**THE EFFECT OF SCRAMBLED SENTENCES TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING WRITING SKILL**

**Rizka Maya Andini1; Nadrun2; Budi3**

**Abstract**

The objective of this research was to find out whether the application of Scrambled Sentences Technique can improve the writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu in writing recount paragraph. This research applied quasi experimental research design that two groups had pretest and posttest. The population was the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu. The sample was selected by using purposive sampling technique. The sample were X IPA 1 as the experimental group that consisted of 30 students and X IPA 5 as the control group that consisted of 30 students. In collecting the data, the researcher used test. The test was administered twice as pretest and posttest. Then, the data were analyzed statistically. It reveals that there were different scores obtained from the experimental group and the control group. By applying 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom (df) of 58, the researcher found that the t-counted was 3.56 and the t-table was 2.0021. In other words, the t-counted was higher than thet-table. It means that Scrambled Sentences Technique can be used to improve the writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu in wrting recount paragraph.

**Key words**: Scrambled Sentences Technique, Writing Skill, Recount Paragraph.

**INTRODUCTION**

English is used as international communication by many people around the world. In Indonesia English is a first foreign language. It becomes general subject that has to be taught from secondary school up to university level. Therefore, the students are expected to be able to communicate in English with international communities.

There are four language skills in English which are very important to learn. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the language skills that is used as indirect communication. It is the activity to express ideas, opinions, thoughts, and feelings through written form. According to Richards and Schmidt in Kamadeni (2014:6), “Writing is expressing idea, concept, feeling, opinion and experience in certain place, time and situation in written form.”

English Education Study Program

rizkamayandini@gmail.com

Additionally, Nunan (2003:88) defines, “writing is a form of communication and process of expressing and impressing ideas into a product of writing: translating out thought into language.” It means that people can share their experience or what they feel like in writen form.

Writing has purpose to give information about many things; fact, data, phenomena, opinions to readers. Therefore, the readers can gain new knowledge and understanding about various things that happen in this world as well. Mayers (1992) catagorizes the purpose of writing into three catagories. They are to persuade, to inform, and to entertain. To inform means the writer explains or describes thing to give informarion. To persuade means a writer tries to change the audience or behave differently. To entertain means the writer gives some efforts to make the reader laughed, smile or even angry.

Writing is often considered as a difficult skill to be mastered. Writing is a kind of process in which the students should always consider the choice of words and sentences, sequence of words and sentences. Braine and Yorozu (1998) stated that writing skill requires a well-structured way of the presentation of thoughts in an organized and planned way. It is generally considered one of the difficult skills for foreign language students. Even, native speakers feel difficult in showing a good command of writing. It is supported by Raims (1983: 3) who states,

When students complain, as they often do, about how difficult it is to write in a second language. They are talking not only about difficulty of finding the right words and using the correct grammar but about the difficulty of finding and expressing idea in a new language.

From the statement above, it can be said that writing is a difficult skill because the students who learn writing skill need to be able to deal with some writing elements. The elements are the combination of a number of diverse elements: organization, grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary. In other words, the students are required to be able to develop ideas, organize content of the text, employ appropriate grammatical forms, choose structures and lexical items, and demonstrate appropriate spelling and punctuation in the text in order to produce the best writing.

Although writing is difficult to learn, it still needs to be taught for the students. Based on the School-Based Curriculum (2006), the standard competences in writing at Senior High School is that the students should be able to express and produce good written form into the kinds of writing text, such as recount text, narrative text, and procedure text. Therefore, the students have to be able to understand and create writing.

Based on the preliminary research at SMAN 4 Palu, the researcher observed the students and interviewed the English teacher. The researcher found that there are some problems faced by the students, particularly the tenth grade in learning English especially writing. First, the students get confused to start their writing. Actually, they knew or had some ideas of what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into sentences or paragraph. The ideas and the sentences were not well organized. Second, there are many errors in grammar. When they write sentence, they get difficulties in using in a grammatical structure. Third, they lack of vocabulary. As a result, they waste too much time to write and not interested in doing the writing.

