Improving Students' Writing Paragraph Ability by Using Praise- Question- Polish Method

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Abstract: This learning improvement research seeks to improve the learning process of writing by applying Praise Question Polish (PQP) method . Thesubject of the research is the second semester of the academic year students of 2017/2018. Before applying this method,the writer conducted a pre - test . The result of the pre - test showed that the students' paragraph writing skills is low. If it is converted to the University's academic regulations of Riau, only 5.4 % of students got good score, 32.4 % got average score, 48.6 % of students got less score, and 13.5 % were failed category. After the application of the Praise Question Polish conducted in two cycles, the second cycle results showed the significant changes. The percentage of students' scores in cycle 2 showed that 2.7% got excellent, 48.6 % got good score, 29,7% got average score, 10,8 % got less score, and 5.4 % were failed category. The significant increase is also seen in all of the elements of paragaph writing such as *Format, Mechanics, Content, Organization* and *Grammar* . From the results above could be concluded that the application of PQP is very recomended in teaching writing paragraph.

Keywords : *Praise Question Polish , Paragraph , Learning Outcomes*

1. Introduction

Designing a text in the form of a paragraph, for some students is not an easy thing, especially if the writing is in academic atmosphere (academic writing). It takes several stages to reach the writing that meets the academic writing requirements. The task of the lecturer in writing learning is to guide students so that the stages can be carried out properly. This can be done by lecturers by applying appropriate learning methods for students, especially in writing correct and good paragraphs.

From the observations on previous learning, lecturers tend to focus on products such as clarity of topic, originality of topics, and assessment of sentence structure, not on the process of how to produce a good paragraph. The lecturer gives the assignment, then assesses the assignment, returns it to the students. Lecturers tend to assess the writing of students from their products, not from the process. Meanwhile, students are rarely involved in assessing or commenting on classmates' writing for writing improvements made by their friends. Whereas in cooperative learning, peer feed back is a strategy to improve student learning outcomes.

In order to writing learning to be meaningful, effective, creative and fun learning, it can be done with various teaching strategies / methods. Among the many methods that can be applied in learning writingis Praise Question Polish (PQP). The Praise Question Polish method,is a method in which group members are asked to read and correct the written / text results of their

group members. In this method the author needs feedback not only from the lecturer, but also from other students who are intended to improve writing by the author. Therefore the problem is formulated as follows:

1. Can the application of learning using the PQP method improve the results of writing paragraph?
2. Does the application of learning using the PQP method increase students activity in writing paragraph?

Writing I course is so important, considering that good writing skills in students of English study program are provision for writing the final project. However, in practice, writing is not as easy as other language skills, such as listening, speaking, or reading. Writing requires a process or stages in practice, so that it can produce good and right writing. According to Petty (1980), writing is a process of conveying ideas, feelings, as well as things experienced through writing. Furthermore, Phenix (1990) states that writing includes what will be conveyed, what will be expressed through written language, in accordance with the standard language used.

Writing in mother tongue is very different from writing in a foreign language. Not only different in grammar and vocabulary, but the author must also be able to write his ideas into a foreign language that is used, so that the reader understands what is meant by the author (Raison et.al., 1997). According to Hefferman (1986), writing good and right, must include the application of correct grammar, the sensitivity of pouring ideas in writing, and having an artistic feeling in assembling words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs.

When associated with one cooperative learninglearning strategy, which requires active and creative students, both individually and in groups, paragraph writing learning requires feedback not only from the lecturer, but also from his friends (peer feedback) then the PQP strategy can facilitate learning intended. According to Anchin (1979) PQP (Praise Question and Polish) is a learning that invites peers to provide input based on three columns, namely:

1. Praise - What is good about the writing? Why is it good?
2. Question - As a reader, what do you not understand?
3. Polish - What specific suggestions for improvement can you make?

Furthermore Anchin stated that the Praise column is for positive comments, the Question column is to record the less obvious in the paragraph, while the Polish column is the column that contains suggestions for improvement. The last stage of this activity is an evaluation carried out by the lecturer. The evaluation that will be carried out is by evaluating paragraphs written by students based on rubric scoring, which helps the lecturer to evaluate the writing of students. The rubric scoring used is rubric scoring offered by Oshima and Ann Hague (2007).PQP learning method will be applied to students who took writing I subject. This method is in the Classroom ActionResearch steps. According to Rapopot in Wiriaatmadja (2007) classroom action research is carried out to help someone (in this case the lecturer) to overcome practically the problems faced and trying to improve the problems faced are better, with cooperation and in a mutually agreed ethical framework.

