

The Use of Attribute Charts Strategy to Improve Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Texts in Class VII SMP Negeri 1 Bangun Purba

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ABSTRACT

Writing is a way of expressing ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings and it becomes one of the skills that must be achieved by the seventh grade students. Producing a variety of short functional texts such as descriptive text raises the difficulty because of the different writing conventions including language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and spelling between Indonesian and English. The use of Attribute Charts strategy is the way to find out the effective strategy to help the students in writing the correct adjectives in order to improve the students' skills in descriptive writing. There are two purposes of this study. The first is to explain and describe the use of Attribute Charts as the strategy in teaching writing descriptive text to the grade VII of State Junior High School. The second is to find out how well the use of Attribute Charts as an alternative strategy in teaching writing descriptive text that gives a valuable contribution to the development of teaching writing. The subject of this research is 30 students of VII class of Junior SMP N 1 Bangun Purba in academic year 2022/2023. In order to achieve the purposes of the study, I designed an action research that was carried out through cycle 1 and cycle 2. I used observation, interview, and test as the instruments in collecting the data. The first meeting was used for conducting the pre-test. The second and third meetings were used to conduct cycle 1 and cycle 1 test, the fourth meeting was used to conduct cycle 2, and the last meeting was used to hold post-test. Based on the research, the students' progress during the teaching learning activity by using Attribute Charts is good. The writing aspects such aspects as organization, content, grammar, style in expressing ideas, and punctuation are improve in each cycle. It is realized by the significant result of the pre-test that is low (48.8), and the post-test which is high (70.1). Based on the result above, the Attribute Charts strategy can be one of effective strategies to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text. This study suggests the teachers to use Attribute Charts as the strategy in teaching writing, especially in writing descriptive text.

Keywords: : *Attribute Chart, Writing Descriptive Text*

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English becomes one of compulsory subjects that is taught in Junior High Schools. English is considered as one important foreign language that should be acquired by Indonesians for many reasons, such as for education.

Indonesia students as English Foreign Learners use English as a way of communication both spoken and written. Communication is defined as conveying ideas, argument, and feeling in order to realize the discourse ability, BSNP (2007:15). Discourse abilities at formal school for Junior High School students in learning English as foreign language are realized in the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in which the students have to able to produce written text

and spoken text.. Therefore, English in junior high school is designed to develop those four language skills.

One of the four language skills that must be mastered by the students is writing. Producing a variety of short functional text, monologue, and essay is one of writing skills that must be achieved by the Junior High School students, and one of text must be mastered is descriptive, BSNP (2007:16).

Meyers (2005:3) states that writing is a representation of language through a text using signs or symbols. It is a way of expressing ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings through writing. In addition, to express the ideas, students found the different writing conventions including language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and spelling between in Indonesian and English.

Different convention in using language components raises the difficulty for the students to use adjective in writing descriptive text. Determining the appropriate adjective to describe people or things is one of the difficulties which is faced by students in writing descriptive text. It proves on the preliminary research with the English teacher each class" potentials of the students. The teacher explainsthat the students" writing skills is about intermediate to the lower. The students cannot produce the descriptive text in good ordering of sentences.

The students" ability in writing the correct adjective order also become one of the reasons to find out whether the use of Attribute Charts Strategy is helpful or not. The use of Attribute Charts is a way to find the effective strategy to help the students in determining the appropriate adjective and furthermore to help the students writing the descriptive text in good ordering of sentences.

METHOD

Berdasarkan kurikulum pendidikan dasar yang tertera pada GBPP tahun 2004 menyebutkan bahwa bahan kajian inti Bahasa Inggris dasar pada kelas VII semester I mencakup bahasan menyebutkan istilah-istilah keluarga dengan benar dan bercakapcakap dengan kalimat sederhana tentang keluarga.

