THESIS

IMPROVING STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH WRITING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTION AT GRADE X.2 OF SMA N.1 LUBUKSIKAPING

BY

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ABSTRAK

John Hendry, 2009. Improving Students' Paragraph Writing Through Collaborative Paragraph Construction at Grade X.2 of SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping. Thesis. Graduate Program. State University of Padang.

Sebagai seorang Guru bahasa Inggris, peneliti berharap siswanya mampu menulis dan mengungkapkan ide-ide mereka dalam bahasa Inggris dengan baik, mampu berpartisipasi secara aktif dalam proses belajar mengajar terutama menulis, dan mampu mencapai standar ketuntasan minimal, yakni 70. Namun di kelas X.2 dimana peneliti mengajar ditemukan permasalahan yaitu siswa kurang mampu menulis paragraf atau sebuah cerita sederhana dengan baik. Sebagai akibat dari masalah ini, siswa kurang mampu mencapai standar ketuntasan minimal yang telah ditetapkan, dan mereka juga kurang mampu berperan secara aktif dalam kegiatan menulis. Oleh karena itu, peneliti mencoba memecahkan masalah dengan meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa dalam bahasa Inggris. Sebagai pemecahan masalah, penulis mencoba menerapkan " Improving Students' Paragraph Writing Through Collaborative Paragraph Construction". Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menguji bagaimana " Collaborative Paragraph Construction" meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis sebuah paragraph maupun sebuah cerita pendek, serta menemukan faktor-faktor apa yang mempengaruhi peningatan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis paragraph. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas yang bersifat kolaboratif. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di kelas X.2 SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan sebanyak dua siklus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan test tertulis. Data dianalisa secara kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang dilakukan menunjukkan bahwa dengan menggunakan model Collaborative Paragraph Construction, kemampuan menulis paragraf siswa kelas X.2 meningkat dan mampu mencapai atau melebihi standar ketuntasan minimal.

ABSTRACT

John Hendry, 2009. Improving Students' Paragraph Writing Through Collaborative Paragraph Construction at Grade X.2 of SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping. Thesis. Graduate Program. State University of Padang.

As an English teacher, the researcher expects his students to be able to write and express their ideas in English well, to achieve the writing passing grade, which is 70. However, in grade X.2 taught by the researcher, it was found some problems. One of them is that the students could not write a paragraph or a short story well. As a result of this problem, they could not achieve the writing passing grade, and could not participate actively in writing activities. Therefore, the researcher tried to solve this problem in order to improve students' paragraph writing. As a solving problem, the researcher tries to apply "Improving Students' Paragraph Writing through Collaborative Paragraph Construction". The objectives of the research are to find out how "Collaborative Paragraph Construction" improve the students' paragraph writing or short story, and to find out the factors which influence the improvement of students' paragraph writing. The type of the research is a collaborative classroom action research, which is implemented at grade X.2 of SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping. The research was conducted in two cycles. The data was collected through observation, interview, written test. The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The finding of the research shows that Collaborative Paragraph Construction was successful in improving students' paragraph writing at grade X.2 SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping.

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       SURAT PERNYATAAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa:

1. karya tulis saya, tesis dengan judul Improving Students' Paragraph Writing Through Collaborative Paragraph Construction at Grade X.2 of SMA N.1 Lubuksikaping, adalah asli dan belum diajukan untuk mendapatkan gelar akademik baik di Universitas Negeri Padang maupun di Perguruan Tinggi Lainnya.

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Padang,   April 2009
Saya yang menyatakan,

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the problem

Mastering English is an important point for one's success in facing the globalization era, because English is an important language. It is used all over the world for communication. It has to be mastered in order to avoid misunderstanding when communicate with others from different cultural backgrounds. It can be achieved in formal school and informal school programs.