The PQP method is one of the types of Cooperative Learning methods. According to Slavin in Sanofwandi (2012), cooperative learning is a method in which students learn together, to solve a problem and contribute to each other's thoughts. Furthermore, Supriyono in Sanofwandi stated that all types of group work directed by the teacher, where the teacher assigns assignments and questions and provides materials and information designed to help students solve the problem in question, and at the end of the lesson, the teacher will make evaluation of learning that has been

carried out. In line with the above, in this study, the task of the lecturer is as a facilitator and motivator, who prepares everything before the PQP method is implemented.

2. Methodology

The research subjects were students who took Writing I subject in the even semester of 2017/2018 with totaling 37 students. The study was conducted for one semester (6 months). The material used is taken from several learning sources, such as books and the internet.This research is a Class Action Research, which is carried out in two cycles. The design of this study is an adaptation of the research design proposed by Kemmis and Taggart in Wiriaatmadja (Wiriaatmadja 2007). The source of this research data is obtained from: **Students**. To get data about learning outcomes and student activities in the learning process; **Lecturer**.To see the success rate of implementing the PQP strategy in writing I courses and student activities during the learning process; **Collaborator**. Collaborators are intended as a source to see the implementation of PQP comprehensively both in terms of students and from lecturers.

The Data Collection Technique is carried out as follows: **Test**. Used to obtain data about student learning outcomes; **Observation**. Used to collect data about students and lecturer activities in writingI learning activities. The observation sheets consist of lecturer and students observation. On the observation sheet there are cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, while in the lecture observation sheet, there are aspects of pre teaching, while teaching and post teaching; **Discussion**. Discussions were held between researchers and collaborators to reflect the PTK cycle results.Meanwhile the data collection tool is carried out as follows: **Test**. Using a set of paragraph, description, narrative, and expository topics, to measure student learning outcomes. This test will consist of Pre test, cycle I test, and cycle II test; **Observation**. Using observation sheets to measure the level of activity of students and lecturers in the process of learning writing I; **Discussion**. Using the observation sheet. Further performance indicators can be seen from the criteria specified as follows: **Students.** Students are declared successful, if the test results reach a score of 65, according to academic rules set by the University of Riau; **Lecturer.** Lecturer performance can be seen from the student attendance list and observations.

In this study there are two types of data, namely: **Quantitative data**. In this case the value of students learning outcomes is analyzed by descriptive statistical analysis, to find the average value, and the percentage of learning success. The data obtained from students will use rubric scoring proposed by Oshima and Ann Hogue (2007); **Qualitative data**. In this case, the data / information obtained from the observation sheet, and field notes which will then be described in sentence form.

3. Results And Discussion

Pre Test. Pre Test is done before the implementation of PQP is carried out. This Pre Test aims to see the initial ability of students in writing paragraphs. Pre Test results show that the initial ability to write paragraphs is still low. There was no student who got very good results, 2 people (5.4%) got good grades, 12 people (32.4%) got enough scores, 18 people (48.6%) got less grades, and 5 people (13.5%) failed.
 Meanwhile the mean score of student paragraph elements is as follows: In the Format element the student scores 52%, Mechanics 78%, Content 58.5%, Organization 42.8%, and Grammar 50.8%. The acquisition of the students above shows that the implementation of the learning

method needs to be implemented. The learning method applied is one of the Coopeartive Learning methods, namely the Praise Question Polish (PQP) method. In the PQP method implemented, student grouping is applied during the learning process. The grouping model that is applied is work in pair.

The Application of PQP in Cycle 1

In this step, applied learning scenarios that have been designed, and the procedures to be implemented, as seen in the learning process contained in the Learning Implementation Plan. Learning in the first cycle was carried out in two meetings, in which the first meeting discussed about descriptive text, and the second meeting discussed about narrative text. Each meeting, students are conditioned into pairs. The number of students is 37 people divided into 18 groups, where one group has 3 members. In this cycle the members of each group are permanent during learning. The grouping of students is arranged randomly by the lecturer.

