TEACHING WRITING PROCEDURE TEXT BY USING “JOT THOUGHTS” TECHNIQUE TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Istiqamah Rahmadani 1, Sitti Fatimah 2

English Department
Faculty of Languages and Arts
State University of Padang
email: istiqamahrahmadani10@gmail.com

Abstract


Key words: Game, ELT, Teacher

A. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia Students writing ability should be supported by teacher’s ability to teach properly. Writing skill is one of the four skills. Which required to students based curriculum 2013. Based on Harmer (2004) “writing has always been a part of the syllabus in the teaching of English”. It means that writing is skill necessary to learn by junior high school students in anywhere they are. For
instance, students need to be able to write monologue texts such as recount text, descriptive text, and narrative text. They must be able to write in order to achieve the core and basic competence.

However, writing is not easy as the students think. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that “writing is a difficult skill for second or foreign language learners to master”. Natural difficult of writing, students face some other problems in writing. The students who are not creative in generating ideas will find it very hard to write anything on their papers. Imaginations and creativities are mainly needed in writing. Other problem is that students do not only think how to express their ideas, but they also must pay attention to some other aspects such as grammar, spelling, organization, and word choices. It means that students do not only write something on a paper, but students also should pay attention to their sentences whether their sentences are correct grammatically. It has understandable vocabulary as well. This idea is in line with Richards and Renandya (2002) who state that “the difficulty in writing is not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating the ideas into readable text which means that the writing must be understandable by readers”. The writer also pays attention to skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice and so on. Thus, beside generating their ideas, they also must take into account of some aspects such as as grammar, content, word choice, punctuation, word choice, and spelling.

The other problem in writing for students is the lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary is usually the reason why students are not motivated to write. Students get stucked when they do not know what to write. According to Brown (2000), one of the characteristic of written language is vocabulary where written language places a heavier demand on vocabulary use. Therefore, having less vocabularies is one of difficulties in writing.

Considering the difficulty of writing based on the explanation above, it must be challenging for teachers to teach this skill. Teachers have to find ways to make their students master the skill. Teachers must find techniques that can improve their teaching and give effects on student’s ability in writing. According to Patel and Javin (2008), teachers are obliged to recognize different methods and techniques in teaching English. Thus, they need to be able to know what techniques or methods that they need to apply in teaching to develop their teaching in order to make the lesson becomes more effective. Teachers need to find interesting ways in teaching writing.

One of the ways is cooperative learning which can be interesting in teaching writing because it can make students more active. Since it is about learning together, it can motivate students in learning process. Nunan (2003: 34) states that members in a group need to be cooperative one to another to achieve a shared goal which results in positive interdependence among them. In cooperative learning, students can help each other by sharing information and giving opinion each other.

There are some techniques in cooperative learning that can be used by teachers in teaching to improve students’ writing ability. One of them is Jot Thoughts technique. Students work in a group of four or five. In this technique, the students are asked writes ideas in words or sentences on slip papers till they
cover the tables with them. Students can write as many ideas as they can in a
given time. Then, each team discusses and starts to write. In this technique, all of
students will participate in the teaching learning process. This technique also
requires students to share their ideas, give opinions, and help each other in
learning process.

Jot Thoughts technique as a part of cooperative learning strategy to teach
writing is worth using. It is successfully proven by Soumia (2016) who finds that “it
is really an effective technique to enhance learners' writing. Moreover, this is the
fact that the writing skill is better learned when students work with each others in
groups”. This is also strengthened by the research found by Bahsyal (2009) and
Halkett (2010). They state that “Jot Thoughtshelp us produce a good product
because the writers in a small number of groups can discuss each other and reach
conclusion after synthesizing the ideas of all”. Based on the explanation above,
the writer proposes this technique in teaching writing procedure text to junior high
school students.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Teaching Writing to EFL Students

Writing as one of the four skills obliged to master by Indonesian EFL
students based on curriculum 2013 has some importance. Firstly, students cannot
escape from the fact that many things that they do are related to writing. Browler
(2017) argues that many situations in life particularly require us to be able to
write. Secondly, it often becomes a tool to see the understanding of students
toward a lesson. Brown (2000) states that you are failed in a course when you
cannot write to express yourself. It is also confirmed by Afrin (2016) who says
that in almost all levels of education, writing is a tool used at most to rate
students’ performance. Thus, we can understand that writing has a significant role
in learning.

