



ENHANCING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING TEXT USING GROUP INVESTIGATION METHOD

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Article info	ABSTRACT
<p>Corresponding Author:</p> <p>Jenny Ika Misela jennyikamisela@gmail.com Universitas Wahidiyah Kediri</p>	<p>Writing is considered by students as a difficult skill to study. They do not realize that communication can be transferred through writing. Consequently, they write without purpose and in disorder way. They only write what is inside their head down in the paper and ignore what their purpose is, its grammatical and vocabulary use. Group Investigation (GI) is an organizational approach that allows a class to work actively and collaboratively in small groups and enables students to take an active role in determining their own learning goals and processes. GI is interesting so that the students will feel the new atmosphere in classroom and they are interested in learning writing. This study aims to investigate the implementation of GI to enhance the students' writing ability. This study was conducted by using classroom action research that has two cycles within. The subject of the research was the students of eleventh year SMKN 2 Kediri which consisted of 35 students. The instruments of collecting data were quantitative (writing test) and qualitative data (observation sheet, and field notes). Questionnaire and interview being used by the researcher to know deeply the problem faced by the students then she analyzed them to find the appropriate method. They could follow the writing process from (1) topic selection, (2) cooperative planning, (3) implementation, (4) analysis and synthesis, (5) presentation of final project, and (6) evaluation. Based on the writing test scores, the students' score kept improving in every test. In the pre-liminary study, there were only 43% of the students who passed the minimum standard score. After giving treatment to the students using GI, there was an enhancement towards the students writing. 91% of the students passed the test in cycle 1 and 100% of the students passed the test in cycle 2. Based on the observation sheet and field notes, it was found that the learning process of writing ran well. The students can be more active in group work, and they can follow the process of writing well-ordered by implementing the steps of GI. The result of the research showed that GI method could enhance students' achievement in writing instruction text. It was suggested to modify and make the GI method to be more interesting and suitable towards the skill and topic of the study.</p> <p>Keywords: <i>classroom action research (CAR), group investigation (GI), method, teaching learning process, writing, instruction text</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most important skills in learning languages besides listening, speaking, and reading. Nunan (2003: 89) states, "Writing was used to show that students had mastered a particular grammatical rule, rather than had a good idea about the subject matter.

In fact, correct spelling, grammar, and overall organization were the most important evidence of second language proficiency.” It means that the most important evidence of the students was success in learning a second language is where they can write in the correct spelling, know its grammar rule, have a good idea, and know the organization of the writing types.

Based on the writing result that the researcher gave when she did the training teaching practice (PPL) showed that 28% of students in XI Banking class who do not realize that communication can be transferred through writing usually write without purpose and in disorder way. This case can be seen from the writing result of the students. They only write what is inside their head down on paper. They are not aware of what they need to do in writing, what their purpose in writing is, which word they must use in writing and how to arrange those words into coherent sentences.

Further, she found some problems in the field when giving writing materials to the students. The problem was that almost fifty percent of the students from 35 students still got marks under KKM in writing. Then she was motivated to conduct pre-liminary study to know the students’ writing ability. She gave tests, distributed questionnaires, and did interviews. The result from the test given by the researcher showed that 29 students from 35 got low scores under 75. There were many errors that she found in the students’ writing. Mostly the errors are apparent in content, organizations, vocabulary mechanics, and grammar of the text.

Another problem was found from the open-ended interview; it showed that the students had low motivation and were not interested in doing the task since the writing activities were not interesting. Usually, the students in SMKN 2 *Kediri* were asked to write sentences and paragraphs without being given some clue so that it is difficult for them to express ideas on a piece of paper.

To strengthen towards that evidence, the result of the questionnaire showed that 62% students did not like to write English, 57% students stated they have many problems in writing and mostly in grammar, vocabulary and content. Seventy-seven percent of students agreed that the way of their teacher teaching writing was boring. From all the evidence above, the researcher presumed that the problem faced by the students arose since the teacher never gave a clear explanation toward what the students had to do to build up their idea when they were doing writing tasks. As consequence, they often stuck and ran out the idea in the middle of their writing process. The idea may be incomplete, some points are missing, the paragraphs not divided right, and the content is inadequate.

