IMPROVING STUDENTS’ WRITING ABILITY
BY USING ROUND TABLE TECHNIQUE
(A Classroom Action Research at the Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Ngemplak in 2014/2015 Academic Year)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is aimed to identify whether Round Table technique can improve the students’ writing or not and to describe how Round Table technique improves the students’ writing ability. It is essential to learn writing in order to make the students have more knowledge. In fact, most of the students at the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 1 Ngemplak face problems in writing. For the common problems, the students had less enthusiasm in writing because they still lack of vocabulary. The students also had difficulties to start and develop the sentences in writing. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to apply certain methods or techniques to solve those problems and make the students interested to learn English.

The method of this research is a classroom action research. It was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Ngemplak. The researcher conducted a classroom action research from February until May 2015. In this research, the researcher used the eleventh grade students in 2014/2015 academic year as the subject of research. The researcher divided this action research into two cycles. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation, interview, field note, and test. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the formula of t-test to know the improvement between pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2.

The result of the research shows that Round Table Technique can improve the students’ writing ability. There was an improvement on the mean score of the test. In the pre-test, the mean is 46.64, the first cycle was 64.45 and improved to 79.27 in the second cycle.

Based on the result of this researcher, it can be concluded that: (1) This technique could make the students have more ideas. (2) It also improved students’ participation in learning writing. (3) They were not shy anymore and highly motivated to join the instructional process. The English teachers who want to apply Round Table technique in English teaching should pay attention in the process of technique to make the technique run well.

Key words: Writing Ability, Round Table Technique, Classroom Action Research
INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language for Indonesia. It has four skills, speaking, reading, listening, and writing. All of the skills have to be mastered because those are important in understanding English. The learners can learn English easily by writing as one of those skills because it can develop our ability in arrangement or knowledge. According to Brown (2003:218), “Writing skill, at least at rudimentary levels, is a necessary condition for achieving employment in many walks of life and is simply taken for granted in literate cultures”. It is one of the important skills of four basic skills that have to be mastered. This skill also has to be paid attention more by the school. The students can express their ideas more by writing. They can write all of their opinion in the form of written text. The students also can get more knowledge by writing.

In the KTSP (School-Based Curriculum), the students of the eleventh grade have to be able to write some kinds of text. Unfortunately, some problems were occurred in teaching writing. The students had less enthusiasm in learning writing. They were not interested in doing the task when the topic of writing was not interesting for them. It made the students had low motivation in learning writing. The students also had difficulty to start writing. They still confused to make some exact sub topics that related with the topics. It can make the sentences were not coherent one to the others.

The problems also can come from the teacher, especially the technique that the teacher used in learning writing. The teacher still used a monotonous way like just asked the students to write a paragraph in teaching writing. The teacher
ever used the techniques, like Index Card Match and Story Telling to make the students understand the learning, but it hadn’t effective. The teacher had not had the other ways to make the students are attracted in writing. The teacher also pushed the learning English in the improvement of speaking and reading skill because the teacher focused on the orientation in final exam. In fact, the students still had the score in writing below the Minimum Criterion of the Students Mastery (KKM). The teacher hoped that the students can reach the score in writing at least 7.5 according to the KKM at SMA Negeri 1 Ngemplak, but it hadn’t happened really.

For solving the problems above, there are some techniques that can be used in teaching writing. One of the techniques is Round Table technique. According to Kagan (2009: 6.34), round table technique is learning technique where the students take turn in their team by generating their responses, solving problems, or making a contribution to a project. The students can do the writing task with their friends for their team. They also can express their ideas easily to make the supporting sentences in paragraph. According to Barkley, Cross, & Major (2005:241), “Students take turns responding to a prompt by writing one or two words or phrase before passing the paper along to others who do the same”. It means that the students have to be active in collaborative study. Each of them has to give their ideas in a paper before the paper is given to their friends. Barkley et al (2005:241) also state that round table also ensures equal participation among group members and exposes students to multiple viewpoints and ideas.
The procedures of round table technique in teaching writing are: (1) Grouping—the teacher asks the students to sit in a group of four students; (2) Preparing—the teacher gives the groups similar theme; (3) Brainstorming—the teacher asks the member of the groups to write words or phrases related to the theme; (4) Writing—the group writes a text using the words/phrases written; (5) Presenting—each group presents their writing; (6) Evaluating—the teacher asks each group to make correction; (7) Revising—each group revises their work/writing. The researcher did those steps in teaching writing to make the students can do the learning processes easily.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This research was carried out at SMA N 1 Ngemplak Boyolali in the academic year of 2014/2015. The subject that was used by the researcher was the eleventh grade of Social Class or XI S 3 of SMA N 1 Ngemplak. There are 29 students, consisting of 9 male students and 20 female students. The subject was taken because the writing skill in that class had to be improved.

