. the meeting also consisted of three main activities: pre-activity, while activity and post-activity. The third meeting was held on Monday, April 27th, 2015. In this meeting the teaching and learning process just focused on evaluation.

Observation

This step was done during the process of teaching and learning. It involved teacher's performance in the classroom and students' participation in the teaching and learning process.

Reflection.

Reflection was done to analyze the process of teaching and learning in cycle 1. It involved the result of the students in constructing the descriptive paragraph. It was done in order to know the students' mistakes and weaknesses in cycle 1. The researcher hoped that by identifying their flaws, they would not do the same in the next planning. Based on the data collection in meeting 1 and meeting 2, there were many problems faced by the collaborator and the students during the process of teaching and learning. For example: the researcher did not organize the students before joining the lesson, the researcher did not lead the students in doing the task, the researcher did not ask the students to conclude the material and did not motivate the students in the last activity.

Some of the activities observed on the students also had low score, like answering questions from the teacher or asking questions regarding the material of descriptive text to the teacher.

b. Cycle 2

In the cycle 2 the meeting was held in three meetings. The first meeting focused on teaching descriptive text. The researcher introduced the students dealing with generic structure and language future of descriptive paragraph. In the second meeting, he continued with the explanation of descriptive

text, and in the third meeting was focused on evaluation.

Planning

The researcher and her collaborator prepared some preparation before the actions were carried out. One of the preparations was employing contextual teaching and learning sources. . The other preparation were planning Lesson plan consisted of time allocation, standard competence and basic competence, indicator, teaching objectives, teaching materials, teaching method, teaching procedures used by the researcher, teaching resources, and evaluation. In this phase the reseracher and collaborator plnanned to change some instructions to make the students easily undersatand the material. He should chage a part of the way in applying the material for students. Some changes were: the researcher told the students to think about what they would write in Bahasa Indonesia, the researcher told the students the importance to take dictionary to look up words and the researcher distributed handout individually.

Action

In implementation of action in cycle 1, the meeting was conducted into three meetings. First meeting was conducted on Monday, April, 29th, 2015. The meeting was held in three steps namely pre-activity, while-activity and post-activity. The meeting was adjusted based on the schedule of the class. The second meeting was conducted on Monday, May, 11th.2015. the meeting also consisted of three main activities: pre-activity, while activity and post-activity. The third meeting was held on Monday, May 13th, 2015. In this meeting the teaching and learning process just focused on evaluation.

Observation

This step was done during the process of teaching and learning. It involved teacher's performance in the classroom and students' participation in the teaching and learning process.

Reflection

Based on the data from the observation, the researcher made reflections. The result of the data analysis would be matched to the criteria of success. The result of observation on teacher's activity shows that there was no activities were missed out by the researcher. This means that all the activities had been done properly by the teacher. This was no surprising since both the researcher and the collaborator both made sure that every step was done by the researcher. This was also a reflection from cycle I in which some of the steps were not performed. Therefore, to improve the result, the researcher paid attention to them and made sure that everything was done.

From the test in cycle 2, the researcher found that only 8 students failed the test. It means that, the research was successful and matched with the criteria of success, because the criteria of success in this study were achieved. The classical mastery had the result of 77,14 which passed the indicator stated for this research that was at least 75% of the students passed the minimum score of 75.

Discussion

Based on the experience of researcher in teaching descriptive text, he found many problems faced by the students in constructing simple descriptive text. The students have lack vocabulary, lack confidence and sometimes got boring in expressing their ideas in a piece of paper. They always did not know what they write.

The implementation of some principles of contextual teaching and learning in teaching descriptive text, the learning become enjoyable. CTL led the students to know what they write. They also could interact with their friends in collecting information about the material. The implementation of action involved of two cycles.

After the researcher reflected the teaching and learning process that happened

in the cycle 1, there were some weaknesses faced by the researcher so the result of the test still far from the criteria of success. Some of the weaknesses were the researcher did not distribute the material for students individually, the researcher did not lead the students to solve their problems in constructing descriptive paragraph and the students did not have dictionary. In cycle 2, the teacher reviewed the previous lesson and used contextual teaching and learning as the method in teaching writing descriptive text. As usual the researcher implemented some principles of contextual Teaching and Learning. They were constructivism, inquiry, questioning, modeling, learning community, reflection and authentic assesment. Based on the observation, the majority of the students joined the class enthusiastically. All activities in the cycle 2 could run well. It can be seen from their responses. While the teacher was presenting the lesson, majority of the students were paying attention to the teacher. Same as with the previous meeting, the researcher gave the evaluation test at the end of the cycle.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Using Contextual Teaching and Learning to improve students' skill in writing descriptive paragraph is an appropriate method to make the learning activities more effective. The implementation of method familiarized the students with the school surroundings. The results of the research reveals that the implementation of the method improves the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph effectively. It is supported by the significance increase of the students score from cycle 1 to cycle 2 where there are 54,28 % who achieved criteria of success in cycle 1, to 77,14 % in cycle 2.

Suggestions

From the conclusion above, there were some suggestions that are proposed by the writer: for Teacher: (1) Teacher may consider the use of contextual teaching and learning in the teaching of descriptive writing text, because it can motivate students to write what they have seen, felt, tasted, heard or touched to share to the others, (2) managing time is very important for effective presentations, teacher should prepare the equipment well. It means that before using a method or media as a medium in the teaching of descriptive text writing. It will be better for teacher to prepare some examples of text before asking the students to write. (3) using proper method in teaching and learning process is very important, especially in writing descriptive paragraph. It would be successful if the theme based on the students' surrounding. For Students; (1) Students should study more and respond in learning process (2) Students should be more interested in English study (3) Students should improve their ability in English (4) Students should bring dictionary to help them in getting difficult words.

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