To solve those problems, the researcher was interested in using Group Investigation. This study was concerned with applying Group Investigation in improving students’ skill in writing instructions text. Killen in Mabruroh (2011: 8) notifies that students in GI select topics for study, then every group decides what subtopics are to be investigated as well as the goals of their study and then prepare and present a report in front of class. In line with the statement above, Slavin (2005: 216) states that the important point for group investigation is the students’ cooperative planning of their inquiry. Group members determine what they want to investigate to solve their problem; which resources they require; who will do what; and how they will present their completed project to the class. Zingaro (2008: 1) notifies that GI includes four important components (the four I’s): investigation, interaction, interpretation and intrinsic motivation. These four I’s are very useful for both teachers and students in teaching and learning instructions text. In the first “i”, investigation the students are forced to investigate a chosen topic. Second “i” for interaction, here the students are learnt

cooperatively, they explore and share their ideas in group of students. Next “i” for interpretation where the students are synthesizes and elaborates on their findings of each member to enhance understanding and clarity of ideas. Last “i” is for intrinsic motivation, GI kindled motivation of the students through group activity.

METHOD

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR is the most applied for those who are concerned in an educational setting, and it is practical design. Action researchers explore a practical problem with an aim toward developing a solution to a problem. Mills in Creswell (2011:577) believed that action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers (or other individuals in an educational setting) to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning. In addition, Ary (2010:512) notifies that action research can be used to enhance everyday work practices, to resolve specific problems, and to develop special projects and programs. For further, Hendricks in Ary (2010:512) states that action research is a powerful tool for studying and improving one’s practice. In this research, the researcher used CAR design because the researcher wanted to resolve the problem in Banking 1 class. The problem is they had low performance in writing tasks and resolved by conducting teaching writing procedures using GI to enhance the students’ writing performance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The research found in this research is represented from two cycles. The findings of each cycle can be seen as follows:

Cycle 1

Firstly, the researcher who has a role as teacher announced the result of preliminary test. She told the students’ score of the test was not satisfying enough. Here, she brought the students to a clear importance of writing text as a means of communication besides speaking, which can be facilitated through group work. She motivated the students to say that the method would be useful for them. She also introduced the rules of learning writing using GI method. The first cycle was about teaching and learning process and achievement tests. The topic was about instructions for making their favorite food. The test was followed by 35 students from 35 students. She did research using GI method to improve students' writing performance. The activities on the first cycle are as follows:

a. Planning

In this step, the researcher who has a role as teacher started to develop lesson plan for cycle 1, students attendance list, writing material (instruction text), observation sheet, and test. The lesson plan that she developed was about instruction text under topic of “How to Make Your Favorite Food”. She was preparing the students to make a group work, power point presentation about instruction text and simple text of “Nice Sandwich Before School”. She had planned to begin the teaching scenario from pre-writing activity, while-writing activity, and post-writing activity. Pre-writing activity is the activity where she prepared the students for the task and made them familiar with the topic. She gave a clear explanation about the material, grammatical features, and generic structure of instruction text. In while-writing

activity, the students did the writing process by using GI method starting from topic selection, cooperative planning, implementation, analysis and synthesis, and presentation of final project. The last step is post-writing activity. Post-writing activity was intended as a kind of follow-up activity. In this activity the students' work were evaluated by her whether individual work or even group work. Then she gave the students a writing test to measure their progress in learning writing.

b. Implementing

In this activity, the researcher became a teacher, and she was accompanied by her friend as the collaborator. Learning process was begun by greeting, asked students to pray together, checking students' attendance and she gave brainstorming before beginning the material by asking the students "Do you like to eat?", "What is your favorite food?", "Do you know how to make your favorite food?". In this case, the students in class were extremely enthusiastic to start learning the material which can be seen from how interested they are to answer the brainstorming question. After that, she explained about instruction text and the features of the text. She introduced the topic about "How to Make Your Favorite Food" with the title "Nice Sandwich Before School". Then, the students were divided into seven groups. Each group consisted of five students based on random systems both academically and gender. The students got the text one by one, and then they read the text and identified the generic structure (goal, material, and steps), and the language features of instruction text focus on grammar used. Then each group had the task of investigating one of their favorite foods.

