

IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO (ELP) TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING *NARRATIVE TEXT*

Nursamsu

IAIN Tulungagung, East Java

nursyamsu33@ymail.com

Abstract: One of the text types to be taught to junior high school is a narrative text. It is a short story that is used to inform or entertain the readers or listeners (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). Anyhow, many students at State Junior High School of Kedungwaru 3 Tulungagung face problems in writing this kind of text. Before conducting the study, the researcher carried out a preliminary study to know the practical problems faced by the students. The result of the preliminary study showed that almost all students get difficulties to find a topic and develop it into a narrative text. Therefore, this study is aimed at providing a good strategy for students to write a good narrative text. This action research involved 30 students of the eighth grade and was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of two meetings. The strategy was implemented by following the four steps of action research: planning, implementing, and observing the action, followed by reflection. The results of the findings showed that the teaching of narrative text by using the European Language Portfolio could enhance the students' ability in writing. More specifically, it was found out that many of the students could produce 'sufficient' to 'excellent' narrative text assessed with the writing rubric adapted from the Behrman (2003:297). Due to the success of the implementation of the European Language Portfolio, teachers of English are suggested to consider implementing the strategy to help students write narrative texts.

Keywords: writing skill, narrative text, European Language Portfolio

One of the text types to be taught to junior high school is a narrative text. Anyhow, many students at State Junior High School of Kedungwaru 3 Tulungagung faced problems in writing this kind of text.

Before conducting the study, the researcher carried out a preliminary study to know the practical problems faced by the students. It was done on 5 March 2014 through some techniques: interview, observation, assigning students to write a narrative text. The observation was done during class hours from 08.20-09.40 a.m. At the end of the session the teacher assigned students to write a narrative text. After teaching learning process, then the researcher interviewed the English teacher and some students. The result of the

preliminary study showed that almost all students get difficulties to find a topic and develop it into a narrative text; the teacher did not give students enough time and guidance to assess their writing; students' narrative writing did not cover the generic structure of the text.

Narrative text is a short story that is used to inform or entertain the readers or listeners (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). The basic purpose of narrative is to entertain, to gain and hold a readers' interest. However narratives can also be written to teach or inform, to change attitudes/social opinions such as soap operas and television dramas that are used to raise topical issues. Narratives sequence people/characters in time and place. Also the stories set up one or more problems, which must eventually find a way to be resolved.

Generic structures of narrative text are as follows: orientation, complication (problem), evaluation, resolution, and coda (Emilia, 2011: 92-93). Orientation deals with (introduction) in which the characters, setting and time of the story are established. Usually it answers question (who? when? where?) example: Wolf went out hunting in the forest one dark gloomy night. Complication or problem refers to the complication usually that involves the main character(s) (often mirroring the complications in real life). Evaluation is very often combined with complication. Here, the write usually attract readers' attention to know more what is going to happen next. Resolution refers to the solution of the complication or problem. The complication may be resolved for better or worse/happily or unhappily. Sometimes there are a number of complications that have to be resolved. These add and sustain interest and suspense for the reader. Coda is the end of story commenting on the events presented in the story.

Generally, language features of narrative text is elaborated in detail as follows: A narrative focuses on specific participants; There are many action verbs, verbal and mental processes; Direct and indirect speeches are often used; It usually uses Past Tense, Linking words are used, related with time; There are sometimes some dialogs and the tense can change; Descriptive language is used to create listener's or reader's imagination; Temporal conjunctions are also used.

There are many types of narrative. They can be imaginary, factual or a combination of both. They may include fairy stories, mysteries, science fiction, romances, horror stories, adventure stories, fables, myths and legends, historical narratives, ballads, slice of life, and personal experience.

Therefore, this study is aimed at providing a good strategy for students to write a good narrative text. It is the European Language Portfolio. The European Language Portfolio (ELP) was firstly proposed at a council of Europe (CoE) symposium in 1991. Actually it was intended to provide a way of teaching and assessing all languages in Europe (Scharer, 2008). Any educational institution actually can develop their own ELPs and receive validation for them from the Council of Language Policy Division.