Based on the problems, the researcher would find suitable technique that can help the students to improve their writing skill. One of the ways to make the teaching writing more effective is making the students active and creative in classroom. This research chooses scrambled sentences technique in improving the students’ writing skill because it is helpful technique in teaching writing. By rearranging the scrambled sentences into logical order of a text, the students are expected to grasp the intended information. In relation to the aspect of writing which consists of content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics, scrambled sentences practice can be used to teach writing. It is an effective technique of reinforcing grammar, vocabulary, and syntax in context because the text serves as a model for the students in the aspects of writing. Moreover, scrambled sentences technique is familiar with the students because it is widely applied in their English text book. It is easier to apply this technique to them.

Based on the background above, the researcher conducted an experimental research. The researcher applied Scrambled Sentences technique to improve the students’ writing skill at the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research used quasi experimental design. In this research, the researcher took two sample groups. They were experimental and control groups. Both groups were given pretest and posttest, but the experimental group was given the treatment while the control group was not. It means that only experimental group was taught with scrambled sentences technique. Meanwhile, the control group was taught conventionally. The design of this research was followed from Cresswell (2009:161).

Group A O1 X O2

Group B O3 O4

Best (1981) states that population is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristic in common that are interest to the researcher. In relation to the statement, the population of this research was the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu which consisted of thirteen classes. Furthermore, Best (1981: 81) states, “Sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation an analyses”. In choosing the sample of this research, the researcher used purposive sampling technique because it was appropriate to the design of the research. The sample of this research was taken from the two classes of the tenth grade students. Therefore, the recommended classes were X IPA 1 as the experimental group and X IPA 5 as the control group.

Best (1981: 59) states, “variables as the conditions or characteristics that the experimenter manipulates, controls, or observes”. There are two variables in this research. They are independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is applying scrambled sentences technique, and the dependent one is students’ writing skill. Furthermore, the researcher only used test as the instrument in collecting data. The test consisted of pretest and posttest. The pretest was given before the treatment in order to measure the students’ ability in writing recount paragarph and the posttest was given after the treatment in order find out the effectiveness of scrambled sentences technique.

After the pre-test, the researcher gave treatment to the experimental group. the researcher taught recount paragraph in order to improve students’ ability in writing. She applied scrambled sentences technique in treating the students. The treatment was conducted for six times.

After the treatment, the researcher gave posttest to both experimental group and control group. It was given to find out whether the teaching activity through scrambled sentences technique can improve students’ writing skill.

The researcher analyzed the data statistically. She counted the individual score by using the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:308). Secondly, the researcher calculated the students’ mean score of each group by using the formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55). After getting the mean score of both experimental and control group, the researcher analyzed the data of the pretest and posttest by using the standard deviation formula proposed by Arikunto (2006). Then researcher also analyzed the data from the pretest and the posttest by using the t-test formula. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed t-table to prove whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected.

**FINDINGS**

Instrument is the way which is used by the researcher to collect data. In collecting the data of this research, the researcher used test. There were two kinds of tests in this research. They were pretest and posttest. The pretest was given before the researcher applied treatment to find out the students’ writing ability. The posttest was given after the researcher applied treatment. The result of each test was compared to measure whether the application of scrambled sentences technique can improve students’ writing skill or not.

In scoring each item of writing recount paragraph, the researcher used the scoring procedures for writing assessment. The researcher used the writing assessment adapted from Weigle (2002:117). The scores in this assessment are 0 up to 3. In this research focused on three aspects of writing. First is organization, the score is 3 if overall shape and internal pattern is clear. The score is 2 if underlying structure not sufficiently controlled. The score is 1 if some organizational skill in evidence, but not adequately controlled. The score is 0 if very little organization of content. No apparent organization of content. Second is grammar, the score is 3 if the student’s writing almost no grammatical inaccuracies. The score is 2 if some grammatical inaccuracies. The score is 1 if frequent grammatical inaccuracies. The score is 0 if almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate. Third is vocabulary, the score is 3 if almost no inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/or circumlocution. The score is 2 if some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution. The score is 1 if Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps, frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution inappropriacies and/or repetition. The score is 0 if vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication. Moreover, the result of the post-test of both groups can be seen in table 1 and 2.