This research was a classroom action research which conducted to acquire the information in order to solve the problems that faced in particular situation and condition. According to Kemmis (2009), “Critical participatory action research is fundamentally a ‘practice changing practice’”. Kemmis, Mc Taggart, & Nixon (2014:67) state that the aims of the critical participatory action research to help participants to transform (1) their understandings of their practices; (2) the conduct of their practices, and (3) the conditions under which they practice, in
order that these things will be more rational (comprehensible, coherent and reasonable), more productive and sustainable, and more inclusive.

The researcher used the model of action research that had been stated by Kemmis and Taggart in Burns (1999:32) that action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential moments: of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The description of each steps as follows:

1. Planning

   The researcher identified the problems in teaching process that will be studied. The researcher used some methods to have the information about these problems, such as by interviewing, observing, field notes, and the others. From those methods, the researcher identified the problems and found the way to solve it. After that, the researcher planned the cycle one into two meetings. The researcher made a lesson plan for every meeting. Then she conducted the teaching learning in class.

2. Acting

   The researcher implemented the teaching-learning activities by using round table technique in eleventh grade students to improve the writing ability. The researcher compared the result of using this study in writing learning before.

3. Observing

   The researcher observed the students’ activities in learning process. The researcher noted the strengths and the weaknesses of the implementation of round table technique. The researcher developed it if give more strengths.
4. Reflecting

The researcher evaluated the process and implementation of using round table technique in writing. The researcher noted the strength and the weakness of the technique to the development the leaning next.

In this classroom action research, the sources of the data are in the form of numbers and words. The researcher used test and non-test to collect the data. For the test, the researcher used pre-test and post-test to know the improving of students’ skill in writing before and after using round table technique. The researcher gave pre-test to know the students’ skill in writing before using the technique. Then, the researcher gave post-test to know the improvement of students’ skill in writing after used the technique. According to Brown (2003:3) test is a method of measuring a person’s ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. For the data in words, the researcher used non-test in collecting the data. The researcher used observation, interview, and field note.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used quantitative and qualitative method. For the quantitative the data, the researcher gave pre-test to know the students’ ability in writing before using round table technique. After the action, the researcher gave post-test to know whether using round table technique can improve the students’ ability in writing. The result of the test was analyzed using non-independent t-test to know that the result in improving the students’ ability in writing is different between before and after using round table technique. Besides used quantitative in analyzing the data, the researcher used qualitative data. The data was in words. Marshal and Rossman in Gibson and Brown (2006:154) state
that “Qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships and underlying themes”. Based on the above, it means that to analyze the data, the researcher needs more information about the object which will be analyzed.

**RESEARCH FINDING**

In this finding, the researcher presents the result of the research and the analysis of the data collected which were conducted through pre-research, cycle one, and cycle two. The researcher demonstrated the explanation of round table technique in learning to make the students can do the learning with round table technique easily. The researcher conducted pre-research before implemented the action research. In teaching learning, the researcher gave treatment to the students before implemented round table technique. The researcher gave a pre-test to identify the students’ ability in writing before using the technique. Based on the result of pre-test, the data showed that the mean score of pre-test was 46.24. There was no student who could pass the KKM. The lowest achievement gained score 35 and the highest achievement gained score 69.

From that analyzing, it could be seen that almost of the XI S 3 students’ writing ability was still low. The students still confused to start writing. They had no more ideas in arranging a text. In the pre-test, the students actually known about the material, but they could not make a good text because of some problems, such as they had no idea to make the first sentence of paragraph, they
had less vocabulary, they had not known about the organization of the text, and they could not develop the sentences well.

Based on the result above, the researcher conducted the action research to improve the students’ writing ability. The researcher analyzed the problems that had been found. Then, the researcher improved it by using round table technique. The researcher divided classroom action research into two cycles where every cycle consists of at least two meetings. In every cycle, the researcher conducted post-test in the end of meeting. Every cycle consisted of planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The researcher identified the problems in the result of pre-test before conducted those steps. Planning was done to prepare all instruments to collect the data. In the next step, the researcher implemented the planning that have arranged before. Then, the researcher observed the implementation of planning. For the last, the researcher reflected all of the steps that have been done.