Each developed ELP should have three important components: (1) a language passport, which describes a learner's proficiency and competences; (2) a language biography, which facilitates planning, reflecting, and assessing through the descriptors written for each language proficiency level from AI (basic user) to

C2 (proficient user); (3) a dossier, in which the learners collect evidence of their developing language proficiency (Yilmaz & Akcan, 2011).

The language biography section of the ELP especially enables both learner to assess themselves and teachers to assess learners' performances. First, students put plus signs, stars, ticks, or minus for the descriptors on the assessment grid and then teachers follow the same procedure to assess learners.

These three components of the ELP serve both pedagogical and reporting functions (CoE 2004). Pedagogically, the ELP makes the learning process obvious, enables language learners to be more aware of the process, develops a capacity for self-assessment and reflection, and take control of their own learning. Thus, they become autonomous and responsible language learners. This pedagogical function is consistent with CoE's interest in promoting autonomy and lifelong learning (Little and Perclova, 2001). The ELP serves its reporting function by providing a record of the linguistic and cultural skills that students have acquired. Kohonon (2000) makes the point that students' self-assessment contribute significantly to the reporting function and that this kind of self-reporting helps students to appreciate their role as responsible students.

The ELP has been implemented in many European countries since 2001 and Asian countries since 2002 (Yilmaz & Akcan, 2011) and its pedagogical effectiveness as a means of promoting learners' autonomy was researched intensively in pilot studies (Scharer, 2008).

This present study concerns Classroom Action Research when implementing the ELP in English class at the eighth grade of SMPN 3 Kedungwaru - Tulungagung. Locally, the findings of the study can help teachers and the schools to understand how the ELP is used in a classroom to encourage learners to become more autonomous in writing any texts especially narrative text concerning this mini research. Internationally, the findings can contribute to the complement of ELP projects designing instruments to learn and teach English.

METHOD

The research design was Classroom Action Research. It was practical research, which was conducted in a classroom setting to develop a certain method to improve the quality of teaching. It was done in the form of cycles using the model of classroom action research by Kemmis and Mc Taggart (in Mc. Niff, 1998:2) that consisted of four steps: (1) planning the action, (2) implementing the plan, (3) observing the action, and (4) analyzing and reflecting the result. The study was categorized as Collaborative Classroom Action Research since in conducting the research, the researcher was assisted by the English teacher of the school where the study was executed.

The research was conducted at State Junior High School 3 Kedungwaru Tulungagung. The subjects of this study were the students of the eight grades of that school in the Academic Year 2013/2014.

In this study, the researcher acted as the practitioner who implemented the instruction while his collaborator observed both the researcher performance and the students' progress during the process of learning. It was because the researcher was assumed to have better mastery of the proposed strategy and the

English teacher wanted to learn it by doing observation on it. The observation was emphasized on how the researcher implemented the ELP and the students' response and progress toward the implementation of it.

At the planning stage, the researcher and his collaborator prepared the proposed strategy, designed the lesson plan, socialized the strategy and set the criteria of success.

At the implementing stage, the researcher provided Indicators. In this study, the researcher acted as the practitioner who implemented the instruction while his collaborator observed both the researcher's performance and the students' progress derived from the ELP to solve the practical problem occurred in the English class. In this study, the students were guided to write a narrative text through the following steps. First, they are given a model of narrative text. Second, they wrote rough draft; the students were assigned to write the text consisting of generic structure of the text. Third, they revised the first draft consulting to the indicators derived from the ELP; the emphasis was more on the context and meaning rather than on the mechanics and conventions. Fourth, they edited the draft and proofread them for accuracy and correctness in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and usage. Fifth, they shared the final product with the other students. At this stage, the students were given the opportunities to share their writings by reading them aloud to the whole class or in a small group or to a partner. Finally, the students collected and submitted their final writings.

