

THE PROFILE OF ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL USING WORD GAMES; THE CASE STUDY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN SEMARANG, CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

According to Chastain (1988) "writing is a basic communication skill and a unique tool in the process of second language learning" (p.244). this is a qualitative descriptive study which has some research problems as follows; firstly, how do the teachers enhance their students; writing skill using word games? and secondly, what are the teachers' perception towards the word games used in enhancing the students' writing skill? The sample of the research were 6 junior high schools' students in Semarang central java, Indonesia. They were students of grade eighth at SMP N 8, SMPN 39, SMPN 36, SMP Institut Indonesia, SMP PGRI Semarang, and SMP Theresiana Semarang. Observation and questionnaire were kindly used as the instrument in collecting the data. The findings are; they are some general strategies in enhancing students' writing using word games namely; the topic of word games is referred to the syllabus, teachers make students into some groups, mostly the writing sessions are descriptive and recount texts, teachers provide them with the teaching kits, and teachers involve all students taking part in the games. on the other hands, based on the results, they are some teachers' perception dealing with the use of word games; mostly teachers' like implementing word games in teaching writing, teachers' think that using word games make students fun and happy, teachers become creative and think hard to run the word games, teachers need more energy and time in playing word games because it needs more time, and teachers feel enthusiastic in creating their own word games as the teaching media. The suggestions are teachers need to be creative and innovative in creating and running the word games in enhancing students' writing and teachers should have some other various word games which are in line with the syllabus.

Key words: *enhancing, writing skill, word games,*

Introduction

Teaching English in junior high school nowadays is very frightening forwards to concerning on the result learning session. Based on the curriculum of 2013, teacher and students feel difficult to get involve in the process of teaching and learning English in the classroom since there is no specific skill goal that will be reached permanently. This curriculum brings the students considered to be active in their having experience while learning English but then actually there is no certain skill that is focused to gain during the process. The dominant priority of learning process is giving students with the many various texts in which make students understand in specifying and classifying the text types and generic structures. Teachers feel that by giving the comprehending skill on understanding



and applying text types so that students are master English. Even though not all teachers and students do not agree with the concept of 2013 curriculum, on the other hand, this curriculum also give something benefits like; making students active in reacting and exploring their experience to create and observe within the process of teaching and learning English. A good English learner needs to master the Five English language skills such; listening, speaking, reading, writing and reviewing. Teacher believes that those five language skill requires some efforts to get them good like; in every unit of teaching session there is a specific subtitle about certain skill that will be arrowed. Usually students feel difficult in two of these skills namely speaking and writing. Those productive skills need more sacrificing to get the prefect comprehending ability in English since they should have more practices out of class.

Research Problems

The writers formulate two problems that should be covered to get the recent issues in teaching writing especially for junior high school in Semarang, they are following

1. How do teachers enhance students' writing skill using word games?
2. What are teachers' perception towards teaching writing using word games?

Related Literature

Our research is strengthening by this first previous study which is improving the writing skills of college students written by Ronald T. Kellogg and Bascom A. Raulerson III Saint Louis University. This research was done at of the big universities in America. It elaborates that writing skill is an important aspect of academic performance as well as subsequent work-related performance. However, American students rarely attain advanced scores on assessments of writing skills (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002). In order to achieve higher levels of writing performance, the working memory demands of writing processes should be reduced so that executive attention is free to coordinate interactions among them.

Then the second previous study is written in 2017 by ratna kusumawardhani, maria yosephin and dias andris susanto entitled teachers' reflections about vocabulary teaching at junior high schools in semarang, central java. Corson (1997) tells us that "words are only fully learned when they are available for active use" (p. 699). The objectives of this study are to find out the teachers' perspectives about the vocabulary teaching in their classroom, and to find out the teachers' innovative in teaching vocabulary. The research design used was descriptive qualitative with 7 teachers from public and private junior high schools in Semarang. Writers used structured interview and FGD/Focus Group Discussion in gathering the data. Then, this research can give the findings as follows; firstly, teachers feel that vocabulary teaching is very important in mastering English since students can speak and write more if they have more vocabulary, secondly, teaching vocabulary should be



integrated in the lessons, it means that when teachers teach any skills of English, vocabulary should be inserted as part of the lesson, thirdly, technique of teaching vocabulary most of teachers used the traditional technique that is finding the difficult words, repeat after me, question and answer in reading, but there is still less teachers used films, and pictures to develop students' vocabulary, fourth, the media used in teaching vocabulary most of teacher do not maximize the internet or web, they frequently ask their students to look up the internet when they give them take home assignments, but only small teachers use the *Medsos*/social media, what's up, line, etc. The conclusion that can be delivered is that English teachers in Semarang especially junior high schools mostly have not implemented the alternative media in teaching vocabulary, they prefer having the conventional technique yet they lack of information and sources. Finally, writers can give some suggestions like; teachers should upgrade their teaching methodology especially in teaching vocabulary, teachers should encourage themselves in using the technology to develop their knowledge in varying their technique in teaching vocabulary.

