OPTIMIZING TEAM ASSISTED INDIVIDUALIZATION TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

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Abstract

This research is aimed to find out how the use of Team AssistedIndividualization (TAI) Instruction can improve students' writing ability of personal recount text to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianakin the academic year of 2015/2016. The method of the research was conducted using Classroom Action Research (CAR). Then, there were totaled 22 students of the tenth grade students (XD) of SMA Santun Pontianak as the samples of research. The tools of collecting data were observation checklist, field note, and written test. TAI Instruction in teaching recount text was received well by the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. TAI was very helpful in giving equal opportunity in learning. Implementing TAI Instruction could encourage and help one another because they wanted their team won. Based on the data, it was found that TAI instruction improved students' behavior during CAR. They became more confident in writing a recount paragraph. Thus, it can be concluded that Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) Instruction improved students' ability in writing personal recount text to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. TAI instruction is considered one of alternative teaching instruction that can be implemented in teaching writing.TAI Instruction would be helpful to enhance students' writing ability and involve students actively in teaching and learning activity. So it is suggested that TAI instruction can be used as one of the alternative way in learning writing in the classroom.

Keywords: Team Assisted Individualization (TAI), Writing, student's writing skill, Classroom Action Research (CAR)

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana penggunaan Tim Assisted Individualization (TAI) dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks personal recount untuk siswa kelas X SMA Santun Pontianakin tahun akademik 2015/2016. Metode penelitian dilakukan dengan menggunakan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). Kemudian, sample yang berjumlah 22 siswa dari siswa kelas (XD) SMA Santun Pontianak sebagai sampel penelitian. Alat pengumpulan data yang checklist observasi, catatan lapangan, dan tes tertulis. TAI Instruksi dalam teks recount diterima dengan baik oleh siswa kelas X SMA Santun Pontianak pada tahun akademik 2015/2016. TAI sangat membantu dalam memberikan kesempatan yang sama dalam belajar. Menerapkan TAI Instruksi bisa mendorong dan membantu satu sama lain karena mereka ingin tim mereka menang. Berdasarkan data, ditemukan bahwa TAI instruksi meningkatkan perilaku siswa selama Peneltian ini. Mereka menjadi lebih percaya diri dalam menulis paragrap Recount. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menulis personal recount text meningkat dengan menggunakan Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) Instruksi untuk siswa kelas X SMA Santun Pontianak pada tahun akademik 2015/2016.

TAI instruksi dianggap sebagai salah satu instruksi pengajaran alternatif yang dapat diimplementasikan dalam mengajar writing. TAI Instruksi akan membantu untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa dan melibatkan siswa secara aktif dalam kegiatan belajar mengajar. Jadi disarankan agar TAI instruksi dapat digunakan sebagai salah satu cara alternatif dalam pembelajaran menulis di kelas.

Kata Kunci: Team Assisted Individualization (TAI)*, Menulis, kemampuan menulis siswa, Peneltian Tindakan Kelas*

INTRODUCTION

For the most part, however, people communicate in phrases and sentences, which also have meaning. The students of Senior High School are expected to be able to master several writing text such as descriptive, recount, report, narrative, procedural text. The syllabus of the tenth grade of Senior High School states that the students are expected to be able to express the recount texts. Therefore in doing the writing activity, the students are expected to understand the correct structure, grammar, punctuation and the other kinds of grammatical rules. Those rules are the main things in doing writing activity to produce correct and meaningful writing.

Based on the observation done on September 2015 to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016, most of the students faced difficulties in writing recount text. The students did not able to convey their idea well. They faced difficulties to write the several generic structures of recount text cover orientation (introduction), events (development of issue), and reiteration (conclusion). They made mistakes of grammar, language use, and lack of vocabulary. The observation showed that the students had low achievement in making recount text. The problem that could reveal in this research is how Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) as solution for the problem exist in the classroom can improve student's writing skill.