In the observing stage, the instruments which were used to collect the data in this study were observation checklist, field notes, and writing assignments. The observation checklist was used to record the subject' progress in accomplishing the task given in each stage of writing and field notes were used to record detailed information that occurred during the implementation of the study which could not be covered by the observation checklist. The other instrument used in this study was writing assignment. The products of writing were evaluated with analytic scoring guide. The scoring rubric is adapted from the Behrman (2003:297).

In the reflecting stage, the decision of next cycle whether this action research was to be continued or terminated was undertaken. The data classification was done. The data were classified into the data of observation, field notes, and the subjects' score. Meanwhile, the concluding the analysis of the data was done. The data were analyzed step by step from the data obtained in each meeting separately. Then the data compared with the relevant research finding and the criteria of success to identify whether or not the students' writing scores were at least in the "sufficient" level. The result of these comparisons was used as the basis of deciding to continue or stop the cycle of this study.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This part presents the findings of research on the implementation of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) to enhance students' ability in writing narrative text. The findings are divided into two main sections. The first section

discusses the result of the first cycle held on March 12nd and 19th 2014. The other section focuses on the result of the second cycle held on March 26th and April 2nd 2014.

Findings of Cycle 1

In order to know whether the implementation of the plan in cycle 1 was successful or not, both the researcher and his collaborator analyzed the data taken from the observation checklist, field notes, and subjects' final writing. The analysis was focused on the process of the teaching-learning and the subjects' writing product.

Teaching and Learning Process

From the teacher's side, some problems were identified: (1) the teacher could not apply the ELP perfectly because some students came late, and they could not understand well the activities done in the class. As a result, the teacher had to repeat the explanation especially to those who came late, and (2) the teacher often forgot the student's name when he needed to call his/her name sometime. This disturbed the class concentration. (3) Being observed by his collaborator, the teacher felt less confident that influenced his performance in teaching.

In terms of the students' activities during the learning process, the researcher found that some students faced some problems i.e. they still felt unfamiliar with the European Language Portfolio although it had been implemented in the two meetings.

Concerning with the students activities, in prewriting, 90% or 27 students did three activities suggested: exploring ideas, selecting ideas, and ordering ideas.

In drafting process, 70% or 21 students did three points of drafting activities: writing orientation, complication (problem), evaluation, resolution, and coda. Here, drafting activity was intended to write the generic structure of narrative text.

In revising, 40% or 14 students were actively involved since revising provided the most indicators that should be accomplished. Some students did not accomplish the task because they got confused; they know that there was something wrong with their drafts but they did not know what to do although the teacher had already equipped them with the revising guidelines.

In the editing process, 75% or 23 students did the targeted activities actively. They were able to use the editing guidelines to do both self- and peer-correction. Their ability to proofread the revised draft for correctness in terms of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation were developed. This was indicated by their ability to minimize their error in writing narrative text.

In the publishing process, 60% or 18 students read their final writing in front of the class. It is aimed at sharing their final writing and inviting significant feedback from the audience.

Subject's writing

Based on the result of the students' narrative text in cycle 1, it was found that there were still many errors in the students' writing. Some of them wrote fragments, and misplaced modifiers, instead of sentences. Others wrote confusing sentences and made mistakes in subject-verb agreement.

Reflection

This part deals with the discussion of comparing research findings and some relevant research finding to the criteria of success. Referring to the criteria of success, the study was considered successful if the criteria of success could be achieved. *First*, the students were active and motivated in the writing class that was in the "sufficient" level. It could be identified through the data collected from the direct observation. As a result, however, the students' improvement in the learning process was still categorized as "good" since among 30 students, 90% or 27 students did prewriting activities, 70% or 21 students did drafting activities, 40% or 14 students did revising activities, 75% or 23 students did editing activity and 60% or 18 students read their final writing in front of the class. Furthermore, the improvement in learning process did not meet the criteria of success.

Secondly, the subject's final writings were in the "sufficient" level. Unfortunately, the subjects' score in writing narrative text also still belonged to the "uneven" level. Three of thirty students did not achieve the criteria of success. Their scores were under the targeted criteria.