Research Methodology

The design of the research should be related to the problem of the research. The writers conducted a descriptive research with qualitative analysis. The writers choose qualitative research because it was a characteristic which can be changed as well as characteristic of new phenomena that was found by researcher during the observation. Qualitative method was called as naturalistic method, ethnographic method, and qualitative method itself because the data collection and analysis process has qualitative procedure. According to Cohen (2007: 462), Qualitative itself is research that was done for the purpose of understanding social phenomena, social being used in a broad sense. In qualitative, theory would be function as a foundation to understand socio context largely and intensively. The qualitative researcher should do grounded research that was to find out the theory based on the collection data from field.

According to Lodico (2006: 139), total sampling or called census sampling is nonrandom sampling technique that surveys entire population and may be used when the realistic population is not too large. It means that the sample taken is the whole of population. In this research, the sample were the student and the teachers in SMP Negeri 8 Semarang, SMP Negeri 27 Semarang, SMP Negeri 29 Semarang, SMP Theresiana, SMP 01 PGRI Semarang, and MTS Negeri 01 Semarang. The instruments of the study that have be applied in this research are structured interview, questionnaire and guided observation.

Research Findings

1. The way teachers enhance the students' writing skill using word games.

The result are explained in detailed narratively and qualitatively based on the observation done by the team of researchers in the classroom; a) the teaching kits used



by teachers are mostly they used and prepared kits like; lesson plan, teacher's book, student's book, dictionary, media PowerPoint, and the word games used; b) in the opening teachers gradually taking a roll or students' attendance, followed by the beginning pray and greet teacher. After that, teachers gave apperception dealing with the lesson is going to teach that is 'guessing occupation', 'broken sentence', 'mixed stories', 'arrange sentence in a story'.

In the game of guessing occupation, teachers gave some pictures which are related to the formal and famous occupation surrounding them like; nurse, teacher, soldier, policeman, doctor, etc. in the game of broken sentence, teachers gave some illustrations on there are some sentences provided but then those are not the correct sentences otherwise students should make it in the right order. In the game of mixed stories, teachers asked them to read some provided stories then students should try to mix them into the right stories paragraphs. Then the last is, in the game of arrange sentence in a story is about; there are some pictures related to the story but then the pictures are still in the wrong orders consequently they have to make it in a good arrange story based on the instructions given.

The main activity in teaching writing using word games like this following; it is in the game of guessing occupation. -Work in groups of 5 or 6. -Mention some job names in English. -*You will race to guess what your friend does. Every group may choose a 'master'. -A 'master' looks at this card. Then go back to your group. Do not tell your friends what it is. Do not say anything (=Just mime!). Mime the job in front of the class. -OK, let me give you **an example**. Aldi, please come forward. Look at this card. -Do you know what this person does? Good. Pssst! Don't say anything. -You may only use expressions or gestures/ body language. The others can guess. -If you can guess the job, you will get 10 points.K, now let's start. One, two, three... GO!*

In the game of broken sentence; the main activity is that following; -Work in-group of 3-4. -Each group takes turn to move from table to table to construct a sentence. -Write down your sentence on the board. -Then correct the sentences. Then in the game of mixed stories the main activity is following; -Work in pairs, -Learn the mix story by heart for three minutes, -Cut the mix story into two text, -Stick the result on the word board, -You have fifteen minutes to finish the story, -If you finish, said "I DID IT". Then the fourth game is arrange sentence in a story. It has some instructions in Indonesian language like; -Mengamati gambar, -Menyusun huruf acak menjadi kalimat yang benar, -Waktu: 1 menit, -Kerjakan secara kelompok (4 orang).

After having the main activity then teachers came to the leave taking session like these following actions; giving feedback whether they have understood the material, which was taught, or not, making sure that they understand and have a skill in making a good writing. Before teachers closed the teaching sessions, they look once more and give students take home assignment to have a further discussion. Finally yet



importantly, it is a closing activity that teachers used like; ensuring all sessions of teaching and learning activity have been done chronologically well and finished by fun and happy. Then teachers closed the session by having a big greet and giving a compliment to students with respect.

