

USING CHAIN STORIES TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF MA DAR-EL HIKMAH PEKANBARU IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS

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Abstract

This classroom action research was aimed to use chain stories to improve the ability of the first year students of MA Dar-el Hikmah Pekanbaru in writing recount texts. This study consisted of two cycles of classroom treatment, in which one cycle consisted of four stages, namely Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. The Pre-test and Post-tests was used for measurement, and also a set of observation sheets and field notes were used to gain the record of the classroom activity during the Chain Stories treatment. The subjects were 30 students from class X.A1 MA Dar-el Hikmah Pekanbaru. Before the treatment was conducted, the sample was given Pre-test and after the treatment, Post-test 1 and Post-test 2 were also held. The procedures carried out consist of constructed the students' mind and knowledge by asking the students' experience that related to recount text, teacher gives opportunity to the students to find out knowledge, skill or information before the teacher explanation, teacher gives some questions to encourage students' thinking ability, teacher divides the students into groups of four, teacher gives a sample of a recount text, teacher explains and models to the students the process of chain stories, teacher writes the first sentence "when I was in the first year of elementary school, I had an unforgettable experience" on the board, students led by the teacher write the next sentence in their own paper. Each student will be given one minute to give the contribution (more time needed as the stories grow longer), students pass their paper to their right (This pattern continues until the stories are completed), and students correct the stories in pairs led by the teacher by providing an edit checklist on the board to aid students in focusing on particular errors. After two cycles of the Chain Stories treatment, it was found that the students score in writing recount texts differ significantly from Pre-test to Post-test (the Pre-test score is 41.56, Post-test 1 is 62.04, Post-test 2 is 75). However, the statistically significant differences of the score results of the two cycles were found on the Post-test 2, where about 96.7% of the students reached the school minimum standard of English subject in writing recount text. Moreover, the student's activeness during the Chain Stories treatment also improved from one meeting to others. Regarding the effectiveness of the Chain Stories on the students' attitudes, the observation sheets and field notes results showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the Chain Stories method.

Keyword : Classroom Action Research, Chain Stories, Writing

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the productive skills in English that must be learned by students of English as a foreign language. Many students consider writing to be the most difficult subject to learn because there are many aspects should be considered.

The aspects are grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, form and fluency. Besides, learners need to know to whom they will interact with, and why they have to write. It means that writing is communicative since it is an interactive activity. A writer should know how to express their ideas and how to build their message in their writing. Yet, not all people can write well. Some of them find difficulties in writing. Gould, et al (1989 : 51) in Suryani (2006 : 1) point of that writing is one of the most self conscious of human activity. It needs someone to teach us in order to be an excellent writer.

Based on senior high school curriculum, the students are required to be able to write many kinds of genres, such as narrative text, descriptive text, recount text, etc. which are useful for communicative purposes. It is stated by Bathia in Mauchlan (2005) that genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. The first year students have learned how to write a recount text. The students have learned how to make a good sentence and paragraph; they also have learned structure which has an important role in writing.

However, based on writer's observation in MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru, the writer found the facts that many students still have difficulties in writing especially in writing recount text. Students' difficulties were in terms of finding an idea both motivating and encouraging. As the effect, more than 60% of the students had lower ability in writing than the standard minimum of criteria of achievement (KKM) of English subject at MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru. The standard minimum of criteria of achievement at MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru is 65. Students also thought that writing activities were a boring session. The writer believes that it is important for teachers to provide students with a variety of activities. This ensures that all learning styles are being addressed, yet providing students with varying exercises and activities required a fair amount of imagination and experimentation. The result is an interested and motivated class. Students also find them refreshing.

There are various strategies which have been developed to teach students in increasing their abilities, interests, and motivations. One of the strategies that the writer wants to explore is the use of Chain Stories. It is of the certain collaborative writing activity to solve the students' problems in writing. Chain stories offer students a choice. The teacher may suggest a topic, or ask the students to use particular structures, but students are encouraged to enjoy themselves and make choices in content within the framework. Students are encouraged to use their imagination and enjoy the activity. The greatest advantage in chain stories is that chain stories are interesting. They make writing enjoyable for the students. If the students are interested, they will be motivated and will not regard writing as a boring activity. Thus, writing will be viewed as a positive experience.