However, to make students start writing is a challenging and difficult task.
Thuy (2009:90) states linguistic knowledge and competence need to be acquired
by the students, making writing difficult in EFL teachers’ view. Hidayati (2018)
adds that the difficulties of writing exist because of both internal and external
factors. The internal factors can be like linguistic competence, native language
interference, motivation, and reading habits. Meanwhile, the external factors
include the class condition, teaching aids, and the availability of time. So, to make
them write, teachers need to bring a teaching strategy or a technique into the class.

There are various teaching strategies that a teacher can use. Each strategy
is differently implemented based on teaching material. It means that a teacher has
to find the most suitable strategy for a certain material. For example, if a teacher
wants to teach students how to write a procedure text, it is strongly recommended
that he/she uses cooperative learning strategy. It is proven successful since writing
a procedure text is more effective if it is done in groups.

2. Cooperative Learning

The concept of cooperative learning refers to a method of teaching and
learning language which involves an instructional interaction by peers. Johnson
(1991:69) states that cooperative learning is a teaching using small groups where
students are cooperative each other to maximize their learning. Slavin (2011) adds
that cooperative learning is instructional methods in which teachers organize students into smaller groups which then work together to help one another learn academic content. These show that cooperative learning is one of instructional methods and the key factor is putting students in group to work together and to help each other.

However, cooperative learning is more than just putting students into several groups. Artz and Newman (1990) claim that working together in cooperative learning means solving a problem and finish a task or a goal. In other words, the main point of this method is improving learning in groups by making student’s cooperation and interdependence, and then it helps them improve to reach the goals. Considering all the previous definitions, cooperative learning is an effective way of teaching. It is a learner-centred approach in which learners work together in groups to pursue learning goals.

In general, when it is implemented in a writing activity, a teacher keeps being active and just cannot let students unguided. He/she is more than just giving students a series of questions to finally produce writing. In other words, he/she plays an important role during the writing activity.

After each question is given, the teacher must go around the class to observe the students. Soumia (2016) says that a teacher is in the state of dynamic interaction in the classroom. He/she observes and controls them. Still, the students discuss each other to find an answer to a question. If the make mistakes and a wrong decision, an immediate correction needs to be taken by the teacher. Thus, in the end, each group has written the correct answers before the next questions are given.

a. Types of Cooperative Learning

According to Johnson& Holubec (1998) there are three types of cooperative learning in which the role of the teacher can be used. They are formal cooperative learning, informal cooperative learning and cooperative base groups.

1) Formal Cooperative Learning

Formal cooperative learning involves an organized interaction among the members of the groups to work together, and for students to interact with each other. Johnson and Holubec (1998) state that Formal cooperative learning consists of students working together for several weeks to achieve mutual learning goals and complete specific tasks and assignments. Thus, this type of group learning is ideal for students to work together for extended periods of time to achieve specific purposes.

2) Informal Cooperative Learning

In contrast to the formal cooperative learning, Johnson and Holubec (1998:59) suggests informal cooperative learning which consists of having students working together in groups to achieve shared goals. These groups may only last for a few minutes. When implementing informal cooperative learning, the focus is directing the attention of students to the lecture, demonstration, or film to make students interested in learning, and to ensure that students cognitively are aware of the material to be learned.
b. Cooperative Base Groups

Johnson and Holubec (1998) describe the term cooperative base groups as long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership in which students provide support, encouragement, and assistance to make academic progress (attend class, complete all assignments, learn). Base groups seek to improve student performance of the learning process and how to work cooperatively, when they face problems with learning or any other aspects.

c. Advantages of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is basically more than just a learning strategy. Gilles and Ashma (2013) explains that “It is well recognized as a pedagogical practice that promotes learning, higher level thinking, prosaically behaviour, and a greater understanding of children with diverse learning, social and adjustment needs”. Thus, cooperative learning is considered as an effective strategy to enhance teaching and learning process that helps learners to perceive, retrain ideas and improve their skills. The researchers have identified numerous benefits of implementing cooperative learning teaching that include positive interdependence, high achievement and better motivation etc. These benefits are summarized by Kagan (2009) into three main points

First, it promotes groups’ and individuals’ outcome, productivity and achievement. When one member needs a help, the others are there to help him/her. A member never works individually and giving a help one to another is a main characteristic of this strategy. Furthermore, when a member helps his group mates, it means that he has helped himself/herself and the group. Thus, the academic achievement for all members in a group will be improvable.

