

IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL USING THINK PAIR SHARE STRATEGY

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to improve students' writing skills in English using Think Pair Share Learning Strategy. The method for this research is Classroom Action Research. The researcher will try to use the Think Pair Share strategy properly to solve problems in Teaching Writing at BIT BINA AULIA Vocational High School. The object of the research in this study is grade 10 students. Think Pair Share not only makes students think individually but also builds Communication Skills when all students are asked to present and share their thoughts and the result of discussions with their partners, or in front of the class. This research is established in two cycles within four steps for each cycles: plan, action, observation, and reflection. In reflections, the researcher finds things to improve the next cycle. Students' worksheets have to show a good result to see how much students have improved their writing skills in hope and conclusion that the Think Pair Share Learning strategy can be used as a variation of learning to improve English writing skills

Keywords:

Writing skill, think pair share, students



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INTRODUCTION

Language is a method of human communication, both oral and written, which consists of the use of words in a structured or unstructured way. This is the way for people to express their feelings, thoughts, and ideas. We can imagine how our lives would be without the presence of language. As a deaf or dumb learn how to use language even though they cannot use the same way of communication (verbal communication) as people do in general. Language has an important role in human's life to communicate. This thing happens because humans are social creatures. Language is often used as a form of interaction between one human to another, then continues to social relations. Language has several functions including as a communication tool, for example male and female symbols on the toilet. Then language also functions as a means of self-expression, such as smiling or shouting. Other functions are as a cultural function, for example to signify a group's identity, social stratification, and entertainment.

Talking about language, we can see that currently English is a very popular language in the world. In fact, many countries have made English as a second language. It shows that the existence of English cannot be doubted. In Indonesia, English is a language that is

taught from children, adolescents, and adults as well. English has also become one of the mandatory lessons learned at school. Brumfit (2001:35) states “English is an international language that it is the most widespread medium of international communication.” In this case, Brumfit states that English is the most widely used international language in the world as an international communication tool. That is why we find a large number of people flock to the English language course to be able to master English language. This is also caused by the use of English which spread throughout the world. Izzan (2016:10) states that English is currently the most widely spoken language, even extensively across five continents: America, Europe, Asia, North Africa, to Australia.

In learning English, students must master 4 abilities. There are writing, reading, listening, and speaking. These four abilities are very important and interconnected or integrated. Reading and listening are receptive skills that are used to get information, while speaking and writing are Productive skills that are used to produce information. As time goes by, in English language lessons, students will be asked to provide thoughts or ideas, and that will be manifested by using Productive skills. Students will deliver it through the speaking or writing ability. When students use their speaking ability in delivering their ideas, students can communicate with some of their peers and they can correct each other, then also provide some inputs directly. Although students make some mistakes in grammar, when they are speaking in English, it will not be a big problem, it is not a big deal, as long as their peers understand the purpose and content of the conversation.

In contrast to writing, students will often feel afraid of making mistakes, and find it difficult to understand the purpose of their writing because there are many aspects that must be considered. Courage to try is not enough. They often think of their limitations of grammar mastery. Students do not master grammar comprehensively. When they put their thoughts and ideas into writing, they will hesitate to write down their thoughts and ideas due to confusion with grammar. Another thing is students have difficulty in developing a topic and putting it into writing. Byrne in Slamet (20077:141) says that writing skills are not just the ability to write graphic symbols so that they are shaped into words and arranged into sentences according to certain rules. Writing is the ability to pour thoughts into written language through certain sentences in full, complete and clear so that it can be communicated to the reader. Christopher Tribble (2006:11) says “Writing normally requires some form of instructions. It is not a skill that is readily picked up by exposure”, or we can conclude writing is a language skill that uses a variety of written languages. Writing is an inseparable part of a learning process experienced by students while studying at school. Writing requires skills because it requires ongoing practice. Learning writing skills at the elementary school level is the foundation for a higher level. Primary school students are expected to absorb the basic aspects of writing skills, so writing skills at the elementary school level serves as a foundation for writing skills at the next level of education.

If we look at the needs of students in the future, when one day students will work and deal with the real world called job and occupation, we can assume that the writing ability is also very important in the communication process. This writing ability will one day be needed to make reports, plans and strategies, proposals, or job application letters, and personal data and CV when they try to apply for a job vacancy. Weak writing ability will cause the negative reactions from readers when they find errors and deficiencies in the

results of their writing. To be able to produce good writing, students must get used to writing. But writing habits must also be raised from the desire and strong will of students to continue writing.

