The Application of Activity Lists to Improve the Students' Writing Skill of Recount Text at Vocational High School in Semarang

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ABSTRAK

Keterampilan menulis merupakan keterampilan lanjutan dalam pembelajaran bahasa yang diperlukan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa yang dimiliki peserta didik. Tetapi, menulis merupakan keterampilan yang menantang untuk dikuasai oleh peserta didik. Terutama ketika mereka menulis teks recount yang di dalamnya terdapat kata kerja bentuk 2 (Verb 2), terkadang mereka lupa menuliskan kata kerja jenis ini dalam teks recount karena mereka lebih mengetahui tentang kata kerja bentuk 1 (Verb 1) daripada kata kerja bentuk 2 (Verb 2). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bahwa penggunaan daftar kegiatan (list of activity) dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis teks recount yang dimiliki peserta didik. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui tentang kesadaran atau pemahaman yang dimilik peserta didik terhadap kata kerja bentuk 2 (Verb 2) dengan bantuan daftar kegiatan yang mereka tulis pada baris per baris. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini adalah dokumentasi dan wawancara. Metode dalam menganalisis data adalah metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Objek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI SMK Negeri 6 Semarang yang berjumlah 33 siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan daftar kegiatan pada siklus I dan siklus II dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis sebesar 81,8 % dan 90,9 % dari jumlah siswa di kelas. Dari wawancara dengan siswa, diketahui bahwa banyak siswa yang lebih sadar dan paham dalam menggunakan kata kerja bentuk 2 (Verb 2) dengan bantuan daftar aktivitas yang mereka tulis baris per baris. Kesimpulannya adalah penerapan daftar aktivitas dapat membantu siswa dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis teks recount.

Kata kunci: daftar kegiatan, teks recount, keterampilan menulis, pengajaran bahasa Inggris

ABSTRACT

Writing skill is an advanced skill in language learning which is needed to improve students' language skill. Meanwhile, writing is the challenging skill to be mastered by the students. Especially when they write a recount text in which there are Verbs 2, they sometimes forget to write this type of verb in recount text because they are more aware of Verb 1 than Verb 2. This research aims to find out that the application of activity lists can improve the students' writing skill of recount text. This research also aims to find out the students' awareness toward Verb 2 with the help of the activity lists which they write in line after line. Technique of collecting data in this research was documentation and interview. The methods in analyzing the data were quantitative and qualitative methods. The object of this research was 33 students of the eleventh grade at SMK Negeri 6 Semarang. The result of this research shows that the application of activity lists in the cycle I and in the cycle II can improve the students' writing skill of 81.8 % and 90.9 % students in the class. From the interview with the students, it is found out that many students are more aware of using Verb 2 by the help of activity lists which they wrote in line after line. The conclusion is that the application of activity lists can help the students in improving their writing skill of recount text.

Keywords: *activity list, recount text, writing skill, english teaching*

1. INTRODUCTION

There are four skills in language learning which are studied by students. One of them is writing skill. Writing skill is an advanced skill in language learning which is needed to improve students' language skill in junior, senior and vocational high school. According to Wyrick (2017), writing is an act of discovery. Students write down everything which comes up in their minds because in the first place, they do not know what they really want to convey. In writing, students are trained to express everything which they think and feel into sentences which can be seen repeatedly by themselves or other people. It is hoped that other people can understand the students' ideas and feeling well through their writings.

In writing a recount text, students must be able to integrate their experiences in the past events into a story which forms a recount text. A recount text is a text in which the writers retell their experiences in the past events in the chronological order (Hidayat et al., 2018). A recount text aims to tell what and when the events happened. Students have to remember about what they did and what they experienced in the past. Sometimes, some of them forget about what they did in some events and when it happened so it becomes a challenge for them to write their stories in a recount text.

Students also have difficulties in arranging their stories because a recount text has a certain structure to be arranged. To know the structure of recount text, they have to learn first about this text. According to Callaghan and Rothery (as cited in Budiyanto, n.d.), the structures of recount text are orientation (introduction of the characters, time and place in which happened), events (sequence of events which happened), and re-orientation (closing or conclusion of the story). Students have to arrange their past stories in such structures to make their writings can meet the terms of recount text. They face challenges in writing recount text by remembering the time, place and events in the past time, and they also have to write down their stories into the certain structures of recount text.

To resolve the difficulties which are faced by students, a teacher has to make a strategy to stimulate them in writing a recount text. The strategy has to make the students easy to remember their past experiences and make them easy to write down the paragraphs of the recount text. The strategy which is used is to make lists of activities first so they can remember what they experienced in the past time. By given the lists of activities, the students can write down each paragraph of the recount text in the chronological order. It decreases their confusion in arranging events based on the time which it took place.