Then, it heightens self-esteem and reduces anxiety. Asking a student to write individually is difficult. Given an individual writing exercise, they may think that it is difficult to do and finally results in anxiety. However, if the writing exercise is done in groups, it will reduce and take away the anxiety because the responsibility is equally shared within a group. On the other hand, it can even establish a more relaxed learning atmosphere and their confidence.

Finally, it provides opportunities for collaborative thinking, immediate feedback and regulation of thoughts. In its process, students are more than just writing a text. They need to produce thoughts and ideas which are then argued. It means that their critical thinking is trained. In the other words, they can transmit their ideas and assess others’ thought.

3. Jot Thoughts

Jot Thoughts adopting the concept of learning together is designed to make students master the materials. This technique is useful to help students understand the materials. Shilvock (2015) states that the activity is brief and particularly useful to have students understand a topic. Therefore, it is applicable if teachers want an activity which is simple and not durable.

Jot Thoughts starts with a teacher naming a topic, then setting a time limit and providing ‘think time’. For example, if the class learns descriptive text and is given a topic to describe their English teacher, then the teacher can ask questions like “How is my hair like?” or “What do you think about my personality?”. After
that, they write as many ideas as they can in the allocated time on a slip of paper (one idea per slip of paper).

Moreover, this is more than just a technique which is only used for a single text descriptive. It also suits to activities with different purposes and themes. As noted by Kagan (2009) this structure is recommended for team building, social skill, knowledge building, and procedure learning, processing information, and thinking skills. So, it is clear that this can be used for a lot of themes based on our needs.

Jot Thoughts as one of the five strategies of cooperative learning based on the classification made by Soumia (2016) generally has the same aim, which is to make students involved in classroom activities and help each other. It is a quick and simple activity and is especially useful in preparation for an assessment. It is clear that the understanding of students toward a material can be seen through this activity.

4. Procedure Text

There are several text types which are currently learned by students in junior high schools in Indonesia. One of the text types is procedure text. According to Anderson (2003) a text in which a series of commands are given to us to do something is called procedure text. The purpose of a procedure text is to explain how something can be done. Meanwhile, Bima (2005) state that procedure text is a kind of text designed to describe how something is achieved through a sequence of actions or steps. It explains how people perform different processes in a sequence of steps. From the two statements above, it is inferable that procedure text is a kind of text that gives us instructions to do something through a sequence of actions or steps.

Procedure text usually uses simple present tense, often the imperative sentence. It also usually uses the temporal conjunction, such as first, second, then, after that, next, finally, etc. Regarding the procedure text, Bima (2005) summarize that the procedure text has the following structure; goal, material and steps. The more complete summary about the procedure text can be seen in the table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>to give instructions on how to do something</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generic structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Ingredients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It contains the purpose of the text (e.g : how to make spaghetti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It contains objects needed to achieve a goal (e.g : spatula, stove, frying pan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It contains the name of food needed to cook. Ingredients need to be written if the theme is about making food or drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It consists of a series of steps taken to achieve a goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. DISCUSSION

1. Teaching Preparation

Before the teacher comes to the class, the teacher has to make some preparations. Preparation is one of the factors that determine the success of teaching and learning process. The preparation can be formulated in a lesson plan. Furthermore, the teacher must prepare the appropriate material and question that will be used in the teaching process, and also makes the time allocation in the teaching and learning process. Having a good preparation will help the teachers in teaching and learning process and also increase their confidence because they have already known things to do in the classroom.
There are some preparations that can be done by the teacher before going to teach in the class. The first preparation is making a lesson plan. A lesson plan is a guide for the teacher in teaching and learning process. In the lesson plan, there is a written procedure that is going to be used by the teacher as an orientation in teaching. The lesson plan will produce many advantages for the teacher, such as it will help them to teach systematically. It consists of core competence, basic competence, indicators, objectives, learning materials, learning models, teaching and learning activity, question, and evaluation, as explained below.

The second preparation is choosing the appropriate material based on the syllabus and curriculum. The materials should be interesting, also easy to understand by the students. The material should be appropriate with syllabus and curriculum. To junior high school students, procedure text is used in teaching writing through Jot Thoughts Technique.

Last preparation makes the time allocation before the teaching and learning process is running. To junior high school students, students will learn English 2x45 minutes for one meeting. So, by the time, the teacher must be able to manage the time and can achieve the purpose of the learning process.