Each group wrote the name of the food that they investigated, and the paper name of the person collected to the teacher. Then, the students of each group found out data about food that they investigated and prepared a report in the form of instruction text. After finishing, the students of each group presented their report in the class. During the presentation, she helped by the collaborator observed the student's cooperativeness in group, the students' activeness in presenting the material, students' concern toward other group presentations, the students' activeness in asking questions, and the students' activeness in answering questions in group. Then, the students helped by the teacher if they faced the problem.

In the last, the researcher as teacher and her students evaluated each group contribution to the work of the class. After all the process had finished, she evaluated students by giving them a test. After she did the test, she gave suggestions to the students to study hard and increase their vocabulary and learned grammar because vocabulary is the core to build up the idea in writing and grammar has an important role in writing. Then, she asked the students to say *hamdalah* together and closed the meeting.

c. Observing

The collaborator observed students in the learning process at class by using an observation sheet. This observation was done in the learning process of using GI method to teach writing at the eleventh grade of SMKN 2 Kediri. According to the result of the observation in cycle 1 done by the collaborator, it can be concluded that the teaching learning process was bad learning. Although the students had a good behavior toward the teacher's explanation before teaching began, in the process of learning writing activity the students less focus on group work.

The good points from the teaching learning process noted by the collaborator are first, most of the students are active to answer the researcher as teacher's question in brainstorming section. Second, most of the students wrote the material they got from her in their book. On

the contrary, there was unsatisfied noted from the collaborator and she wrote that some students were confused about what they had to do in their group work and sadly they did not know the process of writing, as consequent they could not manage their time in writing the text well and they ran out of time.

Another finding was based on the students' post writing test that had been checked and scored by the researcher and her collaborator. In checking or correcting the products of the students' writing was done in accordance with the scoring guide that has been agreed between the researcher and the collaborator. Then, the results were placed on the scoring table of the students. The total number of students is 35. The description of the writing post-test result is as follows: 32 students had got scores ≥ 75 or in another word 91% of the students had passed the minimum passing score. On the contrary, 3 students got score < 75 or in another word 9% of the students did not pass the minimum passing standard score. The work of those three students was weak on the development of the idea.

d. Reflecting

At this stage, reflection was done based on the data collected by the researcher and the collaborator. The data resources were the data of the preliminary study, the observation check list, the field notes, and the result of writing products. After deeply and carefully studying and analyzing the data recorded along and after the learning process that applied writing process approach on writing instruction text, there are some items that can be drawn by the researcher assisted by the collaborator.

Based on the collaborator's note, the researcher who has a role as teacher must be more confident and not panic when she faced all the students which majority is female and basically, they have a high critical thinking. The collaborator had written some points in her field notes to evaluate the teaching and learning writing process done by the researcher; she wrote that:

- i) The researcher had to motivate students to be more active in their group activity
- ii) The researcher should manage class well, e.g.: preparing the material needed completely, explaining the material clearly, telling the students how they are going to do the activity, putting the students into groups and controlling the students by going around the whole class.
- iii) The researcher had to prepare materials to make the students become active in group work, e.g. using pictures
- iv) The researcher had to explain clearly what the group work had to be done to get a perfect result

Cycle 2

The researcher here in cycle 2 begins the lesson by motivating the students and she announced the result of the post-writing test. She told the students' score of the test was better than the pre-cycle score. In this meeting, she used pictures to help the students select sub-topics they were interested in discussing, and the teaching learning process ran well. The students paid attention to her explanation, and they were interested in the topic on the day. They are more cooperative to do the group work, and they were more active than previous meetings. The topic was about "How to Make a Useful Handicraft". The test was followed by 35 students. The procedure is as follows:

a. Planning

The researcher planned some activities to get maximum result in the second cycle. The planning of the second cycle is not far from the first cycle. She arranged the lesson plan for

cycle 2, attendance list, observation sheet, writing material and test. In the second cycle, she used different topics. The topic she taught was about “How to Make a Useful Handicraft”. One point that made the second cycle preparation different from the first cycle was that she prepared pictures that are appropriate with the material. She downloaded some pictures from a search engine about the step of making handicraft.