To be excited, you have to make sure that you are progressing. To be enthusiastic, we must continue to make progress. According what Vivienne Baumfield, et.al (2011:69) say, "when learners or students face a difficulty in learning, they will act unnaturally and being lazy." In the end, many students give up on learning something because it might not produce any development. But if students can continue to make progress, students will be more enthusiastic and be eager to continue to pursue it.

To overcome this problem, students need practice, help, and supports from people in their learning environment. Learning to write together will make them feel easier. Students will increase their vocabulary and learn a lot of words and will learn to master grammar. The right method and techniques, also a supportive environment will help students to develop their desires to sharpen their writing skills. We must make students successfully progressing, then students will continue to be encouraged to improve their writing skills. More, productive skills must be sharpened by students continuously.

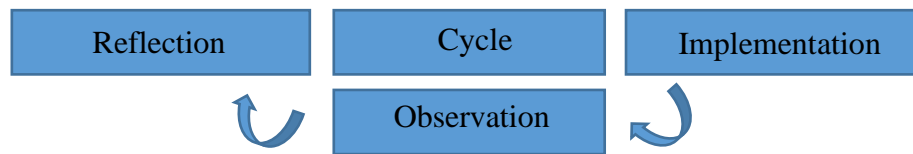
There are so many methods, learning models, strategies, and approaches to help teacher in teaching writing to students. Think Pair Share is the one of strategies that can be applied in teaching writing to students. By seeing the name of this models and according to Cooperative Learning Book by Miftahul Huda (2011:136) The first step is Thinking about the topic and question that teacher has given. Second, students are asked to be pairing and then discussing their thoughts. Finally, every pair must share and explain in front of the class the result of the discussion. It can be used to help students developing ideas, discussing their thoughts and build also learn how to communicate by sharing with the others in-group.

This is the reason of the researcher wants to use and apply the Think Pair Share Strategy to improve the students' ability to write, and students can learn together using this strategy. With this strategy, researcher hopes the learning targets made by researcher can be realized, and students can make procedure texts or descriptive texts. Hopefully students can continue to hone their skills in writing.

METHOD

This research used Qualitative Research because according to Hemlata Talesra's statement in her book, *Scope and Trends of Research on Teaching*, Qualitative Reserach is kind of research that produces findings, not arrived by means of statistical procedures (2004:3).

The researcher uses Classroom Action Research as the Research Methodology, where the teacher will do this research together with other people. It could be another Teacher (partner), and it will be focusing on the process.



Classroom Action Research table cycle: Arikunto, dkk (2014)

The technique that is used under this qualitative descriptive approach is Classroom Action Research which means it is applied in teaching and learning process in effort to improve students' writing skills. This action research is the systematic study of efforts to overcome education problems.

This research will be conducted in several cycles that have been designed and planned carefully to solve problems in learning. Arikunto (2014:24) explains in Classroom Action Research, there must be at least four stages in one cycle. There are Planning, Act, Observation, and Reflection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using Triangulation, researcher has collected the data by doing interview, observation, and test for students. Here are the descriptions:

1. Interview

The researcher has met and interviewed the English teacher. Before doing the interview, the researcher explains the research plan that has been approved by the Principal. The researcher explains that the learning strategy that will be used is Think Pair Share. Researchers also do a detailed interview to two students to find out their difficulties.

The minimum passing grade from the teacher is 68. The obstacle faced by the teacher is that students like English lessons but give up too soon. They also come from the lower middle class, so they do not accustom themselves to speak English. They lack of motivation and vocabulary. They do not even master any English skills. They only follow all the lessons taught by the teacher. They follow the lesson because the teacher always does the best way and combining some method to make students interested in English lesson. All lessons only rely on the teacher's methods and strategies in teaching.

From the results of interviews with two students and a quick survey for instant student feedback, students state they like English lessons, but they lacked of vocabulary. They do not understand the meaning of the English they are learning in class, so they think English is difficult. Luckily, their English teacher is very patient and persistent. If they make a mistake, the teacher will correct it. If students face difficulty, the teacher will try as hard as possible to make them understand, for example: the teacher will explain again in detail. Their teacher always makes the lesson fun.

2. Observation

In observation, it shows that the situation in the classroom is the same as what was conveyed by the teacher in the interview. Classroom is ready to learn. All students sit in their places and focus on learning. This is also caused by the regulations made by English teacher. The teacher is very strict. The teacher does not allow them to take a break if they do not finish the work first.

