ENHANCING WRITING POWER THROUGH LEADING QUESTIONS STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

Writing is difficult skill in English. This study aims to determine the improvement of students' writing skills using a leading question strategy. The study was conducted at the bilingual Madrasah Aliyah class in Kediri. In fact, in the preliminary study, the researcher found that students had difficulty in writing recount texts. Students cannot retell past experiences because of lack of vocabulary and had no ideas for writing. The researcher used leading questions strategy to help students improve their writing skill in recount text. The researcher applied the classroom action research design by collecting data through observation checklists and tests. The research is considered successful if more than 80% of the students of the class achieve a score greater than or equal to 80 in the students' writing test. The finding of this study shows that there is improvement of students' writing skill in recount text after implementing leading question strategy in one cycle with four meetings. The success percentage of this technique is 94 %, and the average score is 88. The average student scores 88. This means that almost all students pass the written test. The attitude of the students during the writing process was very good. Students' enthusiasm in writing recount text increased significantly. From the results of all meetings, it can be concluded that the use of leading questions strategy can improve students' writing skill in recount text.

Keywords: Leading Questions, Writing Skill, Classroom Action Research

INTRODUCTION

Complaints from learners of English as a foreign language generally point to the complexity of writing skills. In fact, more than 65% of students admitted that their writing quality was very weak and this skill was very challenging. This is not only found in Indonesia but in various parts of the world such as in Saudi Arabia (Gaffas, 2019), Malaysia (Singh, 2019), Oman (Naghdipour, 2021), Turkey (Altinmakas & Bayyurt, 2019), and in a number of other Asian countries. . In Indonesia itself, English learners are required to be able to master the

skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. The education curriculum also compiles English writing skills at the level of primary education to secondary education.

In education field, writing is also carried out both students and teachers. Roxas (2020) explained that writing is an indispensable skill in various life contexts. It is undeniable that writing skills are also accompanied by some difficulties in developing ideas. Kristiana, Yunita and Syahriah (2021) defined that there were 3 aspects of writing difficulties including linguistic, psychological and cognitive difficulties. In addition, writing is not an easy skill to master, especially if the writing must be written in other language than the mother tongue. English teachers generally have the same goal of teaching English as an international language. Teaching English also has its own challenges, such as preparing relevant teaching strategies for students and teaching media that are in accordance with the topics being taught in classroom.

The effortness to improve students' writing skills, the teacher will look for strategies that are relevant for students, adapted to the students' conditions. There are a number of strategies to improve writing skills, including using Juxtaposing pictures (Risan & Hasriani, 2019), using Blog-Assisted Language Learning (BALL) (Muslem, Marhaban, Heriansyah & Utama, 2021), using a questioning strategy (Sutiwi, 2021) and so on. Leading questions are an effective method in improving students' English writing skills. Indriani, Zahrida and Hardiah (2019) stated that leading questions could have a significant effect in improving students' descriptive text writing skills. Therefore, researchers use leading questions in improving students' writing skills. The ways to improve writing skills are also accompanied by assessments. Wijaya (2022) explained that if teachers are able to assess the importance of formative writing assessments, so teachers can determine more information on writing learning objectives, decisions, and trajectories in a holistic way that benefits all students in order to produce more satisfying writing learning outcomes.

The uniqueness of this research lies in the bilingual class sector in madrasah. Bilingual classes for madrasah students have their own positive points. Students can learn 2 foreign languages at the same time. These students learn Arabic part by part within learning English. In writing skills, the students learn about various kinds of texts such as descriptive text, narrative text, recount text and procedure text. Here, the researcher focused on improving writing skills inrecount text where students find it difficult to write down ideas in a paragraph. Khairunnisak, Sartika and Asmara (2022) mentioned difficulties in writing recount texts due to a lack of understanding of the use of English structures in recount texts and a lack of practice in writing in English for students. However, it is possible that students

also experience difficulties in understanding linguistic elements, as well as improving skills in foreign languages orally and written. One of the writing materials is writing recount text. Safitri, Azisah and Nur (2021) expressed their opinion that the challenges of writing recount texts for students are the lack of mastery of English vocabulary and the availability of English references.

Here the researcher observes the students where they had difficulty in writing in English due to the lack of English vocabulary and the lack of understanding of the linguistic structure in English. Therefore, the researcher applies the leading questions method in order to be able to improve the recount text writing skills. Husna and Multazim (2019) showed that difficulties in writing recount texts were not only experienced by students in public schools but also students in inclusive classes. Difficulties in writing recount texts include aspects of idea development, grammatical aspects especially in the orientation and re-orientation sections.

