

USING RESTATE, ANSWER, PROVE, SUM UP (RAPS) TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITING SKILL

Tityn Sholichah

English Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Universitas Tidar
Indonesia

titin.sholichah@gmail.com

Abstract

Writing is one of the four language skills that is viewed as the most difficult skill to be mastered. The seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019 are ones of those who face some difficulties in writing descriptive text. RAPS is offered as a technique to improve their learning motivation and skill in writing descriptive text. The objectives of this research are to know whether the use of RAPS technique can improve the learning motivation of writing descriptive text of the seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019 and to know how great the improvement of descriptive text writing skill of the seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019 after the implementation of RAPS technique. The writer did the research through three phases; they are Pre- Cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2. The data of this research are collected from the students' written test, questionnaire, observation, and documentation. All the data are analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis technique. The result of research shows that RAPS technique give great improvement on the students' learning motivation and skill in writing descriptive text

Keyword - RAPS, motivation, writing, descriptive text, Classroom Action Research (CAR)

Introduction

English has become an international language that is widely spoken by people from different parts of the world as a means of communication either in written or spoken form. In Indonesia, English has become a compulsory subject. From elementary school to university level, it is implemented as a foreign language. The purposes is to develop students' oral and written communication competence in the four language skill namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Harmer (2004: 31) states that writing is a way to produce language and express ideas, feelings, and opinions. Writing is considered important to be mastered. Graham and Perin (2007: 3) view that writing well is not just an option for young people- it is a necessity. Along with reading comprehension, writing skill is a predicator and indicator of one's academic success and a basic requirement for one's participation in civic life and in the global economy.

In accordance with Curriculum 2013, the seventh grade students of junior high school are asked to compose a simple descriptive text about people, animals, or things by taking into account the social function, text structure, and linguistic elements, correctly and contextually. For EFL learners, writing in English may be very challenging as they have to write in English style in which the language rules are different from their first language and it could be harder if they are poor in vocabulary and grammar. The students of VII F class in MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019 are ones of those who face some difficulties in writing descriptive text. They have poor writing skill that causes low writing scores.



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Teaching writing is necessary to help students develop their writing skill. Harmer (2001: 37) states that people from different ages have some different needs, competences, and skills. For that reason, it is important for teachers to facilitate students with effective teaching technique in order to help the students improve their language and writing skills. In addition, teachers must pay attention on the students' motivation as stated by Gardner (1985) "Motivation has long been identified as one of the main factors affecting English language learning.

In order to help the students, the writer tries to implement a technique named RAPS that stands for *restate*, *answer*, *prove*, and *sum up*. Reyes and Reyes (2018) states that RAPS is an easy step-by-step way for students to organize a short written response and recall text in order to answer a writing prompt or question. According to Rutledge (2017), RAPS is a formula for teaching students to answer short response questions. It is a technique to answer text-based questions or to write a text evidence essay. However, the steps of RAPS are appropriate to compose a descriptive text. By implementing this technique, the writer means to know the effect on the students' learning motivation and their skill in writing descriptive text.

Methodology

The type of the research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). The subject was the class of VII F in MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019. There were 30 students in total consisting of 16 male and 14 female. The writer did the research through three phases: Pre- Cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2.

The data of this research were collected from the students' written test, questionnaire, observation, and documentation. In each cycle, there was a test given to know the students' writing scores and its improvement from cycle to cycle. The writer also observed the students' behavior by using an observation sheet as guidance. It consisted of some motivation indicators based on Notoatmojo (2005: 145). There was also questionnaire to know the students' responses toward the teaching and learning process. Besides that, the writer took some pictures of the students' activities during lesson.