Guna mewujudkan hasil belajar yang optimal, maka perlu strategi belajar yang efektif dan efisien serta dapat menumbuhkan motivasi belajar dan kreativitas siswa serta menanamkan rasa tanggung jawab terhadap apa yang dipelajari. Dalam penelitian ini akan menggunakan rancangan strategi belajar kelompok untuk mengetahui pengaruhnya terhadap hasil belajar bahasa Inggris siswa kelas VII SMP Eka Tjipta Naga Sakti Kab. Kampar.

Rancangan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan rancangan penelitian tindakan (*action research*). Dengan perkataan lain penerapan penelitian tindakan di dalam kelas diharapkan mampu mendorong guru untuk memiliki kesadaran diri melakukan refleksi dan kritik diri terhadap aktivitas

pembelajaran. Penelitian tindakan merupakan proses daur ulang, mulai tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan tindakan dan pemantauan, refleksi yang mungkin diikuti dengan perencanaan ulang (Waseso, 1994).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

I conducted a pre - test on the 8th November 2022. There were two kinds of pretest; close test and guided writing test. Time allotment that was given to the students was around thirty minutes to complete each pre-test. I arranged the sitting position based on the student's number. The aim of arranging the students' sitting position was to make sure that the students could not cheat with others.

The first pre-test was close test, there were five texts and the students should fill the blank spaces by the correct adjectives that researcher provided. The first three texts were set by the requirement of writing the appropriate adjectives. There were twenty four items that students should complete. In the fourth text, there were eight items that students would meet the rules of writing the correct comparative or superlative forms of the adjectives. The fifth text required the students to write the correct adjective order in series.

After the first half pre-test section, the students had to take the second pretest in form of guided writing test. The students should write a short descriptive text by the provided theme from me. The aim of guided writing test was to assess how far the students' ability in writing descriptive text by their own words.

Conducting Cycle 1

Cycle 1 was conducted on 12th up to 15th November 2013. In cycle 1, I had four meetings during the two weeks. There were four stages that I conducted in cycle 1. It was planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data which were prepared at stage planning was: (1) preparing learning material, (2) preparing teaching planning, and (3) preparing learning medium. I also conducted classroom interview with the classroom teacher. I asked the questions about the attitude and motivation of the students during learning activities.

Before conducting the acting, I conducted the pre-test in order to assess the initial students' achievement in writing descriptive text. The objective of the conducting cycle 1 was to accustom the students with linguistic competence. The linguistic competence components such as wrote the words and collocation appropriately, wrote the appropriate adjective, wrote the correct adjective order, wrote the correct phrase structure, used the modifiers would be given at this cycle.

In order to achieve the linguistic competence that were stated in cycle 1, I would conduct some activities based on the result of the cloze test on pre-test.

Conducting Cycle 2

Cycle 2 was conducted on 19th up to 22nd November 2022. In cycle 2, I had four meetings during the two weeks. There were four stages that researcher conducted in cycle 1. It was planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data that was prepared on stage planning was: (1) preparing learning material, (2) preparing teaching planing, and (3) preparing learning medium. In cycle 2, I would concern with the actional competence at which the students would get the explanation about descriptive text as whole.

Table 4.2. Writing skills that must be achived in cycle 2

Aspect of good writing	Achieved
Content / idea	
- Has excellent support - Is interesting to read - Has unity and completeness	
Organization	
 - Has topic sentence with clear controlling idea - Has supporting sentences - Has concluding sentence - Has coherence and cohesion	
Grammar / structure	
Demonstrate control of basic grammar (eg. Tenses, verb, forms, noun forms, preposition, articles)	
Word choice / word form	
Demonstrate sophistication choice of vocabulary items	
- Has correct idiomatic use of vocabulary - Has correct form word	
Mechanics	
Demonstrates good control over use of capital letters, periods, commas, and semicolons.	

