

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEACHING WRITING USING WORD GAMES; THE CASE STUDY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN SEMARANG, CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

This was a descriptive qualitative study which was done in 2017 at junior high schools in Semarang Central Java, Indonesia. This study focused on the teachers' perception and teaching writing using word games. According to Chastain (1988) "writing is a basic communication skill and a unique tool in the process of second language learning" (p.244). The problem of this study was what are the teachers' perception towards the word games used in enhancing the students' writing skill? The sample of the research were 6 junior high schools' students in Semarang central java, Indonesia. They were students of grade eighth at SMP N 8, SMPN 39, SMPN 36, SMP Institut Indonesia, SMP PGRI Semarang, and SMP Theresiana Semarang. A structured interview was kindly used as the instrument in collecting the data. The findings are; 1) Teaching writing is not easy and need to be creative to make students understand since they have to master the way hoe to organize a good paragraph or text. 2) Usually they do not apply any games in teaching writing since they got the material for granted. 3) Most of the teachers have known what word game is. Even they have applied it sometimes in speaking and vocabulary. 4) Teachers rarely do teaching English using word games by purpose. Especially teaching writing, teachers do not really pay attention on the current skill. 5) Even though some teachers do not really understand the way to use word games in the case of implementation but then, they are aware that students need a motivation in a space of teaching and learning process during filling the material. 6) Teachers like teaching writing using word games because word games can help them to motivate students in following the questions since the love playing while learning in the classroom. 7) teachers can motivate students to follow the lesson with fun, teachers easily follow the word games because it is equipped by the clear instructions, there are various word games which are related to teaching skills, word games are easily made/created by teachers based on the need of the lesson plan, word games are the simplest media to teach and long life. 8) word games which applicable to teach writing using word games are entitled broken sentence, mixed story, arranging sentence in a story, and getting occupation. The conclusions are The teachers' perceptions towards teaching writing using word games are; teachers feel happy and fun during teaching writing using word games, teachers need more energy and time to maintain the word games, teachers should focus on the goal of writing mastery not the game itself, teachers should be creative in creating and organizing the word games, and teachers believe that word games are able to motivate students in following the lesson.

Key words: *teachers' perception, teaching writing, word games*

Introduction

Based on the curriculum of 2013, teacher and students feel difficult to get involve in the process of teaching and learning English in the classroom since there is no specific skill goal that will be reached permanently. This curriculum brings the students considered to be active in their having experience while learning English but then actually there is no certain skill that is focused to gain during the process. The dominant priority of learning process is giving students with the many various texts in which make students understand in specifying and classifying the text types and generic structures. Teachers feel that by giving the comprehending skill on understanding and applying text types so that students are master English. Even though not all teachers and students do not agree with the concept of 2013 curriculum, on the other hand, this curriculum also give something benefits like; making students active in reacting and exploring their experience to create and observe within the process of teaching and learning English. A good English learner needs to master the Five English language skills such; listening, speaking, reading, writing and reviewing. Teacher believes that those five language skill requires some efforts to get them good like; in every unit of teaching session there is a specific subtitle about certain skill that will be arrowed. Usually students feel difficult in two of these skills namely speaking and writing. Those productive skills need more sacrificing to get the prefect comprehending ability in English since they should have more practices out of class.

Teaching writing is not easy as we think especially at junior high school grade. Most of students feel that writing English is very difficult seen from the way the write some exposition and descriptive writing. According to Chastain (1988) "writing is a basic communication skill and a unique tool in the process of second language learning" (p.244). To equip students with the English skill teacher needs to maintain and give plus the material they teach in the classroom. The material should represent the life skill that the students need in order to cope the business and office matter. Then, the additional material like; giving some English components to strengthen their communication skill is needed to make it perfect students in gaining the spoken and written communication.

The writers think that teaching vocabulary using word games is an urgent needed media to make students' English skill elevated high in the short time ahead. Since Underscoring the

importance of vocabulary acquisition, Schmitt (2000) emphasizes that “lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language” p. 55). There is no a good writing if there is no a good vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use and, conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. That is why based on the alteration above all, we argue and want to describe that students’ writing skill can be goaled if teachers can implement the good vocabulary teaching media like word games especially for junior high school level.