In this step, she began with pre-writing activity, while-writing activity, and post-writing activity. Pre-writing activity is the activity where she prepared the students for the task and made them familiar with the topic. She gave a clear explanation about the material, grammatical features, and generic structure of instruction text. She explained deeply about the grammatical features in instruction text (simple present tense & imperative sentence) because grammar was being scored in posttest writing aside the content. She trained the students to write simple sentences in simple present tense & imperative.

In while-writing activity, the students did the writing process by using GI method starting from topic selection, cooperative planning, implementation, analysis and synthesis, and presentation of final project. In topic selection, she asked the captain of each group to decide what subtopic they wanted to discuss and investigate by choosing the provided picture. The last step is post-writing activity. Post-writing activity was intended as a kind of follow-up activity. In this activity the students’ work were evaluated by the researcher whether individual work or even the group work. Then she gave the students a writing test to measure their progress in learning writing.

b. Implementing

The activity in this stage was not different from the previous cycle. The researcher became a teacher, and she was accompanied by her friend as the collaborator. The learning process was begun by greeting, ask students to pray together, checking students’ attendance and she gave brainstorming before beginning the material by asking the students “*Do you like to wear it?*” (showed pictures of bracelet, it is handmade) “*Do you ever make it?* In this case, all the students said they never made bracelets, but they like to wear it to beautify their look. Then, she replied that it is okay if they never made a bracelet by themselves. Next, she asked “*Does anyone here who ever make a handicraft?* In this case, there was one student who raised her hand and said that she made brooches from flannel and some beads. That student shared her experience of how to make brooch from flannel and got money from it. She got all the students’ eyes and big applause. After the sharing time was over, the researcher that became a teacher introduced the topic about “How to Make a Useful Handicraft” and gave example of text under title “How to Make Bracelet”. Then, the students were divided into seven groups. Each group consists of five people and the members of the group were still the same as the previous group in cycle 1. Each group got one text then they read the text and identified the generic structure (goal, material, and steps), and the language features of instruction text focus on grammar used. Then each group got the task of investigating pictures of handicraft prepared by the researcher.

Each group wrote the name of handicraft that they investigated, and the paper name of person collected to the teacher. Then, students of each group found data about handicraft that they investigated and prepared a report in the form of instruction text. After finishing, the students of each group presented their report in the class. During presentation, the researcher as teacher accompanied by the collaborator observed the student’s cooperativeness in group, the students’ activeness in presenting the material, students’ concern toward other group

presentation, the students' activeness in asking questions, and the students' activeness in answering questions in group. Then, students helped by her if they faced the problem. After all the process had finished, she evaluated students by giving them a test.

In the end, the students and the teacher evaluated each group's contribution to the work of the class. After all the process had finished, she evaluated students by giving them a test. After doing the test, she gave suggestions to the students to study hard and increase their vocabulary and learned grammar because vocabulary is the core to build up the idea in writing and grammar has an important role in writing. She explained that they can improve their vocabulary by reading and finding a difficult word in dictionary, or any other way they are interested in doing. It may be listening to their favorite song, memorizing difficult words, etc. For leaning grammar, they can practice regularly in their spare time or maybe discuss with friends. Then, she asked students to say *hamdalah* together and closed the meeting.

c. Observing

The collaborator observed students in the learning process at class by using an observation sheet. This observation was done in the learning process of using GI method to teach writing at the eleventh grade of SMKN 2 *Kediri*. According to the result of the observation in cycle 2 done by the collaborator it can be concluded that the teaching learning process was good learning. Students had excellent behavior to teacher's explanation. They pay attention to her instructions and respond to it. The writing process of the students is getting better than previous study. The group work is better since she gave them pictures to help them in building the idea.