For the first step of cycle one, the researcher planned all of the instruments in every meeting. The researcher made lesson plan in every meeting. The researcher also prepared the material based on the syllabus. The material of cycle one was about genre, they were spoof text and exposition text. The researcher also drilled the use of vocabulary, language, and mechanics that have to be mastered by the students. After the researcher conducted the action into two meetings, the researcher planned to conduct post-test 1 to know the improvement of the students’ score between pre-test and post-test 1. Then, the researcher implemented the planning used round table technique as stated in the lesson plan. The
The researcher divided the action into three steps: Opening activity, main activity, and closing activity. Then, the researcher observed the teaching learning process and the class situation of meeting. In the last step of cycle one, the researcher reflected all of the steps by evaluating about the conclusion of the action. The researcher tried to find the strength and the weakness of the action in cycle one and tried to modify the action in order students’ writing ability and in order 75% of students in the class could pass the Minimum Mastery Criterion- *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)*.

For the result of cycle one, there was an improvement in the students’ score, but it still below the KKM. The mean score of post test 1 was 64.45. The researcher gained the improvement results in those meeting by using round table technique. The researcher continued to improve the other skills in cycle 2. There were two meeting in cycle 2. For the first step, the researcher revised the plan from cycle one. The researcher made lesson plan in every meeting in cycle two. Then, the researcher decided to do an innovation about the implementation of round table technique. The researcher tried to ask the students to present the result of writing by using round table technique. Each group in the class had to present it. Then, the other group had to give their comments, suggestion, or recommendation based on the performance. The students could know if they made a mistake in writing from the other groups. Then, the group that were presenting in front of class had to repair the writing. The researcher also got the result in post-test 2. In those meeting of cycle 2, the researcher drilled the use of mechanics, organization and the content of the students’ writing. The result of
post-test 2 is the improvement of the students’ writing ability. The mean score of post-test 2 was 79.27.

The other result also shown in the improvement of the students’ ability in each aspect of writing, in pre-test, the average score for aspect “Content” was 55.97 %, the average score for aspect “Organization” was 48.96 %, the average score for aspect “Vocabulary” was 46.89 %, the average score for aspect “Language Use” was 32.68 % and average score for aspect “Mechanics” was 20.67 %. Based on the evaluation of the data on pre-test, the students’ ability in writing a text was still very low.

Most of the students did the errors frequently on each of writing components. Most of the errors in the aspect “Mechanics” were coming from punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. The researcher then decided to shoot this aspect first on the second meeting by explaining the rules in applying this component in writing.

The improvement occurred in post-test 1. The average score for aspect “Content” was increased, from 55.97 % in pre-test to 68.96 % in post-test 1. The average score for aspect “Organization” was 69.13 %, the average score for aspect “Vocabulary” was 62.93 %, the average score for aspect “Language Use” was 56.68 % and average score for aspect “Mechanics” was 31.18 %.

Based on the calculated data, the researcher found out that the lowest point that the students got in post-test 1 was in aspect “Mechanics”. This result was the consideration for the researcher to arrange the lesson material that suitable and effective to solve this problem and improve the students’ ability in this aspect. In cycle 2, the researcher tried to drill the mechanics aspect in task.
The average score of the students for aspect “Content” in post-test 2 was increased to 84.71 %, for aspect “Organization” was 83.10, for aspect “Vocabulary” was 76.89 %, for aspect “Language Use” was 69.51 %, and for aspect “Mechanics” was 41.69 %. If we compare the result of the students’ ability, on each aspect of writing in Pre-Test, Post-Test 1 and Post-Test 2, we can see a magnifying improvement. The improvement can be seen on the table below:

**The Improvement of the Students’ Writing Ability in each aspects of Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Writing</th>
<th>Pre-Test (%)</th>
<th>Post-Test 1 (%)</th>
<th>Post-Test 2 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>55.97</td>
<td>68.96</td>
<td>84.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>48.96</td>
<td>69.13</td>
<td>83.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>46.89</td>
<td>62.93</td>
<td>76.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Use</td>
<td>32.68</td>
<td>56.68</td>
<td>69.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>20.67</td>
<td>31.18</td>
<td>41.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher also obtained and analyzed the data from affective and psychomotor aspects by using observation sheet which was done by the collaborator. The aspects that were observed were the quality of the teaching and learning process on the classroom in applying round table technique. The teacher and the students were the objects of the observation. This instrument was on checklist form that contains the aspects that needed to be observed. The collaborator monitored and wrote the student’s and teacher’s participations to identify the problems and obstacles during the application of round table technique in the classroom so that the researcher were able to decide the steps that
need to be taken on the following treatment to minimize the problems. The findings then computed and calculated for the ease of the presentation of the data analysis. From the result of observation, the researcher known what aspects will be changed and improved, so that the researcher got a good quality in teaching writing.

**DISCUSSION**

The researcher conducted pre-research observations before doing the research in order to know what problems that the students faced. After that, the researcher formulated those problems to be solved. In order to collect the data, the researcher interviewed the previous English teacher. From the result of the pre-research, the researcher found four problems, they are about the students’ enthusiastic in learning writing, the students’ inability in composing writing, the problem from the teacher’s way in teaching, and the students’ score in writing. Then, the researcher conducted the action research to solve those problems in teaching writing by using round table technique.

