

The effectiveness of think aloud strategy to improve student's writing simple present tense on descriptive text

Dian Rismayanti¹, Dila Charisma², Ikariya Sugesti³

English Language Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Cirebon, Indonesia

Correspondence

ikariya.sugesti@umc.ac.id

Abstract

This research aims to improve student grades and student activity in learning simple present tense in the descriptive text by using think aloud strategy and motivate students to more quickly and easily learn simple present tense in the descriptive text. SMPN 1 MUNDU Cirebon was chosen as the place for this research. There are 2 classes namely control class and experimental class consisting of 20 students in each class who participated in this study. Data were collected using Triangulation techniques. Triangulation can be defined as the use of two or more data collection methods in this study. The purpose of triangulation is to increase the credibility and validity of findings. In addition, the authors collected data using Pre-test, post-test and questionnaire. This study found that in the Control class the high score was 26%, Medium 42% and the low score 32% and in this Experimental class the researcher used think aloud strategy and produced the high score of 35%, Medium 44% and the Low score 21%. In these values it can be simplified that applying think aloud strategy to simple present tense learning in the descriptive text can be understood and accepted by students. So the results of the learning value that is quite satisfying.

Keywords: Think aloud strategy: students writing: simple present tense: descriptive text

INTRODUCTION

There are four skills in English that people have to master, they are, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills will be used to create discourse in their lives. The function of discourse in their life is the function of discourse in their lives is to be able to communicate and interact properly and correctly (Fitrijanti, 1992)

Looking at the English curriculum of Junior High School, that is the first thing to be taught, is to identify the simple form of sentences in the writing (or reading) text. That simple forms are called Simple Present Tense. It is one of the basic tenses that should be mastered by the students since it dominantly use in daily life. Beside that, in identifying the text such as the descriptive text or the procedure text, the Simple Present Tense is also used. Simple Present Tense is one of tenses that is important to be mastered by the students. Wrong perception of Simple Present Tense will affect the students' ability in constructing or understanding Simple Present Tense sentences. Simple

present tense is tense denoting an action happening in this time. This tense is used to talk about things in general. We are not only thinking about now, but it is used to say something is true in general (Hinkel, 2002). Simple present tense is talk about (which is usually said and heard by them).

For examples taken from the lesson at the first year of Junior High School:

She is a beautiful girl Shinta is a beautiful girl

There are Pilot Tono and Nino are Pilot

From the four examples above, the researcher realize that the simple present tense are very important, but on the other hand simple present tense is as a problem often faced by students. Then, the other examples of the simple present tense given to the first year of Junior High School are about command and request Paterns, Such as; What are you doing? What is your name? Etc. To explain these sentence patterns the teacher should be capable of analyzing the structure and explaining the use of each in certain situation. "the trainee teacher has to learn to analyze structures which many of his students know better than he does." The effort to analyze the three sample present tense above should be based on the positive form. It means that the teacher has to be able to make clear the occupation of each word in sentences. In other words, each teacher of English must be clever enough to analyze sentences they are teaching.

In *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006* syllabus of junior and senior high schools curriculum require students to be able to write some kind of genre in writing. They are narrative, recount, descriptive, report, explanation, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, procedure, discussion, reviews, anecdote, spoof, and news items. Based on the above, the descriptive text was one genre that must be mastered by students in learning English. And theoretically, according to Evawina S (2010:7) descriptive paragraph was a paragraph vividly portrays a person, place, or thing in such a way that the reader can visualize the topic and enter into the writers's experience. In fact, not all students are able to write descriptive paragraph properly and in accordance with the existing elements in the descriptive text namely simple present tense. Moreover in the researcher experience, some students were confused in differentiating which subject used auxiliaries do and which ones used does. All problems above arose since the students did not understand the right rule of Simple Present Tense. Simple present tense was still difficult, they felt bored to study grammar, they did not understand what their teacher had taught about simple present tense and they did not get enough practice in using simple present tense. And the most significant reason of this was the way how the teacher taught Simple Present Tense influenced the students' motivation in learning. Based on the explanation above, the researcher offered a method that

