



Using Concept Circles Strategy on Students' Writing Ability in Descriptive Text

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate the concept circles strategy on Students' writing ability in descriptive text. The writer conducted pre experimental research. The sample consisted of 29 students. Before giving treatment, the students were given pre-test, and post-test after students were given treatment. The technique of collecting the data was the writing test. The technique of data analysis used paired sample T-test formula in order to find out the significant effect that compares pre-test and post-test score in one class only analyzed by using SPSS 16.0 version. Based on the data analysis, T showed 8.382 compared at significant level 5% (2.05), and at level 1% (2.76). It can be read $2.05 < 8.382 > 2.76$. Therefore, there is a significant effect of using Concept Circles Strategy at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru.

Key words: Concept Circles Strategy, Writing Ability.

1. Introduction

Writing is one of the activities that should be mastered by English learners and one of the language skills. It is a skill to describe our ideas, opinions or arguments in a piece of paper. Nunan (2005, p. 98) said writing is a combination of process and product. The process refers to act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are represented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers and the product or the final from our writing such as a book, has grown out of many steps which make up the process. Elbow in Brown (1994, p. 336) said "writing is a two-step process. First, you figure out your meaning, then

you put into language, figure out what you want to say; do not start writing till you do; use a plane; use an outline; begin writing only afterward".

Writing can not be produced if the writer does not have a good capability in grammar and vocabulary. The idea above is dealing with Hughey, et al, (1983, p. 5) "writings allows for higher levels of abstraction; more complex ideas that can be presented in written form because writing can be read over and over again. Writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner's course of study.

Grice in Murcia (2001, p. 207) states that according to cooperative principle, the writer is obligated to try

to write clear, relevant, truthful, informative, interesting, and memorable text. Writing primarily focuses on the mechanical aspect of writing and also the purpose of writing itself. Based on the opinions, it can be concluded that writing is a process to deliver our idea in a piece of paper and produce the good writing.

Problem and Objective of the Research

The problems of this research can be formulated into three research questions: How is students' writing ability in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School before being taught by using Concept Circles Strategy? How is students' writing ability in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School after being taught by using Concept Circle Strategy? Is there any significant effect of using Concept Circles Strategy on students' writing ability in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School?

Then, the objectives of this research were To investigate students' writing ability in descriptive text before being taught by using concept circles strategy of the tenth grade at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru. To investigate students' writing ability in descriptive text after being taught by using concept circles strategy of the tenth grade at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru. To investigate the significant effect of concept circles strategy on students' writing ability in descriptive text of the tenth grade at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru.

2. Review of Related Literature

1) The Components of Writing

According to Hughey et al. (1983, p. 139), there are five components of writing which are needed by the writer to make a good writing.

a. Content

To create a good content, the writer should think creatively in developing ideas, excluding all irrelevant information, and connect every sentence and paragraph cohesively. It discusses about how the writer is storming and developing the ideas in his/her mind to create a creative writing. The writer needs to present all of information in written language communicatively.

b. Organization

It pertains the ideas which must be stated clearly, well organized, logically sequence and cohesive. It tells about the systematic nature of the text.

c. Vocabulary

The vocabulary used should be sophisticated range and effective words idiom in order to make a good writing. Vocabulary has a big place in writing. It influences the affectivity of writing.

d. Language Use/Grammatical Features

It is related to the highlight effective complex construction, few errors of agreement, and the order of articles is used. In composing paragraphs or texts, the mastery of grammatical order is very important for writers. It will influence what messages that will be caught by the readers.

e. Mechanics

It is related to the ability of the writer to mastery convention, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. This components are required by the writer to recognize the basic rules of writing in producing right meaning. According to Praveen (2008, p. 126), there are eight mechanics of writing as follows:

1. Making strokes with proper hand movements. This means to know from where to start a letter and where to end it.
2. Write letter of appropriate size and proper shape.
3. Write letter in words with proper space.
4. Write words in sentence with proper space.
5. Write sentence in paragraph with proper space.
6. Write correct spelling in words.
7. Write capital letters correctly.
8. Write legibly and neatly.

It means that the writers have to master the components of writing to produce a good writing. The researcher then has to understand the organization of text types first before starting to write the ideas so that their writing becomes intelligible. The writer should understand the use of vocabulary even language use and mechanics in order to their writing acceptable.

2) Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a kind of texts. According to Kane (2000, p. 352), Descriptive text is a text which says a person or a thing is like. The purpose of descriptive text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 16) also state that descriptive writing appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/or sounds. A good description is a

word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind. Descriptive also describes ideas and examples focused on particular subject. The social function of descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place, or thing.

According to Sudarwati and Grace (2007, p. 135), descriptive text has several descriptions, they are:

1. Generic Structure of Descriptive Text

- a. Identification: If the object is a person, the writer needs to mention the name, occupation, profession, and career.
- b. Description: If the object is a person, the writer needs to mention the physical features, the way he or she dresses and his or her personality.

2. Language Features of Descriptive Text

- a. Using adjectives and compound adjectives such as white and attractive and beautiful
- b. Using linking verbs such as smell, appear, fell, and etc
- c. Using attributive *has* and *have*

3) Concept Circles Strategy

Concept Circles (Vacca, Vacca and gove 1987) are circles with words placed in sections of the circle. While many variations occur during the use of Concept Circles, the basic structure is usually the same: a circle with four sections; each section contains a word or a phrase.

Allen offers good suggestions about using Concept Circles in thinking conceptually about vocabulary (Allen, p. 14). The activities she suggests are about making connections, including or excluding words based on relationships

between words, and writing about the words. These activities foster deep thinking about words, a key ingredient to effective word learning (Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). Stahl and Nagy (2006) also advocate the teaching of concepts, especially for more abstract or complex words, such as “liberty” or “prehistoric”. At the surface level, this strategy seems to be useful for working with academic vocabulary and concepts in the content areas.

In accordance with (Vacca, Vacca and Gove 1987), the procedures concept circles strategy are as follows:

1. Teachers brainstorm about a topic to the students.
2. The teacher puts words or phrases in section of the circle and asks the students to write about the connection they see between the words phrases.
3. The teacher puts vocabulary words in three of sections of the circle.

4. The teacher asks the students to choose four vocabulary words from their study of a topic or a text and use those four words to write about the what they have learned of the topic.
5. The teacher asks the students to shade the words that go together the word does not fit with others

3. Method of the Research

This research is an experimental research. Creswell (2008, p. 60) cites that experimental research is a quantitative research that requires the researcher to find out the significant difference between independent and dependent variable. Gay, et.al (2000, p. 388) explains that this research called the One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design, involve a single group that is pre-tested, exposed to a treatment, and post-tested.

Table 1
One-Group Pretest Posttest Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Class	O ₁	X	O ₂

The target of the population of this research was the tenth grade students of Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru. It consisted of 6 classes. The number of the tenth grade students of this school was 160 students.

Considering the population of this research was bigger, thus, the writer took the sample of the population of the research by using purposive sampling. According to Gay (2000, p. 138) the researcher selected a sample based on his or her experience or knowledge of

the group to be sampled. That’s why the writer chooses X 1 as the sample.

To obtain the students’ writing ability by using Concept Circles strategy, the writer gave the test. The test was done twice, the first was pre-test that was given before treatment, and the second was posttest that was given after treatment intended to obtain students’ writing ability of the tenth grade at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru.

The tests used to test students’ writing ability should be valid and reliable. The test can be valid if it

measures accurately what the test is appropriate, meaningful, and useful (Hughes, 2003, p. 26). In this research, the researcher used content validity to know the validity of writing ability test. According to Brown (2003, p. 22) content validity is partly a matter of determining if the content that the instruments contains is an adequate sample of the domain of content it is supposed to represent. Thus, the test was given based on the material studied by the students. The material of the test was taken from the textbook used by the tenth grade of Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru.

The data of the research were taken from the students' score of pretest and posttest in X1 class as experimental class. The data were collected through the following procedure:

1. At pre-test and post-test, students were asked to write a descriptive text.
2. The writing was written in the blank sheets. Then, it was collected to evaluate the appropriate of content, vocabulary, language use, organization, and mechanics.
3. The researcher used two raters to evaluate the students' writing.
4. The researcher added the scores from the raters and divided it.

4. Research Findings

The students' score are presented in table in order to have a clear and better result. From the total number of students who had done the writing test, there were 29 students from experimental class who were selected to write about descriptive text.