The above failure was possibly caused by a number of factors. First, the teacher could not manage the time well, so the students could not accomplish the task on time. Second, two subjects did not fully pay attention to the teacher's explanation. Third, the subjects had insufficient background for the topic discussed. Three subjects had problem in utilizing grammar knowledge, which actually they had learnt before.

Taking into account all the problems identified, the researcher and his collaborator decided to revise the plan and continue the study to cycle 2 by considering the following aspects. First, the teacher needed to set up the time each stage and reminded the students to accomplish the task on time. Second, the teacher needed to intensively guide the students in every stage of the process writing and the use of the European Language Portfolio by walking around the class more frequently during the class discussion in order to give helps to the students. The teacher needed to emphasize on the student's grammatical errors in editing the students' writing by assigning the students to look closer on grammatical errors when they were revising their peer draft.

Findings of Cycle 2

Teaching and Learning Process

From the teacher's side, he applied the lesson plan well. He set up the time proportionally and executed the plan on time. He always reminded the students to do so. Besides, he also gave additional explanation to the grammar especially those related to the topic. To motivate them, the teacher also gave an

intensive guidance by proactively approaching and asking them about their problems.

Discussing more about the implementation of the ELP, in the prewriting process, all students could accomplish three activities suggested: exploring ideas, selecting ideas, and ordering ideas.

Likewise, in the drafting process, all of the students could write the writing orientation, complication (problem), evaluation, resolution, and coda which were targeted to be accomplished in the drafting. Those are the generic structures of narrative text.

In the revising process, all of the students could accomplish the task perfectly on time. They could find that the draft consisting of orientation, complication (problem), evaluation, resolution, and coda.

In the editing process, all the students could accomplish the task perfectly on time. They were able to use the editing guideline to do both self-revising and peer-revising. Their ability to proofread the revised draft for correctness in terms of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation were developed.

In the publishing process, all of the students read their final writing in front of the class. It was aimed at sharing their final writing and inviting significant feedback from the audience.

Subject's writing

In this cycle, 90% or 27 students achieve 4 point which is considered to be the minimum score to meet the criteria of success.

Reflection

This part deals with the discussion of the research findings and the relevant previous research findings about the implementation of ELP compared to the criteria of success. There were some evidences showing that the criteria of success were achieved.

First, the students were active and motivated in the writing class. They accomplished all activities. The criteria of success were acquired if the mean score reaches the "sufficient" level. All of the students did the activities which were scored 'sufficient'. It met the criteria of success.

Secondly, the subject's final writings were in 'sufficient' level. 90% or 27 students achieve 4 score which is the minimum score considered to meet the criteria of success. The score could be categorized as "sufficient" in this study.

For the above reasons, the researcher and his collaborator decided to stop the study, since it was considered successful.

DISCUSSION

The use of the ELP in Writing

Since the implementation of the ELP in enhancing students' writing ability in narrative writing text is very interesting, it is useful to see how it has been successfully implemented in one specific school context.

In this study, only the language biography section of the ELP was employed to foster planning, self-assessment, and reflection and the ELP descriptors in that section were used before, during, and after tasks to raise

learners' awareness of the aims of the task, the strategies they need to use, and the competence they are expected to acquire.

Throughout two cycles in four meetings, it obviously revealed that five advantages resulted from the implementation of the ELP on writing class: (1) raising awareness (using descriptors), (2) goal tracking, (3) making choices (during task preparation and completion), (4) reflection, and (5) self-assessment.

Process of writing

Discussing more about students' activities in the process of writing, many students needed a long time to decide a topic to write about in the prewriting stage. At first, the teacher might need to help students to select topics based upon learning experiences they had in the classroom, experiences at home, or experiences they have outside the class. It was important to develop topics with which the students had some experience. This allowed the student to draw upon prior knowledge to connect with the writing topic.

Furthermore, in this stage, the students had to understand that it was okay to make mistakes in their writing and not to get stuck on worrying whether or not their writing was perfect. In the class, the researcher explained to the students that they needed to practice a lot to get better writing skill. Having a pencil on paper was the only way that students would improve their writing.

