**APPLYING FRESH TECHNIQUE**

**IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH**

**OF THE SEVENTH GRADE EFL-LEARNERS**

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**Abstract**

The objective of this research is to prove that the use of FRESH technique can effective in improve the writing ability of the seventh grade students in writing descriptive paragraph. This research employes quasi experimental design. It involves two classes: experimental and control class. The sample of this research is the seventh grade students, consisting of 48 students. This sample is choose by using purposive sampling technique. The instrument of data collection is a test which is give and distribute to the research sample as pretest and posttest. The type of test is descriptive paragraph. Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) Technique employes in this research consist of four steps (1) steps of writing a fact, (2) step of writing a reason (3) step of elaborate, (4) step of shift or conclude. The result of the analysis data shows that the value of the means score of the students of experimental class in pretest is 29.0 and posttest is 73.0, while the mean score of control class in pretest is 22.7 and posttest is 61.5. For further analysis, the comparison of t-counted and t-table, indicates that t-counted 2.82 while t-table value is 2.01. Based on the analysis result, t-counted value is greater than the t-table value (2.82>2.01). It means that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. In conclusion, the writing skill of seventh grade students can be improved through Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique.

**Keywords**: Applying, Writing Skill, Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) Technique.

**INTRODUCTION**

In our global community, the ability to write effectively is becoming important to be mastered. As advances in transportation and technology allow people from nations and cultures throughout the world to interact with each other, communication across languages becomes more essential. Therefore, the ability to write a second language is becaming widely recognize as important skill for educational, business, and personal reason. In adult life, people’s writing needs are both institutional and personal. Institutional writing is used in a professional or institutional role, such as business person, teacher, or student, and conforms to institutional conventions. Personal writing includes personal letters and creative writing.

As part of the language, writing is an important skill besides listening, reading, and speaking that must be mastered by the students. On curriculum 2013, people should have good capabilities in writing. Writing is often considered as the hardest language skill than the other skills since it requires in a higher level or productive language control. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. Writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. The difficulty becomes even more seen if their language proficiency is poor. The most important thing is how the learners create, because writing has three steps to produce or to make. So, they need a preparation to write. There are pre-writing, writing and revising. But, some people also define writing process in different steps. Harmer (2007:5) divides this process into four elements. They are planning, drafting, editing, and final version. The researcher also experiences that writing is the hardest skill for people who learn English, because in writing process, students will face many difficulties in transferring thought and ideas in writing form. To make the students motivated and enjoyable in learning, the teacher should use appropriate teaching method. Therefore, it is important for teacher to gain some knowledge. When we teach the lesson to students, especially in writing, we should give them new things or we should use the interesting method or technique in teaching. One of the technique that can be applied by the teacher in teaching writing is FRESH technique.

Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) is one of the techniques which use in teaching writing. It is considered as a technique of learning that enables students to improve their comprehension. The strategy used in this model is the “F” stands for “Fact”. “Fact” in this study means the identification of the object or it be called general description of the object. Usually, it contains object’s name, kind of the object, etc. “R” stands for “Reasons” which means a supporting idea that strengthen the fact. “E” stands for “Elaboration”. “Elaboration” means the explanation of the reasons. The students should elaborate it in detail, so the reader can get clear description of the object. “SH” stands for “Shift”, which can also mean decision or conclusion. Is the conclusion of the information before. The technique which is chosen above become one of researcher’s consideration to make something new in teaching writing descriptive paragraph. In this case, the researcher attempt to offer one technique that makes the students interested in studying writing through FRESH technique. This can be a good way to increase students ability in writing descriptive paragraph because the teacher will guide them to make a descriptive paragraph which are contain fact and reason of the topic before elaborate them into a good paragraph. From this activitiy, it is espected to enhance the quality of students’ answer.

In relation to this, the object of this research would be the seventh grade EFL-learners. The reason why the researcher would conduct her research in that school, because it was based on observation and interviewed; the reseacrher identified that the seventh grade students got any difficulties in learning writing especially in descriptive paragraph. First, the students made many mistakes in understanding grammar. They do not master the construction of grammatical sentences well. Last, they also had difficulties to organize their ideas into simple descriptive paragraph even how to arrange paragraph based on the right generic structure. By looking at the condition, one of the techniques which can be applied in teaching writing is FRESH technique. The researcher will use this technique because it is an interesting, useful, and easy to apply for the students. Every steps in FRESH will lead them to make a good descriptive paragraph. FRESH technique will help students to improve their descriptive writing skill. Every letters in FRESH will guide the students to organize their idea in writing a descriptive paragraph with the correct grammatical sentences. FRESH is a simple technique, but it will give big advantages for the learner.