TAI is one of effective instruction which is early used for Mathematics lesson (Slavin, 1983). However, TAI instruction has developed so it can be used for learning a language. It is in line with Efriani (2014) who conducted a quasi experimental research focused on the effect of TAI instruction on the eighth grade students' writing ability at MTs Ashri Jember in 2013/2014. The result of this

research showed that there was a significant effect of using TAI instruction to the students' writing achievement. It explains that students worked together to achieve a learning goal. The result showed that TAI increased students' responsibility for his or her contribution to the group. It means that TAI instruction is an effective way in improving students' writing ability.

TAI is one of the cooperative instructions which developed by Robert E. Slavin on 1986. Cooperative instruction is overall plan instruction of teaching that is used in the classroom, so the students can gain better teaching and learning process (Anthony, 2015). Besides, Richard and Rogers (2011:192) add cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the social structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and motivated to increase the learning of others.

TAI was designed by Slavin and his associate in the early 1980s (Slavin, Leavey, & Steven, 1989: 22). TAI is designed primarily for grades 3-6, but it has been used at higher grades levels (up to the community college level). TAI was developed for several reasons. First, TAI would provide a means of combining the motivational power and peer assistance of cooperative learning with an individualized instructional program-one that would provide all students with materials appropriate to their levels of skill and allow them to proceed through these materials at their own rates. Second, TAI was developed to apply cooperative learning method to solve many of the problems of individualized instruction. Third, TAI was developed as a means of producing the well-documented social effects characteristic of cooperative learning while meeting diverse needs.Duplass (2011) elaborates that through TAI the students can cooperatively work with other students and can share knowledge or any information to reach the learning goals. It can be concluded that TAI helps students focus on their writing and giving feedback. The students are also motivated and enthusiastic in writing process.

There are eight principle components of TAI (Slavin, 2008: 186) as follows: (1) Placement test. At the beginning of the program, students are

pretested on vocabulary mastery. They are placed at the appropriate point in the individualized program based on their performance on the placement test.(2) Teams. Students are assigned to four-to five-member teams. Each team has a mix of high, average, and achiever, boys and girls, and students of any ethnic groups in the class. Every eight weeks, students are assigned to new teams.(3)Curriculum material. The students work in their teams on self-instructional curriculum materials covering main idea, reference, lexical meaning, meaning based on the context, detail information, and parts of the text.(4) Teaching group. Every day, the teacher teaches lesson to small groups of students (drawn from the heterogeneous teams) who are at the same point in the curriculum (5)Team study method. Following the placement test, the students are given a starting place in the sequence of vocabulary skills. (6)Team scores and team unit recognition. At the end of each week, the teacher computes a team score. This score is based on the average number of units covered by each team member and the accuracy of the unit tests. Criteria are established for team performance. A high criterion is set for a team to be a "super team", a moderate criterion is set for a team to be a "great team", and a minimum criterion is set for a team to be a "good team". The teams meeting the "super team" and "great team" criteria receive attractive certificates.(7) Fact test. Twice each week, the students are given three-minutes facts (usually functional text test facts) the students are given fact sheets to study at home to prepare for these tests.(8)Whole-class units. Every three weeks, the teacher stops the individualized program and spends a week teaching lessons to the entire class and make reflection with the students.

Some advantages of TAI for both teacher and students (Slavin, 2008: 190) are as follows:(1)It can minimize teacher's involvement in correcting and scoring answer.(2)The teacher will spend the time to teach the small group.(3)The students will be motivated to study the material quickly and accurately.(4)The students working in learning teams toward a cooperative goal could help one another study, provide instant feedback to one another, and encourage one another to proceed rapidly and accurately through the material.

Based on all of the explanations above, the researcher concludes that cooperative learning of TAI is centered on student's learning (students' centered). In TAI instruction, the students discuss to find or understand the concepts. Each member of group works on a single problem as a form of collective responsibility. English writing undoubtedly has become the important key of communication in for the society. Because of the importance of the English writing ability in the society, the educational government of Indonesia has decided that English writing ability should be implemented toward a language teaching-learning program by putting it into a curriculum of educational institutions as a compulsory subject to be learned. As Nation (2009: 93) said that English writing ability becomes a necessary one implemented in second language and foreign language teaching and learning.