Drafting is the process of getting ideas down on paper (Christenson, 2002:41) to lead the students to jot down their ideas and thought, compose rough draft based upon the prewriting activities. The researcher used modeling technique. It was aimed at showing the student a model of narrative text equipped with drafting guidelines. According to Brown (2001: 215) reading and studying a variety of relevant modes of text, students can gain important insight both about how they should write and about the subject matter that may become the topic of their writing. Therefore, presenting the model became an appropriate method that could be given in the drafting in order to enable the students to jot down their ideas accordance with the writing form that they were supposed to write.

Revising is the step in which the students begin to look at their work to examine content or ideas, choice of words and so forth (Cooper, 2000:359). The students examined the first draft to form the second draft. It was done for content clarity. In this stage, the researcher developed two technique namely, self-correction and peer-correction.

According to Troyka (1987: 63), editing focuses on surface features. Cooper (2000:360) calls it proofreading. In proofreading, students got their writing in order for final copy, checking spelling, writing mechanic, and sentence structure. In this stage, the researcher used modeling, self-correction and peer correction.

Publishing is also called post-writing activity because publishing actually is done after writing. Publishing was the activity where students could share their final composition with other classmate and their instructor. Vacca and Vacca (1998) stated that publishing is a fun activity. Publishing was very important for students as it provided an opportunity for them to share their final writing with real audience. It provided the students as writer and audience.

Publishing was the only reason for the writing to be important enough for hard work of editing and proofreading.

Tompkins (1994) proposed some ways to share children's writing such as reading it aloud in class, displaying it on bulletin, or reading it to students in other class. In this study students preferred to publish their composition by reading it aloud in front of the class.

The implementation of the strategy needs qualified teachers. Hammer (1998:1-2) states that qualified teachers have the following characteristics: they are entertainers in a positive sense, not in negative one; they are able to correct their student without offending them; they have an affinity sense with their students, so they can recognize the characteristics of their students well; they have lots of knowledge, not only of his subject but also any other life filed; they are able to make their lessons interesting so they do not fall asleep and unmotivated in them.

A lesson plan was also an important aspect that could not be forgotten here. Therefore, preparing the lesson plan was a crucial thing. A teacher should do it before conducting a teaching and learning activity because it leads the teacher to achieve the expected result from his teaching plan. Kauchack and Eggen (1996:76) state that clear objectives are very important in teaching and learning activities because they provide the framework for teachers' thinking as they guide their students 'construction of the topic they are teaching.

The preparation of a lesson plan covered the formulation of the basic competence and the instructional objectives that students should achieve after learning a certain instructional material. Besides, a teacher was also expected to be able to select instructional material and media, determine the method and technique of presenting the material, and designing the assessment procedure. The success of teaching-learning process was much more determined by well-prepared lesson plan. A well-prepared lesson plan brought a good impact on the students' learning as well as on the teachers' performance in conducting the class. Besides, a well-prepared lesson plan directed the teacher in carrying out the teaching and learning process and reminded them the goal of the lesson.

The design of the lesson plan of this study also covered the components that were expected to support and maximize the success of this study. Those components were formulating basic competence and instructional objectives, selecting material and media, determining the technique of presenting the instructional material, and designing the assessment procedure.

Moreover, based on the findings of this study, it was identified that the ELP was appropriate in solving the problem faced by the eighth students of SMPN 3 Kedungwaru , Tulungagung in writing narrative texts.

These findings agreed with the result of the previous studies conducted by Yilmaz and Sumru (2012) which shows that the ELP as a tool for effective learning and teaching. It could improve the student's ability on writing narrative essay at primary school level.

CONCLUSIONS

This part concludes the research. The improvement of the subject's writing ability narrative text was achieved through several activities using the

ELP in process writing. The ELP makes the students stay in the following condition: (1) raising awareness (using descriptors), (2) goal tracking, (3) making choices (during task preparation and completion), (4) reflection, and (5) self-assessment.