METHODOLOGY

This research contained of 2 cycles to see any improvement of students' writing ability in recount text during the implementation of Chain Stories.

Before conducting the treatment in cycle 1, The writing proficiency of the class had been tested with by Pre-Test, where the students would had one topic to be written in the form of recount text.

After giving pre-test and knowing the students' proficiency, the researcher gave them treatment in writing recount text by implementing Chain Stories. The steps of implementing Chain Stories were drawn as follows:

1. Teacher constructs the students' mind and knowledge from the basic knowledge by asking the students' experience that related to recount text.
2. Teacher gives opportunity to the students to find out knowledge, skill or information before the teacher explanation.
3. Teacher gives some questions to encourage students' thinking ability.
4. Teacher divides the students into groups of four.
5. Teacher gives a sample of a recount text. Teacher explains about recount text (what is recount ext, generic structure, language features, grammatical pattern, and its purpose), and how to make a good recount (use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and the organization)
6. Teacher explains and models to the students the process of chain stories.
7. Teacher writes the first sentence "when I was in the first year of elementary school, I had an unforgettable experience" on the board.
8. Students led by the teacher write the next sentence in their own paper. Each student will be given one minute to give the contribution (more time needed as the stories grow longer)
9. Students pass their paper to their right (This pattern continues until the stories are completed)
10. Students correct the stories in pairs led by the teacher by providing an edit checklist on the board to aid students in focusing on particular errors.
 - Vocabulary (spelling vocabulary)
 - Grammatical structure (subject-verb agreement, correct form and spelling of the past tense).

The implementation of the action was followed also by the observation process of which the result was delivered into observation sheet. The students' and the teacher's activities were recorded by the collaborator in the observation sheets, and the situation in the class was recorded in the field notes during the treatment.

After conducting the treatment and recording the activities during the treatment in the observation sheets, then the result was collected as raw data of the research and was analyzed to find out whether the students showed a good progress in writing a recount text or not. Both researcher and observer analyzed the activity in cycle 1 through the observation

sheets and field notes. The observer gave comments about the teacher's performance and added any other improvement in using Chain stories in the classroom.

Then, Post-Test 1 was conducted at the end of cycle 1 of this action research by purpose of knowing students' achievement after getting the constructive treatment by the researcher. Post-Test 1 was consisted of a topic that the students should write in the form of a recount text. The researcher decided to continue to the cycle 2 if the result of the quantitative and qualitative data in the cycle 1 showed significant improvement. However, the post-test score could not reach the minimum criteria of achievement ($62.04 < 65$). Only 10 (33.3%) of 30 students could reach the minimum criteria of achievement. The different point between the students' average score in post-test and the minimum criteria of achievement was 2.96. 66.7% students still could not reach the minimum criteria of achievement.

In addition to this, the quantitative data of this research was collected through the writing test (Pre-Test and Post-Test), and the qualitative data was collected by the recording of activity during the treatment by using the observation sheets and field notes. For the rating scales, the three assigned raters had used the scoring from Hughes (2003), in which the holistic scoring rubrics are used to assess the students' competency in certain features of writing: grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency, and organization.

A. Qualitative Data

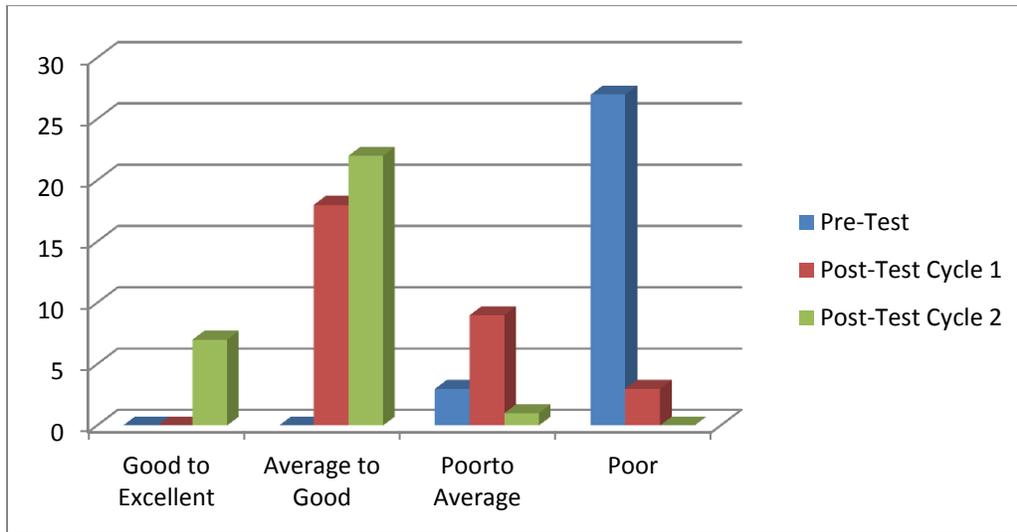
Here are the compilation data of the improvement of students' writing ability from cycle 1 to cycle 2:

Table 1. The Improvement of Students' Writing Ability from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2

No	Score	Ability Level	Cycle 1				Cycle 2	
			Pre-Test		Post-Test		Post-Test	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1	80-100	Good to Excellent	0	0	0	0	7	23.3
2	60-79	Average to Good	0	0	18	60	22	73.3
3	50-59	Poor to Average	3	10	9	30	1	3.3
4	0-49	Poor	27	90	3	10	0	0
Total			30	100	30	100	30	100

This table could also be interpreted as the chart below:

Chart 1. The Improvement of Students' Writing Ability from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2



From the table 18 and figure 8, we can see that the test have some significant improvement in each test. In pre-test, there were none of the students get good to excellent and average to good, 10% students get poor to average and 90% students get poor. In post-test cycle 1, there were none of the students get good to excellent, 60% students get average to good, 30% students get poor to average, and 10% get poor. In post-test cycle 2, there were 23.3% students get good to excellent, 73.3% get average to good, 3.3% student get poor to average and none of the students in post-test cycle 2 get poor.

B. Qualitative Data

❖ Cycle 1

The researcher reflected the students' achievement in writing recount text at the end of each cycle. In this cycle, the writer made a reflection to consider whether the research would be continued to the next cycle or not. The writer analyzed the data both quantitative and qualitative. The observations showed that the students and the teacher were active in teaching and learning process. The students' average score in post-test cycle 1 showed significant improvement. However, the post-test score could not reach the minimum criteria of achievement ($62.04 < 65$). Only 10 (33.3%) of 30 students could reach the minimum criteria of achievement. The different point between the students' average score in post-test and the minimum criteria of achievement was 2.96. 66.7% students still could not reach the minimum criteria of achievement. Moreover, the students still have difficulties in vocabulary. They still have a problem in choosing appropriate word in sentences. Although the result of the observation showed significant improvements and the students were seem interested in conducting the chain stories, most students still have difficulties in comprehending the process of chain stories. Therefore, the writer considered to continue to the next cycle.

❖ Cycle 2

At the end of cycle 2, the writer reflected to the students' achievement in writing recount text to consider whether the research had to be continued to the next cycle or not. The writer analyzed the data both the quantitative and qualitative. The score and the observation showed that the students and the teacher were active in teaching and learning process than in cycle 1. It can be seen from the tables below:

Table 2. The Result of Observation Sheet of Students in Cycle 1

Meeting	Activities										Average
	Class Activities				Group Activities						
	Express	Sharin g	Answer	Asking	Grouping	Model	Wr. Sntc	Wr.Recount	Pass	Correct	
1	9	19	12	14	30	19	30	30	30	9	Average
2	15	22	17	15	30	22	30	30	15		
3	17	24	20	20	30	24	30	30	17		
4	20	25	22	19	30	25	30	30	20		
Total	61	90	71	68	120	90	120	120	120	61	
Avg	15.2	22.5	17.7	17	30	22.5	30	30	30	15.2	
Percent	50.8	75	59.1	56.7	100	75	100	100	100	50.8	76.7

From the table 5, we can see the activeness of students in each activity from the first to fourth meeting in this cycle. In class activities, there were 50.8% students express ideas, 75% students sharing information, 59.1% students answering question, and 56.7% students asking question. In group activities, there were 100% students made group, 75% students model the chain stories process, 100% students write sentence, recount text, and pass the paper, and 50.8% students correct the stories. The average of all activities is 76.7%. It means that there were more than 60% students are active in teaching and learning process. However, some students still have difficulties in comprehending the process of chain stories.

