

ANALYSIS OF EGRA (EXPERIENCE, GENERALIZATION, REINFORCEMENT, APPLICATION) METHOD IN TEACHING PROCESS OF RECOUNT TEXT WRITING ABILITY AT SMPN 7 PALANGKA RAYA

Nunur Hasanah*, Indra Perdana, Maria Arina Luardini
Magister of English Education, Palangka Raya University
*nunurhasanah30@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the teaching process using the EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, Application) method for writing a recount text in the eighth grade at SMPN7 Palangka Raya. It specifically focuses on how the method is utilized in lessons, its presence in teaching plans, and the responses it receives from teachers and students. The EGRA method is selected due to its focus on experiential learning, thereby providing students with opportunities for creativity in their writing and facilitating discussions about their work. Each EGRA stage has its specific objectives, aiding students in understanding, formulating, revising, and applying ideas. Data, collected through observations, interviews, and document review, reveal how the EGRA method affects student participation and assists in effective material delivery, creating an engaging classroom environment. The method encourages various insightful activities and challenges students, thereby stimulating their knowledge and creativity. The research concludes the influential role of the EGRA method in activating student learning and transforming the teacher's role into a facilitator, breaking away from monotonous classroom conditions.

Keywords: The EGRA Method, Recount Text, Writing Ability

INTRODUCTION

With its role as the international lingua franca, the English language finds itself increasingly pushed to the forefront of global communication and interaction systems. The widespread usage of English, powered by cultural influences from English-speaking nations, digital technology advancements and the omnipresence of English in global media, has considerably amplified its prominence in the exchange of global ideas, discourse and collaborative initiatives across borders.

The English language, hence, operates as a powerful conduit for dialogue and cooperation across different global communities and regions, impacting an array of sectors including education, technology, research, business, politics, entertainment, and arts. It's the medium through which global issues are discussed and multilateral agreements are crafted. Undeniably, English, with its expansive global reach and appeal, has

become the primary tool for knowledge and information dissemination in our increasingly interconnected world.

For young learners, particularly, gaining proficiency in English, the world's 'default language', from an early age, offers far-reaching benefits. Not only does it provide a gateway to multicultural exchanges, higher education in top global universities, and a plethora of career prospects, but it also broadens their minds, helping them develop a global outlook. Learning English is not just about learning another language; it involves nurturing four pivotal skills - reading, listening, writing, and speaking - each holding unique importance in cultivating overall linguistic competency.

In our examination, we turn our lens onto the diverse archipelago of Indonesia, a country with a rich tapestry of cultural and linguistic traditions. In Indonesia, the first steps towards English proficiency typically

begin during junior high school. At this early stage, students are introduced to the fundamental concepts of the English language which are then systematically and progressively developed as they progress up the academic ladder, culminating at the university level.

The Indonesian education system purposely integrates the four core language skills into their national curriculum, a testament to the thoughtfulness and cultural attuneness of their educational policy and planning (Setiasih, 2015). However, though all four skills - reading, listening, writing, and speaking - are equally crucial, our research chooses to zoom in on the complexities and intrigues surrounding the 'writing' skill.

Writing in the English language is far from a straightforward translation of thoughts into words on paper. It encapsulates several elements and techniques, merging creativity, critical thinking, grammar knowledge, appropriate vocabulary usage, and efficient language structure to deliver an intelligible and engaging written output. Writing, though offering an ingenious tool for self-expression and communication, ushers in an array of challenges too (Sarimarsutalinda, Inderawati & Suganda, 2018). Learners may grapple with obstacles including a limited understanding of correct grammar, struggle in selecting the right words, apprehension around making mistakes, and insufficient grasp of the cultural nuances coloring the English language.

