

THE COMPARISON OF USING PARAGRAPH FRAME AND SENTENCE COMBINING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL AT SMPN 33 PALEMBANG

Ayu Marsela Erda & Yuyun Hendrety

Tridinanti University Palembang

yuyun_hendrety@univ-tridinanti.ac.id

ABSTRACT: The objective of this study was to find out whether or not there was any significant improvement on students' writing skill between students who used paragraph frame strategy and those who used sentence combining strategy of the seventh grade students at SMPN 33 of Palembang. The research method was quasi-experimental method. The design of this study was non-equivalent control group design. The technique for collecting the data was the test. The population of this study was all Seventh Grade Students of SMPN 33 of Palembang, and the sample of this study was VII.1 and VII.2. The experimental group had 33 students; meanwhile, control group had 35 students. The data were collected by giving pretest, treatment and post-test for both groups. The data were analyzed by using independent and paired sample t-test. The result of the data analysis showed that the mean score of post-test of experimental group was 81.36 and post-test of control group was 63.14. Furthermore, it shows that the value of sig, (2-tailed) was 0.00 and it was lower than 0.05 as the significant level. The value of t-obtained was 4.809 which was higher than t-table critical value of 1.996 and the degree of freedom was 66. Based on the result of data analysis, It can be concluded that there was any significant improvement on students' writing skill between students who used paragraph frame strategy and those who used sentence combining strategy.

Keywords: *paragraph frame strategy, sentence combining strategy, writing skill.*

PERBANDINGAN PENGGUNAAN *PARAGRAPH FRAME* DAN STRATEGI *SENTENCE COMBINING* UNTUK MENINGKATKAN KETRAMPILAN MENULIS SISWA KELAS VII SMPN 33 PALEMBANG

ABSTRACT: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari ada tidaknya peningkatan yang signifikan pada keterampilan menulis siswa di antara siswa yang menggunakan strategi *paragraph frame* dan siswa yang menggunakan strategi *sentence combining* pada anak kelas VII SMP 33 Palembang. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode penelitian eksperimental quasi (semu). Desain penelitian ini adalah non equivalent control group design. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah tes. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VII SMP 33 Palembang dan sampel penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VII.1 dan siswa kelas VII.2. Kelompok eksperimental terdiri atas 33 siswa sementara kelompok kontrol terdiri atas 35 siswa. Data dikumpulkan dengan cara memberikan *pretest, treatment* dan *posttest* untuk kedua kelas tersebut. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *independent* dan *paired sample t-test*. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa *mean score* dari nilai *posttest* kelas eksperimental adalah 81.36 dan nilai *posttest* dari kelas kontrol adalah 63.14. Lebih lanjut, hasil penelitian menunjukkan nilai dari *sig, (2-tailed)* adalah 0.00 yang lebih rendah dari 0.05 sebagai level signifikan dan dengan nilai *degree of freedom* adalah 66. Berdasarkan hasil dari analisis data, dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada peningkatan yang signifikan pada keterampilan menulis siswa di antara siswa yang menggunakan strategi *paragraph frame* dan siswa yang menggunakan strategi *sentence combining*.

Kata Kunci: *strategi paragraph frame, strategi sentence combining, keterampilan menulis.*

INTRODUCTION

In this era, English as an international language has facilitated the globalization. It is used by not only the native speakers of English but also all worldwide English users. During its development, English has raised some agenda either for economic, politic or education. It attracts people to learn and master English for some purposes. Being a part from the English growth, the teaching of English has appeared as the control of English spread.

With enthusiasm and excitement of learning English, many institutions offer their education system as a facilitator to make a certain step in learning English. Listening, reading, speaking and writing are laid down as four macro skills of English which must be learned and practiced by the learners. Listening skill focuses on understanding the spoken language, reading skill is how the authors transfer their thought to the readers, speaking skill sounds the words orally and transfer the information to the listeners, and writing skill expresses the thought or idea in written form. No matter what the purposes of people who want learn

it, practicing these four skills is a big deal.

In 2013 curriculum, the students are encouraged to be able to produce both speaking and writing products. The government awareness of the importance of writing is well-illustrated by this curriculum. The students have the necessity as good writers for entering the higher education level institutions (college or university) and achieving their degree by completing their undergraduate or postgraduate thesis. As a response to the mentioned details, the educators and all the related parties must take the action to prepare our students to face their future academic and professional carrier.