Another finding was based on the students' post writing test that had been checked and scored by the researcher and her collaborator. In checking or correcting the products of the students' writing was done in accordance with the scoring guide that has been agreed between the researcher and the collaborator. Then, the results were placed on the scoring table of the students. The total number of students that participate in this test is 35. The description of the writing post-test result is as follows: 35 students had got scores ≥ 75 or in another word 100% of the students had passed the minimum passing score. On the contrary, none of the students got a score < 75 or in another word 0% of the students did not pass the minimum passing standard score. It means all students in Banking 1 successfully passed the test.

d. Reflecting

The result of the second cycle was also considered as implementation. It was better than in the first cycle. There was an improvement in this cycle. The condition of the class was getting better. The students listened to the teacher's explanation and did not make noise in learning activity. The students took active part in their group, and they can associate with group members. It was because they were interested in studying with GI method that the teacher never used as teaching method before. In addition, pictures here are used to make the students more interested. The researcher concluded that the problems have been solving using GI method to teaching English writing ability. The teacher should motivate students to practice regularly in writing a text and motivate the passive students to be brave to express their idea into written text.

Discussion

In this section the researcher will point out her point of view in seeing the gap between the theories explained in chapter II and several evidence she had found in the field where she

got the data, especially in XI Banking 1 SMKN 2 *Kediri*. This is about the implementation of teaching writing using GI method in XI Banking 1 SMKN 2 *Kediri*.

From the observation in the field, she found that the students' writing skill was not good since they could not apply the writing process step by step from getting ideas, choosing, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing as proposed by Grenville (2001: 11-167). It can be seen from the result of observation check list in cycle 1, focus on outlining where the student's skill to plan what should they write down (beginning, content, ending) and thinking about the correct sentence was not implemented in good way. They did not plan and think out loud about what they should write and how to arrange the sentences into paragraph coherently. They also had poor skill in drafting and revising the text in the process of writing. After following the treatment given by the researcher using GI method in the process of teaching and learning writing, then the students could apply the step of writing well and their achievement kept improving.

Related to the implementation of GI method, the group work did not run well as the researcher's expected. Some of the students are active and some are passive. This differs from Slavin's beliefs that the important point in GI is students' cooperative planning of their inquiry. It was assumed that by implementing GI method, the group work will run well, and each member of the group knows what they are going to do, who will do what, and finds out the data on which resources they require. On the contrary, the students who are active became more active and the passive students still followed the active students' work. In the process of teaching writing using GI method, the researcher who has a role as the teacher is aware of her role as a facilitator. Then she prepared pictures in cycle 2 as the media to discuss for the group work. Her plan was to work efficiently, and all the students enjoyed it. The group working in cycle 2 gets better and it brings better results on their writing.

It can be concluded that GI could enhance the students' writing achievement because the step of teaching writing using GI method is similar toward the process of writing itself. The researchers could make the group work alive in the process of teaching and learning by using pictures as the stimulation to be discussed about in their group. The teaching and learning process was successful when the teacher could make the lessons interesting, draw out the quiet ones and control the more talkative ones.

Obstacle and Restrictiveness

There was no smooth way to get into the top of mountain, it was always curved and steep way. Regarding this research, it was conducted and finished after passing on some obstacles in the process of it. The obstacles may come from the school where the researcher carries out the research, the participants, or the material.

This research was done in XI Banking 1 class. The class was not too large, and it was overloaded. It needs to be wider so the students can have a bigger place and pleasant enough to study in. The researcher had to work and manage the class harder and efficiently when she asked the students in class to break up into some group because there was only limited space to move their table and chair. She was confused to recognize which students belong to group 1, group 2, and so other groups. This case was getting more serious when doing the writing test, it was easy for the students to cheat their friend's work.