Upon standing back, and reflecting on the broader perspective, it becomes apparent that hurdles faced while attempting to master writing often stem from a subpar grasp of the key building blocks that together constitute effective writing. These fundamental building blocks encompass areas such as content generation, organization of thoughts and ideas, vocabulary selection, language use in terms of choosing the right tone and style, understanding and applying grammatical structures, and ensuring accuracy in mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, and consistent formatting. The absence of synchrony and proper integration among these elements can

result in writing that lacks readability, clarity, coherence and overall effectiveness, thereby inhibiting the reader's engagement and ability to glean meaning from the written text (Erisda Vildia Muhammad, 2017).

English writing can exhibit a myriad of forms, each aligning to different genres that offer distinctive stylistic directives and serve varied purposes. Descriptive texts vividly portray people, places, or things, creating a mental image for the reader. Narrative texts weave a story keeping the reader engrossed, while procedural texts guide readers through a sequence of steps towards achieving a certain task. Recount texts, meanwhile, provide sequentially detailed accounts of past events or experiences.

While each genre has its unique style, structure, and purpose, this research narrows its focus to the fascinating domain of recounting texts, and more specifically, to personal recounts.

Creating an effective piece of writing is far from a spontaneous burst of inspiration, but rather, it's a methodically organized process that involves considerable reflection, effort, and time. The endeavor starts with an initial draft of the text stemming from the author's thoughts and ideas. This draft then undergoes a thorough review to identify areas needing enhancements or changes. Based on the review, the text is revised, in terms of content, structure, and language use. Rewriting or editing follows to fine-tune the text for improved clarity, emphasis, or tone. The final product is a polished text, ready to be consumed by readers. Each stage in this progression is paramount to generate a well-crafted, impactful, and effective piece of writing.

Recount texts, which present past experiences or incidents in a chronological format, typically comprise of three distinct parts: an orientation that lays out the context, the recount of events or experiences forming the body of the text, and a reorientation or conclusion that summarizes or wraps up the narration (Matondang, 2020). Recount texts could be seen as prisms; they take a single

concept and refract it into various forms such as personal recounts, factual recounts, imaginative recounts, and biography recounts. Every type presents its narrative perspective and employs a unique textual format. For the purposes of this study, we delve into personal recounts, offering a window into individuals' experiences and their personal perspectives (Cholipah, 2014).

This research significantly refers to Dr. Brian Tomlinson's EGRA instructional method (1990). The EGRA, which stands for Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, and Application, offers a comprehensive and holistic teaching methodology. Deriving its essence from the learning theory of communicative language teaching approach (CLT), it promotes interaction and meaningful, real-world communication scenarios among students. EGRA aims to foster an enriched writing experience, provoking the creative expression of thoughts and ideas, stimulating peer discourse and instilling the habit of continuous review, revision, and practical application of learned skills. This rich pedagogical blend plays a key role in nurturing the writing skills of English language learners, enhancing their linguistic proficiency, and empowering their communicative competence.

RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher conducted an in-depth investigation into the teaching process of writing recount text, focusing specifically on the use of the EGRA (Experienced-based Generalization Reinforcement Application) method. The EGRA method has been demonstrated to be highly effective when applied by English teachers to enhance the writing abilities of their students. It encourages students to independently explore and understand the structure and function of recount text, thus fostering a greater comprehension of the subject matter.

The EGRA method employs four distinct teaching objectives — experience, generalization, reinforcement, and application. In the 'experience' stage, there's a focus on experiential learning, which helps to

familiarize students with the subject matter. 'Generalization' encourages students to draw autonomous conclusions about the form and function they've experienced, which enhances their retention skills. 'Reinforcement' follows, where learners are tasked to reflect on or revise their inferences, ensuring a thorough understanding of the conclusions they've made. Finally, the 'application' phase requires students to put their learned theoretical knowledge to practical use by communicating messages or information.

A descriptive qualitative method was chosen for this study which makes it a naturalistic research method—precisely because it involves a detailed analysis of data in a natural environment. The outcomes are typically conveyed through descriptive written explanations supported by data provided in tables. Citing Cresswel (2014), the results of qualitative research are highly descriptive and involve extensive use of words or imagery versus quantitative numeric data.