Table 2
The Difference Mean of the Students' Pre-test and Post-test Scores

No	Respondent	Pre Test	Post Test	Gain Score
1	Student	54	74	20
2	Student	52	74	22
3	Student	58	78	20
4	Student	64	62	-2
5	Student	58	70	12
6	Student	62	68	6
7	Student	64	64	0
8	Student	58	72	14
9	Student	62	80	18
10	Student	68	72	4
11	Student	58	72	14
12	Student	72	70	-2
13	Student	60	64	4
14	Student	68	74	6
15	Student	48	70	22
16	Student	48	72	24
17	Student	60	74	14
18	Student	60	76	16
19	Student	64	68	4
20	Student	64	70	6
21	Student	50	72	22
22	Student	58	66	8

23	Student	52	72	20
24	Student	60	70	10
25	Student	56	70	4
26	Student	56	66	10
27	Student	56	76	20
28	Student	54	76	22
29	Student	62	70	8
	Total	1706	2060	346
	Average	58.82	71.10	11.93

To determine the significant effect of the students' writing ability after giving the treatment for the experimental group, the writer used paired sample t-test by using SPSS 16

to compare students' pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group. The output of data analysis is as follows:

Table 3
Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	58.8276	29	5.86801	1.08966
	Posttest	71.1034	29	4.22868	.78525

Based on the table above, the total students from each class were 29 students in experimental class. The mean of pretest in experimental class was 58.83 and the mean of post test in experimental class was 71.10. The standard deviation of pre-test in experimental class was 5.868 and the standard deviation of post-test in experimental class was 4.228. Then, the standard error mean from pre-test in experimental class was 1.089 and the standard error mean from post-test in experimental class was 0.785.

The mean score of pre-test of the experimental class was 58.82. It was

categorized into **enough** level. Meanwhile, mean score of post-test was 71.10. It was categorized into **good level**. So, the mean and the standard deviation of pre-test and post-test score in experimental class were significantly effected.

Furthermore, in determining whether there was a effect of the students' writing ability after giving the treatment for the experimental group, the writer used Paired Sample t-test by using SPSS 16. The data were from students' writing ability of the experimental group. The output of SPSS 16 is as follows:

Table 4									
Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences			t		Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	12.2759	7.88713	1.4646	15.27597	9.27576	8.382	28	0

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the mean was 12.27, standard deviation was 7.88, standard error mean was 1.46, lower difference interval was 15.27, upper difference interval was 9.27, T-test result was 8.38, df was 28, and significant was 0.000. There were two ways that can be done in interpreting to, they were:

- a. By comparing t_o (t-obtained) to t-table from $df = 28$, it is found that the level significance of 5% was 2.05, and the level significance of 1% is 2.76. If $t_o(t\text{-obtained}) > t\text{-table}$, it means that null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected and alternative

hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. Meanwhile, if $t_o(t\text{-obtained}) < t\text{-table}$, it means that alternative hypothesis (H_a) rejected and null hypothesis (H_o) is accepted.

- b. By orienting number of significance. If $probability > 0.05$, null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. If $probability < 0.05$ alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

Based on the difference between pre-test and post-test from the experimental class, the researcher found out the effect size as follows:

$$Eta\ Squared = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + (N - 1)}$$

$$Eta\ Squared = \frac{(8.382)^2}{(8.382)^2 + (29 - 1)}$$

$$Eta\ Squared = \frac{70.257}{70.257 + 28}$$

$$Eta\ Squared = 0.715$$

According to Pallant (2010:210), the guidelines for interpreting this value are 0.01= small effect, 0.06= medium effect, 0.14= large effect. The effect size for the difference above was 0.715, therefore the researcher can conclude that there was a large effect obtained from students' writing descriptive text scores before and after being taught by concept circles strategy.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

The researcher concluded this research as follows:

1. Students' writing ability before being taught by using Concept Circles strategy in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru had no improvement. It was classified as less level by the mean score of pre-test was 58.82.

2. Students' writing ability after taught by using Concept Circles strategy in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru had improvement. It was classified as good level by the mean score of post-test was 71.10.
3. The mean of students' writing ability at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru shows that there is a significant difference of using Concept Circles strategy on the students' writing ability. After calculating effect size, it was obtained that there was a large effect size of using Concept Circles strategy on students writing ability in descriptive text.

So, the use of concept circles strategy has given a significant effect on students' writing ability in descriptive text at Darul Hikmah Islamic Senior High School Pekanbaru.

From the result that is obtained from the effect of concept circles strategy, it was found that the students' achievement in writing ability was much better taught by concept circles strategy. It is recommended to the teachers to apply concept circles strategy in teaching writing especially teaching writing descriptive text. In addition, the researcher suggests increasing the sample size. This will ensure the the better evidence.

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