had to be applied in the learning process of writing descriptive paragraph because Ransdell and Barbier (2002: 143) maintain that a good writing strategy can be trained, and it can improve writing performance. The various English methods, procedures and techniques are very essential to be applied by English teacher. English teacher has to know which method can be applied in any grade, class or situation. Think Aloud Strategy is applied by English teacher at the first year of SMP in teaching simple present tense. Naturally, simple present tense is easy. But in Reality, in learning simple present tense the student often make mistakes in arranging sentences. Beside that the students often get confused with what situation of those sentences occurs. They learn to think as authors, mathematicians, anthropologists, economists, historians, scientists, and artists. They develop into reflective, metacognitive, independent learners, an invaluable step in helping students understand that learning requires effort and often is difficult (Tinzmann et al. 1990) There are some reasons for making students practice writing. The think aloud approach is a provocative tool that is not only a teaching and learning strategy but is also used as a research tool (Fowler, 1997, Gresty and Cotton, 2004, Offredy and Meerabeau, 2005). Jonson (2002) is think aloud used to the problem solving, decision making, convincing, assumption analyzing, scientific discoveries. In McKeown and Gentilucci's (2007) work: "think-aloud is one of the "transactional strategies" because it is a joint process of teachers and students working together to construct understandings of text as they interact with it" Another illustration about think aloud is provided by Tinzmann in Teacher Vision website (2009), he says that: When students use think out loud with teachers and with one another, they gradually internalize this dialogue. It becomes their inner speech, the means by which they direct their own behaviors and problem-solving processes. Therefore, as students think aloud, they learn how to learn, and they develop into reflective, metacognitive, independent learners, an invaluable step in helping students understand that learning requires effort and often is difficult.

Writing is one of language skills that should be mastered by the students. It has been taught since Primary school to senior high schools. Moreover, it has also been taught at play group students, although they only study to write and to pronounce a single word. It shows that this aspect is very fundamental, where the students start writing words and then arrange them into sentences and the last making paragraphs (Ramli 2013:1). Therefore it can be inferred that writing is one of important skills that requires the use of correct grammatical words such as noun, the article, verb auxiliaries and preposition. They also have to express their feelings, share opinion or ideas by writing.

On the other hand, according to Widiastutik (2015 : 4), writing is important because it can show the learner's mind and idea. If the learners do not show their mind through speaking, they can use writing to express it. Based on Andrian (2015), the ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments. Writing instructors should take into account of both strategy of learning and language skill development when working with their students in learning.

According to Harmer (2007 : 112) writing is used as an aidememore or practice tool to help students practice and work with language they have been studying and writing is directed at developing the students' skill as a writers. According to Suwarni, (2016 : 2) writing is a skill for the students to express their ideas in written form that involves the mastery of all elements in the target language: as grammar, content, organization, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and mechanics. It needs a complex process. Consequently, the students may have difficulties to do the writing. It is also one of language skills that has taught from Primary school to senior high schools. Moreover, it has been taught at play group students, although they only study to write and to pronounce a single word. It shows that this aspect is very fundamental, where the students start writing words and then arrange them into sentences and the last making paragraphs.

METHOD

In this research, the writers applied an experimental research with a quantitative approach According to Creswell (2012: 20), research designs were "...the specific procedure involved in the research process: data collection, data analysis, and report writing". In other words, research design was the researchers' way to arrange the conditions for collecting the data, analyzing the data, and reporting the result of the research in written form. According to Creswell (2012: 294), "an experimental design was the traditional approach to conducting quantitative research". In other words, to accomplish a quantitative research, it was needed to used an experimental design. According to Balnaves (2001) research designs are guidelines how this research was built and carried out. Based on Creswell (2012: 293) Research designs can be used to collected and analyzed. Based on the above theory, researchers obtain valid data based on answers to research problems. An experimental research involved two groups: experimental group and control group. The experimental group and control group were the first grade students of junior high school. An experimental group received think aloud strategy treatment while control group received a group discussion treatment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data taken from test and questionnaire, think aloud strategy is very effective in the learning process of simple present tense based on descriptive text. This can be proven in the results of research that can be in the study. That the result in the control class the pre-test questions there were 5 students who received high score, 7 students who received medium score and 8 students who received low score. In the Post-test questions, there were 8 students who received high score, 5 students who received medium scores and 7 students who received low score and the result of the experimental class is the pre-test questions there were 12 students who received high score, 5 students who received medium score and 3 students who received low score. In the Post-test questions, there were 15 students who received high score, 3 students who received medium scores and 2 students who received low score so that the students' grade 7^f or an experimental class whose learning process applies think aloud strategy has very satisfying results. This think aloud strategy can also improve grammar, writing present tense on descriptive text for second semester students at SMPN 1 MUNDU Cirebon.

In research conducted by the writers at SMPN 1 Mundu, think aloud strategy is very effective in the learning process of simple present tense based on descriptive text. This can be proven in the results of research that can be in the study. That the students' grade 7^f or an experimental class whose learning process applies think aloud strategy has very satisfying results. This think aloud strategy can also improve grammar, writing present tense on descriptive text for second semester students at SMPN 1 MUNDU Cirebon.