Preparing the lesson plan

Before the teacher teaches writing a procedure text, the teacher must have good preparation which can be seen from the way the teacher prepares the lesson plan. The materials based on the syllabus should be prepared by the teacher. The teacher should find the materials which are familiar and interesting for the students. Thus, they need to make a lesson plan and prepare everything that will be used to support the teaching and learning process in the classroom. So, they must prepare the lesson plan carefully. In the lesson plan, the teacher prepares whatever is needed for the teaching process. The lesson plan consists of core competence, basic competence, indicators, objectives, learning materials, teaching and learning activity, question, and evaluation. Preparing a lesson plan avoids the teacher from getting confused when they are teaching. Moreover, the lesson plan helps the teacher control the time allocation and match the time with the activity. It helps the learning to be more effective. The lesson plan of teaching a procedure text is by using Jot Thoughts Technique.

2. The Essence of Jot Thoughts

Looking at how this technique is applied, it is understood that this puts forward team work instead of individuality to achieve a goal. Students must be cooperative or help each other until the writing is finished. In its process, they propose, argue, defend and decide the opinions that can go on. Thus, each member in a group has an equal role and will be involved.

At the end of the activity, each group will produce a text as a result of their team work. However, the most important thing to keep in mind is teachers will not issue the quality of their text like the accuracy of their grammar, punctuation, and so on because it is, in fact, that jot thoughts adopt process approach where process is more important than the product. Thus, it will not be emphasized as long as they go through the process.
3. The Preparation and Procedures
   a. The Preparation
      As this is a classroom activity in which all students are involved by putting them into a few groups, a lot of equipment needs to be prepared:
      a) Tables
         Each group should have one. The table is placed in the middle and members of a group sit around it.
      b) Blank papers
         A teacher needs to prepare a lot of papers as each member will write down his/her answers. The papers need to be cut into pieces with the size 15 x 2 cms. Each group gets a lot of paper pieces as, in procedural text, teacher will ask them 3 questions (the material, the ingredient, and the steps). Thus they can write down as many answers as possible. Colourful papers are recommended in order to look more interesting.
      c) Foams and pins
         Each group needs foam which covers the whole table. The pins are needed to pinpoint the papers on the foam. However, if the teacher provides glued papers, the activity will not need things like foams and pins.
   b. Procedures
      Before doing Jot Thoughts, students must understand what they are learning. They need to be familiar with the text, generic structure and language features of procedural text. The reason for this is because students are later asked to write, and it is impossible if they only know little about what they are learning.
      To start it off, a teacher takes a topic that can make students talk about what they know. For example, if it is about making a cup of tea, then the teacher can ask questions like “Do you like tea?”, “Have you ever made a cup of tea?” or “What do you need to make a cup of tea?”. The teacher and students go on and on until he/she tells them what they are learning and they realize that they are going to learn a procedure to do something.
      Following it, a teacher can tell them the purpose of procedural text, the generic structure of the text, the language features, or even specific vocabularies related to the topic. As most topics of this text are about making food and drinks, students can be given vocabularies like cooking verbs (stir, fry, boil, and etc.) , cooking utensils (spatula, frying pan, spoon, glass and etc.), or cooking ingredients (sugar, salt, oil and etc.). It needs to be done in order that they know what they will write down in Jot Thoughts activity. The entire procedure of teaching can be seen in the table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Teaching Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Questioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A teacher asks students a few questions that stimulate their background knowledge (e.g Have you ever made a cup of tea? What do you need to make a cup of tea?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The teacher and students discusses the questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Collecting information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After the discussion, the teacher guides students to collect information and conclude what they are going to learn.

**elaboration**

a. Association
- The teacher presents a procedure text and explains it in detail, including the purpose, the generic structure, language features, and even specific vocabularies related to procedure text.
- The teacher teaches how to write imperative sentences.
- The teacher gives them an exercise to see their understanding, and discuss it afterwards.
- The teacher does a Jot Thought activity with the class.

**confirmation**

a. Communication
- The teacher and the class conclude and evaluate what they have learned.

Before doing the Jot Thoughts activity, the teacher gives students clear and brief direction. The class may be divided into 6 groups since a majority of junior high school classes in Indonesia has 30 students in them.

*Teacher*: Well class, now I want you to make a group of five, and make sure each of you belongs to a group.

*Students*: Yes, mam.

Next, the teacher helps students arrange the class and prepare the materials that they need in the jot thoughts activity. Each group has a table and they sit around it.

