



Using Dictogloss Procedure to Improve Students' Recount Writing Skill

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Received December 21, 2015. Accepted June 11, 2016. Published June 29, 2016.

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to explain whether dictogloss procedure can better improve students' recount writing skill at grade X4 of SMAN 1 Curup Timur of Bengkulu and explain what factors influence it through classroom action research. The research was done in 3 cycles. The findings of this research showed that the students' recount writing skill improved after they implemented the dictogloss procedure. In cycle 1 the mean score of students' recount writing skill increased to 1.26 if it was compared with the pre-test that was 1.04. In cycle 2 the score increased to 2.13, while in cycle 3 became 3.12. The increasing was influenced by several factors, such as the students' motivation in writing recount text, the level of the text used in the procedure, and the group work. Therefore, it can be concluded that using dictogloss procedure can better improve students' recount writing skill well.

Keywords: Writing; skill; dictogloss; procedure; group work; motivation

Introduction

In education point of view, writing skill is considered as an important skill in teaching English for

senior high school students. Rozimela (2004) states that writing is part of competencies for the students and cannot be separated in the English

teaching in senior high schools in Indonesia. Although, writing is very important, it is also assumed as a difficult subject for the students. Kim (2005:33) identified some obstacles in writing related to the choosing of suitable vocabulary, correcting grammar rules, and integrating ideas.

In addition, another factor that caused writing becomes a difficult subject to be mastered is due to the various kinds of texts in English. Each text has different characteristics and language features. Within certain social situations, the linguistics features found in the text can constitute genre and its communicative purposes. Swales (1990:58) identifies genre as “a class communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes”. There are thirteen types of genre proposed by Gerot and Wignell (1994). Some of them are spoof, recount, reports, procedure, and discussion. Different genres deploy the resources for meaning making through the grammar in different ways.

Among the text types, recount text is considered as an interesting text. Retelling events in order to inform or entertain the reader is the social function of recount text (Gerot and Wignell; 1994:194). Through recount, students not only understand the sequence of event, but they can almost feel it. The action, details, and dialogue put the readers come to the story and feel as if it really happens to them. Unfortunately, not all teachers were familiar with every genre they were assigned to teach. It causes some problems found in teaching writing of recount text. As researcher discovered in Class X4 of SMAN 1 Curup Timur of Bengkulu, writing is the most difficult skill for the students. It can be seen from some problems and the unsatisfactory writing score that the students encounter in writing.

In the classroom, the researcher has observed some serious problems in recount writing. *The first problem* is the problem in developing and organizing ideas. *The second problem* is dealt with the lack of vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary makes student

confused to develop their ideas because they have to choose the correct diction to represent what they meant. *The third problem* is related to the grammatical use; it is closely related to the use of simple past tense that is included as one of language features in recount text. *The fourth problem* is dealt with the influence of the native language. Although writing is a very important subject but many students considered it as something difficult because in writing the ideas should be shared appropriately from our brain which is not easy to do. Creating a readable text is a big challenge for students to translate their concept in their brain to be a written discourse of the target language. The researcher who is also the teacher faced difficulties to find out the interesting and effective way to teach writing to their students. Encouraging individual to experiment and construct text by themselves without worrying about spelling and grammar at the beginning can be a solution. In this research, the researcher has chosen dictogloss procedure because it

encourages students to reflect on their own output. The reason to use the dictogloss procedure to teach writing to the students is reported by Jacobs, G. & John Small (2003:2) that students are encouraged to focus their attention on form and that all four language skills. Some activities in dictogloss are very helpful to improve their writing skill and reflect on their language, collaborate in the task, take responsibility, and discover their strengths and weaknesses and thus help them gradually improve their skill in writing a recount text.

Methods of the Research

This research was classroom action research. The action research in the language classroom combines a substantive act with a research procedure; It means that this action disciplined by enquiry of a personal attempt at understanding while engaged in a process of improvement and reform (Hopkins; 2008:47). The research was conducted at the first year students of SMAN 1 Curup Timur

of Bengkulu province. There were seven classes in the tenth grade. All of the first year students were regarded the same in writing since they had lack opportunity to practice their English writing skill in the classroom. If there was difference, the difference must be very little and insignificant. The researcher had chosen one of the classes randomly as the participants. And she got class X4 that has 28 students to be participants in this research. In addition, SMAN 1 Curup Timur is located on Jln. Ahmad Yani No.23 Kelurahan Sambe Rejo, Kecamatan Curup Timur, Curup Regency of Bengkulu province.