Considering that problem, the research question would be formulated as follows: Does the use of FRESH technique in teaching English improve the students’ writing ability of VII grade?

**METHOD**

This research applies a quasi experimental design. The study used a research design which proposed by Cohen et al (2007:283).

The samples of this study are VII D and VII E. This study applied a purposive sampling technique. In this case, the teacher suggested conducting a research in class VII D and class VII E because they have the same condition in writing a descriptive paragraph.

Related to the title of this research, “applying FRESH technique in teaching writing descriptive paragraph of the seventh grade students.” The independent variable is the FRESH technique, while the dependent variable in this research is writing skill of the seventh grade students. The instrument of collecting the research data are pretest and posttest. This treatment was conducted in eight meetings. A pretest was given to both class experimental class and control class. Before doing the posttest, the experimental class would be given the treatment. The treatment conducted in six meetings. In this treatment, the students in experimental group were taught by using *fact-reason-elaboration-shift technique* where they have to make a simple descriptive paragraph by collecting the fact and reasons about the topic. Firstly, the researcher guided them to collecting the fact about the topic. Secondly, the researcher guide them to find out some reasons about the fact that they already write. Thirdly, the learners should elaborate their reasons in detail. Fourthly, the learners should write a conclusion about their paragraph by write again their toic sentence using different words.

Before starting to write a descriptive paragraph, the learners got some explanations that related to the topic. Especially at the first meeting, appropriate elaboration is needed by the learners to encourage them understand the rule of learning process. The learners said that it was the first time they learn with FRESH technique.

Furthermore, the students started to share their ideas in their own sheet. The students really enjoy the process write using FRESH technique. Sometimes the class got noisy because there were some students that share their opinion to other. In this case the researcher roled as a facilitator to guide them where share ideas was not for share but to enrich their knowlege that related to the problem. At the first and the second topics the students did not get significant improvement in their writing. Based on that problem, before begin to learn with the third topic, the researcher discussed what their difficulties in using this technique. The main problem was the learners did not master the grammar.

At the third until the last topics the students have good improvement in writing particularly in their grammar, orgaization and vocabulary. In grammar they understood how to use simple present tense in appropriate times. Moreover, in organize the paragraph and used vocabulary. Then, posttest would be given to both of classes after finish the treatment for the experimental class. The posttest would be used as a measurement to know how well the technique works in improving the students’ achievement in writing descriptive paragraph.

In collecting the obtained data were analyzed statistically with the following steps; Firstly, to analyze the data, this research used one kind of data analysis. Therefore, in analyzing the test used formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:240). Secondly, to calculated mean of the class on pre-test and post-test, this study used formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55). Thirdly, After getting the mean score of both experimental and control group, this study computed the squared deviation. It used to know the significant difference between the experimental and control group. This study used a formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:312). Fourthly, the study analyzed the data in order to know the significant difference or testing hypothesis by using t-count formula as proposed by Arikunto (2006:311).

**FINDINGS**

There were two kind of the test in this research; pretest and posttest. The tests are administered to the both group. Experimental and control class, pretest was given before applying the treatment and posttest was given after applying the treatment by using Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique in experimental class. Before giving treatment, pretest was conducted for experimental class (VII D) on Tuesday, August 3th 2016 at 10.15-11.15 a.m., and for control class (VII E) on Friday, August 5th 2016 at 08.35- 09.45 a.m. The tests were given in different time because both classes got English subject on different day.

The treatment was given eight times to the experimental group. In this treatment, the students in experimental group were taught by using *fact-reason-elaboration-shift technique* where they have to make a simple descriptive paragraph by collecting the fact and reasons about the topic. Firstly, the researcher guided them to collecting the fact about the topic. Secondly, the researcher guide them to find out some reasons about the fact that they already write. Thirdly, the learners should elaborate their reasons in detail. Fourthly, the learners should write a conclusion about their paragraph by write again their toic sentence using different words.

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At the first and the second topics the students did not get significant improvement in their writing. Based on that problem, before begin to learn with the third topic, the researcher discussed what their difficulties in using this technique. The main problem was the learners did not master the grammar.