All the data were used to know the improvement of the students leaning motivation and skill in writing descriptive text. The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis technique. In analyzing the qualitative data such as observation, questionnaire, and documentation, the writer used the theory from Milles and Huberman (1994: 10) that consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Meanwhile, in analyzing the quantitative data that is the students' written test, the writer used the writing assessment from Jacobs (1981) and the analytic rating score from Harris (1969: 134). To calculate the mean of scores, the writer used a formula as below:



$$Mean = \frac{SS}{R}$$

Explanation:

SS = Total number of students' score
R = Number of respondents

Finding(s) and Discussion

To know the improvement of the students' learning motivation, the writer accumulated and compared the result of the questionnaire, observation, and photo documentation from Pre-Cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2.

From the observation in Pre- Cycle, the mean of students' motivation belongs to low category. It only reaches the number of 56.33%. There are quite a lot of the students who do not have motivation during the learning process. Some of them also seemed bored with the teacher's explanation. Furthermore, from the questionnaire, a number of students say they are not interested in writing activity. Most of them also consider that they do not like English. Additionally, many of the students find writing in English is difficult.

Then, in Cycle 1, the mean of the students' motivation significantly increases from 56.33% to 72.33%. The number of the improvement is 16. Through the observation in Cycle 1, the writer finds that the students have better motivation to participate in the learning activities. Those who pay attention to the teacher's explanation are greater than in Pre-Cycle. Similarly, a large number of the students can understand the material and want to make notes. Besides that, most of them can do the test well and finish it on time. It can be concluded that the implementation of RAPS technique to teach writing descriptive text can give significant improvement to the students' motivation in learning writing descriptive text.

Furthermore, in Cycle 2, the students' motivation grows by 8.67 points from Cycle 1. The mean of the observation touches the number of 81% and belongs to good category. From the observation, the writer notices that the students become more enthusiastic and active during the teaching and learning process. They give respond to the questions given. Almost of them also can do test well and finish it on time. Meanwhile, from the questionnaire, it shows that a large number of students like studying English. Most of them also feel that RAPS technique can help to improve their writing skill. Moreover, they think that the technique make them become more motivated to learn writing descriptive text. Shortly, from the observation in all cycle, there is a significant improvement of the students' motivation in learning writing descriptive text after being taught by using RAPS technique.

Meanwhile, to know the improvement of the students' descriptive text writing skill, the writer accumulated the mean scores from each cycle and calculated the number of improvement from cycle to cycle. Then, we can see the comparison of the result of descriptive text writing test in the table below.



Table 1. The Result of the Writing Test in All Cycles

Assessment Aspect	Mean of Score			Improvement		
	PC	C 1	C2	PC-C1	C1-C2	PC-C2
Writing Skill	54.16	68.87	80.73	14.71	11.86	26.57
Category	Poor	Fair	Good			

As recorded in the table above, the mean score of the students' writing test in Pre-Cycle is 54.16 which is categorized as poor. Then, from the Pre-Cycle to Cycle 1, there is a great improvement of the students' writing score by 14.71 points. The mean score in Cycle 1 reaches the number of 68.87 and belongs to fair category. Furthermore, in Cycle 2, the mean score increases by 11.86 points becoming 80.73. The category of the mean score in Cycle 2 is good. Finally, the writer summarized that using RAPS technique can greatly improve the descriptive text writing skill of the seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang.

Conclusions

Based on the findings in Pre- Cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2, the writer can conclude that the use of RAPS technique can improve the learning motivation of writing descriptive text of the seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019. There are some positive changes in the students' motivation after being taught by using RAPS technique. In the Pre- Cycle, the mean of the students' motivation is 56.33%. Then, in Cycle 1, it increases to 72.33%. Furthermore, in the Cycle 2, the mean score of the students' motivation can reach at the rate of 81%. The writer also finds that there is a great improvement of the students' descriptive text writing skill of the seventh graders of MTs Negeri 2 Kota Magelang in the school year 2018/2019 who after the implementation of RAPS technique. It can be seen in the mean score of the students' writing test that increase significantly from cycle to cycle. In Pre- Cycle, the mean score of the students' writing test is only 54.16. Then, it significantly increases to 68.87 in Cycle 1. Meanwhile, in Cycle 2, the mean score of the students' writing test can attain the number of 80.73 and it has reached the standardized score of 71.

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