Writing ability is meant to be the important subject for being taught and learned. Weigle (2002: 1) states that writing is an important part of global society. The more often one seeks to learn writing, the more effective the writing product he or she produces. Weigle (2002: 1) also added that apart from being placed as the significant role toward the society, it is meant to be important implemented in second and foreign language teaching-learning in education. In facts, there are several opinions stated by experts about writing's definitions. Nation (2009: 93) defined writing as any activity of producing letters or symbols in which they are put down not only in a piece of blank-written-paper but also printed; for example, books, stories or articles. It means that writing is a combination of words formed into a sentence that representing ideas. Meanwhile Brown (2001: 335) said that writing is something that a writer wishes to express in a written form. It explains that writing is putting down words in a piece of paper into the sentence of a topic so that readers can comprehend what a writer wishes to convey about.

Meanwhile, writing is also a productive skill. As Nation (2009:113) stated that writing is combining between process and product which refer to collecting idea to express and present the idea in a written form to be read by readers. Writing has a function to deliver the meaningful message to the readers. It can be found in novel, newspaper, and magazine. Then Hylan (2003: 9) says that writing

which one produces are a combination of words to a sentence then it is formed into a paragraph with a function of delivering his/her meaningful message related to his or her personal demand to readers. It means that writing is purposed to deliver information.

Element of writing ability is one of the purposes of writing. As it focuses on how students can give the meaningful information. Kendal and Khoun (2006: 37) explain that writing has purpose to deliver meaning to readers. It means that one has to focus on the meaning of his/her writing work. Besides, the elements of the writing ability are various which mean that one considers not only for meaning but only for other elements about assessing writing ability. Since Heaton (1998: 135) divided it into five components of the writing ability. There are Firstly, language use. It is considered one of important to master the writing skill when he/she is able to write correct and appropriate sentences. Second, mechanical skills. In producing a writing product, one is able to apply writing convention such as punctuation, spelling, grammar and etc. Third, treatment of content. In this part of the writing ability, one is required to have a creative thinking and thinking development. Besides, he/she can select which part of sentences or paragraph is relevant. Fourth, stylistic skills. It means that one should be able to vary sentences and paragraphs and apply communication in writing as well e.g. using phrases and idioms. Fifth, judgment skills. This is the last element of writing skills which demands one that his/her writing product have an aim at readers to deliver about and his/hers consider choosing, organizing and arranging relevant information. Besides, in mastering the performance, the students may also consider element of the writing ability.

Considering the learning process as a way of writing development, the students are expected to be able to master types of the writing text. Hornby (1995: 1234) says that text is generally defined as the words of something written on a book or a page. Anderson (2000: 1) specifically cited that text is a combination of words constructed into a meaningful message in order to deliver to an intended reader. Writing about the past event is called as recount. Recount text is a text which retells the events in the past. It is in line with Hook (2011: 4) who says that

a recount discusses about a sequence of past events. It explains that a recount is a piece of text that retells past events, usually in the order in which they happened. Therefore, a recount text has functions to tell and write in an order sequence of events happened in the past. It means that a recount has a communicative purpose for retelling a past event or a past experience in either spoken or written language (Hook, 2011:4).

Recount text has social function. It is linked with Hook (2011:4) who states that "a recount reconstructs past events in the time order in which they occurred. It involves telling what happened and interpreting or evaluating the experience in some way". It explains that the purpose of a social recount is to document a series of events and evaluate their significance in some way. It is also to give the audience a descriptions of what occurred and when it occurred.Every kind of text has schematic structures. The structure of text concerns to achieve the purpose of the text. The schematic structure of recount text covers orientation, events and re-orientation as Hook (2011, 5-6).