There are some researches related to this study of improving writing of a recount text for students. The first research is *The Use of Visual Imagery Strategy to Improve The Students' Writing Skill of Recount Text at The Tenth Grade of Senior High School* conducted by Marpaung (2021). In this research, the researcher used visual imagery strategy to improve the students' writing skill of recount text. The picture used can help the students what was happening in the story. After they understood the story, they could write down the sentences to make a recount text based on the picture. The second research is *The Application of Padlet in Teaching and Learning of Writing Recount Text at Senior High School in Palu City* conducted by Mulyadi et al. (2021). In this research, the researcher integrated a technology namely Padlet application in learning of writing recount text. The researcher found that the Padlet application can be used in helping the

students to write a recount text. Besides, using the Padlet application gives the positive effect of the students' attitude and learning motivation.

The differences those two researches with this research are in the first research used pictures to enhance students' writing skill ability of recount text and in the second research used technology in improving the students' writing skill of recount text. Meanwhile, this research uses the activity list technique which are written by the students to improve the students' writing skill of recount text. The application of activity lists helps the students in remembering all the activities which they did and help them to focus more on the Verb 2 which they write in the activity lists. The type of Verb 2 is a very crucial type of verb in writing a recount text, but sometimes, the students forget to use this type of verb when they write down a recount text. It makes their recount texts have significant mistakes.

Writing

Writing is a skill in language learning which has to be mastered by students. They need to master this skill to deliver their ideas and feeling through words so the students and other people can be able to see those words whenever they want to. According to Negari (2011), writing is an intricate process which needs cognitive and metacognitive activities such as brainstorming, outlining, and revising. The students need to integrate their mind, knowledge, experiences and activities to write down whatever they think and feel. Meanwhile, according to Sukma (2015), writing can enhance the students' performance in mastering vocabulary and grammar. So, the writing exercise has a significant influence in learning language.

Recount Text

Recount is a text which tells the audiences about the experiences in the past events (Hyland, 2009). A recount text focuses on the past experiences of the writer in the sequences of events based on the time which the events happened. A recount text is similar with a narrative text but there is the difference between them. A narrative text is an imaginative story which never happen in the real life, whereas a recount text tells the readers about events which happened in the real life (Corbett & Julia, 2011). It means that everything which is written in a recount text really happened in the past time. A recount text has the generic structures to guide the writer in writing the text and it distinguishes the text and other texts. According to Hyland (2009), the generic structures of a recount text are orientation, events, and re-orientation.

1. Orientation: introducing the participants, time and setting which the events take place.
2. Events: telling what happened in the sequences of time.
3. Re-orientation: optional closure of events. It is the conclusion of the story which can be written or not by the writer.

Activity Lists

Activity lists are all the scheduled activities in a project (Indeed Editorial Team [IET], 2022). Each activity includes one or more tasks which has to be completed, so people can move to another activity after completing the previous activity (IET, 2022). These activity lists are written sequentially from the activity which needs to be done at the beginning to activities which should be done after other activities. The writing of activity lists can make the students remember and organize sequentially all the activities which they did in a particular experience.

Improvement

According to Crawford (2020), people

can make an improvement if the people understand how the system produces the problem, then the people identify changes to rectify the problems, test the efficacy of those changes, and spread the changes. So the improvement can be conducted by the teacher for students' learning activities to help the students enhance their knowledge, skill and attitude in a better direction. After the students improve their knowledge, skill and attitude, they can feel happy and think that they have really studied. This improvement can change the learning activities in the class in a better direction.

2. METHOD

The type of this research is a Collaborative Classroom Action Research. According to Arikunto et al. (2015), a Collaborative Classroom Action Research is a research which is conducted by two or more researchers who make a proposal, conduct a research and make a report of the research together. This research is conducted by the internship student in the school, the school supervisor, and the lecturer. The internship student conducted the research in the class, while the school supervisor and the lecturer observed the research in the class and gave feedback about the research which had been done.

Classroom Action Research is a research which is conducted through three phases namely planning, implementation and reflection (Kusuma & Dwitagama, 2010). Those three phases are conducted collaboratively which have the purpose to enhance the teacher's performance in teaching the students so the students' ability can improve.

The findings of this research are analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative methods. According to Crawford (2020), a quantitative research tries to explain everything in the form of numbers. It makes everything which is studied can be measured exactly so that people know the value of that thing and can distinguish between one thing to another thing precisely.

Meanwhile, Berg and Lune (2012) affirmed that a qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, methapors, symbols, and descriptions of things. Qualitative research contains data which are difficult to understand and need to be analyzed in depth (Lune, 2012). The purpose of qualitative research is to provide rich descriptions of a thing because it is to know the understanding of a thing deeply (Crawford, 2020). In the qualitative research, the study is based on the descriptive method to classify and describe the data and findings.

