Students' Experiences of Left-Right Game in Writing Narrative Text: A Narrative Inquiry Study

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Abstract

The present study is aimed at exploring students' experiences of using left-right game in writing narrative text. Narrative inquiry is used to capture students' experiences of left-right games told in their narrative frames. This study concerned one class at the tenth grade purposively determined senior high school students in Indonesian context which consist of thirty-one students. Student's narrative frame, semi structured interview and observation are the instruments employed to collect data. Their narratives reflect positive experiences in using left right games as a strategy to help them in writing narrative text. The findings of this study show that 87 % of the students state positive experiences in using left-right game activity in writing narrative text. They state that left-right game is a fun activity, they feel enthusiast when the teacher conduct left-right game. The students who engage through left-right game activity can find the way to equally and mutually collaborate in producing better a piece of writing.

Keywords: students' experiences; left-right game; narrative text; students' narrative writing text.

To be able to write well is a goal every English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student needs to acquire. Having this skill will enable students to convey their thoughts and communicate their ideas with readers in written form. In Indonesia, writing has been taught since junior high school level until higher education level. This indicates that writing is one of the prominent skills every EFL learners should master.

Despite the length of exposure to this skill, many EFL students encounter problems and challenges when learning to write in English. One of the most common problems in writing is structure. This is likely due to the distinct rules between their L1, that is Bahasa and English, as well as styles (Sugesti et al., 2020). It is a challenging task for EFL students who are easily bored with the conventional approach of learning writing.

On the other hand, it is of common knowledge that one of ways to measure one's English or language ability is through their writing skill. In addition to speaking, writing

is a productive skill usually measured to know one's achievement in language learning (Kingston et al, 2002).

Usually in doing writing tasks, many students struggle in generating ideas or arguments. To deal with that, it is important that students are aware of using correct and appropriate words which are relevant to the context they are writing. Dealing with such challenge, teacher needs a strategy and creates an enjoyable class atmosphere to attract the students to explore their ideas and give more motivation to write easily.

Based on the observation conducted at the tenth grade at one of the senior state in Cirebon, the academic year of 2019/2020, there are many difficulties in the teaching and learning process of writing which can be identified. There were several factors that influenced students' writing difficulties; they were factors related to students, the aspect of writing, and factors related to the teacher, and their teaching strategy.

Students need integrated skill to be able to produce a piece of writing, including understanding grammar generating and organizing ideas. They seem to participate less during the class activities, unmotivated, struggling to elicit their ideas especially when expressing them in English both in spoken and written. To achieve the goals of writing a paragraph especially narrative text, first, teacher should encourage and motivate the students to learn writing. Second, teacher should show how to develop paragraph. It does not matter if the students make some mistakes. In arranging the ideas, they should be shown the parts of writing, such as: opening the paragraph, the body of the paragraph. And the last, teacher evaluates students' works.

Narrative Text

Students are expected to be able to understand as well as create various texts and monologue, in this study one of them is narrative. This genre of text has a purpose to amuse or entertain readers using past events or by presenting actual or imaginary experience in different ways. It relates a series of logically, and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by factors (Rebbeca, 2010). A narrative text is usually formulated by three phases, namely orientation, where main characters and settings are introduced, complication, in which the climax of the story is presented, usually with a problem, and resolution, that shows the ending of a story, where the characters solve and go through their crisis. Djatmika and Wulandari (2013) add that narrative text itself comprises linguistic features, such as uses of preposition, conjunction, adverb, adverbial phrase, adverb of time, noun phrase, tenses (past tense and past perfect tense), and also direct and indirect speech.

Despite the purpose to amuse and entertain readers, composing a narrative text remains a challenging task. Therefore, teaching this text with an engaging activity that improves students' writing skill is preferable. Left-right game is an activity that is engaging and arousing students' confidence, which is suitable for the students' problems.