The successful of any instruction is considered significant depends on the procedures in applying in the class. TAI instruction covers a regular cycle of instructional activities for teaching in the classroom such as : Step 1 : Introducing the concepts of Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) instruction together the benefits to the students., Step 2 : Team, In this phase, the students' team works are assigned into 4 to 5 students in mixed-ability teams. The main purpose of assigning team is to make sure that all students in team members are learning. The team members have tasks in mastering the material given from the teacher and help each others in a group to complete task. This activity is also to prepare students to do well in individual quiz section. Step 3 : Curriculum Materials In this teaching, the materials used in TAI instruction were adopted from text books or other published sources or with teacher-made materials and internet. Step 4 : Team Study During team study, all of team members responsible to master the material presented by the teacher and to help their teammates master the material. In team study, it is important to convey some orders: first, ensuring the students that they do not finish yet before all their teammates master the material. Second,

ensuring students to understand that the work sheet is not just to be filled and to be submitted but important for students to check themselves how far they understand the lesson given. Third, it is also important to remind students to discuss to their teammates first before asking to the teacher. Step 5 : Team Score and Team Recognition. The first step need to do is counting group value and individual development value and also giving certificate or other rewards. Step 6: Teaching Group In this phase, the teacher prepares students for major concepts in the next lesson and tries to discuss the points where the students have difficulties during teaching and learning process.

METHOD

This research was conducted at SMA SANTUN Pontianak, West Kalimantan. The research was conducted from writing the research proposal, conducting the research, and writing the research report. This research conducted at SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. Besides, the researcher selects the tenth grade (XD) students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. Moreover, the total subject of this research consists of 22 students. It is important to decide the appropriate research method. The method of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR is a combination of action and research which has purpose to improve practice. It is supported by Hopkins in Cohen et al (2007: 297) who states that "the combination of action and research involve that action a form of disciplined inquiry, in which a personal attempt is made to understand, improve and reform practice". It explains that the application of Classroom Action Research (CAR) is a suitable research method for a research who intends to improve students' learning behavior and solving the students' difficulties. In this case, this research was aimed to improve students' personal recount text through Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) strategy.

According to Mertler (2006: 10), there are several benefits of Classroom Action Research (CAR). First, CAR improves students' achievement through effective teaching. Second, educators involve in action research became more

flexible in their thinking, more open to new ideas, and more able to solve new problems. Third, action research influences teachers' teaching skill, sense of efficacy, willingness to communicate with colleagues, and attitudes toward professional development and the process of change. Then the last, teacher engages in action research depended more on themselves as decision makers and gained more confidence in what they believed about curriculum and instruction. Classroom Action Research (CAR) is a collaborative. Zubber – Skerrit as cited in Cohen et al (2007:299) define that "Action Research is "critical (and self-critical) collaborative inquiry by reflective practitioners being accountable and making results of their enquiry public self evaluating their practice and engaged in participatory problem-solving and continuing professional development".

Classroom Action Research (CAR) also provides some procedures to be applied. The procedures of the CAR mean the steps that will be carried out by the researcher in applying the determined technique into classroom, which is followed by cycles; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Lewin as cited in Cohen et al, 2007:304).It is important to apply the appropriate technique for collecting data. In this research of CAR, the researcher applied observation and measurement technique. Cohen et al (2007: 412) explains that observation is gathering facts of information from "live" situation for achieving validity and reliability. It is aimed to enter and understand the situation which is being occurred (Patton in Cohen et al, 2007: 397). In this research, the observation technique involved field note, observation checklist, and recording. Besides, the measurement technique covered written test. The written test was used for measuring students' understanding to the material given.

The research instruments covered qualitative data and quantitative data. Creswell (2011:4) defines "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem". It means that qualitative data is used for achieving the information social problems. In this case, the qualitative data was used for obtaining whole information involves teacher, students, and class situation during CAR. However, the qualitative data covered field note, observation checklist, and recording.