No gadget in class is one number one rule for English class, and it makes all students focus to English lesson and teacher's explanation. However, although they all always follow all instructions from the teacher and focus on the lessons, they are very lacking in motivation due to several things, one of the examples is the limitations of students in mastering English abilities. They do not know much vocabulary so that it is difficult to understand the lesson.

When the teacher asks them to answer questions they will be quiet because they are afraid of being wrong when answering, but when the teacher divides them into groups, then they are allowed to help each other they are more courageous and confident to answer questions and do the assignment from the teacher.

3. *Cycles*

The procedure for each cycle is implemented as follows:

a. **First cycle**

The first cycle consists of plan, action, observation, and reflection. This research has been implemented on June 26, 2020 using the Think Pair Share learning strategy.

1) **Plan**

In this stage, researcher must prepare the lesson plan of learning activities. This lesson plan will be used as a reference by researcher in doing learning activities. Researchers must also prepare the material carefully. The material in this research is Descriptive Text. The researcher must prepare some examples of descriptive text also prepare observation sheets and assignments to assess students' abilities.

2) **Action**

When learning activity starts, researcher greet all students and create a pleasant atmosphere for students. In the core activities, students are divided into groups and researchers provide an example of descriptive text. The researcher explains about the structure, characteristics, and ways of writing descriptive text. After giving examples and material, the researcher gives the topic "My most favorite person", then students are asked to be in groups and students had to discuss their most favorite person together. They are asked to describe about that person in English. After doing a discussion, students are asked to think of at least 10 English vocabulary (adjectives) related to the topic. They must share the vocabulary with their friends and write a descriptive text.

At the end of the activity, the researcher does a review of students' work. Researcher tells their mistakes and motivate all students, also convinces all

students that they have worked well. Researcher must appreciate whatever they have done. Researcher also explains errors made by students.

3) Observation

In this stage, researcher knows and find that only few students are active in learning activity. With Think-Pair-Share learning strategy, students are easier to be gathered. At first, most students were silent and do not want to ask questions or convey obstacles when doing assignments. But the researcher shows them examples of friends' work and accompanies the process of making descriptive texts and it encourages them. Finally, they become courageous to write descriptive text as much as they could be, using the vocabulary they have collected together. All students want to try even if they cannot and are so limited doing it.

Their mistakes and shortcomings are visible when making a descriptive text. They do not know how to develop their writing, they do not know what to write. They cannot do writing individually. They don't know how to write in English correctly and some of them don't know when to use punctuation. They don't know about 'pronouns' so there are lots of mistakes when they write. Only a few students know how to write well enough.

4) Reflection

In this stage researcher find things to improve from the first cycle. For this time, it is hard letting them to write descriptive text individually. They are clueless and don't know how to write properly. They do a discussion and collecting vocabularies but they don't know how to develop their ideas into writing. But after seeing other's worksheet, they try to write and can make a descriptive text although the result does not reach the scoring target. Researcher has to find another way to make students improve their writing skill and can reach the targeted score or minimum passing grade in the next cycle.

The average score of class 10 Marketing 1 for writing descriptive text in cycle one is 58.5. From 20 students only four students reach the targeted score or minimum passing grade. It means there are 16 students left. After examining all student worksheets, the researcher also knows things that need to be evaluated and improved for the second cycle.

Table 4.1
ASSESSMENT (Using Brown's Scoring System)
First Cycle

No	Name	Grammar (×2)	Style Mechanism (×3)	& Content (×3)	Organization (×2)	Score (÷4)
1	Asjati W	1	2	3	3	57.5
2	Lela O.	1	2	3	3	57.5
3	Astri J.	2	3	3	3	70
4	Heni S.	3	2	2	3	60
5	Aulia P.	2	2	3	4	67.5
6	Dini L.	3	3	3	2	70
7	Nadya O.	2	2	2	2	50
8	Aliyah	3	2	1	2	47.5
9	Mita A.	2	2	3	3	62.5

10	Siska	2	2	2	2	50
11	Julia	3	3	3	4	80
12	Erni	1	2	3	2	52.5
13	Rahayu	4	3	2	2	67.5
14	Haekal	3	2	2	2	55
15	Reza	3	3	3	3	75
16	Melisa	3	3	2	2	62.5
17	Yuli	1	2	2	2	45
18	Dea Pur	1	2	2	2	45
19	Deva	1	2	2	2	45
20	Dinda	2	2	2	2	50
AVERAGE SCORE						58.5

$$\text{Score (per - student)} = \frac{2G + 3SM + 3C + 2O}{40} \times 100$$

b. Second Cycle

The second cycle consists of plan, action, observation, and reflection. This research has been implemented on July 1, 2020 using Think Pair Share learning strategy, but the researcher has made some improvements in this second cycle.