Research Problems

The writers formulate one problem that should be covered to get the recent issues in teaching writing especially for junior high school in Semarang, they are following

1. What are teachers’ perception towards teaching writing using word games?

Related Literature

Then the previous study is written in 2017 by ratna kusumawardhani, maria yosephin and dias andris susanto entitled teachers’ reflections about vocabulary teaching at junior high schools in semarang, central java. Corson (1997) tells us that “words are only fully learned when they are available for active use” (p. 699). The objectives of this study are to find out the teachers’ perspectives about the vocabulary teaching in their classroom, and to find out the teachers’ innovative in teaching vocabulary. The research design used was descriptive qualitative with 7 teachers from public and private junior high schools in Semarang. Writers used structured interview and FGD/Focus Group Discussion in gathering the data. Then, this research can give the findings as follows; firstly, teachers feel that vocabulary teaching is very important in mastering English since students can speak and write more if they have more vocabulary, secondly, teaching vocabulary should be integrated in the lessons, it means that when teachers teach any skills of English, vocabulary should be inserted as part of the lesson, thirdly, technique of teaching vocabulary most of teachers used the traditional technique that is finding the difficult

words, repeat after me, question and answer in reading, but there is still less teachers used films, and pictures to develop students' vocabulary, fourth, the media used in teaching vocabulary most of teacher do not maximize the internet or web, they frequently ask their students to look up the internet when they give them take home assignments, but only small teachers use the *Medsos*/social media, what's up, line, etc. The conclusion that can be delivered is that English teachers in Semarang especially junior high schools mostly have not implemented the alternative media in teaching vocabulary, they prefer having the conventional technique yet they lack of information and sources. Finally, writers can give some suggestions like; teachers should upgrade their teaching methodology especially in teaching vocabulary, teachers should encourage themselves in using the technology to develop their knowledge in varying their technique in teaching vocabulary.

Not only that, teachers need to have a reflective program in order to make his/her teaching way looks on the right tract. Reflective teaching is a contemporary and highly approved method that teachers use to provide self-awareness in their professional development especially in the way teacher organize their material and classroom. The term reflective practice, coined by Schon (1987), focuses on the ways people think about their experiences and formulate responses as the experiences happen. It is suggested for all teachers who love teaching in the classroom to use and follow the reflective program/practice to know the real strength and weaknesses of our ability in teaching and organizing the learners.

The reason for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, language style, and most importantly writing as a skill in its own right (Harmer, 1998). Reinforcement is some students acquire languages in a purely oral way, but most of us benefit greatly from seeing the language written down. Language development, it seems that the actual process of writing (rather like the process of speaking) helps us to learn as we go along. Learning style is some students are fantastically quick at picking up language just by looking and listening. The last is writing as a skill, by far the most important reason for teaching writing is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening, and reading. Students need to know how to write letters, how to put written reports together, how to reply to advertisements and increasingly, how to write using electronic media.

Research Methodology

The design of the study was a qualitative descriptive study. In case of junior high schools in Semarang, Central Java Indonesia. According to Cohen (2007: 462), Qualitative itself is research that was done for the purpose of understanding social phenomena, social being used in a broad sense. In qualitative, theory would be function as a foundation to understand socio context largely and intensively. The qualitative researcher should do grounded research that was to find out the theory based on the collection data from field. According to Lodico (2006: 139), total sampling or called census sampling is nonrandom sampling technique that surveys entire population and may be used when the realistic population is not too large. It means that the sample taken is the whole of population.

In this research, the sample were the student and the teachers in SMP Negeri 8 Semarang, SMP Negeri 27 Semarang, SMP Negeri 29 Semarang, SMP Theresiana, SMP 01 PGRI Semarang, and MTS Negeri 01 Semarang. The instruments of the study that have be applied in this research are structured interview. Relating to the theory of Lincon and Guba in Cohen (2007:354) about the steps in interviewing to collect data in qualitative research, the researchers delivered 10 questions to the interviewees (the teachers). These items of questions were delivered to find out the beginning why using word games until the advantages of using it.

Research Findings

Teachers' perception towards teaching writing using word games.