According to Klimova (2013), writing has a unique position in language teaching since its acquisition involves a practice and knowledge of other three skills, such as listening reading and speaking (p. 147). Moreover, Saadat and Dastgerdi (2014) mentioned that the ability to write in English as a second or foreign language is an important skill in academic development particularly for the students majoring in English (p. 1573). Furthermore, according to Graham and Perin (2007), writing

well is not just an option to young people—it is a necessity (p.1).

Teaching writing is not simple since the students usually face some problems to produce it. Based on the preliminary interview which had been done by the writer of this research, the teacher of English said the major problems of teaching writing skill were the students' lack of basic in English and the limited understanding on sentence structure and paragraph structure. Another difficulty of teaching writing was due to the students' limitation on writing techniques. These problems occurred to the seventh grade of SMPN 33 Palembang. If the situation gets worse, the students will not fulfill the target and out of the line. That is the reason why the researcher conducted this study in SMPN 33 Palembang.

Based on the above explanation, the certain strategies or techniques should be applied to build students' knowledge of English structure and how to create a writing product which is more interesting for the readers. Related to the mentioned necessity, the researchers decided to use paragraph frame and sentence combining to improve students' writing skill.

Paragraph frame strategy can help students to understand the sentence structure while sentence combining strategy which enables the students to produce a more varied form of sentences. That is why the researchers used these strategies. In addition, the researchers used descriptive text with the mentioned-strategies.

Teaching Descriptive Paragraph Writing

In teaching descriptive paragraph, the learners are possible to know the atmosphere of the story through the text they read. Knapp and Watkins as cited in Lopa (2012) stated that descriptive paragraph usually describes the appearances a person, place or thing. Moreover, Oshima and Hogue (2007) explained that descriptive writing appeals to senses, so it tells how something looks, smells, tastes, and sounds (p. 61). In other words, descriptive paragraph writing is used to explain the physical aspect and condition of the subject.

According to Oshima and Hogue (2007), identification and descriptive aspect are the as the generic structures of descriptive paragraph (p. 63). In spite of that,

Andrew 2008 (as cited in Lopa, 2012) stated some language features of descriptive text as follow:

- a. It involves a specific participant.
- b. It uses simple present tense to promote facts as what the writer sees.
- c. It uses adjectives to explain the subject.
- d. It uses linking verbs.
- e. It is written in third person.

Bailey (2011) mentioned that paragraph is a group of sentences that deal with a single topic and its length varies significantly according to the text types, but should be no less than four or five sentences (p. 78). As sequence of sentences, a paragraph will be formulated in same topic.

Therefore, it can be stated that a paragraph is a unit of sentences that gather to create a writing piece which has the same topic. Its length can be vary and it depends on what the paragraph that will be produced by the writer. Sentences should make a point and support the topic which is determined.

Teaching paragraph writing should consider the students background knowledge of forming the sentence. It is inappropriate to

teach the students who have lack of background knowledge for composing. For instance, the students are not able to make proper sentences; they even do not know what components that should be included in a sentence.

In writing a paragraph, there are three basic parts of paragraph that should be noticed. Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 38):

1) Topic Sentence

Topic sentence usually appears as the first sentence. It helps the reader to comprehend the paragraph as early as possible by giving a general idea of a paragraph that will be read.

2) Supporting Sentence

Supporting sentence gives the explanation for further information or example.

3) Concluding Sentence

Concluding sentence closes the paragraph by giving the statement that remains the reader with the main ideas. It mentions the important points from the entire paragraph.

The text should have clear topic sentence to make point that will be delivered to the readers. Another

part of paragraph is supporting sentence will make the explanation of what is the topic sentence about. It also can be consisted of some examples that are related to the idea in the topic sentence. The last is concluding sentence; this part of paragraph will make a short summary that remains the readers with the entire important items in paragraph.

Furthermore, Brown (2004) stated that developing main and supporting ideas is the goal for the writer attempting to create an effective text, whether a short one to two paragraphs or an extensive one of several pages (p. 236). In other words, the ability to develop the main, supporting details and conclude the paragraph is important to be owned by writer to construct the effective text.