Students' Experiences in Narrative Frame

This study aims at investigating students' experiences of using left right games in writing narrative text. In investigating students learning experiences, researchers employ a qualitative data collection method known as narrative frames, which uses prompts to stimulate written expression of ideas. Their experiences are presented narratively in a narrative frame. As posited by Barkhuizen et al. (2014), it is a written story template consisting of series of incomplete sentences and blank spaces. The narrative frame helped researchers to catch the expected experiences to be written since it provides insightful and fuller picture of the participant's experiences (Hiratsuka, 2014) and provide them with guidance and support in both the structure and content of narrative (Xu, 2014). Narrative research uncovers the temporality of experience, showing that one's

understanding of people and events change (Bell, 2002, p.209). Narratives allow researchers to present the experience holistically in all its complexity and richness. By investigating students' experiences, narrative inquiry is used to capture their potency, the challenges, the strengths and the weaknesses from their view in using left-right game in writing narrative text.

The Left-Right Game

Many teaching strategies and techniques implemented to teach narrative, one of them is through a game. Teacher can create a game which relates to the material. Based on the interview with the English teacher, she has been conducted left-right game as a strategy to enhance students' interest, motivation and ability to improve students' writing, in this study it focuses on students' narrative writing text.

Here are the steps of the left-right game according to the English teacher: (1) the teacher divides the class into two groups, the left group and the right group. If there is only one student left, he/she is asked to be a time keeper. Then, (2) the teacher prepares board, if in the classroom there is only one board, the teacher must divide the board into two parts, left and right. (3) The teacher instructs each group to discuss a narrative story that they have known or they create by themselves in 2 minutes. After that, (4) the teacher asks students one by one from each group to write a narrative story on the whiteboard. (5) The teacher prepares a stopwatch that can be assisted by time keeper. The teacher gives time to students for 25 seconds for each group. Then, the timekeeper notes of the stopwatch and will say "stop" if the time has reached 25 seconds. The students who write on the whiteboard may be helped by other members of the group, they can share their ideas. (6) The students must leave the board and the board marker and changed with his/her other member when the time is up. After all the members of the group have already turned to write on the

whiteboard, (7) the teacher evaluates the result of each group, the structure of text, grammar and diction. Then (8) teacher chooses a winner and give them a reward.

Method

This present study was a narrative inquiry study under case study design of qualitative approach. A narrative inquiry was a way of thinking about, and studying, experience (Barkhuizen, 2011). Narrative inquirers thought narratively about experience throughout inquiry. Meanwhile, Creswell (2012) proposed narrative research' as the term representing a design which focuses on studying a single person, gathering data through the collection of stories, reporting individual experiences, and discussing the meaning of those experiences for the individual. This study explored students' experiences of using left-right game in writing narrative text. A narrative inquiry promises to empower students' voices as someone who has an experience to tell about the game. Their experiences give clear descriptions of what they feel and think of using left-right game activity with its success and unsuccessful stories.

Participants

This study conducted in one class at tenth grade purposively determined Senior State School students in an Indonesian context which consist of thirty-one students. The data were taken from the academic year of 2019/2020.

Table 1. The List of Participants

Total Students	Gender	Age
7	Female	14
12	Female	15
2	Male	14
10	Male	15

Data Sources

Data from this study was taken from (1) students' narrative frame. Students' narrative frames represented their experiences of using

left-right game in writing narrative text. It allows the researchers understand the expected experiences to be written since it provides an insightful and fuller picture of the students' experiences. Students' experiences cover the past and the present experiences of left-right game as the activity in helping them to write narrative text. (2) Interview. The interviews were held to obtain information from the teacher and students of using the left-right game in writing narrative text. The interview covers the students' view and perception of left-right game. And the last data were taken from (3) the classroom observation checklist. The classroom observation checklist plays a pivotal role in this study, since the checklist showed that the teacher applied the left-right game in her teaching narrative text to the students.

In order to fulfill the validity of the study, the researchers with the English teacher monitor teaching and learning process by doing observation as well as taking notes during the observation. The researchers also record the interview. The interview gives participants chances to share their personal opinion, ideas, and comments about the employment of the study. Other than that, the data were also supported by taking photographs during the class begin. This validity is accomplished as there are some positive impacts and changes after the implementation of the left-right game as the students' activity in writing narrative text.