Observation Results

The learning process is observed using prepared observation sheets. The results of observation of students showed that the students seemed enthusiastic in reading the text made by their partners. Observations made on students showed good activity in working in pairs. While observations made on lecturers indicate that the lecturer has acted as an adequate facilitator accompanied by providing feed back at each meeting.

Reflection Results

In this step, individual writing results are analyzed on the topics discussed. The Cycle 1 data shows an increase compared to the Pre Test results, even though the results have not met the graduation standards determined by the University, as follows: A total of 17 students (45.9%) got good grades, 18 (48.6%) students got grades enough, 2 people (5.4%) got less grades, and no more students failed. While in this cycle the average score of paragraph elements also increased. In the *Format* element, the score was 56%, *Mechanics* 88%, *Content* 65%, *Organization* 58.8%, and *Grammar* 64.8%. However, the application of PQP learning still needs to proceed to cycle 2, in connection with collaborator field notes in cycle one which shows that there are still students who are confused in working on the assigned PQP format. This affects the writing of a group of friends. In addition, field notes also show that, there are still lecturer instructions that are poorly understood by students. Time management and strengthening of students still need improvement. In accordance with the results it was decided to continue learning to cycle 2.

The Application of PQP in Cycle 2

The research team made the next writing learning plan based on the results of reflection in Cycle 1. The results of discussions with collaborators decided that in cycle 2 changes in PQP implementation would be held, namely with changes in group member pairs. If in cycle 1 the pair of group members is permanent in each meeting, and is determined by the lecturer, then at each cycle 2 meeting, the group member pairs change, each group has a non-permanent partner in each meeting. Students are free to choose their respective partners. In Cycle 2, different topics will be given the same as those implemented in Cycle 1. Changes in group members are intended to make students were not bored with the same group members at each meeting.

Changes are also intended so that students have good interpersonal relationships to all friends who follow the course.

In the implementation of Cycle 2, lecturers carry out writing I learning based on the reflection plan learning outcomes of Cycle 1, namely by implementing Lesson Plan steps similar to the Lesson Plan steps contained in Cycle 1.

Observation Results

In Cycle 2, collaborators also observed students and lecturers in the prepared observation sheets. The results observations on students showed that students were more active and creative when compared to the results of Cycle 1 observations. This was allegedly due to changes in pairs of group members.

Reflection Results

The research team again reflected on the implementation of Cycle 2, namely in the form of evaluating the learning process of writing I. In this Cycle there was a significant change in value compared to the learning outcomes in Cycle 1. The data obtained in this cycle showed the learning outcomes were in good category, as follows: One student (2.7%) got very good grades, 18 students (48.6%) got good grades, 11 students (29.7%) got enough grades, 4 students (10.8%) got a grade less, and two students (5.4%) failed. Students who failed were caused by students participating in extra curricular activities so that they could not attend lectures.In this cycle the average score of paragraph elements looks better. The mean score of paragraph elements in the format is 90%, Mechanics 88%, Content 64.5%, Oganization 58.8%, and Grammar 62.5%. But in this second cycle, there were students who got very good grades. Thus the results of discussions with collaborators decided that the application of PQP to cycle 2 alone, given the learning outcomes obtained were considered adequate.
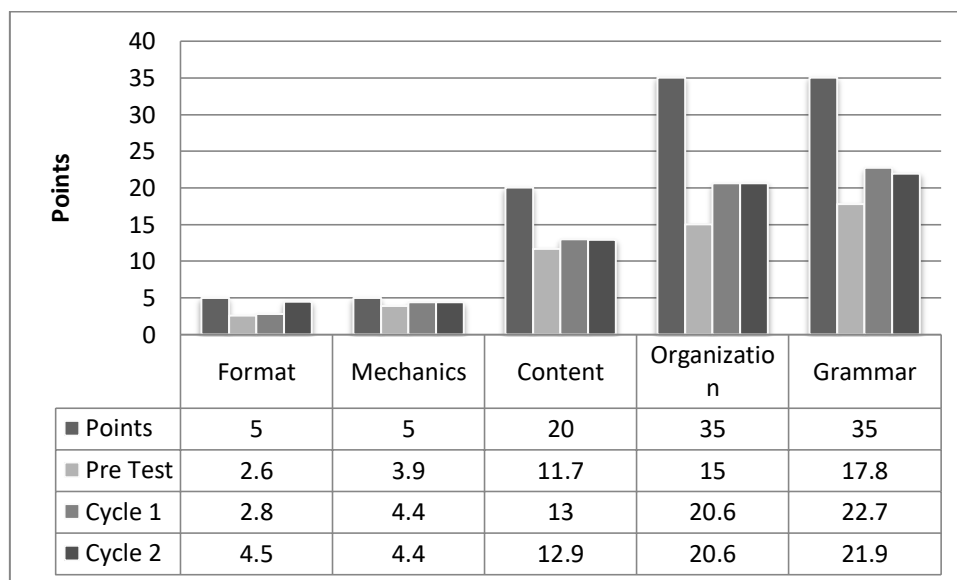
Discussion