Before conducting the acting, I analyzed the result of the students' writing in previous cycle. The objective of conducting cycle 2 was to accustom the students with the actional competence, at which defined as competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent. The conceptualization of actional competence in writing was mainly about rhetorical competence. At the end of the study, the students were expected able to write the descriptive text at the semantic level, it's mainly concerned with the ways in which such things as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions are organized within the whole text. I would concern with such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns

Conducting Post-test

I conducted post-test on the 26th November 2022. In the post- test the students did the responsive writing, they had to write descriptive text. Time allotment that was given to the students was around thirty minutes. The aim of post-test was to assess the final achievement of students' ability in writing descriptive text.

At post-test I assessed the discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and the use of spatial ordering. In other words, they had written the sentences that were ordered according to space. In addition, the post – test was also conducted to assess the actional competences.

One of the primary benefits of using Attribute Charts strategy was that it assisted the learner. The basic writing skill of the students could be improved using that strategy, in which the students began with exploring ideas in order to make the students understand the use of adjective and other language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. From the research, the conclusion could be deduced from several aspects, namely students' result, students' individual observation sheet by teacher, students' interview sheet and students' direct observation by teacher's notes.

Conducting Interview of students' writing

The purpose of conducting an interview of students' writing was to measure the validity of the results of the post-test. The interviewee was Rosmanidar, English teacher of SMP N 1 Bangun Purba in academic year 2022/2024.

In the post- test, I concluded that the students' writing products had achieved the semantic level. As mentioned in the previous chapter, semantic level dealt with the requirements such aspects as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions were organized within the whole text.

Semantic level took into account such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns. The purpose of conducting interview of students' writing was to make a deal with the researcher's conclusion that stated that students' writing result had achieved the semantic level.

The writing aspects that assess by the interviewee were organization, content, grammar, style in expressing ideas, and punctuation. Each criterion was graded from the range of one (worst) to five (best), with each grade representing how well the students did their writing. In the end of interview, I had to calculate the total number of students' score and find out the average of the students result using the same formula.

Result of Interview of Students' Writing

At post-test I assessed the discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and used spatial ordering. In other words, they had sentences that were ordered according to space. In addition, the post – test was conducted to assess the actional competence.

From the data, the interviewee concluded that the students' writing products had achieved the semantic level. Semantic level dealt with the requirements such aspects as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions were organized within the whole text.

The discourse competence of the students, at which they could produce the descriptive text with good coherence, or good ordering of sentences, and used spatial ordering were achieved by the average of the students' result (71.5). In other words, they had sentences that were ordered according to space.

Table 4.8. Interview result of students's writing

students' code	Aspects					TOTAL SCORE
	G	C	O	M	S	
S-1	3	3	3	2	3	56.0
S-2	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-3	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-4	3	3	4	4	4	72.0
S-5	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-6	5	4	5	4	5	92.0
S-7	3	3	3	4	3	64.0
S-8	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-9	2	3	3	2	3	52.0
S-10	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-11	5	4	4	5	5	92.0
S-12	3	3	2	2	2	48.0
S-13	3	2	4	4	2	60.0
S-14	3	3	2	4	2	56.0
S-15	4	2	2	4	2	56.0
S-16	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-17	2	3	3	4	4	64.0
S-18	5	5	5	5	4	96.0
S-19	3	3	3	3	2	56.0
S-20	4	4	4	4	4	80.0
S-21	4	5	5	4	4	88.0
S-22	3	4	3	3	3	64.0
S-23	3	4	3	2	2	56.0
S-24	4	5	5	5	5	96.0
S-25	3	3	2	2	2	48.0
S-26	3	3	4	4	4	72.0

S-27	5	5	5	5	4	96.0
S-28	5	4	3	2	2	64.0
S-29	3	3	3	3	3	60.0
S-30	3	4	4	4	4	76.0

The conclusion that was made by the interviewee was in line with the conclusion that I had made. The students had written the descriptive text in the semantic level. This took into account such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns.

Analysis on students' individual Observation

The purpose of conducting an observation was to measure the students' motivation during research. The observer was Rosmanidar, in academic year 2013/2014.