The participants of this study comprised of English teachers and students in the eighth-grade at SMPN7 Palangka Raya. These individuals were selected for their intricate knowledge and first-hand experience with the problem investigated. The research was centered around teaching recount text writing skills using the EGRA method within this specific academic setting, along with a keen examination of the students' responses and attitudes towards learning by this method.

The research instruments employed during this study were observations, interviews, and document analyses. To ensure utmost accuracy and validity of the gathered data, the researcher employed the technique of triangulation. According to Tan & Whipp (2019), triangulation is essentially a method for cross-referencing and correlating findings from different sources to accomplish a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and secure the validity of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Teaching, as a multifaceted and complex pursuit, is intrinsically tied to the evolution of a student's ability to learn, process, and utilize new knowledge and skills. This expansive process can be broken down into three fundamental stages, aptly identified as the pre-teaching, during-teaching, and post-teaching phases. Each of these stages presents a distinct role in the overarching framework of education, curating a nuanced and multi-level learning journey for students.

The pre-teaching phase aims to smooth the path towards efficient and engaging instruction. It sets the stage for the learning experience, much like the opening act in a grand spectacle. Upon entering the classroom, the teacher initiates this journey with a warm greeting, appropriate for inviting students into the learning environment and fostering a confident and respectful atmosphere conducive to academic discourse.

Following the exchange of greetings, the teacher takes attendance. While this act may seem mundanely administrative, it is instrumental for maintaining an accurate record of student presence, as well as for identifying those who may require extra attention due to repeated absences.

To further facilitate a congenial classroom environment and build the necessary rapport, the teacher initiates an open dialogue about the students' recent activities or experiences during holidays. These questions serve a purpose beyond mere niceties; they create a space for students to reflect and verbalize their experiences, fostering engagement and encouraging students to think critically about their experiences. This conversational approach eases the atmosphere, diminishing the inherent rigidity of a formal classroom and inviting students to participate actively in the upcoming session.

Once an open, respectful atmosphere has been established, the teacher introduces the central topic of the day's instruction. This involves presenting various pertinent keywords linked to the central theme, creating a sense of intrigue and mental preparedness for the forthcoming class. This strategic approach

is designed to spark students' curiosity about the lesson, ensnaring their minds for the enlightened journey that lies ahead.

Moving ahead to the during-teaching phase, one encounters the heart of the educational process. This centerpiece can further be subdivided into three consequential parts: generalization, reinforcement, and application. Each segment serves a specific purpose, acting in harmony to facilitate student comprehension and supportive assimilation of the course content.

The generalization phase involves providing each student with a text for detailed analysis. This exercise invites students to delve into the intricacies of the narrative, exploring aspects such as the central characters, the geographical and temporal milieu, and the sequential unfolding of events. This exploration stimulates robust mental engagement from the students, thereby augmenting their analytical thinking abilities and comprehension skills.

In addition to strengthening cognitive abilities, this phase fosters in-depth classroom discussions, facilitating peer interactions and refining students' communication skills. In essence, this stage generates a learning environment that promotes both cooperative learning and critical thinking.

Transitioning into the reinforcement phase, the teacher delves into the topic of 'recount texts', texts that offer a sequential, detailed account of past events or experiences. With precision, the teacher fragments the comprehensive concept of 'recount texts' into bite-sized sub-categories: factual, personal, and imaginative. Accompanied by an array of exemplars, the unique features, structures, and elements of these texts are illuminated upon. These are inclusive of orientation (an introduction to the characters and setting), a series of events, and re-orientation (a conclusion based on the events).

Taking the explanation one step further, the teacher also introduces the linguistic features unique to recount texts, including the use of past-tense verbs, personal pronouns, time connectives, and chronological

sequences. Through a clear representation of how these elements contribute to the overarching structure of the narrative, students gather insights into the tools and techniques necessary to make their recount text effective and coherent.