At the beginning of treatment, the technique did not run maximally because the students had not known the real implementation of the technique. The students still confused in the use of round table technique. This problem was solved when the researcher explained more and gave the simulation about round table technique. Finally, they could practice the whole steps of round table technique. The improvement could be seen in the score of writing task. The students could create the text better than before. Therefore, the researcher decided
to conduct post-test in order to measure whether there is a difference or not. It proved that there were differences of pre-test and post-test. In fact, the improvement was not maximally reached.

According to Patel & Javin (2008:71), they state that “It is very necessary for teacher to know various types of methods and techniques in teaching English”. It means that the teacher must give an innovation or combination with the various methods or techniques in teaching. As the result of cycle one, the attempts to improve students’ writing ability were still needed. The teacher initiated to add the new way which was able to help the students’ writing. In cycle two, the researcher asked the students to present the result of their discussion in round table technique, then the other groups gave some comments in each performance of group and then wrote it. It was done to be combined with round table technique to be applied in the second cycle. As a result, it was more effectively done than using round table technique only.

From the results showed of cycle one and cycle two, there are improvements in students’ writing ability. In the pre-test, the mean score of pre-test is 46.24. In the post-test 1, the mean score is 65.45. It can be concluded that there is an improvement of the students’ writing ability from pre-test and post-test 1. The comparison of the mean score of pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 can be seen in the following table:
The Result of Improving the Students’ Writing Skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean of Pre-Test</th>
<th>Mean of Post-Test 1</th>
<th>Mean of Post-Test 2</th>
<th>t-value of Cycle 1</th>
<th>t-value of Cycle 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46.24</td>
<td>65.45</td>
<td>79.27</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>13.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The improvement not only in the students’ score in writing, the teaching learning processes also improved. In the first meeting, there were not attentions from the students to the teacher. The students’ attitude and behavior still not organized well due to that the lack of understanding of the implementation of round table technique in the classroom. Then, in the second and third meeting of cycle one, the students started to give attentions to the teacher. They were attracted in using round table technique in teaching writing. They feel more comfortable. Then, in the post-test 1, the students can get the improvement of writing ability. Although based on the check list on the observation sheets in the first treatment, most of the students still couldn’t able to fulfill the steps in using round table technique in the classroom. During the research, the researcher and the collaborator used to discuss all the things that happened in the classroom, found the problems and fix it on the next meeting.

In the next meeting of cycle two, the students feel more enjoyment. They had enthusiasm more in learning. They get more improvement in post-test 2. The result of post-test 2 is excellent which almost the students can gain good score. In fact, the condition of the learning can influence the result in the students’ score. Although in the implementation of learning in cycle one and cycle two still had some failure steps, the result of those learning can be improved.
In cycle one, the researcher still failed to make the students understand all of the material. It can be caused that the researcher still had more failure in teaching. Then, in cycle two, the researcher repaired those failures to be more effective learning. In cycle two, the students can understand more about the material. Then, the best result is in the post-test 2 which almost the students can gain the excellent result and they can understand more about the material of teaching learning. The students and the teacher are active in learning processes. It makes the teaching learning processes can be effective.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The researcher conducted classroom action research related to the attempt to improve students’ writing ability by using round table technique. Before conducted the action research, the researcher conducted the pre-research to identify the problems that students’ faced. Then, the researcher conducted the action research to solve the problems. The action research consist of two cycles, cycle one and cycle two. There were two meetings in each cycle. After the researcher did the action, the researcher concluded that there was improvement in the students’ writing ability. The analysis of the data in this research has shown that round table technique significantly improved the students’ ability in writing. Based on the calculation of the test result in pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2, the researcher found out the increasing in the students’ mean score. In pre-test, it was only 46.24, then in post-test 1 increased to 64.45, and in post-test 2 incredibly arose to 79.27. There is an improvement in each step of the learning.
There are some suggestions for the learning processes at SMA Negeri 1 Ngemplak that the teacher has to use round table technique to be considered as the alternative technique to be applied in teaching and learning process. Not only because of the improvement of the students’ writing ability but also because of the effectiveness of round table technique in creating a better classroom atmosphere where the students were free to deliver their ideas and opinions. For the students, they have to do each step of writing correctly. The suggestion is also for the school to make a policy to the teacher to conduct the appropriate technique in teaching writing to make an improvement in the result of writing. For the other researchers, they are suggested to conduct classroom action research related to the attempt to improve students’ writing ability by using round table technique.

REFERENCES