To get this result of research, we equipped our data with the proper instruments namely structured interview which was dig up more information and notes from the teachers and students as well. This is a result of the data we got during we did interviewing beyond the formal and firm situation. Through this interview sessions we can explain that;

- a) Teaching writing is not easy and need to be creative to make students understand since they have to master the way hoe to organize a good paragraph or text. In organizing the paragraph in a text, students have to know some theoretical frameworks about tenses, punctuation, grammar, spelling, etc. when teachers teach writing they should master all the elements of building a good writing including some extend that there should be connected one paragraph to another.

- b) Usually they do not apply any games in teaching writing since they got the material for granted. The government provide teacher and students with the book for teacher and students as well. By having these books, they might use it any topic lesson they need. For example; when teacher wants to teach them written procedure, they have to teach not only the grammar and vocabulary but also the generic structure and linguistics features, which need more concentration. Therefore, I can say that they rarely use any games otherwise using the conventional technique.
- c) Most of the teachers have known what word game is. Even they have applied it sometimes in speaking and vocabulary. Most of teachers assume that word game is a game to encourage teaching vocabulary/word. Some others mention that word game is a technique used to teach English using a game to make students fun and happy. Teachers don't care about the techniques in teaching English so far because the lesson hours that they have is very limited since then they focus on the way how finish the all material during per semester quickly.
- d) Teachers rarely do teaching English using word games by purpose. Especially teaching writing, teachers do not really pay attention on the current skill. When teacher teach in the afternoon they plan that they have to arouse the students' motivation through the game and it is word game. In teaching writing, teachers used a simple word game like; guessing a picture story, arranging the jumble paragraph, making a text of procedure, etc.
- e) Even though some teachers do not really understand the way to use word games in the case of implementation but then, they are aware that students need a motivation in a space of teaching and learning process during filling the material. In fact, teachers use only special and easiest word games to teach speaking, vocabulary and spelling or pronunciation. During the observation, the researchers saw that mostly students felt happy in joining the writing class using word games. In this case, teachers taught writing the one's occupation towards the pictures given on the board. Teachers wanted to give some elaboration about the use of nouns and adjectives in the sentences in a paragraph. Supporting by pictures, students fell happy and fun in writing their

acknowledgement and ideas in line with the pictures then they wrote it into a good paragraph.

- f) Teachers like teaching writing using word games because word games can help them to motivate students in following the questions since the love playing while learning in the classroom. By having a game like word games, teachers feel easy to shape the atmosphere of the class and teachers can get the goal of the lesson target. The observers mostly agree that using word games in teaching writing make teachers feel enjoy and fun to make students understand and fun.
- g) The advantages of teaching writing using word games are these following; teachers can motivate students to follow the lesson with fun, teachers easily follow the word games because it is equipped by the clear instructions, there are various word games which are related to teaching skills, word games are easily made/created by teachers based on the need of the lesson plan, word games are the simplest media to teach and long life, students get easily understand the components of writing sessions due to support using pictures, teachers believe that teaching writing will be easy to be taught if they use word games because if students have a lots of language components then usually students can compose a good writing.
- h) The disadvantages of teaching writing using word games are; teachers felt difficult in creating their own word games and need more time, teachers sometimes hard to find the ideas of word games that will be taught in the classroom, teaching writing using word games need more hours in finishing per session, teachers have to have more energy since they have to go around to maintain the games, word games need a creative touch, teaching writing using word games should be taught not in a day due to having correction on students' writing result.
- i) the difficult things in applying word games to teach writing like; the composition of the group is not proper as the instructions, the pictures media are not well provided, only the active students will be more active, teachers feel tired due to going around to maintain the game.
- j) word games which applicable to teach writing using word games are entitled broken sentence, mixed story, arranging sentence in a story, and getting occupation.

Suggestions

Here the researchers give some suggestion dealing with the result of the research that will have impacts to the scope of English teachers especially at junior high schools in Semarang.

1. To the English teachers; they need to read this research report in order to enhance their teaching skill especially in teaching writing. Then they can get more information about the way how to conduct a good classroom management using word games. Finally, they can adopt some word games that are in case proper to their English classroom.
2. To the other researchers; this research report is a very fruitful to elevate them in order to get more knowledge in teaching and education in English. They can absorb some methodological approach and the instruments used in qualitative study. Moreover, this research can be a trace for them in having previous studies for their similar research.

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