1) Plan

In this stage, the researcher has examined the student worksheet. Researcher will maximize students' work using THINK PAIR SHARE learning strategy. Researchers make the children with the highest grades as group leaders. Researchers divide them into groups. Researchers also prepare materials, lesson plans, teaching materials, and examples of descriptive text. The researcher also prepares materials about pronouns and the structure of simple present tense, in accordance with the things students have to improve in writing.

2) Action

When the learning activity starts, researcher does a review in remembrance of things they have learned before. The researcher asks them to briefly explain the material that had been taught. The researcher also teaches about 'pronouns' and structure in descriptive text. After that, the researcher gives a more detailed explanation about descriptive text, such as: Things that must be put in descriptive text, how to gather all information, and how to put it into writing.

Researcher shows pictures of Indonesian artists and ask them one by one to at least mention the characteristics of the person. After that the researcher asks them to join a group with friends and establish a discussion. The researcher gives direction to the group leaders and lead their friends in group to look for various information about the artist they choose. The group leaders direct friends to find and gather information they need to make a descriptive text.

The researcher monitors the activities of the whole group and the researcher also reminds all students to be active. Researcher give questions to students who are less active so they can be involved and active in this learning. After researcher senses they have gotten enough information, researchers ask students to share it

with classmates. In the final stage, the researchers asked them to start writing descriptive text

3) Observation

Researcher has done the observation and find much different results between first cycle compared to the second cycle. In the first cycle, only few students were active. But when the more active students lead a discussion and then help the less active students, the class become more active and being motivated to find the information needed to write descriptive text.

They are also more willing to express opinions to their friends and researcher feel there is significant progress. They are also able to correct the work of friends so that other friends can also make improvements. They also began to write correctly. They learn to compose sentences and they can also write quite well, very much different from the first cycle. Researcher believes students find it difficult because they do not know how to write and do not know how to put their ideas into writing. However, when they collaborate with friends they become more confident and can help each other. They are also easier to remember things.

4) Reflection

The second cycle is the stage for evaluating the things done in both cycles. Since the first cycle has been implemented, the learning strategy used was Think-Pair-Share. Researcher applied this learning strategy to improve students' writing abilities. In the first cycle researcher can see only a few students are actively conveying their thoughts and also with all their limitations basically laid out clearly. In the first cycle, only four people reached the minimum passing grade or the targeted score.

Researchers reflects and find a pretty good improvement in the second cycle. The average score in the first cycle was 58.5 and only 4 children were able to reach the minimum targeted score. Most mistakes are grammar and punctuation, and also many mistakes in the use of pronoun. Then the researcher established a detailed evaluation and found things that had to be improved in the second cycle expecting to make an improvement. Finally, in the second cycle the average score increased to 73.75 even though there were still 5 students who had not been able to reach the minimum targeted score.

Table 4.2
ASSESSMENT (Using Brown's Scoring System)
Second Cycle

No	Name	Grammar (×2)	Style & Mechanism (×3)	Content (×3)	Organization (×2)	Score (÷4)
1	Asjati W	4	3	4	4	92.5
2	Lela O.	3	3	3	3	75
3	Astri J.	3	3	4	4	87.5
4	Heni S.	3	3	3	3	75
5	Aulia P.	3	3	3	3	75
6	Dini L.	3	3	3	2	70

7	Nadya O.	3	3	3	3	75
8	Aliyah	3	3	3	3	75
9	Mita A.	3	3	3	3	75
10	Siska	3	3	3	3	75
11	Julia	3	4	4	3	90
12	Erni	3	3	3	3	75
13	Rahayu	3	3	4	3	82.5
14	Haekal	3	2	3	2	62.5
15	Reza	3	3	3	3	75
16	Melisa	3	3	3	3	75
17	Yuli	2	2	3	2	57.5
18	Dea Pur	2	2	3	3	62.5
19	Deva	2	3	2	2	57.5
20	Dinda	3	2	3	3	67.5
AVERAGE SCORE						73.75

$$\text{Score (per - student)} = \frac{2G + 3SM + 3C + 2O}{40} \times 100$$

Discussion

Researcher tries to elaborate and interpret all the data from interview, observation, and students' worksheet. From the interview, either with teacher or students, we know that X Marketing 1 like English lesson, but they lack of motivation and vocabulary. They give up easily and do not want to try a little harder if they get into trouble in learning. They do not master any English skill, especially writing. The class goes well because the teacher tries hard to make them involve in learning. They love learning in a group and some activities than learning individually. Think-Pair-share learning strategy is one of effective ways to help the teacher in learning activity.