A study needs to be not only valid but also reliable. Reliable means that a research study is meant to be trustworthy. It is used to avoid the subjectivity in the study and maintain trustworthiness in analyzing the data. To examine the trustworthiness of the present study, the triangulations principle is implemented. Honorene (2017) triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. Paton in Honorene (2017), identify four types of triangulation, they are: 1) data triangulation; 2) Investigator triangulation; 3) Method

triangulation; and 4) theory or perspective triangulation. The triangulations uses in this study are data triangulation from English teacher and students. In this study, the data were collected from the end of January until the beginning of March. Method triangulation is from the students' narrative frame, classroom observation checklist and interview.

Results and Discussion
The Implementation of the Left-Right Game

Based on the classroom observation checklist and the interview, it can be showed that the teacher has conducted the left-right game since the beginning of the semester of the tenth grade students, the academic year of 2019/2020. It starts at the end of January up to the beginning of March. The teacher chooses the left-right game because it can help the students to generate ideas when they can share with their friends in a group work. She has done the game since a year before this study is conducted. Based on her experience the game is appropriate to conduct for high school students. They can work collaboratively and shares ideas and thoughts in a big group. The left-right game motivates not only the high and medium achiever, but also the slow learner to enhance their ability in writing narrative text. The left-right game is not just a game, it gives the opportunity to all members of the group to work collaboratively and write their ideas. Based on teacher view in applying the game, she sees that in the beginning the students still adjust themselves to follow the rules, but in the second and third times, the students started to get accustomed by the rules and enjoyed writing activity.

In the study, teacher conducted three times of the left-right game as the students' activity in teaching narrative text. The result shows that the students' score of writing narrative text has reached 100% of the standard minimum score. The standard minimum score of the English subject in that school is 77. The average final score of the students' narrative writing test is 83,05. It means that left-right

game can be the alternative choice of activity to apply in teaching narrative text.

The checklist also shows that the teacher has done the right steps in applying left-right game. A clear instruction from the teacher can help the activity runs well and the target can be achieved by the students.

Students' Experiences of the Left-Right Game

The students' narrative frame is divided into two experiences; they are past experience and present experience. The students' past experience proves that the students at the beginning feel that the left-right game is a new activity for them. They still adjust what to do when the teacher asks them to follow the game activity. Their first experience states that they try to understand the game rules and find a way how to arrange the ideas in a group work. Meanwhile, on the second experience, it can be seen from their narrative frame, 76 % of them feel that the game is appropriate in helping them solve writing problems. After the teacher applying the left-right game twice, the students begin to understand the rule well, and easily to work with the group.

Based on the narrative frame given to the students, they show that 87 % of them states positive experiences in using the left-right game activity in writing narrative text. They state in their narrative frame that the left-right game is a fun activity, they feel enthusiast when the teacher conduct the left-right game. They can easily produce every sentence of narrative text and share their ideas with their peers. They do not feel shy and afraid of making mistakes, because the teacher gives motivation and guide them before the left-right game is started.

Their narratives also show that the left-right game creates fun atmosphere between two groups in producing narrative text. They do not feel that it is a competition between two groups but it is an activity that they can enjoy and easily produce a narrative writing text.

Conclusion

The study aimed to investigate learners' experiences when learning writing by using the left-right game. The writing ability by students were first observed to identify the underlying problems. It was further found that students lacked of motivation and confidence, resulting in a poor writing performance. Additionally, it was initially observed that the students encountered several difficulties, among others, generating and organizing the ideas when composing a text. One of the strategies which have been used by the teacher was the left-right game. Using this game presented a satisfactory result, so that researchers need to find the students' view of using the left-right game through their experiences.

Based on the results above it showed that the students' narrative frame reflects positive experiences in using the left-right game as a strategy to help them in writing narrative text. The findings of this study shows that the students who engage through the left-right game activity can find the way to equally and mutually collaborate in producing better a piece of narrative writing text. For further study of narrative text, it is highly recommended that students practice independently in and out of class writing activities regularly to develop their skills. To deal with their confidence, they also need to be consciously active in the classroom by participating actively and interacting with peers and teachers whenever they need assistance with any difficulties. The students should pay attention towards the material, particularly when they work in a group. In addition, the left-right game is one of the alternative activities to motivate students in writing a text and work collaboratively with their peers.

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