Giving the students an opportunity to translate their theoretical understanding into practice launches the application phase. Given the principles learned about recount texts, students are guided to construct their recount text, thereby testing their comprehensive understanding and giving them a chance to showcase their creativity. Through this real-world application of their learning, students can observe how theoretical concepts translate into practice, thereby reinforcing their learning in a hands-on manner.

Following the during-teaching phase is the post-teaching phase, which serves as the concluding chapter to the academic discourse. As part of this phase, students are offered another text, which they are expected to analyze and retell in their words. This repetitive practice allows them to reapply their learning about recount texts, drilling the theoretical concepts further into their minds.

To wrap up, the teacher offers a recap of the essential points covered in the lesson, emphasizing the main features of a recount text, and reasserting the importance of completing assigned homework. As such, the post-teaching phase serves as a revision, practice, and consolidation tool to benefit the student in the long run, providing them with a tangible takeaway from the lesson.

To analyze the effectiveness of this distinct teaching methodology, referred to as the 'Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, and Application' (EGRA), structured interviews were conducted amongst several class teachers who have utilized this method. In comprehending their extrapolations, it is clear there is a consensus that leans strongly towards the positive.

The overwhelming feedback points towards an observable enhancement in the classroom dynamics, produced, in part, by a heightened student engagement in the learning

process. Many teachers recognized improvements in their students' ability to construct compelling recount texts, thereby validating the EGRA method as an effective teaching tool. The encouraging results conferred by this study underscore the promising potential of the EGRA teaching scheme, marking it as a successful model for the future education landscape.

Discussion

In the ever-evolving world of education, the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) teaching method has emerged as a groundbreaking paradigm. EGRA, with its focus on reading acquisition and development in early grades, has rapidly revolutionized the landscape of pedagogy, particularly in the critical literacy skill of constructing recount texts effectively. As an alternative to traditional, passive, and rote learning approaches, the EGRA method emphasizes the active and engaging task of critical learning.

Highlighting the effectiveness and innovativeness of the EGRA method, numerous teachers who have embraced it as a core teaching strategy in their classrooms have had illuminating experiences and achieved impressive results. In interviews, these practitioners noted the vast improvements in their teaching conditions, coupled with an evident boost in their students' engagement and interest. This starkly contrasts with the dull monotony of previous, conventional teaching methods that have long dominated academic institutions.

Implementing the EGRA method represents a significant paradigm shift from the traditional pedagogical approach. It propels teachers to strive in creating a vibrant, interactive learning environment that places paramount importance on intellectual exploration, critical thinking, and collaboration among students. They are guides, leading the learners through the journey of knowledge discovery and pushing them to develop their personal ideas and perspectives. They challenge the learners with open-ended, thought-provoking questions that prompt self-

discovery, incite curiosity, and stimulate intellectual growth. As such, learning experiences are undeniably rich, inspiring, and beneficial.

The heart and soul of the EGRA teaching method lies in the carefully thought-out arrangement of activities specifically designed to foster an inquiry-oriented learning environment. This system, inherently flexible, ensures that learning is constantly dynamic and organic. The EGRA method veers away from the static, one-dimensional approach that characterized traditional pedagogy, instead focusing on creating meaningful, guided experiences or exposures. These techniques aim to prod students into breaking out of their shells, actively participating in learning, and effectively instilling in them the value of content organization and realistic structuring of written texts.

The EGRA approach is built upon four meticulously interconnected stages, each of which is designed to facilitate a smooth, engaging, and productive educational journey. Kicking off the learning process is the all-important "experience" phase. Here, the teacher serves as a navigator, employing well-structured queries to introduce students to new concepts and structures. The learners, in turn, actively engage with the material, utilising their intellect and creativity to form connections, make inferences and start synthesising their new knowledge.