Senior High School curriculum consists of five basic competences. They are actional competence, linguistic competence, discourse competence, social competence and strategic competence. Actional competence is divided into listening, speaking, reading, and writing. One of the most important is writing. It is used to communicate between the writer and the reader. The students in the Senior High School should master the writing skills in order to be success in learning English.

There are many writing problems that are found in the teaching and learning process. Many students who have learned English for years are still poor in writing English. They often fail to write a writing task. It can be seen that most of the students get bad mark in writing. When they try to write, they do not write clearly and neglect the rules of writing. Sometimes they seem not

understand what they want to write and the other students do not understand what their friends' writing. Based on the data of students' grade at class X.2 (32 students) in writing test, the researcher finds that the students' scores are: 23 students get 50 to 64, 11 students get 65 to 85. It also finds in other classes that most of the students get the score under 65. The minimum standard of students' grade is 70.

After doing some observation at SMA 1 Lubuksikaping, the researcher come to a conclusion that the problems might be caused by several factors. First, the English teachers tend to focus on developing reading abilities in order to enable the students to have higher score in final exams. It is done by many English teachers for the reason that the school quality is judged by the national exam. So that, writing skill is rather neglected. Second, some teachers only focused on using materials from English guidebook, which made the learning process neither communicative nor interaction. Most of them rarely combined the guidebook with other sources because there were no other sources available. Third, the teachers seems to be follow the arrangement of the guidebook

The problems also come from the students. As the researcher find in the observation that most of the students were passive or less active in doing the exercises than doing the others during teaching and learning process. First, it seems that they feel that writing in English is difficult since they get very few examples and exercises. So that, they cannot express their ideas as good as in

their mother tongue. Sometimes they try to cheat their friends' task. Second, the students felt that writing was an un-enjoyable activity to do because they thought that writing was very difficult, especially in expressing ideas and organize them into a good topic sentence arrangement. Most of them were passive in doing the writing tasks. It can be seen when the students involve in doing the writing tasks. Some of them try to do other activities like drawing a picture in their book. Third, the students are afraid to make mistake. If they do the mistake, their friends will laugh at them and it will be embarrassing for them. Fourth, the problems of developing topic into topic sentence and supporting sentences were often caused by the lack of vocabulary. It can be stated that they had less vocabulary. Vocabulary plays an important role in the writing process and contributes greatly to the students in writing a paragraph. The students learned the meaning of most words directly in the process of writing paragraph. They also repeated the same words in many times and seldom used the synonym or pronoun of the words.

All the problems above affected the students' ability in developing paragraph. The students do not have willingness to write or they have less motivation to do the writing task. It seems that they did not pay more attention to the aspects of writing. For example, they didn't try to get more understanding of the topic and how to develop it in a paragraph. It is relevant to what Nancy (2008:1) explains that students have problems with writing doe to lack of concentration or problems focusing for extended periods of time. As

it is known in teaching and learning writing, the students need to be personally involved in all kinds of writing tasks in order to make the learning as direct experience for all students. So, the teacher should encourage the students to participate in the exercises.

The students also thought and learned about the pattern of sentence or sentence structure. It often found that the sentences made by the students were not good in sentence pattern or they were grammatically incorrect. The students tend to use the same forms of sentences.

Another problem in writing paragraph is the use of punctuation. It is very important to know about what the punctuation is and when it should be used. It was often found that the students didn't use it consistently. It seems that they didn't know or understand about them.

In developing supporting details or supporting sentences, there are not sufficient details of the topic explanation. They sometimes do not relate to the topic or main idea of the paragraph. And the relationships between the details are not good enough and or not relate to other details. It seems that they were not sure exactly what the paragraph was and almost never had adequate topic or topic sentence which stated the main idea of the paragraph. So there was not a unity of the paragraph.

There is bad arrangement of paragraph organization. The problems indicate that the paragraphs produced by the students were not good in coherence and cohesion. The supporting sentences as an explanation or

description of the topic tend to less coherence to the topic. It often found that the words and information they convey did not relate to another so that it was difficult to follow the flow of ideas, thought and information from sentence to sentence. It seems that there was less dynamic of quality because there was no a good movement of information.