The all parts of paragraph should be placed appropriately. The idea should be put on the right place. The writers will not let their ideas overlapped one another. The portion should be well-managed. The topic sentence will be not appropriate if it is too clear in giving the short information of the paragraph. It will give the information that should be

given by the supporting sentence. Each parts of paragraph should stand for other parts in order to complete the paragraph.

Paragraph Frame Strategy

Cunningham and Cunningham as cited in Lenski and Verbruggen (2010) explained that paragraph frame is an effective strategy in order to learn text structure and it is recommended to use of this strategy. The procedure of teaching paragraph frame strategy (Cunningham and Arlington, 2005, p.121):

- a. Teacher explains components of paragraph and how to construct it.
- b. Once children understand how paragraph is written, the teacher can present the frame.
- c. Teacher divides the students in pairs.
- d. Students try to fill the blank portion in the frame with phrase or clause.
- e. Teacher asks the students to read their complete frame in front of their classmates.
- f. The final step is the students' independency to create their own paragraph.

Paragraph frame is strongly recommended for the early stage writers (Cunningham and Arlington, 2005, p. 122). Young writers usually hard to start their writing and they have lack writing experiences. In early stage of learning how to be good writers, the students will have a useful and appropriate activity to prepare themselves for constructing their own paragraphs or texts. This strategy would be appropriate to teach first graders of junior high school. Therefore, the writers were interested to use paragraph frame to teach writing skill on this research.

Sentence Combining Strategy

According to Saddler (2006) sentence combining exercise were suggested as a way to prompt students to use syntactic options in their writing through practice in consciously controlling and manipulating syntax (p. 28). In other words, sentence combining works on word and sentence level as an early stage of practicing students' writing ability through encouraging them to construct more interesting-complex sentences in varied forms. Combining sentence focuses to produce effective sentence rather

than a longer sentence through a process of adding or removing words, phrases, or punctuation marks.

Graham and Perin (2007) explained that sentence combining is a strategy that involves teaching students to construct more complex, sophisticated sentences (p.11). Sentence combining is an example of strategy that involves sentence forming in its process. Through sentence combining, students are possible to practice their writing ability in constructing more complex sentence by adding or remove words that are needed. The students' quality of writing will be improved by teaching them to use more varying sentences on their writing piece.

According to Saddler (2006, p. 28), the procedures of teaching paragraph frame strategy are as follow:

- a. The teacher begins to show the example of simple sentences and demonstrates how to combine it.
- b. Teacher gives the worksheet to the students.
- c. After that, students work in pairs to construct a new version of the sentences.

- d. Students read their work in front of their classmates.
- e. Teacher gives feedback to students' work.

RESEARCH METHOD

Griffiee (2012, p. 44) defined a research design as the direction of how to conduct a research and to determine the answer of a research question and concern.

In the research, the researchers gave the treatment to the experimental group by using paragraph frame strategy. Meanwhile, the control group was given the treatment of sentence combining strategy. Pre-test was given at the first meeting for each group. After the treatment had done, the researcher gave the post-test for each other.

Population and Sample

The population of this study was all seventh grade students of SMPN 33 Palembang in academic year 2016/2017. The population consisted of 240 students.

The researcher of this research used cluster sampling. Creswell (2005) further mentioned that cluster sampling is the type of selecting sample which is possible the researcher to select particular subgroup within the population.

Technique of Collecting The Data

Test is used to measure group or individual's ability to achieve the objective. The writing test was given twice; the first was given before the teaching and learning process was begun (pre-test), and the second was given after the treatments were done (post-test). The test was formulated as the paragraph writing test and text that would be asked to be written by the test takers was descriptive. The test was in a form of writing test with a topic determined by the researcher. The researchers used the rubric to assess the students' writing test.

Technique for Analyzing the Data

t-TEST

According to Creswell (2005), t-test is the comparison between two groups (p. 94). T-test can be used to explore the impact of independent variable in comparing the groups.

The researchers compared the result of pre-test and post-test through independent and paired sample t-test. In independent sample t-test, the pre-tests of experimental and control groups were compared as well as the post-tests of those two groups.