*Teacher*: Look! Now you see a pile of paper pieces on your tables. I am going to ask you three questions. I give you one minute to write down your answers on the papers. You can write them down more than once. Everybody in group must write. When the time is up, please stop writing. Do you understand it?

*Students*: Yes, mam.

*Teacher*: Our goal now is to make a cup of tea. My first question is “What material do you need to make a cup of tea?”. One minute from now!

(Students write down their answers and put them down in the middle of the table after that)

*Teacher*: Time is up. Please stop writing. My second question is “What ingredients do you need to make a cup of tea?”. One minute from now!

(Students write down their answers and put them down in the middle of the table after that)

*Teacher*: Time is up. Please stop writing. My final question is “What steps do you take to make a cup of tea?”. One minute from now!
(Students write down their answers and put them down in the middle of the table after that)

After that, the teacher asks the students to collect all of the answers and get them to discuss. They take away the inappropriate answers and choose only the best ones. At this stage, they argue, defend and make decisions under the teacher’s control.

Teacher : Well, now I want you to collect all of written answers, and please arrange them into a good instruction of making a cup of tea. Group them into three groups: materials, ingredients, and steps. Is that clear?

Students : Yes, mam.

The teacher keeps controlling the class and makes sure that all of students involved in the activity as seen in this following picture.

Picture 1. Jot thoughts activity

After they are finished, the teacher can discuss it with the students. He/she reviews anything they have learned with the students.

Teacher : So, the purpose of our activity is to show someone how to make a cup of tea. To make a cup of tea, we need materials like a spoon and a cup. We also need sugar, a tea bag, and hot water. The steps are ...... Do you have any questions?

Students : No, mam.

4. The Advantages of Jot Thoughts

There are a lot of advantages of applying the Jot Thoughts technique for both teachers and students:

1. Teachers feel facilitated by using this technique because giving students an independent task like writing a procedural text may be difficult. By using this technique, teachers can control the class and do it step by step.

2. As this puts forward a team work, students can help each other. A student with a good ability can help a poor one in a group. Therefore, at the end of the lesson, it is expected that all of students can understand and master the lesson.

3. This technique teaches students to think critically and to discuss in a good manner. As it has been explained, they have to discuss, defend and make decisions at the end of the activity.

4. The students can enhance their vocabulary building as they have used it in the activity. So, they are more than just memorizing it.
D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Teaching EFL students how to write is not an easy task as their language ability and competence are tested. There are many causes that make students not able to write such as motivation, self-confidence, or even their ability. These cannot be solved by only using a conventional way in teaching. Therefore, a teacher must use an appropriate strategy and technique to solve this.

Jot Thoughts which adopt the cooperative learning strategy is helpful enough as it helps teachers teach how to write a text, particularly procedural text. In its practice, all students are grouped into a few groups and they must help one to another to achieve a goal. At the end of the activity, each group has a finished writing. Its writing quality is not the teacher’s concern because we put forward the process instead of the product.

Moreover, it is proven that it has positive effects on both students’ ability and understanding. As they work in a team, they must be cooperative. A member of a group must help the others unless they fail to reach the team’s goal. As a result, it is expected that all of students can understand and master the material. In conclusion, teaching EFL students how to write a procedural text is proven effective and recommendable.

In order to make the Jot Thoughts technique effectively implemented, there are some points that the writer can suggest:

1. It is suggested for a teacher to give students specific vocabularies based on topics chosen. If the goal is about making food and drinks, he/she must give them vocabulary like cooking verbs, cooking utensils, the name of food and so on. If the topic is other than that like “how to withdraw money from ATM, how to make simple kite, how to make a pencil box and so on”, he/she then gives them related vocabulary which is close to those topics.

2. The teacher has to estimate the amount of allotted time to give for students to write down their answers for each question. If one minute is too fast, he can extends it to 2-3 minutes for each question.

3. The teacher is suggested to go around the class to give a little help while the students are trying to answer the questions. Although it is a team work activity, it does not mean they do not need any help.

4. Topics chosen by the teacher should be familiar and simple. In other words, he/she should not choose topics which enable specific vocabulary to appear. For example, the topics like “how to drive a car”, “how to insert SIM card to phone” or “how to cook rendang” should be avoided.

5. Finally, it is suggested for a teacher to praise and appreciate the efforts of students no matter how their writing looks like as the process is more important than the result. A prize for each group should even be given in order that they can stay in passion and confidence.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