After the treatment, the researcher analyzed the data to find out the individual score of the students. To find out the individual score of each student, the researcher used formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:308). After finding out the individual score of each student, the researcher computed the mean score of the students for both the experimental and the control groups proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982: 55). After that, the researcher calculated the mean score and squared deviation to find out the significant difference between the experimental and the control group. The researcher used formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:312). Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the data to find out the significant differences or testing hypothesis by using t-count formula as proposed by Arikunto (2006:311).

**Table 1 Pre-test and Post-test Score of Experimental Group**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | | Initials | Score | |
| Pre-test | Post-test |
|
| 1. | ARS | 22 | 77 |
| 2. | AFR | 11 | 33 |
| 3. | ALF | 33 | 88 |
| 4. | ANS | 55 | 77 |
| 5. | ARF | 22 | 44 |
| 6. | BYU | 11 | 77 |
| 7. | BVD | 11 | 33 |
| 8. | DNL | 0 | 11 |
| 9. | EDK | 44 | 66 |
| 10. | FZH | 11 | 44 |
| 11. | FTD | 33 | 66 |
| 12. | FRK | 11 | 55 |
| 13. | IZA | 33 | 66 |
| 14. | KNA | 55 | 99 |
| 15. | MAF | 22 | 44 |
| 16. | MHR | 0 | 0 |
| 17. | MRN | 77 | 99 |
| 18 | MJB | 33 | 66 |
| 19 | MFD | 0 | 55 |
| 20 | MFS | 22 | 44 |
| 21 | MZH | 22 | 88 |
| 22 | NFD | 33 | 55 |
| 23 | RHD | 22 | 66 |
| 24 | RFH | 11 | 11 |
| 25 | RHI | 11 | 22 |
| 26 | RSD | 44 | 55 |
| 27 | SHR | 0 | 22 |
| 28 | SLA | 22 | 55 |
| 29 | SFN | 0 | 11 |
| 30 | SZA | 66 | 88 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Total Score | | 707 | 1617 |

Based on the table 1 it can be seen that the highest score of pretest is 77, the lowest score is 0. The highest score of posttest is 99 and the lowest score is 0. After computing the students’ score, the researcher calculated the mean score of the pretest and posttest of the experimental group. The mean score of the pretest is 23.83 and the mean score of posttest is 39.36

**Table 2 Pre-test and Post-test Score of Control Group**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Initials | Score | |
| Pre-test | Post-test |
|
| 1. | AWH | 44 | 55 |
| 2. | ALD | 11 | 22 |
| 3. | ALW | 66 | 77 |
| 4. | ANS | 33 | 77 |
| 5. | FRN | 22 | 33 |
| 6. | IAG | 11 | 44 |
| 7. | JLD | 11 | 22 |
| 8. | KDR | 22 | 33 |
| 9. | KFF | 11 | 22 |
| 10. | LLH | 33 | 55 |
| 11. | MLD | 11 | 11 |
| 12. | MRL | 66 | 77 |
| 13. | MIQ | 11 | 22 |
| 14. | MFQ | 22 | 33 |
| 15. | NDF | 11 | 33 |
| 16. | NVL | 44 | 66 |
| 17. | NSM | 22 | 33 |
| 18 | NNA | 11 | 44 |
| 19 | NAE | 33 | 44 |
| 20 | NIA | 22 | 33 |
| 21 | PDA | 55 | 77 |
| 22 | PRM | 33 | 55 |
| 23 | RHN | 11 | 11 |
| 24 | RGP | 11 | 11 |
| 25 | RYA | 11 | 33 |
| 26 | SLS | 22 | 22 |
| 27 | SMY | 22 | 66 |
| 28 | WHD | 11 | 55 |
| 29 | WDS | 33 | 4 |
| 30 | ZND | 0 | 11 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Total Score | | 715 | 1181 |