In addition, *in the prewriting stage*, the students chose their own topic to explore. This activity was intended to generate, select, and order the ideas. *In the drafting stage*, the students worked together to put the ideas generated in the prewriting in sentences and arrange them into the generic structures of narrative text. *In the revising stage*, the students revised their own drafts using revising guidelines. They identified the topic of the draft. Afterwards, they checked the generic structure of narrative texts. *In the editing stage*, the students were concerned with the surface feature such as grammar and writing mechanic. *In publishing stage*, all students read their final composition in front of the class. Then, the other students gave comments on their writing.

Thus, the use of the ELP in process writing activities, which improved the students' activeness and motivation, they could enhance their writing quality in narrative texts.

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Biodata:

Nursamsu is an English lecturer at IAIN Tulungagung, Indonesia. He earned his Master's degree from State University of Malang (2007). Now, he is doing his doctorate program in State University of Malang. His research interest is in the teaching of writing and the teaching of English to Young Learners. E-mail: nursyamsu33@ymail.com, Mobile phone/SMS: 081335652498.

Appendix 1 Scoring Guide

Component s of writing	Score	Level	Indicators
Thesis statement	6	Excellent	States clearly thesis statement
	5	Skillful	States thesis statement
	4	Sufficient	States adequate thesis statement
	3	Uneven	States a vague thesis statement
	2	Insufficient	Is inapprehensible thesis statement
	1	Unsatisfactory	No thesis statement
Supporting Ideas	6	Excellent	Uses clearly appropriate details to support the thesis statement
	5	Skillful	Uses details to supports the thesis statement
	4	Sufficient	Uses some details to support the thesis statement
	3	Uneven	statement
	2	Insufficient	Has inappropriate details to support thesis statement
	1	Unsatisfactory	Has little or irrelevant specifics No details
Organizatio n	6	Excellent	Is well organized with strong transitions
	5	Skillful	Is clearly organized; but may lack some transitions and /or have lapses in continuity
	4	Sufficient	Is organized with ideas that are generally related but has few or no transitions
	3	Uneven	Is unevenly organized; the essay may be disjointed
	2	Insufficient	disjointed
	1	Unsatisfactory	Is very disorganized Has no clear organization
Sentence Structure	6	Excellent	Sustains variety in sentence structure and exhibits good word choice
	5	Skillful	Exhibits some varieties in sentence structure and some good word choices
	4	Sufficient	Exhibits control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure, but sentences and word choice may be simple and unvaried
	3	Uneven	Exhibits uneven control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; may have some incorrect word choices
	2	Insufficient	Little control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may often be incorrect
	1	Unsatisfactory	No control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may be incorrect in much or all of the response
Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics	6	Excellent	Error in grammar, spelling, and punctuation are few and do not interfere with understanding
	5	Skillful	Errors in grammar, spelling, and

4	Sufficient	punctuation do not interfere with understanding
3	Uneven	Errors in grammar or usage, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding
2	Insufficient	Errors in grammar or usage, spelling, and punctuation sometimes interfere with understanding
1	Unsatisfactory	Errors in grammar or usage, spelling, and punctuation sometimes interfere with understanding in much of the response Many errors in grammar or usage, spelling, and punctuation severely interfere with understanding

(Adapted from Behrman, 2003:297)

Appendix 2 Students' observation checklist

Student's Observation Checklist

Class : VIII

Room : XI

Time : 08.20-09.40

Meeting	Process	Activities	Score			
			1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
1	Prewriting	Generate ideas Select ideas Order ideas for initial drafts				
	Drafting	Write orientation Write complication (problem) Write evaluation, Write resolution, Write coda				
2	Revising	Identify the orientation Identify the complication Identify the evaluation Identify resolution Identify coda Check whether all sentences are complete or not Use transactional words to smoothly move the writing				
3	Editing	Proofread for correctness: In grammar In spelling In capitalization In punctuation				
	Publishing	Read final writing in front of the class				

Score:

1.00= 0%-25% of the students do (Poor)

2.00= 26%-50% of the students do (Fair)

3.00= 51%-75% of the students do (Good)

4.00=76%-100% of the students do (Excellent)

Tulungagung, March 2014

Observer

Jati Sulih P, S.Pd.