Pre-test and post-test questions consisted of twenty questions and ten questionnaire questions for the control and experiment class. After collecting data, the frequency of each question was analyzed by classifying frequencies into percentages. The following was an analysis of data from the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire control class as well as the experimental class which has been divided into 3 categories, namely the largest, medium and smallest values. From the table 1.2.1, in the control class it could be explained that in the pre-test questions there were 5 students who received high score, 7 students who received medium score and 8 students who received low score. In the Post-test questions, there were 8 students who received high score, 5 students who received medium scores and 7 students who received low score.

Table 1. Table Pre - Test, Post - Test Control Class

NO	Control Class	High	Medium	Low	Total	Note

1.	Pre – Test	5	7	8	20	
2.	Post – Test	8	5	7	20	

In this column it can be interpreted that in the acquisition of pre-test questions students who get high score results there are 5 students, 7 students get medium score, and 8 students get low score. Then in the post test questions, there were 8 students got high score, 5 students got medium score and 7 students got low score.

From the diagram 1 it could be explained that the control class was still lacking in understanding and placing to be and auxiliary properly.

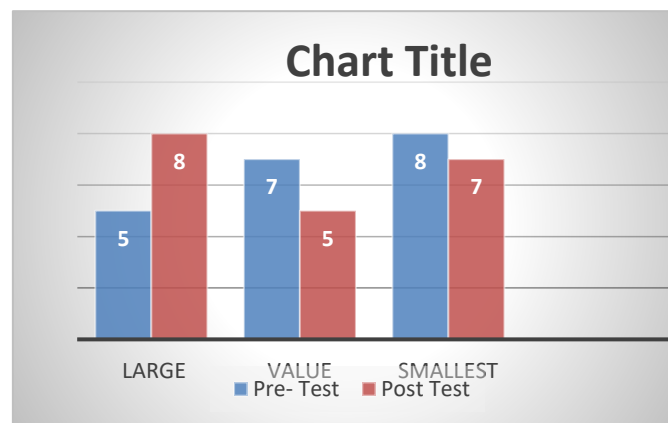


Diagram 1 Diagram Pre - Test, Post – Test Control Class

In this diagram it can be interpreted that the acquisition of grades in the pre-test questions of students who get big results there are 5 students, 7 students get medium results, and 8 students get small results. Then in the post test questions, there were 8 students got high grades, 5 students got medium grades and 7 students got small grades.

From the table 2, in the Experimental class it could be explained that in the pre-test questions there were 12 students who received high score, 5 students who received medium score and 3 students who received low score. in the Post-test questions, there were 15 students who received high score, 3 students who received medium scores and 2 students who received low score.

Table 2. Table Pre - Test, Post – Test Experimental Class

NO	Control	High	Medium	Low	Total	Note

	Class					
1.	Pre – Test	12	5	3	20	
2.	Post – Test	15	3	2	20	

In this table it can be interpreted that the acquisition of grades in the pre-test questions of students who get big results there are 12 students, 5 students get medium results, and 3 students get small results. Then in the post test questions there were 15 students got high grades, 3 students got medium grades and 2 students got small grades.

From the diagram 1.2.4 it could be explained that the Experimental class has an increase in these values by using think aloud strategy in simple present tense learning.

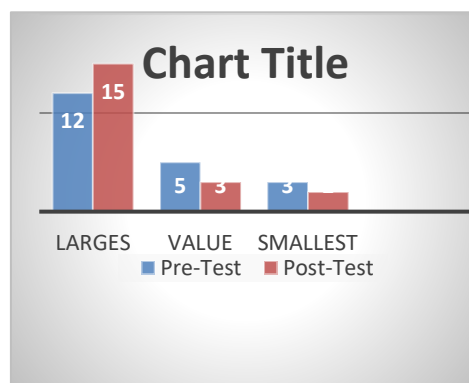


Diagram 2 Pre - Test, Post – Test Experimental Class

In this diagram it can be interpreted that the acquisition of grades in the pre-test questions of students who get big results there are 12 students, 5 students get medium results, and 3 students get small results. Then in the post test questions there were 15 students got high grades, 3 students got medium grades and 2 students got small grades.

Questionnaire experimental class

In this class the writers conducted research. in class 7F (Experimental class) has 20 students and the writers gives questionnaire questions consisting of 10 questions to students related to the think aloud strategy method applied to the simple present tense learning process in descriptive text, there are 5 choices students must answer, namely agree, strongly agree, doubt, disagree, and strongly disagree. In this questionnaire question we can conclude whether

students feel comfortable and more quickly understand learning after applying the method of thinking hard or not.