Based on the table 1 it can be seen that the highest score of pretest is 66, the lowest score is 0. The highest score of posttest is 77 and the lowest score is 0. After computing the students’ score, the researcher calculated the mean score of the pretest and posttest of the control group. The mean score of the pretest is and the mean score of posttest is 53.9

After computing the mean score of the experimental and the control groups, the researcher calculated the deviation of both groups. The mean deviation of the experimental group is 30.3 and the control group is 16.86. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the square deviation of both the experimental and the control groups. The square deviation of the experimental group is and the square deviation of the control group is . Next, the researcher analyzed the t-counted to find out the significant difference between the control group and the experimental group. The result of the data analysis shows that the t-counted is 3.56. By applying 0.05 level of significant with the degree of freedom (df) Nx + Ny – 2 = 58, the research found that t-counted (3.56) is higher than t-table (2.0021). It means that the research hypothesis is accepted. In other words, applying scrambled sentences technique could improve writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu.

**DISCUSSION**

The discussion is provided to explain about the results. After finding out the result of the research, the researcher discusses the findings of the research. The finding of this research is related to the use of scrambled sentences technique to improve the students’ writing skill. The researcher has limited this research on teaching recount paragraph and focused on three aspects of writing. They are grammar, organization, and vocabulary.

In this research, the researcher used pretest and posttest. Before the treatment given to the experimental group, the researcher conducted the pretest for the students. The pretest was given to both groups. Based on the result of the pretest of the experimental group, the researcher found that no student got maximal score in grammar, only one student got maximal score in organization, and also only one student got maximal score in vocabulary. However, it is the most similar with the result of the pretest of the control group that there is no student got maximal score in grammar, one student got maximal score in organization, and two students got maximal score in vocabulary.

From the data above, it can be explained that the students did not understand about using grammatical structure because they wrote recount paragraph in simple present tense. Properly, it should be in simple past tense. The students got confused to organize their sentences in recount paragraph. Most students did not write their recount paragraph completely. Actually, the recount paragraph should consist of orientation, events, and reorientation. For example: *Last holiday, me and my family go to Jogja. My family and I go to Jogja together use a car. We take 6 hours to go there. I go to Jogja for so many time because Jogja is my favorite city.* The example shows that the student gets error in using grammatical structure. She also did not write the events and the reorientation. The correct sentences should be *Last holiday, I and my family went to Jogja. My family and I went to Jogja together by a car. We took 6 hours to go there. I go to Jogja for so many times because Jogja is my favorite city.* The possible answer of the events and reorientation can be written as *First day in Jogja, we visited our families. Next day we went to Parambanan Temple and the last we went to Parangtritis beach. After 5 days in Jogja, finally we went home. It was a great holiday.*

After conducting the pretest, the researcher gave treatments to the experimental group only for six meetings. In every meeting, the researcher taught them through scrambled sentences technique. The first step in teaching writing through scrambled sentences technique was the researcher provided the example of recount paragraph. After that, the researcher explained about generic structures of the recount paragraph. Next the researcher taught the students about simple past tense because this tense is used to make recount paragraph. Next, the researcher explained to the students about scrambled sentences technique. Then the researcher divided the students into group consist of 2 students in order to make the teaching and learning process more effective because the students can share with their friend. After that, the researcher hand out practice materials consisting mixed sentences and asked the students to identify difficult words appears in the text and discussed the meaning of the words with their pairs. Next, the researcher asked the students to identify generic structure of the text to make it easier for them in arranging the scrambled sentences. Then, the researcher asked the students to restructure scrambled sentences given in group based on the generic structure of recount paragraph to make it meaningful. When the students were doing the task in group, the teacher moved among them, gave assistance and guidance as required. The students got interested in rearrange the scrambled sentences. They actively discussed with their pairs. Sometimes the class gets noisy because there are some students are debating their opinion. They actively looked for the meaning of the words in the dictionary, and sometimes asked the researcher about the vocabulary that they did not know. After that, the researcher and the students discussed about the order of the text being scrambled to find out the meaningful text appropriate with the organization of the text. And then, the researcher asked the students to write their own recount paragraph individually.