Observation shows how was the class going when this research has been established. The researcher was given the opportunity, by doing an observation, to know the situation in the class when learning activities were carried out. The situation in the class that was seen by the researcher; students were ready for learning activity. They were already sitting in their seats. When the learning activity started and teacher was teaching, students followed the whole lesson carefully. They were all ready to study because teacher has strict rules so there is no time for playing around. Number one rule: NO GADGET. No one was playing gadget in English Lesson.

When teaching, the teacher gave an opportunity to students to talk in Bahasa Indonesia, but the teacher also wanted them to try speaking in English. When teacher asked them to speak and answer question in Bahasa, few of them were active but if teacher asked them to speak in English they became silent and quiet. They are limited in knowledge. They did not master any English abilities. They cannot answer teacher in English. They cannot task individually and they really love and enjoy learning in a group, especially when the project that is given by teacher use music.

When the researcher started the first cycle, at that time researcher can conclude that not all students are active in learning activity. They were afraid to share their thoughts and mind because they cannot speak in English. They were afraid to start writing since they do not know what to write and how to develop their ideas. Many of them do not know how to use pronouns correctly. They can only collect vocabularies related to the topic but

do not know how to write properly. Researcher must show their friends' work so they can be motivated and be brave to write.

But in the second cycle, after researcher pair the active students with the less active students, researcher found they can be more active and be helped by their friends. Researcher explain more about the structure of descriptive text, the tenses, and explains pronoun in details. After that, through my direction, the active students help their friends to write. They help friends in gathering information. They show their worksheets and exchange their thoughts together. This learning strategy not only help them in writing but also in communicating with others.

Last, students' worksheet shows an improvement. Researcher has done this Classroom Action Research in two cycles. The first cycle has been implemented in two meetings. In the first meeting, researcher Say hello to all students and get acquainted with them, after that researcher gave materials and example of descriptive text. Researcher also asked them to think about their favorite person and think at least 10 vocabularies that is related to the topic. Researcher directed them to share their thoughts to friends, also share the vocabularies they have collected to their friends. In the second meeting, researcher did some review and ask them to write a descriptive text. After that researcher did a quick review of students' works and explain their mistakes. Using Brown's scoring system researcher grades their woks. The highest score is 80 and the lowest is 45. It was devastating. That score really shows that they do not understand how to write at all. The average score of first cycle is 58.50, with only four students having reached the targeted score.

After doing some reflections, the researcher finds things to improve and establishes the second cycle in two meetings. Researcher divides them into groups, directs the active students to help the less active students, and assist also monitors them in learning. The test results show a good improvement. Almost all students can write descriptive text pretty well, although it is not perfect. Using Brown's scoring system researcher grades and assesses their works. 15 students have reached the minimum passing grade or targeted score and 5 students have still not reached the minimum targeted score. The average score for the second cycle is 73.75 with the highest score is 92.50, and the lowest score is 57.50.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research and discussion that have been established, researcher can conclude several things from the application of Think Pair Share Learning Strategy in the classroom. Researcher describes it as follows:

1. Think Pair Share Learning strategy can help students to improve their writing skills in English. An example the essay is Descriptive text
2. Learning with the Think Pair Share strategy can increase student motivation in writing. Active students can help their friends. They will be bolder in sharing their ideas.
3. Think Pair Share learning strategy not only help improving students' writing skill, but students are also directed to think and develop their thoughts.
4. By using Think Pair Share learning strategy, students also practice to communicate when they share their ideas. After thinking, they are also asked to share their thoughts through discussion or in front of the class

5. Learning activity using Think Pair Share Learning Strategy can improve students' writing score. The average score in the first cycle is 58.50 or only 20% which is able to reach the minimum targeted score, and the second cycle increases to 73.75 or 75% students can reach the minimum value.

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