Meanwhile, the paired sample t-test compared pre-test and post-test of experimental and control group separately. In other words, each of two groups compared pre-test and post-test results or scores. Independent and paired sample t-test calculated two different writing achievements from both classes. Independent sample t-test was used to know whether there was any significant difference between two unrelated samples or not. It also measured which one of the sample that was more significant than the other. Meanwhile, paired sample t-test compared two paired samples which had different treatments.

whether it was normal or not. Based on the above data, the value of significant in Kolmogorov-Smirnov was higher than 0.05, it means that the data for each group was normally distributed.

Test of Homogeneity

Table 2. The Test Of Homogeneity

| | | Levene | df | df2 | Sig. |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|----|--------|------|
| | | Statistic | 1 | | |
| PRE-TEST | Based on Mean | .169 | 1 | 66 | .682 |
| | Based on Median | .017 | 1 | 66 | .895 |
| | B. on Median and with adjusted df | .017 | 1 | 51.988 | .896 |
| | B.ontrimmed Mean | .044 | 1 | 66 | .835 |
| POST-TEST | Based on Mean | | | | |
| | Based on Median | 2.044 | 1 | 66 | .158 |
| | B. on Median and with adjusted df | 1.234 | 1 | 66 | .271 |
| | Based on trimmed Mean | 1.234 | 1 | 64.195 | .271 |

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.The Test Of Normality

| GROUP | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|------|------|--------------|------|------|------|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. | |
| PRE-TEST | EXP | .270 | 33 | .000 | .752 | 33 | .000 |
| | CONT | .144 | 35 | .065 | .943 | 35 | .069 |
| POST-TEST | EXP | .117 | 33 | .200 | .946 | 33 | .101 |
| | CONT | .153 | 35 | .035 | .917 | 35 | .012 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance

Before conducted the independent and paired-sample t-test, the researchers tested the normality of both groups to measure the data

The researchers tested the homogeneity of both groups to measure whether the variance of the data was homogeneous or not. The result in Table 2 shows that the value of significant based on mean was higher than 0.05. It means that the variance of the data was homogeneous.

The Result of Pretest and Post-Test of Experimental Group

Pretest and post-test for experimental groups were done in class VII.1 at SMPN 33 Palembang.

The researcher calculated the distribution of score in experimental group. The result explains that in the pretest, all students were in very poor category (100%). While in post-test, 7 students were in excellent category (21.3%), 10 students were in very good category (30.2%), 5 students were in good category (27.3%), 7 students were in poor category (20.2%), and 4 students were in very poor category (12%). It can be concluded that the students in experimental group improved their scores in post-test.

The Result of Pretest and Post-Test of Control Group

The pretest and post-test for control groups were done in class VII.2 at SMPN 33 Palembang. The researchers calculated the distribution of score in control group. The result explains that all students were in very poor category (100%). While in post-test, 2 students were in excellent category (5.8%), 4 students were in very good category (11.5%), 4 students were in good category (11.6%), 4 students were in poor category (11.4%), and 21 students were in very poor category (40.3%).

It can be concluded that the students in control group improved their scores in post-test.

The Result of Independent Sample T-Test

TABLE 3. The Result of Independent Sample T-Test

| | Post. Exp | Equal variance assumed | Equal variance not assumed |
|--|-----------|---|----------------------------|
| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | F |
| | Sig. | .158 | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----------|----------|
| t-test for Equality of Means | t | 4.809 | 4.834 |
| | df | 66 | 65.118 |
| | Sig.(2-tailed) | .000 | .000 |
| | Mean difference | 18.22078 | 18.22078 |
| | Std. Error Difference | 3.7888 | 3.76909 |
| | 95% Lower Confidence Interval of The Difference | 10.65607 | 10.69365 |
| | Upper | 25.78549 | 25.74791 |

The researchers calculated the result of post-test from both experimental and control groups using the independent sample t-test to test the hypothesis. Based on the result in Table 3, it was found that the value of sig. (2-tailed) was 0.00 and it was lower than 0.05. While, the value of t-obtained was 4.809 which was higher

than t-Table critical value of 1.996 and the degree of freedom was 66. It claims that Ha is accepted while Ho is rejected. It claims that Ha is accepted while Ho is rejected. In other words, there was any significant improvement on students' writing skill between students who used paragraph frame and those who used sentence combining strategies.