Regarding the participant in this research, it was followed by 35 students of XI Banking 1, which come from different backgrounds that influence them in receiving the treatment given by the researcher. There were two students who active in English Debate

Club, some active in Scout Club, and some in Journalism Club. For the students who basically like English and joined the English Debate Club, it was easy for them to learn writing in English because according to their confession they always write their opinion in the notebook before they speak it up to their opponents' team. It brings different result in their writing performance than the students who does not joined in any English Club. The researcher had to work harder in explaining the material to the students who does not follow any English club or even English course in school or other English organization. Finally, she simplifies the material from the books and explains it to the students. She prepared the material in power point presentation and intended to present it using LCD projector. In fact, the LCD projector was broken, and the color was not clear. It was interrupted the teaching learning process in class. Then, in doing cycle 2, the researcher made some copies of the material that she wrote in the power point presentation to be spread to the captain of each group and made all the students get the material easily and clearly.

The researcher has an obstacle to herself when controlling the more talkative ones and making the quiet ones active in the group work. She had to motivate the quiet one to be active by calling their name and gave them a lot of opportunities to speak out of their mind. This method was not fully success, but it can train the quite ones to speak their mind. Train them regularly and they will be talkative.

After carefully and deeply analyzing the students' weaknesses in writing, the researcher found that most students find it hard to open new ideas inside their mind as can be seen from their writing result. Mostly they write a text the same way which their friends do. The researchers believed that it was caused by their seat that was too close to their friends. The researcher found that there are three aspects of writing that can be well implemented by using GI method. Outlining, drafting, and revising in writing process were closed to cooperative planning, implementation, analysis and synthesis in step of GI. The outline in writing forces the writer to plan the outline of all the ideas that they are going to write, begin with their writing goal, content, and how to close their text. The same way in GI step, cooperative planning happens where the teacher and the students in each group plan the learning procedures, tasks and goals connected with the subtopics they have selected.

The students make a draft in their writing process to re-write their outline of what should be in their text and what should be not. This process can be well implemented by following the step of GI called implementation. In implementation, the students in each group obtain any information from many sources then gather it and review with the subtopics. By doing this, the students carefully realized what they should write and not.

Revising in the process of writing can be implemented by following the step analysis and synthesis in GI. The students can revise the content and organization of their draft by analyzing and synthesizing it. They can analyze and synthesize the information they have drafted and in the writing process it is called revising.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the research findings and the discussion of the research, the researcher could draw a conclusion that by implementing the teaching and learning process of writing using GI method, this study successfully enhances the ability of the eleventh-grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri in writing instruction text. In doing this research, she used GI method which was also supported by using pictures.

The goal of this research was attained by having all the students in XI Banking 1 get a score of 75 in their writing products. Another goal that was attained in this research was that students could follow the step of the writing process by implementing the steps of GI which can make their writing products better and got the minimum passing score that had been standardized. In the process of writing, the students of XI Banking 1 (1) break into heterogenous group which consist of four to six member to choose specific subtopics (topic selection), (2) the students in each group plan the learning procedures, tasks and goals connected with the subtopics they have selected (cooperative planning), (3) each group obtain any information from many sources then they gather it, reviewing the subtopic, analyzing and find the conclusion (implementation), (4) analyze and evaluate the information they have get and prepare the summary (analysis and synthesis), (5) each group in the class present their topics studied (presentation of final project), (6) students and the teacher evaluate each group's work (evaluation).

This research was conducted in two cycles. The first cycle did not fulfill the criteria or the requirement of success, so the researcher continued to set the second cycle. The requirement is when all the students have got a score of at least 75 as a minimum passing standard determined or at least 100 % of students have achieved the minimum passing standard score. In the first cycle, 32 students had got scores ≥ 75 or in another word 91% of the students had passed the minimum passing score. On the contrary, 3 students got score < 75 or in another word 8,9% of the students did not pass the minimum passing standard score. The work of those three students was weak on the development of the idea.

In the second cycle, the researcher maximized her teaching writing using GI method supported by using pictures. The results are 35 students got scores ≥ 75 or in another word 100% of the students passed the minimum passing score. On the contrary, none of the students got a score < 75 or in another word 0% of the students did not pass the minimum passing standard score. It means all the students in Banking 1 class successfully passed the test.

From all the evidence that the researcher found in the first cycle and second cycle it showed that the implementation of GI method to enhance the writing ability of the eleventh grade was successfully enhanced and it was getting better from first cycle to second cycle.

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