To elicit different kinds of data, some instruments were needed. In the first place, the researcher was the key instrument. The researcher employed test, observation (checklists and fieldnotes), and interview which were important to diagnose problems in the classroom more detail and also to improve the students' recount writing skill. However, she was helped by a collaborator which was English teacher in SMAN 1 Curup Timur.

The test was administered at the end of each cycle individually. The researcher gave recount writing test to the students based on the indicators of this research. This test was guided by a worksheet which contains a table of some indicators namely; generic structure of recount and the language features of recount. It must be filled in by the students during composing their text individually. The indicators and sub indicators tested in the worksheet to be done by the students became the criteria for improving students' recount writing skill. The indicators of recount writing and dictogloss procedure have each sub indicators where these indicators and sub indicators were based on the theories of recount writing and dictogloss procedure as stated in chapter two. Moreover, these indicators and sub indicators were explained and taught to the students in the classroom. It was expected that these indicators and sub indicators could be helpful for the students to improve their recount writing skill.

The researcher employed observation as her second instrument. It was done in the classroom by using observation checklists and also fieldnotes that contained several information related to the indicators of the aspects of writing recount text. The collaborator wrote down and made note of every action that was done both by the researcher and the students in the classroom.

Furthermore, the researcher used interview in order to know students' feelings and attitudes toward the teaching learning process and to gain data related to the students' activities in learning and practicing recount writing skill using dictogloss procedure. By doing the interview, the researcher expected that she can find out the factors that influenced students to compose their own version of the text by using dictogloss procedure.

There were four steps that must be followed by every researcher in applying Classroom Action Research (CAR). The four steps of cyclical process were plan, action, observation,

and reflection (Kemmis and McTaggart; 1988:11).

Afterwards, it can be explained that the research was conducted in two cycles; they were cycle 1 and cycle 2. Briefly, there was a plan where the researcher had to make a lesson plan before teaching, there was also action and observation during teaching process, and a reflection that was required by the researcher where it can be used to make any improvements for the next cycle. If improvements were needed, a revised plan was then made and the researcher must continue to the next cycle. The research finished when there is no more problems appear in the end of any cycle. Thus, it can be said that the expected result of the research was gained.

Findings and Discussions

According to the data analysis, the researcher found that the findings of this research have answered the research questions as follows:

The Extent to Which Dictogloss Procedure Improve Students' Recount Writing Skill

Based on the data analysis of the recount writing test, observation cheklists and fieldnotes, and also interview, it is found that the use of dictogloss procedure during the three cycles resulted in a better improvements of students recount writing skill. The extent of the improvements of students' recount writing skill was especially in composing each of sub-indicator of generic structure and language feature in recount text.

The improvements of each sub-indicators from cycle 1 to cycle 3 is illustrated in the chart. The chart described that in the first sub indicator, the orientation of recount text, the chart showed that there was better improvement from cycle 1 until cycle 3. The Mean of orientation in cycle 1 was 1.31 and then the Mean of orientation in cycle 2 got 2.03, this Mean better improved in cycle 3 which was 2.96. In the second sub indicator, the chronological order of events, the

chart showed that the Mean of events in cycle 1 was only 1.21, and then the Mean of events got little improvement in cycle 2 which was 2.00, after that, this Mean better improved in cycle 3 which was 2.92. The re-orientation of recount text as the third sub indicator showed its Mean in cycle 1 got 1.36, while in cycle 2, the Mean of re-orientation reached 2.15, but in cycle 3, the Mean of re-orientation better improved which was 3.19.

In the fourth sub indicator, the use of past tense, the Mean in cycle 1 reached only 1.26, however, the Mean of past tense seemed improved little bit in cycle 2 which got 2.26, the Mean of past tense also better improved in cycle 3 which got 3.03. In the fifth sub indicator, the focus of specific participant, the chart showed that the Mean of specific participant in cycle 1 was only 1.21, and then the Mean of specific participant got much improvement in cycle 2 which was 2.23, after that, this Mean better improved in cycle 3 which was 3.42. The last sub indicator which was focus on temporal sequence also showed that

Mean in cycle 1 got only 1.21, while in cycle 2, the Mean of temporal sequence reached adequately higher than in cycle 1 which was 2.11, but In cycle 3, the Mean of temporal sequence better improved which was 3.19.

Based on the description above, the improvement of Students' Mean from cycle 1 until cycle 3 could be compared in the chart below. The chart shows the comparison of the Mean of the three cycles.

The chart above illustrated that the improvement of students' recount writing skill occurred from the cycle 1 until cycle 3. The average score of cycle 1 was very low, 1.26. Then, it gradually improved in cycle 2 which became 2.13 with the increasing point was 0.87 points. Next, the average score found in cycle 2 before then better improved in cycle 3 which turned into 3.12 with the increasing point from cycle 2 to cycle 3 was 0.99 points.