The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 6 Semarang in the academic year of 2022/ 2023. The object of this research was 33 students of the eleventh grade which were from XI BO 4. Most of them had difficulties in using Verb 2 in making sentences especially when they wrote recount texts. The source of data was recount texts which were written by the students in pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II when this research was conducted. Technique of collecting data in this research was documentation of the students' writing and interview with the students.

This Classroom Action Research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle has four phases, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection (Arikunto et al., 2015). So the researchers conducted those phases in each cycle which they can be completed in two until three meetings in the class. According Arikunto et al. (2015), those phases can be drawn as below:
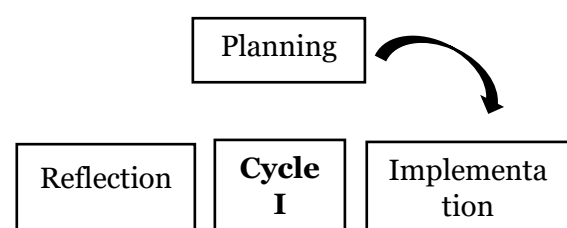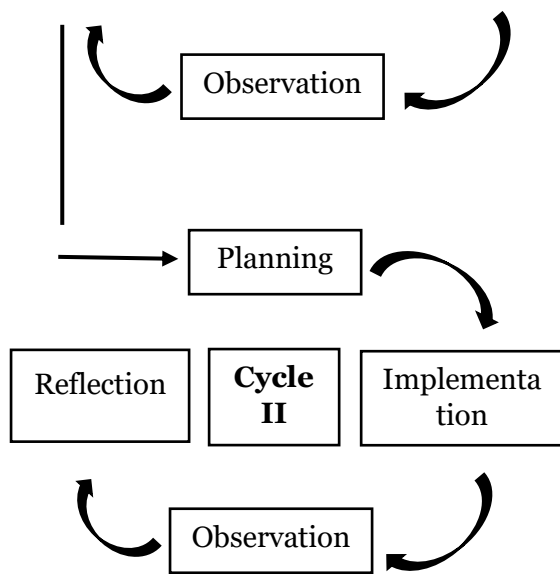
Picture 1. Phases of Classroom Action Research

The researchers conducted the pre-cycle in the first. In the pre-cycle, the students were given a pre-test to make a recount text without any technique given. The purpose of pre-test is to know the students' knowledge and understanding of Verb 2 and recount text. The researchers also conducted interview with the students about the difficulties which they faced in learning and writing a recount text. After conducting the pre-cycle, the researchers did the cycle I and then the cycle II.

The students' learning outcomes were measured by using a rubric of writing assessment to measure their achievements in writing recount texts using the activity list technique. Their achievements were calculated from the number of students who passed the passing grade (KKM) which is 75. To find out the improvement of students' skill in writing recount texts, the student's average score in each cycle was calculated and compared with other cycles. To find out the students' percentage who passed the passing grade (KKM), the researchers analyzed by using this formula:

$$P = \frac{Q}{N} \times 100\ \%$$

P = the students' percentage who passed the passing grade (KKM)
Q = the number of students who passed the passing grade (KKM)
N = the total number of students

To find out the student's average score in each cycle, the researchers analyzed by using this formula:

$$A = \frac{X}{N}$$

A = the student's average score
X = the total of students' scores
N = the total number of students

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the pre-cycle, the researchers gave a pre-test to the students to know their initial ability in writing a recount text. Based on the analysis, the researchers find out that the students who got the scores which are equal or more than the passing grade (≥ 75) are 15 students. Meanwhile, the students who got the scores under the passing grade (<75) are 18 students. The percentage of students who passed the passing grade (75) is 45.5 %. The percentage is very low. It shows that their abilities in writing recount texts are so little. It makes them need to be given a treatment in the cycle I to enhance their abilities. The highest score in the pre-cycle is 83 and the lowest score is 63. The student's average score is 72.9. This average score needs to be improved because it is under the passing grade.

The researchers gave a treatment for the students in the cycle I by asking the students to make a recount text in pairs with a theme about the experience of preparing and doing a performance to be

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shown at the graduation ceremony of the twelfth grade. Before making a recount text, the researchers asked the students to write down all of their activities of this experience in the form of activity lists. The students were asked to recall all activities which they experienced in that time. They were asked to write down every activity list in a line and they were also asked to focus more on the type of Verb (Verb 2) which they wrote so it built up their awareness in using Verb 2. After writing the activity lists, the students arranged the sentences of the activity lists into paragraphs of recount text which consist of orientation, events, and re-orientation parts. The students wrote down the activity lists and the recount text in Canva.