After the treatment to the experimental group, the researcher conducted the posttest to both groups. Based on the result of the posttest of the experimental group, it shows that four (13%) students get maximal score in grammar, six (20%) students get maximal score in organization, and five (16%) students get maximal score in vocabulary. However, three (10%) students in the control group have maximal score in organization, three (10%) students have maximal score in vocabulary, and no student in the control group has maximal score in grammar.

From the result above, the researcher has some explanation. Firstly, the students of the experimental group understand well about using grammar than those of the control group. Secondly, the students of the experimental group can organize their paragraph well than those of the control group. Thirdly, the vocabulary of the students of the experimental group has increased more from the first time they got in the pretest than those of the control group. It means that the students of the experimental group can improve their writing skill compared with the control group.

By looking at the data above, it can be said that scrambled sentences technique can solve the students’ problems in three aspects of writing. First, it helps the students to understand about using grammatical structure that use in recount paragraph. In Scrambled sentences technique the students are given the recount paragraph with scrambled order and the teacher asks them to rearrange the sentences into a good paragraph. In doing the exercise the students practice to rewrite the sentences grammatically. When they rewrite the sentences, they could remember that simple past tense is used in writing recount paragraph. This technique reinforcing the rule of using simple past tense as one of the characteristics of recount paragraph because it serve as the model for the students in the aspect of writing. Second, from the exercise of the scrambled sentences the students get a lot of vocabulary. The vocabularies may the new for the students. Rearrange the sentences into good recount paragraph the students should know the meaning of the words to be able to understand the meaning of the sentences. It means that in rearranging the scrambled sentences into good order, the students grasp new vocabulary and the students’ vocabulary has increased. Third, the students’ writing organization is quite good after the treatment through scrambled sentences technique. The students practice to rearrang the sentences being scrambled and rewrite it into good recount paragraph in each meetings. Therefore**,** the student could understand which sentences are the part of the orientation, the events, and the reorientation and they could write recount paragraph organizationally. Besides, the researcher found that the mean score of the experimental group in posttest is higher (53.9) than the mean score in pretest (23.5). Moreover, the t-counted (3.56) is higher than the t-table (2.0021). From that result, the researcher concludes that there is a significant improvement in teaching recount paragraph through scrambled sentences technique.

Referring to finding above, the researcher relates it to the previous studies by Novita (2011), Kamadeni (2014) and Indrayana (2014). Novita (2011) focused her research on content, vocabulary, grammar, organization, and mechanics. She discussed that scrambled sentences technique has improved the students’ writing organization. The students are able to use appropriate words, tenses, and mechanics in their writing. Kamadeni (2014) argues that applying scrambled sentences can give significant improvement to the students’ writing skill. The students feel happy in learning writing. They become active in the teaching learning process. Meanwhile, it is also proved from the increasing result of the mean score of the pretest (51.07), the posttest of cycle 1 (71.00), and the posttest 2 of cycle 2 (76.53). Indrayana (2014) found that scrambled sentences are effective in improving writing skill. It can be seen from the mean score of the pretest (44.02), the mean score of the posttest of cycle 1 (64.88), and the mean score of the posttest of cycle 2 (69.02).

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

After collecting and analyzing the data statistically, the researcher finally concludes that the application of scrambled sentences technique is effective in improving the writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMAN 4 Palu especially in writing recount paragraph. It is supported by the data in which the mean score of the experimental group in the pretest (23.5) has improved in the posttest (53.9). The result of the data analysis shows that the t-counted (3.56) is greater than the t-table (2.0021). It means that the research hypothesis is accepted.

At the end of this research, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions to students, teachers, and other researchers. Firstly, students of English should not be afraid when they make some mistakes in learning English. They can learn step by step and practice to minimize their mistakes. Secondly, English teacher as the facilitator in classroom should be active in findings various techniques in teaching English to make an improvement of the student in learning English. Then they should speak English more than Bahasa Indonesia to make the students accustomed to general instruction during the learning activity. Last, other researchers can do research which is related to this research and use other techniques in teaching English.

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