Besides, according to Creswell (2011: 4) states, quantitative is "an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures". It means that test is appropriate research instruments for examining the variables. It is important to decide the appropriate test for gain the data. The researcher used test in collecting data in order to know the students' improvement in each cycle. The test in this research used is in form of individual written test with the focus on recount text. In classroom action research, the researcher will plan by using lesson plan before the class begin. After the teaching learning proccess done by the researcher, the next step is observing and also reflecting. In this steps, the researcher collaborates with collaborator analyze the result and the proccess of classroom learning proccess and the researcher decide wether the research ends or not. If the result is not increase, so it will continue to the next cycle untill the student's writing skill improve.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of research in three cycles of CAR found that TAI is successfully improving students' writing ability in personal recount paragraph. The successful of TAI is cannot be separated from the cooperation among members. In this regard, the team learning as a unity had important role during implementing of TAI instruction. It is in line with Richards (2002:52) who says that the cooperation among members and under guidance from the teacher will bring students getting better achievement. Elliot (1999: 404) defines TAI method is a term for teaching that permits students to be active partners in the search for knowledge, thus enhancing the meaning of what they learn.

TAI instruction creates a situation in which the only way team members can obtain their own individual achievement if the group is successful. It explains that in aiming to achieve students' personal goals, team members must help their teammates to succees their groups. In TAI instruction, rewarding groups based on group performance (or the sum of individual test) creates an interpersonal reward

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structure in which group members will give social reinforcers (e.g., praise, encouragement) in response to groupmates' task-related efforts. It shows that the only way the team can succeed is to ensure that all team members have learned, so the team members' activities focus on explaining concepts to one another, helping one another practice, and encouraging one another to achieve the learning goals (Slavin, 1995:6). It is supported by Yan Zhang (2010: 1) *Cooperative Learning and Foreign Language Learning and Teaching,* Journal of Language Teaching and Research. The focus of this paper is cooperative learning has positive effects on foreign language learning and teaching. This paper compared cooperative learning with traditional language teaching. The paper reveals cooperative learning benefits for language learning and teaching.

It is in line with Richards (2002: 52) who says that the cooperation among members and under guidance from the teacher will bring students getting better achievement. The teacher also had important role during CAR by using TAI instruction. In applying TAI to the junior high school level, the teacher needs to give much guiding. The guiding involved giving clear explanation during conveying learning material, controlling students understanding, ensuring all team members cooperate each others, and motivating them (e.g. giving them rewards). It shows that the only way the team can succeed is to ensure that all team members have learned, so the team members' activities focus on explaining concepts to one another, helping one another practice, and encouraging one another to achieve the learning goals (Slavin, 1995: 6).

The first action phase was implemented on Thursday, 12th of November 2015 to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. The action was done by researcher acted as an English teacher who taught recount text and accompanied by the collaborator. The teacher began by greeting then continued checking students' presence. The teacher also tried to spend a few minutes giving some motivational words to them. In the early of class, the teacher explained the steps of TAI instruction, then continued by giving brainstorming to them.

In the main activity, the teacher explained the main material. It was focus on personal recount text. Next, the teacher assigned students into groups learning. Here, they were asked to complete the tasks individually. After that, each group was asked to check the tasks of their members. The members who found difficult could ask help to other members. The groups had a duty to make sure all of their members understood the lesson. Each learning group then allowed conveying their answers in front of class. After that, the students were asked to have individual test. In this phase the students did not allowed to have any cooperation. They had to be independent.

After doing the individual test, the teacher discussed the test together with the students. Next, the teacher began to score their individual test. Their scores then counted into team score. In the post activity, the teacher tried confirming the lesson. The students also were requested to convey their problems during teaching and learning process in the classroom. Then, the students concluded the lesson together with the teacher. At last, the students had a home work to improve their understanding of lesson. Based on students' performance, the result showed that students' mean score only achieved 60.4. It was found that only 27.27% students could pass the criterion and there were 72.73% students did not pass. It explained that most of students found difficult in making a recount paragraph. Thus, it can be concluded that the cycle of CAR would be continued.