Upon the completion of the experience phase, students then navigate through the "explanation" phase, a stage where they delve deeper into the conceptual constructs they uncovered during the previous phase. Here, they dissect the complex rules, principles, and broader concepts that define the language structure elements earlier introduced. As they wander through the labyrinth of writing's subtleties, sentence structure intricacies, and myriad language devices, their comprehension and appreciation of the subject matter deepen.

The reinforcement stage follows smoothly. During this important phase of the EGRA learning curve, the teacher transitions from being a navigator to a guide. The

educator engages with students' work, provides feedback, and offers valuable insights to enhance their understanding. Students use this time to iron out misunderstandings, solidify their newly acquired knowledge and reassess their comprehension of the constantly evolving complexity of the language's structural elements.

The EGRA method's educational journey sees its culmination in the fourth stage: application. This phase offers the most solid, irrefutable evidence of the learning process's success, as it impels students to practically apply their newly acquired knowledge in real-world scenarios. Challenging tasks such as participating in open-ended discussions, delving into storytelling, grappling with essay writing, and engaging in various writing tasks requiring the full use of their fortified writing skills serve as testaments to their learning progress.

The EGRA approach notably transforms the archetypal classroom's dynamics. Teachers, instead of being mere disseminators of knowledge, morph into facilitators and guides. This shift stimulates curiosity, encourages critical thinking, and fuels creativity within students, inciting them to take a more active role in their educational journey.

Students and teachers alike have given their glowing reviews and testimonials about the EGRA method. Students expressed their newfound vigor and enjoyment in the learning process, a refreshing change from the detachment and ennui associated with traditional schooling routines. The level of motivation and engagement among students has climbed dramatically. The enhanced writing abilities of the students- displayed through coherent structures, improved fluency, and accurate tense usage- is a resounding endorsement of the EGRA method.

Teachers have also expressed nothing but high praises for the EGRA method, appreciating how their strategically posed questions have fostered an environment ripe for learning. The method encourages open discussion, critical analysis, and extended exploration of topics. Teachers found

themselves addressing students eagerly anticipating their instructions and contributions, an atmosphere conducive for collective growth.

To summarize, the EGRA method, with its ingenious progression of experience, explanation, reinforcement, and application stages, has undoubtedly left a lasting impression on both the teachers and the students graced with its impact. The adoption of this innovative approach signifies a forceful, groundbreaking shift in teaching techniques and represents a profound transformation of the educational experience as a whole.

Empowering students to take an active role in their learning journey, the EGRA method equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to comprehend and apply language structure effectively and creatively. More than that, it stimulates the joy of independent thinking, self-discovery, and active participation.

There is no doubt that the EGRA method, with its revolutionary design, marks a significant milestone in the ceaseless evolution of modern pedagogy. Its rising popularity and success assure us of its potential, redefining the future of education while leaving an indelible imprint on the minds of learners today.

CONCLUSION

The EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, and Application) teaching methodology implemented at SMPN7 Palangka Raya plays a crucial role in improving students' skills in recount text writing by helping the teachers deliver content effectively and ensure students' continuous learning. This methodology emphasizes the importance of students' active involvement, which leads to more engagement in the learning process and an interactive classroom environment. In tandem, it boosts students' confidence, fostering personal growth and nurturing their competencies. Through this sequential structure of experience, generalization, reinforcement, and application,

the EGRA method revolves around the central concept of active learning. It requires students to express their thoughts and opinions coherently in both oral and written forms, making each stage a step to facilitate both teachers and students in language teaching. Teachers using EGRA invest substantial energy in preparation, particularly for student assignments, designing student-centered and varied learning activities to accommodate different interests and learning styles. As facilitators, their role extends to assisting students by posing challenging questions, thereby unraveling the complexities of recount text and igniting their creative energy. This methodology affects the overall environment of the classroom, making it dynamic, non-monotonous, and consistently engaging. The EGRA teaching method's influence is particularly notable in scenarios where leading questions are used before generating ideas, which further bolsters the students' involvement and their learning abilities.

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