To solve the students' problems in writing activity, the researcher tries to use some model or activities such as complete the blank sentences in a paragraph, arrange the jumble sentences into a paragraph, completing a paragraph by adding some supporting sentences, use a series of picture to write a paragraph like writing a Descriptive and Recount text. Beside these models or activities, the researcher is interested to use "Collaborative Paragraph Construction" activities. This activity can be used to Senior High School students. Its purpose is to enable the students more interesting in writing a paragraph or a short story. There are some reasons why the researcher chooses this activity. One of them is that this activity is never used in the researcher's school and himself.

The researcher get an inspiration to use "Collaborative Paragraph Construction" activity in his class after looked his friend use this activity in teaching Indonesian language. The researcher found that the students were active and have a willing to do a writing task. They sit in groups and express their ideas one by one happily. The teacher told to the researcher that all the students are happy to do the activity of Collaborative Paragraph Construction

activity. They get some experiences after the groups present their tasks and do a discussion of the task. At last, almost all the students are able to write a good short story during the teaching and learning process.

This activity can be called as a collaborative work of the students. It is a unique collaboration between a numbers of students who are excited by the possibility of running a Collaborative Paragraph Construction. They sit in groups that consist of five or six students. Each student tries to express their ideas about the topic of the paragraph or short story. At the first time, the teacher distributes some topic sentence to the group. Then each group chooses one of the topic sentence and does a discussion about the topic sentence. After this, the group develops the topic sentence in a plan or framework of a paragraph that consists of supporting sentences and concluding sentence in the form of word or phrase. Next, each member of the group gets one of the word or phrase. The first student adds a sentence in order to complete the paragraph or gives a supporting sentence. The second to the fifth students add another supporting sentence. And the last student makes a conclusion or concluding sentence. In the second time, the teacher prepares some topics. The group does a discussion and makes a plan or framework as they do in the activity before. The first student tries to develop the topic into topic sentence. The next students or the second to the fifth student add other sentences to complete the paragraph by giving supporting sentences. And the last student makes a conclusion or concluding sentence.

B. Identification of the Problem

One of the crucial problems on writing activities is that the students need to be personally involved in order to directly have the learning experience. The student should be encouraged to participate in writing activities and expand their writing skills. The teacher should be clear on what skill and what technique he/she is trying to develop.

Based on the researcher experience, there was found that a great numbers of the problems in students' writing activities. The problem did not only come from the students but also from the teacher. The teachers' problems were: the English teachers tend to train their students in developing reading abilities. They also focused on English guidebook, which made the learning process neither communicative nor interaction and the technique used by the teachers seems to be monotonous. At last, most of them did not train their students in developing writing ability.

The students' problems are that most of students were weak and have less motivation in writing paragraph. They did not pay more attention to the aspects of writing. They should master the component of writing such as choosing a good topic, develop the topic into an appropriate topic sentence and supporting sentences. The students did not focus on the topic and related information.

The problems are also caused by the lack of vocabulary. The students often used the same words to explain something. They seldom use the

synonym and pronoun of the words. They translate Indonesia language into English word by word. It causes the pattern of sentences was not good or grammatically incorrect. They often wrote in long sentences without pay attention to the structure of the sentence like the use of punctuation.

Another problem is in developing supporting sentences. Sometimes, they were not related to the topic or lack of focus to the topic. It caused that there was not the unity and coherence of the paragraph.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Related to the problem above, it could be summarized that there are many problems which could be observed in this action research. But the researcher will focus the study on improving students' paragraph writing through Collaborative Paragraph Construction activity at Class X.2 of SMA Negeri 1 Lubuksikaping

D. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background, identification and limitation of the problems, this research will be done to answer the research question as follow:

1. To what extent can the Collaborative Paragraph Construction improve students' paragraph writing at Class X. of SMA Negeri 1 Lubuksikaping.