In the cycle I, the researchers find out that there are 27 students who got the scores which are equal or more than 75 (≥75) and there are 6 students who got the scores under 75 (<75). The percentage of students who passed the passing grade (75) is 81.8 %. The highest score is 90 and the lowest score is 70. The students' average score in the cycle I is 80.3. To know the result of pre-cycle and cycle I clearly, it is shown the comparison of pre-cycle and cycle I as follows:

Table 1. The Result Comparison of Pre-Cycle and Cycle I

Aspect	Pre-Cycle	Cycle I
Students who passed the passing grade (≥75)	15	27
Students who didn't pass the passing grade (<75)	18	6
The percentage of passing the passing grade (≥75)	45.5 %	81.8 %
The percentage of not passing the passing grade (<75)	54.6 %	18.2 %
The highest score	83	90
The lowest score	63	70
The average score	72.9	80.3

Based on the table 1, there is a significant increase in the number of students who passed the passing grade in the cycle I which is 81.8 % compared to the pre-cycle which is only 45.5 %. With this result, it shows that many students gain more knowledge and comprehension in writing the correct and good recount texts. Furthermore, the students' average score also increases from pre-cycle to cycle I. In the pre-cycle, the average score is 72.9. This average score is under the passing grade (<75). In the cycle I, the average score increases to 80.3 which is above the passing grade. The increase of the average score in the cycle I shows that many students get the scores above the passing grade. The results of recount texts which they wrote were recount texts with the correct grammar, spelling, capital and punctuation. They also arranged the events of recount text sequentially and in detail.

After getting the significant results in the cycle I, the researchers used the same technique as in the cycle I to be applied in the cycle II. The purpose of cycle II is to convince that the technique which was applied in cycle I and cycle II is the right technique to improve the students' skill in

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writing recount texts. The students were asked to make a recount text in pairs with a theme about the experience of preparing and making food in the school. This theme was chosen by the researchers because the students are from the culinary department in Vocational High School.

Before making a recount text, the researchers asked the students to write down all of their activities of this experience in the form of activity lists. The students were asked to recall all activities which they experienced. They were asked to write down every activity list in a line and they were also asked to focus more on Verb 2 which they wrote. After writing the activity lists, the students arranged the sentences of the activity lists into paragraphs of recount text which consists of orientation, events, and re-orientation parts. The students wrote down the activity lists and the recount text in Canva.

In the cycle II, the finding is that the students who got the scores which are equal or more than the passing grade (≥75) are 30 students. Meanwhile, the students who got the scores under the passing grade (<75) are 3 students. The percentage of students who passed the passing grade (75) is 90.9 %. The highest score in this cycle is 99 and the lowest score is 73. The students' average score is 85,1. The following table is the result comparison of pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II.

Table 2. The Result Comparison of Pre-Cycle, Cycle I and Cycle II

Aspect	Pre-Cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Students who passed the passing grade (≥75)	15	27	30
Students who didn't pass the passing grade (<75)	18	6	3
The percentage of passing the passing grade (≥75)	45.5 %	81.8 %	90.9 %
The percentage of not passing the passing grade (<75)	54.6 %	18.2 %	9.1 %
The highest score	83	90	99
The lowest score	63	70	73
The average score	72.9	80.3	85.1

The table 2 shows that there are increases of the student percentage who passed the passing grade and the average score in cycle II compared to those aspects in the pre-cycle and the cycle I. In the cycle II, the student percentage who passed the passing grade is 90.9 % while in the cycle I only 81.8 %. So, there is an increase of this aspect in cycle II. For the average score, it is 80.3 in cycle I and it increases to 85.1 in cycle II. Those results means that the activity list technique used in the cycle I and II can improve the students' writing skill of recount text.

The researchers also find out from the interview with the students that many of them can be more aware of using Verb 2 (past tense) and to be 2 from each activity list which they wrote. Each activity list was written in a line. This technique made them focus more on Verb 2 and to be 2 in each line. So, this technique can help the students in writing a correct recount text.

4. CONCLUSION

The application of the activity list

technique in writing a recount text can improve the students' writing skill of recount text. It is shown by the students' scores in each cycle. The students' average score of pre-test in the pre-cycle is 72.9 and the students who passed the passing grade is 45.5 %. The students' average score in the cycle I is 80.3 and the students who passed the passing grade is 81.8 %. The students' average score in the cycle II is 85.1 and the students who passed the passing grade is 90.9 %. Those two aspects increase in each cycle from pre-cycle to cycle II.

Based on the interview with the students, the activity list technique makes many students focus and more aware of the use of Verb 2 and to be 2 because each list is written in a line so it makes them have more focus on the verb. It was shown by the correct type of verb (Verb 2) and to be (to be 2) which they wrote in the activity lists and in the paragraphs of recount text.

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