The recount text is a follow-up text that students learn after the descriptive text. Both texts have a number of differences, including the structure of the text composition and the use of adverbs of time in the text. Here, the researcher focuses on word selection, recount text preparation and the use of language features for students in writing recount text. There are several points that students must have in order to improve their recount text writing skills, including mastery of vocabulary, understanding of text structure and the use of adverbs of time in the past tense. In a previous study conducted by Ali (2021) investigating the developing students' ability in writing through guiding questions strategy in English Education program. In another study conducted by Indahsari and Julita (2018) revealing the use of leading questions in improving students' writing skills not only in recount texts but also descriptive texts.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that students with bilingual classes may still have difficulty developing ideas or improving vocabulary mastery in writing recount texts. The results of this study will inform about the various challenges faced by bilingual class learners in improving their recount text writing skills using an effective technique, namely leading questions. This research is based on the argument that bilingual learners need a specific strategy to learn recount text writing. Another assumption is bilingual students can be taught using the leading question technique. Thus, the purpose of this research is to find out; (1) Are lead questions able to improve recount text writing skills? (2) How can lead questions improve recount text writing skills?

METHOD

This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR). The researcher carried out this research only in one cycle. In this cycle there were 4 meetings. The researchers chose the students of class X IIS madrasah aliyah. Class X IIS was chosen because there were problems faced by students in learning English, namely lack of motivation and lack of mastery of English vocabulary. Compared to other classes, class X IIS got the lowest average score on the English language test among other classes. So, the researchers decided to do this research in the class.

Furthermore, the researchers used 2 instruments, namely a test and an observation checklist. In this study, the researcher wrote 5 indicators in the observation checklist including student attendance, students' enthusiasm for listening to the teacher's explanation, the level of student activity asking questions in class, and the activeness of students answering and doing assignments not forgetting also about students' attitudes in participating in learning sessions in class. In this instrument, the researchers used a checklist from 1-5, which means 1 is the lowest score and 5 is the highest score for each indicator in the observation checklist. The results of the observation checklist were in the form of presentations obtained by dividing the total number of observations divided by the maximum score in the observations. Next, the researchers applied the leading question strategy for 4 meetings in the cycle. The use of the leading question strategy has an effect on increasing the score of students' writing skills and increasing the active participation of students in class, so that researchers have been able to complete this research. The researchers also used a scoring rubric to assess the improvement of students' writing skills. The research that implemented the CAR design is Izzah, Aziah & Nurpahmi (2021) in classroom action research to determine the improvement of reading skills using the interactive compensatory model.

This study used a cycle consisting of 4 steps, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflecting. The first stage of planning, researchers prepared lesson plans, leading questions, observation sheets and evaluation tests. The second stage of implementation, the researchers carried out this research in 4 meetings. In each meeting, the researchers gave a leading question according to the writing theme at the meeting. The third stage of observation, the researchers observed student activities in class which included student attendance in class, active question and answer and student focus in following the whole lesson. The last stage is the reflecting, the researches assessed the implementation of the research to conclude the conclusions. Furthermore, the researchers completed this research when it met the criteria of success, which is more than 80% of the students have got

a score equal to or more than the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) score of 80 with an average score of 85.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Leading Questions in Enhancing Writing Power

The researcher implemented leading questions which showed an improvement in recount text writing skills. The main point in implementing leading questions was prepared the leading questions which will be used in every meeting in one cycle. Cotton (2001) said that the instruction including questioning is more effective in generating achievement gains than instruction without questioning. The results of the implementation of leading questions can be seen from the following table.

Table 1. The Result of the Observation Checklist of the Whole Meeting

No.	Indicators	Score				
			Cycle			
		Pre-Test	1st Meeting	2nd Meeting	3rd Meeting	4th Meeting
1.	Student's attendance	5	5	5	5	5
2.	The students are enthusiastic in listening to the teacher explanation of recount text.	1	2	3	4	4
3.	The students asked the question.	1	2	2	3	4
4.	The students are enthusiastic in responding teacher question.	1	2	3	3	4
5.	The students are enthusiastic in writing recount text.	1	2	2	4	5
Total score each meeting		9	13	15	18	22
Percentage of the total score		36%	52%	60%	76%	88%

The table 1 showed that the arrival rate of students in English class increased from the first meeting to the last meeting. This is also accompanied by the activeness of asking question to the researchers and enthusiastically listening to the explanation of the recount text material at each meeting. Brown and Wragg (1993) found that one of the benefits of questions is to check students' understanding, especially if they are used before starting the lesson. The emergence of student interest in the subject is an advantage of the lecturer's questioning strategy at the beginning of learning in teaching writing recount text. Another crucial point is the increasing enthusiasm of students in writing starting from the pre-test to the written test. The use of leading questions could also be used not only for the written test but also for the oral test. This is evidenced by Sujariati et al. (2016), they found that oral leading questions are suitable for use during classroom teaching and in the learning process because they are more effective in encouraging learning than written questions. In this study, the researcher emphasized that the use of leading queations could increase students' scores in writing recount texts in one cycle. The results of the research are presented in the following table.