While in cycle 2 we can see the increasing of students' activities as in the table below:

Table 3. The Result of Observation Sheet for Students in cycle 2

Meeting	Activities										
	Class activities				Group activities						
	Express	Sharin g	Answ er	Askin g	Groupin g	Mode l	Wr. Sntc	Wr. Recou nt	Pass	Corre ct	Average
1	22	26	24	19	30	26	30	30	30	22	
2	22	27	27	22	30	27	30	30	30	22	
3	22	28	24	16	30	28	30	30	30	22	
4	22	28	24	16	30	28	30	30	30	22	
Total	88	109	99	73	120	109	120	120	120	22	
Avg	22	27.2	24.7	18.2	30	27.2	30	30	30	22	
Percent	73.3	90.8	82.5	60.8	100	90.8	100	100	100	73.3	80

From the table above, we can see the activeness of students in each activity from the first to fourth meeting in this cycle. In class activities, there were 73.3% students express ideas, 90% students sharing information, 82.5% students answering question, and 60.8% students asking question. In group activities, there were 100% students made group, 90% students model the chain stories process, 100% students write sentence, recount text, and pass the paper, and 73.3% students correct the stories. The average of all activities is 80%. The result of observation sheet showed that there were improvements from the result of observation sheet in cycle 1. Students were interested and enjoy the process of the chain stories.

In conducting this research, the writer found some strengths and weaknesses during the learning process. The strengths were as in the following:

1. Students were interested in following the lesson and they became active in doing the steps to write recount text by using chain stories.
2. Chain stories were very interesting for students and make their writing enjoyable.
3. The students were enthusiasm during the teaching and learning process, that's why it makes easier to give instructions to the students.

However, the writer also found some weaknesses as in the following:

1. The writer needed to find the interesting and easy topic which were close to their life and experiences of the first year students of senior high school.
2. The writer barely got difficulty to manage the time wisely according to the class' schedule.

CONCLUSION

After conducting this research in improving writing ability of the first year students at MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru by using Chain Stories, the writer comes to the conclusions referring to the result of the research in chapter IV. The writer draws conclusions as follows:

1. The students' average score in pre-test is 41.56. It means that the level of the students' writing ability is 41.56. The achievement of the students' writing ability is smaller than the minimum criteria of achievement that is 65.
2. The use of chain stories in teaching and learning process is effective. The average score of post-test in cycle 1 is 62.04 and the average score of post-test in cycle 2 is 75. It means that the students' score is higher than the minimum criteria of achievement. It shows that there were significant improvement that could be achieved by the students in writing recount text.
3. The involvement of the students in class activity and group activity in cycle 1 is 76.7 and in cycle 2 is 80. It means that more than 65% of students in class were active in teaching and learning process.
4. It was proven that the use of chain stories to first year students of MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru to improve the students' writing ability could achieve the minimum criteria of achievement that had been determined, so, it could be concluded that the use of chain stories can improve the students' ability in writing recount text.
5. Improving the ability of the first year students of MA DAR-EL HIKMAH Pekanbaru in writing recount text by using chain stories is in a good level.
6. Factors that can improve the students' ability in writing recount text were a good and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom to make the students comfortable and enjoying studying English. And chain stories provided it to students so they can express their idea spontaneously.

IMPLICATION

The result of this research shows that the using of Chain stories can improve students' writing skill. Therefore, it is needed to spread this approach to other English teachers, as one of the approach that can improve students' writing skill.

It is expected that using Chain stories can be implemented by English teacher in teaching writing, in order that the students will be more interested and stimulated their motivation in writing.

SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the chapter IV, the writer would like to deliver some suggestions as in the following:

1. Teachers have to be creative in selecting method and media for teaching writing in order to make the students perform their maximum ability and have motivation in learning.
2. Teachers have to create a good and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom to make the students comfortable and enjoy studying English.

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