The data in findings revealed above, the first question of the research was answered. It can be said that each

indicator and sub-indicator such as; generic structure of recount writing (orientation, events, and re-orientation) and language feature of recount writing (past tense, specific participant, and temporal sequence) had better improved in each cycle of this research. According to the findings, it was clear that one of the sub-indicators from generic structure of recount writing which is re-orientation got higher result in every cycle than the orientation and events result. Although this category is optional, the students seemed enthusiasm to create a good closure of events when they were writing recount text. This past might be easier for them because of they were given the freedom to express their feeling or attitudes toward series of events happened in the story.

In addition, there is also the focus of specific participant as one of sub-indicators of language feature in recount text also get better result than the use of past tense and focus on temporal sequence. This is due to the reason that the students can

concentrate to create and develop an experience of themselves in a story. Moreover, if the person involved in the recount text is the writer itself, the flow of the recount writing will be smooth. The students can arrange their past activities or experiences more easily.

In general, all of the sub-indicators got better improved from cycle to cycle in this research. Though, some sub-indicators have not got the maximal score in writing recount text, the researcher hoped has worked hard to do what she can do and still need further research to be able to improve all the aspects of students' recount writing skill.

To hold up the data obtained from recount writing tests, observation cheklists and fieldnotes, the researcher also did some interviews to some students. The interview was done toward 10 students which were randomly selected of students' attendance list.

The Factors Influencing The Improvement of Students' Recount Writing Skill

Besides having the result of students' improvement on recount writing skill from recount writing tests which were held in the end of each cycle, the researcher also found that the improvement was also due to four factors as follows:

1. The Students' Motivation

From cycle to cycle, the researcher and collaborator found that students' motivation was significant factor in supporting students' recount writing to be better. The interviewed to the students revealed that they would not deny that they are most motivated to learn since they considered the teaching they were being exposed, like dictogloss procedure, was pitched to their individual needs. Furthermore, the students described that dictogloss has integrated the teaching and testing to be a technique that stimulated their motivation in writing a recount text. In details, they felt challenging to get the key words as much as possible which can improve their listening skill. They

also got free to be creative in developing their text version in group reconstruction stage. Moreover, the correction stage was very useful to stimulate their eagerness to write better.

After all, numerous students found the dictogloss procedure task difficult but interesting. The students also realized the necessity of improving their English ability, especially listening and writing skill and the importance of cooperation through dictogloss procedure.

2. The level of the text

Based on the data got from all the instruments used in this research, the level of the text was one of the factors that influence the students skill in recount writing by using dictogloss procedure. All of the students in the interview stated that the suitable text which contained familiar words for them made the recount writing become easier. In addition, they added that the text itself, although only consisted of five sentences, it was very interesting and form a coherent whole with a

logical sequence which led them to a structured ideas in writing a recount. The students also found clear characters, place, and time mentioned in the text.

Moreover, the difficult words used in the text adequately challenging for them. The statements that were revealed by the students were also supported by Wajnryb (2007) since argued that the content of the text is the main foundation stone in dictogloss procedure. Moreover, the interesting of the thematic of the text is important to encourage students' motivation in doing the writing in dictogloss procedure.

3. The group work

As one of the stage in dictogloss procedure, the reconstruction stage that required the students to work in group, has influenced the better performance of students in recount writing. Students realized that there were many advantages of collaborative work. The students commented in the interview that there were plenty of unknown words when they wanted to express

their ideas down to the text, but due to pair work, they were able to understand and choose better words to be used in the text. Another mentioned that the technique was interesting, since he found it better to reconstruct the text collaboratively than did it alone.

In other side, students believed that group work was also important for practicing their English communication and group interaction. The passive learner will be an active one if they work in group. They also learnt on how to talking to each other in delivering their ideas. Through this process, the involvement in the group was let them to know their own strengths and weaknesses in English language use. In addition, they found out what they did not know and what they needed to know in recount writing. So, this technique was very helpful to improve their language skills.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the use of dictogloss procedure could better improve students; recount writing skill at grade

X4 of SMAN 1 Curup Timur of Bengkulu. The findings also support the statements from Lai (2003) which argues that dictogloss procedure is very appropriate for writing activity.