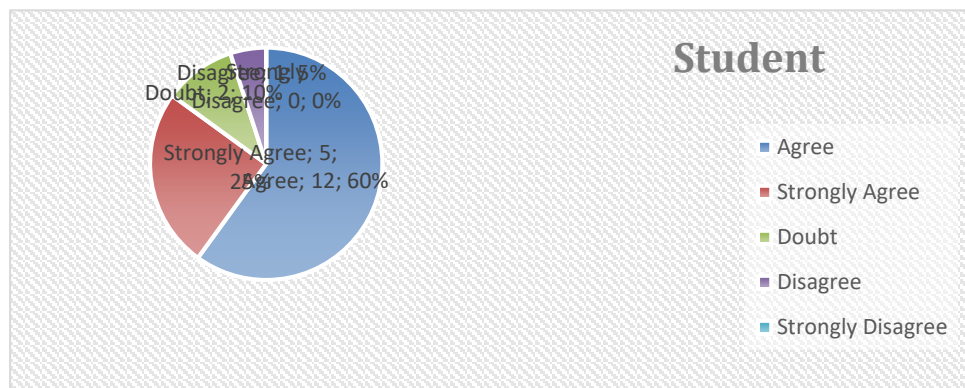


Diagram 3 Questioner

In this pie chart, it can be interpreted that the acquisition of a questionnaire of questions includes 10 questions to students related to the method of thinking strategies applied to the simple present tense learning process in descriptive text, there are 5 choices that must be answered by students namely, 12 students choose to agree, 5 students choose strongly agree, 2 students choose to doubt, 1 student choose to disagree and 0 students choose to strongly disagree. In this questionnaire question we can conclude that many students feel comfortable and more quickly understand learning after applying the method of thinking hard.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the research, this study can conclude into two based on the research question these are:

This think aloud strategy was very effective to be applied to simple present tense on descriptive text learning. It could be seen in the data analysis that subjects in the control class do not carefully fulfill the Simple Past Tense questions in the questions given so that many students got medium and small results. The following was the percentage of results obtained by the control class with the high score of 26%, Medium 42% and the low score 32%. In contrast to the experimental class that used think aloud strategy that made students' grades superior to the grades obtained by classroom control. The following are the results of the Experimental class that used. Think Aloud strategy in the learning

process. The highest score was 35%, medium was 44% and the low score was 21%. It could be concluded in the results of the analysis in the experimental class that used think aloud strategy made student grades superior to the control class in these values, it could be concluded that used Think Aloud Strategy to improve student's writing simple present tense on descriptive text could be applied and made it easier for students to understand and motivate students to learn simple present tense on descriptive text with satisfactory learning value results.

Based on the research conclusions several suggestions relating to the results of this study were presented. That could improve the learning process. Here were some suggestions that hopefully could be applied in the teaching and learning process.

The first fact revealed by the study was that most of the mistakes made by students at SMPN 1 MUNDU Cirebon were caused by neglect and addition, incorrect use of inflected verbs. The teacher must give a broader explanation about to be or auxiliary and the teaching process which was clearer and more lively for the classroom atmosphere so that students do not feel bored and sleepy.

The second teacher could provide teaching improvement to students to release their knowledge in writing skills, especially in writing descriptive text with simple present tense. For example the teacher gave them homework until they understand the rules of English grammar and then the teacher must pay more attention to their mistakes placing to be or auxiliary in descriptive text. After collecting data and analyzing research results. This research draws some conclusions and suggestions. It is concluded that the subject committed four types of error made by students in using Simple Past Tense in writing recount text based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy, they were Omission, Addition, Misformation and Mis-ordering. The total number of errors committed by students were 42 items. Here are the frequency and percentage of the four types of surface strategy taxonomy: The first number of omission error with 26 items and the percentage 4,33%. The second is addition with 5 items. The number of regularization with 4 items and the percentage 0,6%. The number of double marking with 4 items and the percentage 0,6%. The number of simple addition with 1 item and the percentage 0,16%. The third is misformation error with 5 items. The number of regularization with 1 item and the percentage 0,16%. The number of archi-form with 3 items and the percentage 0,5%. The number of misordering with 3 items and percentage 0,5% but there is no errors in alternating. The most grammatical error made by the students are omission.

The students made grammatical errors, it is because they lack of vocabulary mastery and teacher's capacity is not good enough, because the teacher had not taught them about content word, verb inflection, article, auxiliaries and preposition. For the next researcher, there are so many aspects

that we could investigate more about the grammatical errors especially another factors that become the reason of the grammatical errors accuracy.

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