The PQP method is a method that looks at the weaknesses and strengths of a paragraph written by a peer. Peer together with the lecturer corrects the paragraph writer. It turns out that the results of classroom action research using PQP steps towards writing learning I can answer the research objectives stated earlier. The implementation of PQP steps can actually improve student learning outcomes. Class management that places students working in pairs, is proven to motivate, increase activity and student learning outcomes in writing paragraphs. The results of the comparison between the value of the Pre-Test and the value of the learning outcomes contained in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 can be seen on the following chart.

The Comparison of Scores of Pre test, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2
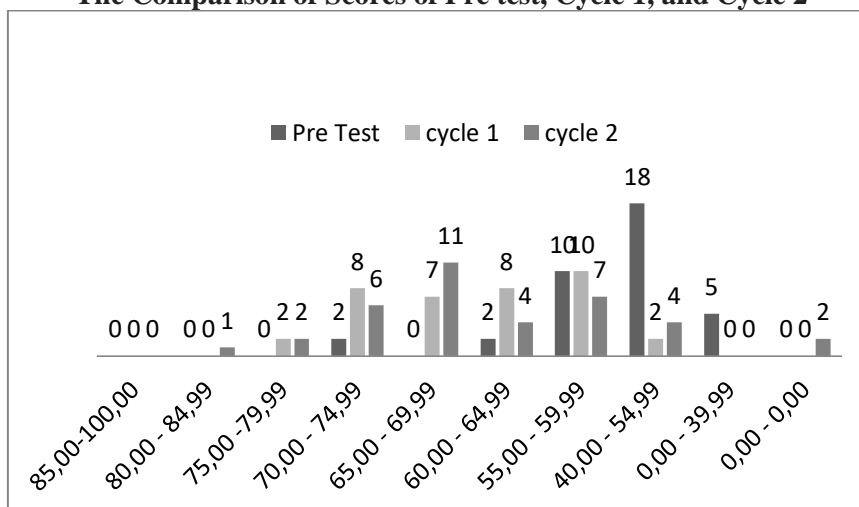
From the comparison of the score of cycle 1 and cycle 2 it was clear that there was an effect of grouping on the learning outcomes of writing I. Changes in grouping methods made students more passionate and more motivated to do activities better than before. Time management and strengthening of students is better than the previous cycle. Meanwhile the comparison of paragraph element or element scores that are seen is that students look more cautious in writing paragraphs, and some even look consistent in the use of *Mechanics* and *Oganization*:

The Comparison of Mean Score of Paragraph Elements

	Format	Mechanics	Content	Organization	Grammar
■ Points	5	5	20	35	35
■ Pre Test	2.6	3.9	11.7	15	17.8
■ Cycle 1	2.8	4.4	13	20.6	22.7
■ Cycle 2	4.5	4.4	12.9	20.6	21.9

4. Conclusions

Based on the results of classroom action research by applying the steps of PQP learning (Praise Question Polish), it was concluded from the comparison of the Pre-Test scores, learning

outcomes of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 shows that there was a significant increase in learning outcomes. This increase can be achieved within 8 weeks of the meeting. If in Cycle 1 there were no students who got very good grades, then in Cycle 2 there were students who got very good grades, even though the percentage was small. Furthermore, the results of the observations show that the method of grouping has a significant contribution to student learning outcomes. If in Cycle 1 the group members remain in each meeting, then in Cycle 2 group members change at each meeting. Thus PQP is worth considering for use in advanced writing learning.

Overall this PQP method is suitable for use in writing learning. But if examined further, the acquisition of individual scores in the very good category still needs to be increased. For this reason, further research is needed, while still using the PQP method but with modified learning steps in accordance with the character of students taking the course, or with other methods that can improve the individual ability of students in writing courses.

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