The Result of Paired Sample T-Test

TABLE 4. The Result Of Paired Sample T-Test In Experimental Group

| Pair 1 | | | Pretest EXP-Post. EXP | |
|--------------------|---|-------|-----------------------|-----------|
| PAIRED DIFFERENCES | Mean | | -4.24242E1 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 14.63735 | |
| | Std. Error Mean | | 2.54803 | |
| | 95% Confidence Interval of The Difference | Lower | | -47.61442 |
| | | Upper | | -37.23407 |
| | T | | -16.650 | |
| | Df | | 32 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | |

Paired sample t-test was used to compare the results between pretest and post-test for both experimental and control groups. Based on Table 4, the result of paired sample t-test between pretest and post-test score for experimental

group shows the value of significant (2-tailed) was 0.00 lower than 0.05.

TABLE 5. The Result of Paired Sample T-Test In Control Group

| Pair 1 | | Pre.C-Post. C |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| PAIRED DIFFERENCES | Mean | -2.13571E1 |
| | Std. Deviation | 15.86180 |
| | Std. Error Mean | 2.68113 |

| Pair 1 | | | Pre.C-Post. C |
|--------------------|---|-------|---------------|
| PAIRED DIFFERENCES | 95% Confidence Interval Of the Difference | Lower | -26.80586 |
| | | Upper | -15.90842 |
| | T | | -7.966 |
| | Df | | 34 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | | | .000 |

Based on Table 5, the result of paired sample t-test between pretest and post-test score for control group shows the value of significant (2-tailed) was 0.00 lower than 0.05.

Based on the result in Table 4 and 5, the researcher concluded that the students in both groups improved their score in post-test, but the scores which were achieved by students in experimental group was higher than control group. The result of mean score in post-test was 81.36 for experimental group and 63.14 for control group.

The students who taught with paragraph frame and sentence combining strategies showed their progress in explaining their idea on their writing. Before they received any treatments, they wrote their idea randomly without considering the organization, capitalization, punctuation and other writing components. Nevertheless, after the researcher gave the treatment, they could write more critically than before. Their writing could be more organized and readable. Post test of both group showed that the improving score between two groups. In spite of that, the comparison of pretest and post-test of both groups indicated the same progress as well. Although, both of experimental and control group were increased on scores, but experimental group had the higher scores than control group. The mean score of experimental group was 81.36, meanwhile control group was 63.14.

The researchers used independent and paired sample t-test to calculate the scores in order to find out whether or not there was any significant improvement on students'

writing skill between students who used paragraph frame and those who used sentence combining strategies. It shows that the value of sig. (2-tailed) was 0.00 and it was lower than 0.05 as the significant level. While, the value of t- obtained was 4.809 which was higher than t-Table critical value of 1.996 and the degree of freedom was 66.

CONCLUSION

The similar progress showed by the experimental and control group through the result of the writing test. The post-test of both groups had the improvement in aspects of idea, organization, capitalization and punctuation. Their writing had clear meaning and it could be more interesting to read than before. Both of the students in experimental and control groups wrote about the physical aspect and described their classroom. Nevertheless, the experimental group had the higher scores than the control group.

The result of the mean score in post-test in experimental group was 81.36, meanwhile control group was 63.14. Based on the comparison between experimental and control

groups, the researcher can conclude that the students in experimental group had a higher improvement than control group through score that had been calculated by the researcher. The researcher used independent and paired sample t-test to calculate the scores. The result shows that the value of sig. (2-tailed) was 0.00 and it was lower than 0.05 as the significant level. While, the value of t-obtained was 4.809 which was higher than t-table critical value of 1.996 and the degree of freedom was 66. Researcher can conclude that H_a is accepted while H_o is rejected. In other words, there was any significant improvement on students' writing skill between students who used paragraph frame and those who used sentence combining strategies.

The suggestions are given to the teachers of English, students and researcher as follow:

1. For the Students

Students should be given the interesting activities or strategies which help them to more explore their abilities. In spite of that, researcher expects them to learn more in order to write a better writing piece.

2. For the Teachers

The researcher expects the teachers to explore and use the interesting topic and strategy to attract their students.

3. For the Researcher

Researcher is expected to learn and practice more in order to conduct a better study in the future.

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