The initial data that researcher got from the classroom teacher, Mrs.Siti Chalimah was used as the base data of students' learning motivation. Then, at cycle 1 and cycle 2, I will be assisted by an observer, Sri Lestari. The observation sheet for each observer was in the same form, it was rubric form. The processes observed were responding, willingness, activeness, contribution and enthusiasm in doing the assignments and tasks in the class.

To help the observer in collecting the data, I gave a sticker for each students and they had to stick it on their uniform. The given number was same with the students' serial number. From the notes that made by the observer, I got that the enthusiastic of the students in learning writing by using Attribute Chart was good. The observer, Srilestari, gave me the result of the observation which the students actually could improve their own skill in writing by using attribute chart. In addition, the use of Attribute Chart also made the students having the sense of deliberation when they had to work in group.

Table 4.9. Result of the Observation during cycle 1 and cycle 2

Students' code	Aspects				
	Respect	Curiosity	Brave	Confidence	Communicative
S-1	A	A	A	A	A
S-2	B	B	B	B	B
S-3	A	B	B	B	A
S-4	A	B	B	B	B
S-5	A	B	B	B	A
S-6	A	A	A	A	A
S-7	A	B	B	B	A

S-8	A	B	B	B	B
S-9	A	A	A	A	A
S-10	A	A	B	B	A
S-11	A	B	B	B	B
S-12	B	A	A	A	A
S-13	A	A	A	A	A
S-14	B	B	B	B	B
S-15	B	B	A	A	A
S-16	A	A	A	A	A
S-17	B	B	B	A	A
S-18	B	B	B	B	B
S-19	A	A	A	A	B
S-20	B	B	B	A	A
S-21	B	B	A	A	A
S-22	B	B	A	A	A
S-23	B	B	B	A	A
S-24	A	A	A	B	B
S-25	A	A	A	A	A
S-26	B	B	A	B	A
S-27	B	A	B	A	A
S-28	B	B	A	B	B
S-29	A	B	B	A	A
S-30	A	A	A	A	A

Analysis on the Result of the Classroom Teacher Interview

This interview was intended to find out how the classroom teacher thought about the classroom that was taught using attribute charts in descriptive writing. The teacher who was assigned for this interview was Mrs. Siti Chalimah. She was being the observer that assessed me during the learning process. I gave the lesson plan and the interview sheet in the form of rubric. At the end of answering the rubric, the classroom teacher could write the conclusion and suggestions for me.

The interview was addressed to the English teacher. The purpose of this interview was to get the description of the teaching learning process by using the Attribute Chart. After assessing the lesson plan, the classroom teacher answered the questions in the given rubric. At the end of answering the rubric, the classroom teacher could wrote the conclusion and suggestions for the researcher. The conclusions were; (1) the use of Attribute Charts in teaching descriptive writing was helpful for the students in improving the students' writing abilities. The students could use the appropriate adjectives to describe the object of description were achieved. (2) Attribute Charts used as a strategy during the teaching writing descriptive process to the seventh grade students had given the significant improvement for the students. It could be seen in the final achievement of the students in which they could produce the better descriptive text compared with their initial writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the analysis in the previous chapter, I conclude that the students' progress during the teaching learning activity by teaching descriptive text is improved. It is supported by the average of the students' result of the pretest (48.8) and that of the post-test (77.1). The main factor affected this success is the use of attribute chart strategy and the given material.

The use of attribute charts assists the students to improve the initial writing skill in determining the appropriate adjectives. Based on the cycle 1 test, the students have achieved the skills of; writing the collocation appropriately, writing the correct phrase structure, achieving the requirement of writing the correct comparative or superlative forms of the adjective, and achieving the requirement in writing the correct adjectives order in series.

The semantic level has achieved by the students, at which its level mainly concerned with the ways in which such things as ideas, information, issues, opinions, events, and emotions were organized within the whole text. This took into account such aspects as patterns of causality, ordering of ideas, patterns of time sequence, cohesion and point of view. The semantic level was realized through overall text structures and particular grammatical patterns.

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