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**Table 1**

**Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Students in Experimental Group**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initial | Pre-Test | Post-test |
| Scores | Scores |
|  | MY | 55.5 | 88.9 |
| 2. | NF | 22.2 | 77.8 |
| 3. | W | 22.2 | 77.8 |
| 4. | H | 22.2 | 55.5 |
| 5. | SK | 33.3 | 77.8 |
| 6. | F | 22.2 | 66.7 |
| 7. | CW | 44.4 | 66.7 |
| 8. | MA | 22.2 | 77.8 |
| 9. | T | 33.3 | 88.9 |
| 10. | PSW | 33.3 | 88.9 |
| 11. | AF | 11.1 | 77.8 |
| 12. | MFB | 22.2 | 66.7 |
| 13. | NMD | 11.1 | 88.9 |
| 14. | TK | 33.3 | 66.7 |
| 15. | MAF | 33.3 | 55.5 |
| 16. | SV | 44.4 | 55.5 |
| 17. | S | 55.5 | 77.8 |
| 18. | MS | 33.3 | 88.9 |
| 19. | MF | 22.2 | 55.5 |
| 20. | AM | 22.2 | 88.9 |
| 21. | AMD | 33.3 | 55.5 |
| 22. | M | 33.3 | 77.8 |
| 23. | KV | 44.4 | 77.8 |
| 24 | MO | 33.3 | 66.7 |
| 25 | AO | 22.2 | 44.4 |
| 26 | BS | 22.2 | 88.9 |
| **Scores** | | 754.8 | 1899.9 |

Table 1 indicates, The students got scores under the standard score ≤ 65. It can be known that all students were failed in descriptive paragraph. The conclusion, they had problems in writing especially in descriptive paragraph and their skill needed to be improved.

In the posttest, there are 20 students got good score or passed standard score and 6 students failed. 6 students who failed in the posttes got remedial posttest but their scores did not put into the data. Other words, 76.9% students got score ≥ 65 and 46.6% students got the score ≤ 65. It means that FRESHtechnique can help students to improve their writing skill in descriptive paragraph.

**Table 2**

**Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Students in Control Group**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initial | Pre-Test | Post-test |
| Scores | Scores |
|  | ZY | 11.1 | 55.5 |
| 2. | AB | 11.1 | 22.2 |
| 3. | IR | 11.1 | 22.2 |
| 4. | MAG | 33.3 | 88.9 |
| 5. | NS | 22.2 | 44.4 |
| 6. | FH | 11.1 | 66.7 |
| 7. | PG | 22.2 | 55.5 |
| 8. | JA | 44.4 | 66.7 |
| 9. | MD | 33.3 | 44.4 |
| 10. | RW | 22.2 | 77.8 |
| 11. | MI | 11.1 | 88.9 |
| 12. | YS | 33.3 | 88.9 |
| 13. | G | 22.2 | 44.4 |
| 14. | DS | 11.1 | 55.5 |
| 15. | CR | 22.2 | 55.5 |
| 16. | F | 22.2 | 22.2 |
| 17. | MA | 22.2 | 55.5 |
| 18. | AR | 11.1 | 33.3 |
| 19. | AA | 33.3 | 55.5 |
| 20. | TS | 22.2 | 22.2 |
| 21. | NF | 33.3 | 55.5 |
| 22. | AN | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| **Scores** | | 499.5 | 1355 |

Table 2 indicates, the students score in pretest of control class can be known that from 22 students, all students were failed in writing descriptive paragraph. In other words 100% students got score under the standard score.

In the posttest, there were 16 students got score ≥ 65 and 6 students got score ≤ 65. It means that 27.3% students passed writing descriptive paragraph test and 72.7% students who failed or remedial.

After calculating the total score, the researcher computed the mean score of pre-test and post-test to both group by using formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55). By looking at the pre-test and post-test of both groups have an explicit difference score between the experimental group and the control group, the mean score petest of experimental group was 29.0 and the mean score pretest of control group was 22.7. Then, the mean score posttest of experimental group was 73.0 and the mean score posttest of control group was 61.5.

After getting the mean score of pretest and posttest, the data showed the deviation and square deviation in pretest and posttest score of experimental class and control class.

The data found the mean deviation score from both groups, the deviation score of experimental group was 42.77 and the deviation score of control group was 27.28. After analyzing the data of the test by using t-test formula, the researcher found that t-counted is 2.82. By applying 0.05 level significance with the degree of freedom (df) Nx + Ny – 2 = 46, the researcher found that the t-counted ( is higher than the t-table (2.01). It means that the researcher is hypothesis is accepted. In other words, the use of FRESH technique can improve EFL-Learners writing ability of the seventh graders.

**DISCUSSION**

The result of the test shows that the writing skill of the seventh grade students can be improved by applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique. Furthermore, the study explained briefly the students’ improvement before having treatment, getting treatment, and after having treatment.

