Task-Based Learning: Gaining Students' Engagement to Improve Students' Competence in Writing Procedure Text

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Abstract

This study aims to improve the quality of English learning at SMPN 2 Magelang. It focuses in improving the students' writing competence of procedure text through task-based learning. The method used in this study was a classroom action research. There were two cycles carried in this study which included four stages in each cycle, they were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data in this study were collected through observation, test, and also questionnaire. From the result, it was revealed that there was an improvement in the students' writing competence of procedure text. Meanwhile, 92% of the students show a positive response towards the learning process.

Keywords: Task-based learning, writing competence, procedure text

Introduction

Having students' attention and engagement during a teaching and learning process surely can be a beneficial condition for the learning process. Task-based learning, for many years, has been considered as a learning model which can increase students' engagement in learning process (Robinson, 2011). Since it focuses on how students completing a task, a task-based learning can help students in meeting their learning goal. As stated by (Kafipour et al., 2018) when students are able to complete every tasks given to them, it may affect their confidence in the learning process. Moreover, task-based learning demands on using authentic materials in which can be an effective for students in understanding instructions given.

According to Prabhu cited by (Karakurt, 2016) students might learn easier when they focus their minds on the task. By doing the task, the students need to use their thinking strategies to reach an outcome. (Ellis, 1993) adds that the main purpose of task-based learning itself is to engage

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students, especially language learners, in authentic language use through carrying out a series of tasks while interacting with other learners. It also can facilitate students to learn new linguistic knowledge while organizing their existing knowledge.

Broadly, many researchers admit that the use of task-based learning has some promising effects such as motivating, stimulating, empowering, and challenging students during the learning process. Beside motivating students, the integration of task-based activities in a language learning has proven in enhancing students' self-confidence to deliver their ideas in reality (Afifah Binti Azlan et al., 2019). These characteristics are needed by students to gain autonomy in language learning. Besides, the existence of authentic materials in task-based learning can offer a more natural procedure in the learning process so it might spark a higher chance in language acquisition for the students.

Task-based learning is more student-centered so it might be helpful to students in language learning. In task-based learning, students are more intended to complete task given by expressing and sharing their own ideas. Willis in (Kafipour et al., 2018) adds that within the TBL framework, tasks and texts combine to give students a rich exposure to language and also opportunities to use it themselves.

By considering various benefits stated above, the writer tries to utilize task-based learning to improve students' writing skill of procedure text. This study seeks how the use of task based learning might help students in improving their writing skill of procedure text.

Method

This study used the classroom action research. The phases of implementation consisted of four stages. The four stages were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The subject of this research consisted of 28 students of grade IX class D SMPN 2 Magelang. A collaborator was also included in this study. There are two cycles in this study. Each cycle consisted of four meetings. The data were taken from observation, writing test, and also students' questionnaire.

The observation was done by the collaborator during the implementation of task-based learning to find out the students' engagement in the learning process. An adapted observation sheet was prepared to help in find out the students' engagement in the classroom. In the observation sheet, there were five observation focus, they were: positive body language, consistent focus, verbal participation, students' confidence, and students' excitement.

For the test, the students were asked to write a procedure text in cycle 1 and cycle 2. Some indicators were prepared to score the students' writing test out, those indicators were adapted from Nurgiyantos' grid cited by (Faizah, n.d.; Rolando Damanik & Juriaty Ownie, 2013). The score ranged

from very poor, fair, good, and excellent. In giving scoring of the writing test, the writer processed the result of the students' test by giving the score for each element of writing as follows:

a. Content: The lowest score is 13 and the highest score is 30
b. Organization: The lowest score is 7 and the highest score is 20
c. Vocabulary: The lowest score is 7 and the highest score is 20
d. Grammar: The lowest score is 5 and the highest score is 25
e. Mechanic: The lowest score is 2 and the highest score is 5

After all of the process had been carried, the students were asked to participate in filling a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of ten closed questions. Those reflected their opinion towards the learning process using discovery learning.

Meanwhile, the techniques of data analysis were done in three stages which were: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. Data reduction was the process of simplification of the data obtained by selecting the data according to the needs of this study. From the selection of the data, then it finally was concluded in the form of a short statement desccription and dense but containing a broad sense.

Findings and discussion
The first cycle took place in four meetings. During the implementation, the record was carried out by using the observation sheet. For easing of implementation, the collaborator teacher observed the activities taking place while filling the prepared list of observations. In the first meeting, most of the students still expected help from other members of their group and they did not contribute to the group. Similarly with the aspects of attitude, it appeared that most of the students did not show discipline in doing the task group. In the second until fourth meeting, the students were given more various and different tasks from the previous meeting. The tasks still demanded their work as a team to complete the tasks.