The action of second cycle was done on Tuesday, 17th of November 2015. In the main activity, the teacher reviewed to explain the recount text which covered the definition, the purpose, the language features, and the generic structures by using power point presentation to attract students' attention. The teacher then assigned students into groups learning. Here, they were assigned by mixed abilities based on their writing score in last action. There were 5 groups consisted of 5 students and a group with 4 students. They were asked to complete the tasks individually in groups. After that, each group was asked to check the tasks of their members each others. The members who found difficult could ask help to other members. The groups had a duty to make sure all of their members understood the lesson. Each learning group then allowed conveying their answers

in front of class. After that, the students were asked to have individual test. In this phase the students did not allowed to have any cooperation. They had to be independent.

In the post activity, the teacher tried to confirming the lesson. The students were asked to delivered their responses of learning and then conclude the lesson today. At last, they had homework to be done. Based on the observing in the second cycle of implementation of CAR, the researcher and collaborator summarized some corrections. First, related to the students' careless in a wring a paragraph, the teacher asked the students' to revise their own task twice. It was hoped that they could have better fluency and grammar in construct a text. Second, the teacher was asked to keep present the material using power point presentation. It was proofed attracting students' enthusiasm. Third, the teacher was asked to encourage them who did the best team. It was purposed to encourage students' motivation. Fourth, the students would be asked to have dictionary during writing recount text in the classroom. However, the teacher might be strict for students' who did not follow the rules. At last, the collaborator and practitioner decided to continue to the next cycle.

The third action was implemented on Tuesday, 24th of November 2015 to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak. The teacher then had the *brainstorming* to active students' prior knowledge. Then the teacher tried to motivate students by giving reinforcement. In the main activity, the teacher reviewed to explain recount text by using power point presentation. After that, students had to be in groups learning. In pre − writing activity, the students were given stimulus and the teacher motivated them in order they had not blank space before drifting. Next is drafting, in this activity, the teacher delivered them a paper. In this phase, the groups needed to make a recount paragraph together based on the theme. In this activity, the students were requested to have good cooperation. They needed share ideas for better result. After drafting (writing), the students were asked to revise their works. In this phase, the students were requested to check about their writing. At last was editing. In this stage, the

students were tidying their text as they prepared the final draft for evaluation by the teacher.

After writing the text collaboratively, the students had individual task. In this phase, they had to think and pouring their ideas in a text independently. They were not allowed to have any cooperation.After all of students did the individual task, next it was corrected together with the students. Then the teacher counted their team rewards for the students' who passed criterion. At last, the students were asked to conclude the lesson.

After obtaining the result data in third cycle, the observer and researcher were satisfied. The students could write recount very well. The target to achieve 70% of the students' score at least same or above 7 were achieved. Therefore, the teacher and the collaborator decided to stop the Cycle of Classroom Action Research (CAR) because all of the targets already accomplished. Based on the result of evaluation between teacher and collaborator, it could be conclude that Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) instruction improved students' ability in writing recount text to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of three cycles of CAR, it can be concluded that Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) instruction can improve students' ability in writing recount text to the tenth grade students of SMA Santun Pontianak in the academic year of 2015/2016. TAI makes students become aware to have a responsibility to finish the task for a team goal. Implementing TAI instruction encourages students' compactness so they become a unity to achieve learning goals for improvement achievement. TAI can be categorized as one of solution that can be implemented in the classroom in improving student's writing skill

The teacher also should be creative in teaching writing. The teacher can use different technique in teaching to avoid students feel bored in class. One of technique that the researcher suggests is TAI Instruction. Regarding that TAI Instruction encouraged the students' achievement in writing. The students can use this technique to improve their writing effectively. The students need to have

well–cooperation during grouping among members so the goals of learning can be achieved. Regarding the writing is one of the main factors that influenced success to students' learning so the researcher believes that the same topic can be done in another place. Furthermore, the result can be used to develop a mutual teaching' strategies in developing students learning achievement towards English.

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