In addition, dictogloss is a technique integrating the four-skills through the group works to reconstruct students' own versions (Jacobs, G. & John Small; 2003). This is in line with Bourke (2008) who states that dictogloss is a communicative technique that involved the students and teacher to do interaction, text construction, and error analysis. Dictogloss procedure offers a different way to help students toward a better understanding of how grammar works in expressing any ideas. In the error analysis and correction step, student can consolidate their understanding of which word choices are the most suitable and what grammatical aspect works within a determined context.

Beside that, dictogloss procedure as the technique in solving the teaching and learning problems in writing, has proved that there was significant improvement on students

recount writing skill during three cycles. The improvement was concluded through the data gathered from the result of the recount writing tests, observation sheets, and interview.

Furthermore, with dictogloss procedure, students learnt to listen for global meaning in the target language which was the valuable skill for them. In addition, after conducting the research, the students found it was very encouraging. The text obviously met their interest and was within the scope of their understanding. This technique and the tests help them to overcome to gain confidence in their ability to glean some meaning from language they hear, even if they did not understand every words.

From the researcher observation during the lesson, it could be seen that students demonstrated keen interest in the brainstorming part but felt a bit panicky after hearing the text for the first time. As there were some unfamiliar words like; “a half-dollar change”, “partial”, and “illuminate”. However, they tried out to take down

short notes as instructed. To reassure them, she read the text one more time in a slow speed, after that, they felt more able to reconstruct it.

According to the result of the interview feedback, most students thought the activity was particularly difficult. Nevertheless, they found it interesting and demanding, meaningful, and helpful in developing their language skills. They also commented that they learned more writing skills. For instance, by using different structures and expressions to convey the same idea and taking effective notes. They took it as an opportunity to learn new vocabulary as well. All in all, the activity was worth doing and it gave a meaningful context to stimulate writing. Without the need to formulate ideas, students can focus entirely on the language they used. In particular, this technique could improve the students’ grammar and ability to use language appropriately in various writing situations.

This research also revealed that there are three major factors influence the improvements of students recount

writing through dictogloss procedure. The factors are; the students' motivation, the level of the text, and the group work.

The first factor supports the statements of Wajnryb (2007) that the importance of students' motivation can encourage them to have contribution to involve actively in the dictogloss stages. She also adds that the students also will be affected by how the group respond to their efforts and energies.

Dealing with the second factor which the level of the text can influence students' recount writing skill, Jacobs, G. & John Small (2003) explains that the text should be chosen carefully. The organization of the text, the text length, and the students' interest to the text are important parts that need to be considered. Then, he also argues that the difficulty of content and the familiarity with topic or subject matter are significant parts on choosing the text to be used in dictogloss procedure.

Moreover, the third factor that influences the improvements of students' recount writing skill is in line

with Hernandez (2004) who states that in applying the dictogloss procedure, the interaction and cooperation in the group work is the key of this activity. He further explains that it provides students possibility to find what they still do not know and improve their language skills.

The three factors mentioned above hold a big role in supporting the improvements on students' recount writing skill. These involved students to be active decision making about the target language. Some of their decisions were conscious, and some were subconscious. Most of their ability got better especially related to learning and communication strategies. The high motivation of the students elicited their spirit and cheerfulness to follow the stages in dictogloss procedure seriously and maximally. The researcher found that one of the most effective ways for writing was the use of dictogloss procedure to compose a recount text and discussed the ideas with their partner in groups. When students were involved in these practices seriously, then they could

complete all activities and improve their writing ability. In addition, motivation for studying English was risen. The researcher could also feel students' positive energy, and the activity was useful.

In short, practice develops student English fluency. However, if students do not participate in such practices, or if they lack concentration, or if they are not just interested in activities, their motivation will decrease, then their writing ability does not improve. Therefore, the researcher considered that students' motivation when they use tasks as their activities was one important factor in improving their recount writing skill.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

According to the findings and discussion of the students' recount writing skill by using dictogloss procedure during the three cycles of the classroom action research, it can be concluded that the use of dictogloss procedure better improve students'

recount writing skill at grade X4 of SMAN 1 Curup Timur of Bengkulu. The findings show that all the indicators and sub-indicators of this research such as generic structure (orientation, events, and re-orientation) and language feature (past tense, specific participant, and temporal sequence) got better improved in each cycle of the research.

Suggestions

Having finished conducting the study, there are some suggestions that might be useful for the researcher as English teacher in teaching writing. Those suggestions are proposed as follows:

It is expected that the researcher as the English teacher should be more creative in implementing materials or techniques that can improve the teaching and learning process; perhaps using dictogloss procedure with another kinds of genre in order to make the students improve their english skills in general; it is also suggested to other teachers who have the same problem are suggested to apply the

dictogloss procedure in their own class, especially in teaching writing.

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