2. What factors can change students' paragraph writing at Class X.2 of SMA Negeri 1 Lubuksikaping.

E. Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is

1. To find out whether Collaborative Paragraph Construction can better improve students' ability in paragraph writing.

2. To find out the factors that can change students' paragraph writing.

F. Significance of the Research

It can be stated that there are two significances of this action research, namely practically and theoretically. As practically, it has a significance input to help the teachers improve their teaching quality by creating a practice method or technique in teaching. Moreover, it helps the teachers to teach their students in learning English, mainly writing.

As theoretically, the finding of this research would be meaningful for other teachers who have the same writing problem. It can be used as an alternative technique in teaching writing.

G. Definition of the Key terms

There are some key tem in this classroom action research as follow:

1. Collaborative Paragraph Construction   : a kind of writing activity to create a collective sentences to be a paragraph where the students are set to be a performance of five or six students to act the paragraph writing

2. Paragraph writing :   is an activity in organizing ideas into a paragraph of short story.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

This research is expected to contribute to the improvement of the students' paragraph writing. The conclusions are as follow:

1. Collaborative Paragraph Construction improve students' paragraph writing at the:

   a. Collaborative Paragraph Construction helps students to express their ideas and opinion systematically in writing a paragraph.

   b. Collaborative Paragraph Construction helps students to organize their ideas and opinion well in writing a paragraph.

2. The factors cause the improvement of students' paragraph writing by using Collaborative Paragraph Construction are:

   a. The stages of teaching writing used by the researcher in teaching paragraph writing. The stages begin with; Preparation, MoT, JCoT, and ICoT. It could be proved by the data of the paragraph writing test result showed in diagram 8 in chapter IV. It can be seen there is an improvement of the students' paragraph writing in line with the improvement of the students' paragraph writing quality. It means that the use of Collaborative Paragraph Construction in paragraph writing is a good model to improve students' paragraph writing.

b. The modeling from the researcher in using Collaborative Paragraph Construction in paragraph writing. The teacher as the researcher gives a model how to use Collaborative Paragraph Construction activity in writing a paragraph based on a plan or a framework.

c. Choosing the suitable media, that is picture, in teaching writing is very important to attract the students' interest. In the first cycle the researcher used short stories to be reviewed and in the second cycle the researcher use the pictures.

d. Giving questions and answer are very useful in teaching paragraph writing in order to help students to get the main points and developed them in the paragraph or short story.

B. Implications

The findings and the conclusions of this research have some implications. The implications are as follow:

1. To the researcher herself:

a. He should consider applying the Collaborative Paragraph Construction in the process of writing a paragraph or a short story.

b. He should consider applying the Collaborative Paragraph Construction in the process of teaching writing at the other class, mainly at the first grade of Senior High School.

2. To the teaching of the writing at the Senior High School:

    a. Using Collaborative Paragraph Construction maximally in writing a paragraph or a short story is one of a better activity in writing teaching-learning process.

    b. The way of using Collaborative Paragraph Construction in paragraph writing can be a pre-activity of writing a paragraph or short story to before writing a paragraph or short story related to the kinds of text or genre.

3. To the English curriculum for Senior High School, this activity can be as an input for designing the time in writing class.

C. Suggestions

Based on the conclusions and the implications above, there are some suggestions that might be useful for English teachers in teaching paragraph writing. The suggestions are:

1. It is suggested that the researcher as an English teacher use Collaborative Paragraph Construction in teaching writing to improve students' paragraph writing at grade X SMAN 1 Lubuksikaping.

2. It is suggested that the researcher as an English teacher at Senior High School should explores other more helpful and useful teaching writing model to make the students interested in writing.

3. It is also suggested to other English teachers to conduct the similar research in their own class as an attempt to improve their own teaching, especially in teaching writing.

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