After the implementation of task-based learning in the Cycle 1, the result of observation was obtained by the collaborator. The observation focused on the students' engagement in the classroom's activities. The result of the observation can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Students' Engagement in Cycle 1

No.	Observation Focus	Category		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
1	**Positive Body Language** (Students exhibit body postures that indicate they are paying attention to the teacher and/or other students)		v	
2	**Consistent Focus** (All students are focused on the learning activity with minimum disruptions)		v	
3	**Verbal Participation** (Students express thoughtful ideas, reflective answers, and questions relevant or appropriate to learning)		v	
4	**Student Confidence** (Students exhibit confidence and can initiate and complete a task with limited coaching and can work in a group)			v
5	**Fun and Excitement** (Students exhibit interest and enthusiasm and use positive humor)		v	

As it can be seen from the table above that the students' engagement in the Cycle 1 still belonged into the medium category. After having the four meetings, some students were identified having low confidence in participating the activities. Even though the task-based learning implemented in the class mostly done in a group, most of them were passive in initiating and helping their group to complete the tasks. For the rest, the activities in the Cycle 1 brought a positive impact on their attention, focus, participation, interest, and enthusiasm during the implementation of task-based learning.

After the fourth meeting had been conducted, the students then were asked to write a procedure text based on the guidelines given. Their writing test in Cycle 1 then were analyzed. Based on the result of their writing test in procedure text, the highest score achieved is 70 and lowest is 41. While the average of their achievement is 65. The average score was still lower than KKM which is 75.

By considering the result from the observation in Cycle 1, Cycle 2 was conducted to fix the condition. Cycle 2 consisted of four meetings. In Cycle 2, different activities included both group and individual tasks were carried out. Some integrated group and individual tasks were given to engage the students more in the learning activities. After the implementation of task-based learning in the Cycle 2, the result of observation was obtained by the

collaborator. The observation focused on the students' engagement in the classroom's activities. The result of the observation can be seen in the table below.

### Table 2. Students' Engagement in Cycle 2

No.	Observation Focus	Category		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
1	**Positive Body Language** (Students exhibit body postures that indicate they are paying attention to the teacher and/or other students)	v		
2	**Consistent Focus** (All students are focused on the learning activity with minimum disruptions)		v	
3	**Verbal Participation** (Students express thoughtful ideas, reflective answers, and questions relevant or appropriate to learning)	v		
4	**Student Confidence** (Students exhibit confidence and can initiate and complete a task with limited coaching and can work in a group)	v		
5	**Fun and Excitement** (Students exhibit interest and enthusiasm and use positive humor)	v		

From the table above, it can be seen that the students' engagement in the Cycle has improved better from Cycle 1. The students' engagement during the task-based learning showed in the high category. Their confidence in joining and participating in the activities has increased. For the rest, the activities in the Cycle 2 brought a positive impact on their attention, focus, participation, confidence, interest, and enthusiasm during the implementation of task-based learning.

After the fourth meeting had been conducted, the students then were asked to write a procedure text based on the guidelines given. Their writing test in Cycle 2 then were analyzed. Based on the result of their writing test in procedure text, the highest score achieved is 87 and lowest is 75. While the average of their achievement is 81. A questionnaire was also spread to the students to find how the students' opinion about the learning activities by using task-based learning. From the result of the questionnaire, it was revealed that 92% of the students gave a positive opinion towards the learning process.

Based on the result in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. It seemed that there was an improvement in their procedure text writing competence. Moreover, the students also improved their engagement during the learning activities. The improvement of the students' procedure text writing competence from the Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 can be seen in the diagram below.
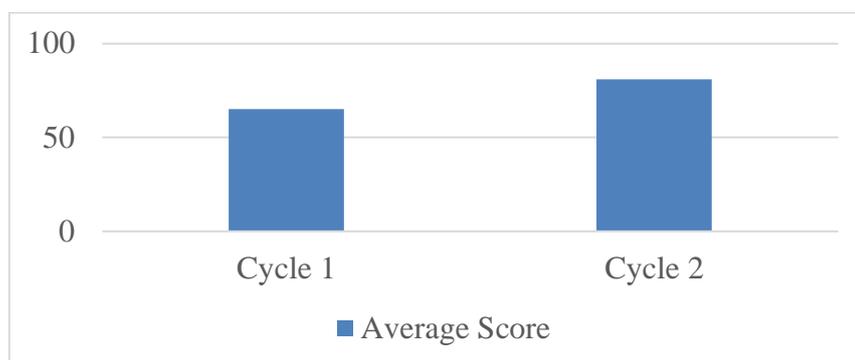
Diagram 1. The Average Achievement in Writing Procedure Text

The implementation of task-based learning apparently improved the students' competence in writing procedure text. In the learning process, the students seemed happy and excited so that they became active and creative. This happens because of the grouping of the students could encourage their involvement in the learning process. The achievement of success indicators in the second cycle was able to improve the students' competence in writing procedure text in which the students were able to create a procedure text.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, discussion, and the proof of research conducted, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Task-Based Learning can improve the students' competence in writing a procedure text. In addition, having students engaging in, both group and individual tasks, are considered helping the students in improving their confidence in completing tasks, which then they will improve their achievement in learning.

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