2. Teachers' perception towards teaching writing using word games.

To get this result of research, we equipped our data with the proper instruments namely structured interview which was dig up more information and notes from the teachers and students as well. This is a result of the data we got during we did interviewing beyond the formal and firmed situation. Through this interview sessions we can explain that;

- a) Teaching writing is not easy and need to be creative to make students understand since they have to master the way hoe to organize a good paragraph or text. In organizing the paragraph in a text, students have to know some theoretical frameworks about tenses, punctuation, grammar, spelling, etc. when teachers teach writing they should master all the elements of building a good writing including some extend that there should be connected one paragraph to another.
- b) Usually they do not apply any games in teaching writing since they got the material for granted. The government provide teacher and students with the book for teacher and students as well. By having these books, they might use it any topic lesson they need. For example; when teacher wants to teach them written procedure, they have to teach not only the grammar and vocabulary but also the generic structure and linguistics features, which need more concentration. Therefore, I can say that they rarely use any games otherwise using the conventional technique.
- c) Most of the teachers have known what word game is. Even they have applied it sometimes in speaking and vocabulary. Most of teachers assume that word game is a game to encourage teaching vocabulary/word. Some others mention that word game is a technique used to teach English using a game to make students fun and happy. Teachers don't care about the techniques in teaching English so far because the lesson hours that they have is very limited since then they focus on the way how finish the all material during per semester quickly.
- d) Teachers rarely do teaching English using word games by purpose. Especially teaching writing, teachers do not really pay attention on the current skill. When teacher teach in the afternoon they plan that they have to arouse the students' motivation through the game and it is word game. In teaching writing, teachers used a simple word game like; guessing a picture story, arranging the jumble paragraph, making a text of procedure, etc.
- e) Even though some teachers do not really understand the way to use word games in the case of implementation but then, they are aware that students need a motivation in a space of teaching and learning process during filling the material. In fact,



teachers use only special and easiest word games to teach speaking, vocabulary and spelling or pronunciation. During the observation, the researchers saw that mostly students felt happy in joining the writing class using word games. In this case, teachers taught writing the one's occupation towards the pictures given on the board. Teachers wanted to give some elaboration about the use of nouns and adjectives in the sentences in a paragraph. Supporting by pictures, students felt happy and fun in writing their acknowledgement and ideas in line with the pictures then they wrote it into a good paragraph.

- f) Teachers like teaching writing using word games because word games can help them to motivate students in following the questions since the love playing while learning in the classroom. By having a game like word games, teachers feel easy to shape the atmosphere of the class and teachers can get the goal of the lesson target. The observers mostly agree that using word games in teaching writing make teachers feel enjoy and fun to make students understand and fun.
- g) The advantages of teaching writing using word games are these following; teachers can motivate students to follow the lesson with fun, teachers easily follow the word games because it is equipped by the clear instructions, there are various word games which are related to teaching skills, word games are easily made/created by teachers based on the need of the lesson plan, word games are the simplest media to teach and long life, students get easily understand the components of writing sessions due to support using pictures, teachers believe that teaching writing will be easy to be taught if they use word games because if students have a lots of language components then usually students can compose a good writing.
- h) The disadvantages of teaching writing using word games are; teachers felt difficult in creating their own word games and need more time, teachers sometimes hard to find the ideas of word games that will be taught in the classroom, teaching writing using word games need more hours in finishing per session, teachers have to have more energy since they have to go around to maintain the games, word games need a creative touch, teaching writing using word games should be taught not in a day due to having correction on students' writing result.
- i) the difficult things in applying word games to teach writing like; the composition of the group is not proper as the instructions, the pictures media are not well provided, only the active students will be more active, teachers feel tired due to going around to maintain the game.
- j) word games which applicable to teach writing using word games are entitled broken sentence, mixed story, arranging sentence in a story, and getting occupation.



Suggestions

Here the researchers give some suggestion dealing with the result of the research that will have impacts to the scope of English teachers especially at junior high schools in Semarang.

1. To the English teachers; they need to read this research report in order to enhance their teaching skill especially in teaching writing. Then they can get more information about the way how to conduct a good classroom management using word games. Finally, they can adopt some word games that are in case proper to their English classroom.
2. To the other researchers; this research report is a very fruitful to elevate them in order to get more knowledge in teaching and education in English. They can absorb some methodological approach and the instruments used in qualitative study. Moreover, this research can be a trace for them in having previous studies for their similar research.

Biodata

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