First, the pretest gave to the experimental and control class before treatment to know their knowledge in writing descriptive paragraph. The test was contained a prompt. The students asked to write simple descriptive paragraph. Both of experimental and control class received the same kind of pretest. The result of the pretest was under the standard score. In experimental class, 0 (0%) students were considered pass the test. The mean score was 27.2 While in the control class, 0 (0%) students were also considered pass the test which the mean score was 22.7. The study calculated that both of the class had similar ability in writing because they made many mistakes in making descriptive paragraph.

Based on the result of pretest, in fact the students had some problems in writing, on line with the forms of this research which concerned with some aspect of writing ; organization, grammar and vocabulary. First, the study found that the students did not write anything for minutes when the researcher asked them to write descriptive paragraph. It means that they confused when they were going to start writing something. They did not know how to express their ideas. Second, they also often made mistakes in organization of the paragraph and could not put their ideas in the right part. The last, the students almost did not master the construction of grammatical sentences well especially in simple present tense. So, they produced text in grammatical errors, meaningless sentences, used Bahasa Indonesia styles and even wrong. The students basically translate word by word what they want to write from Indonesia to English. Furthermore, the researcher gave treatment in order to help the students in experimental class to improve their writing skill.

After conducted pretest for both classes. The treatment were conducted to experimental class in six meetings. Both classes were taught with different Technique. The experimental class was taught writing descriptive paragraph through Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique. While the control class was taught through conventional technique as their teacher taught in school. The material for both classes were provided related to the English curriculum in junior high school (K13) about descriptive paragraph. In experimental class, the first and second meeting they were taught about descriptive paragraph, the generic structures and tenses that used in descriptive paragraph. From the third to the six meetings, they were taught several topics by applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique.

There are some procedures that writer used in developing students’ writing skill. First of all, teacher gave students’ attention and asked some students questions related to the topic. Then, the teacher delivers the learning objectives that will be done at this meeting. According to Faisal (2010:8),“FRESH technique has own meaning of each letter. “F” stands for *Fact*, “R” stands for *Reason*, E stands for *Elabratio*, and “SH” stands for *Shift.* In applying the treatment, teachers introduced and explained to them what Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique is and how to make descriptive paragraph by applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique. After that, the students got a topic about descriptive paragraph. Next step, they were asked to write the fact about the topic. Third, after write the topic, the learners were asked to write the reason about the fact that they already write. Fourth, after done two steps before, the learners were asked to elaborate the fact and the reason that they have stated before. Last, after finishing all steps before, the learners were asked to write a conclution about their paragraph.

In the process of teaching learning, the students were active, interested, and enthusiastic. They gave their participation to do the task and asked the researcher about related vocabulary that they did not know. Furthermore, the teacher help the students check their error in writing. And the last the students were given exercise. Finally, the researcher gave the learners posttest to measure their writing skill after having treatment both of the class.

The result of posttest showed the significance progress the students in experimental class. Although in the control class had progress also, but its progress was different. The study found in the experimental class, there were 20 (76.9%) students got score higher than standard score and 6 (23.1%) learners got lower the standard score. The highest score was 88.9. The study found the mean score of posttest in experimental class was 73.0. Meanwhile, in control class, there were 5 (22.8%) learners got score higher than standard score 65 and 17 (77.2%) learners got score lower the standard score. Furthermore, the mean score of posttest in the control class was 61.5. Based on the results, the score of the students in experimental class were higher than the learners in the control class. Finally, the study concluded that the applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique is effective to improve writing skill of the seventh grade EFL-Learners.

By applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique in the teaching and learning writing process. The learners could be active when the learners getting and organizing idea from the topic, the technique was guided the learners to organize their idea in the written form. The learners in the experimental class were guided to get the ideas, grammar and vocabulary used to make descriptive paragraph.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the data analysis, the researcher draws conclusions as follows. The study concludes that the applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique is effective to improve writing skill of the seventh grade EFL-Learners. Especially in the some aspects of writing, there are organization, grammar and mechanics. It was supported by the mean score between the mean score of posttest in experimental class (73.0) is higher than the mean score of posttest in control class (61.5). It also was proved by the t-counted value (2.82) is higher than the t-table (2.01). Therefore, the hypothesis of this research is accepted. It showed that the score of experimental class after the treatment applying Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique is better than the score of control class. In conclusion, through Fact-Reason-Elaboration-Shift (FRESH) technique can be used to help the students to improve and to master their writing skill, particularly in writing descriptive paragraph.

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