Tabel 2. The Result of the Whole Meeting

No.	Participants	M/F	The Result Score				
				Cycle			
			Pre-test	1st Meeting	2nd Meeting	3rd Meeting	Written Test
1	Student 1	F	52	58	68	80	84
2	Student 2	M	44	60	68	80	82
3	Student 3	F	52	66	74	78	80
4	Student 4	M	40	56	64	72	78
5	Student 5	F	80	80	82	86	86
6	Student 6	F	60	74	80	84	84
7	Student 7	M	52	64	80	80	80
8	Student 8	F	80	80	84	88	91
9	Student 9	F	72	80	80	80	86
10	Student 10	M	48	56	78	78	80
11	Student 11	F	76	80	84	86	91
12	Student 12	F	76	80	88	90	92
13	Student 13	F	72	80	80	80	86
14	Student 14	F	80	80	90	92	94
15	Student 15	F	72	76	76	80	88
16	Student 16	M	60	64	74	76	80
17	Student 17	F	68	78	80	84	88
18	Student 18	F	76	78	80	88	92
The Percentage of Success			16,67%	38,89%	61,12%	77%	94%

The table 2 indicated an increase in the score of writing recount texts from the pre-test to the written test in which the researcher implemented leading questions as a teaching strategy. The results presented this strategy were successful in improving writing skills in recount text. In the cycle above, it is shown that the students' score increased gradually after receiving treatment from the researcher. The results of this study also prove that leading questions were an effective and significant strategy in improving students' writing skills. This strategy cannot be separated from the lesson plan guidelines.

Enhancing Students' Writing Power through Leading Questions

The result of the study showed the progress of students' scores in writing recount texts as well as the process of class activities after receiving treatment. This is shown in the criteria of success percentage of 94.45% and the percentage in the observation checklist of 88% regarding student activity in class. Shahrill (2013) concluded that the first question in class was able to stimulate students' thinking. One of the benefits of asking and answering lecturers in the learning process is improving students' ability to master the material.

This researcher also found some students' difficulties in writing recount texts, including the low motivation of students self-learning and the passivity of students in joining English classes. Nurohmah (2013) in her analysis emphasized that most students still have difficulty distinguishing present, past, and future tenses in writing recount texts. In the other side, Khairunnisaak, Sartika, & Asmara (2022) also added that the difficulty in writing recount text is when students are faced with the systematics, the content and ideas for writing recount text.

Refered to the previous statement, the researcher also obtained observations which showed that students had a lack of English vocabulary and did not know how to pronounce and the vocabulary meaning. Emilia (2002) says that the ability of students is to be able to express their views and thoughts through questions in the learning process. The percentage of success in this stage is 16.7% and 32% in student activity in class.

Furthermore, improving English writing skills can be done with various learning strategies. This study emphasized that leading questions is the most appropriate strategy to improve English writing skills. However, the previous researchers have proven that there were other strategies in improving writing skills, such as Juxtaposing pictures (Risan & Hasriani, 2019), using blog-assisted language learning (BALL) (Muslem, Marhaban, Heriansyah & Utama, 2021), using a questioning strategy (Sutiwi, 2021), using brainswriting (Yulianti, Nuraeni & Parmawati, 2019) and using an animation movie (Ginting, Syafitri, Nehe, Manullang & Tarigan, 2019).

In this study, the last section raised the importance of evaluation after completion of teaching learning activities. The evaluation of the quality of students' writing after receiving treatment from the researcher is carried out at the end of the lesson. Eble (1988) also claims that student responded to one last question and the most important point can be submitted for lecturer review to address student concerns at the start of the next class period or review to clarify learning material.

CONCLUSION

The uses of leading questions were able to improve students' writing skills in recount texts. The researcher directed the students to understand the questions, then answer the question clearly and detail. The answers are compiled into recount text. Using this strategy, the students could focus on making their answers quickly. This strategy could also significantly improve student achievement in writing skills and help students know the generic structure of recount text which consists of orientation, series of events and re-orientation. In addition, the use of this technique could encourage the students to build their own ideas in writing and increase creativity in writing for other types of texts. The students are more productive in making drafts based on the leading questions.

The researcher suggested English teachers at the high school level to use leading questions in teaching English according to the material to be taught. The researcher also suggested that English teachers use various teaching strategies that support the teaching learning process in the classroom and teachers are able to manage the conditions in writing

class such as descriptive texts, narrative texts or recount texts. One more important point is the researcher suggested to the next researcher to use leading questions to improve English skills for productive skills such as writing and speaking. Furthermore, the researchers could use leading questions strategies at various levels of students.

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