

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

There are four skills that a person must master: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Each skill has an important role in educational purposes, and writing is a valuable thing in education because it not only facilitates and deepens someone's thoughts and ideas, but it also makes someone think critically (Angelo, 1980).

Writing is also a part of human life. According to Davies (1998:25), writing is a creative process, in which writers should learn to communicate their ideas clearly to an unseen audience. He also states that learning how to write in English is important for many language learners.

To become good writers, people have to practice their writing skill a lot because writing is a difficult skill to learn. Moreover, many of the learners get difficulties when they have to write a composition.

For elementary level students, writing a composition is not only difficult but it is also not interesting. In fact, they are prepared to be able to write well in the next stage of education, which are in Junior High School, Senior High School, and University.

The writer observes that the students often get difficulties in developing their ideas in writing a composition although they have already had English subject since they were in the kindergarten or even playgroup. The problems that they are likely confronted with are when they:

- a. start writing.
- b. organize the sentences into paragraphs.
- c. develop their ideas into words.

Working in groups or with a partner creates an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual helpfulness. The students can also enjoy cooperating with their friends during their developing the ideas before writing (Davidson, 1990).

Learning cooperatively with their friends does not only create a good atmosphere but the learners also learn how to take responsibility for their own learning and for that of the other members of the group or team (Kessler, 1992). Because of the positive interdependence in the Cooperative Learning activities, the students are willing to work collaboratively for the goals of the group.

The students will be encouraged to write if the writing assignment given to them can motivate them and keep them interested. Therefore, in this study, the writer would like to discuss one interesting way to teach writing to the Elementary School students; that is by using Think-Pair-Square.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Closely related to the background of the problem, this study is conducted in order to answer the following research question:

- Do Elementary School students taught writing using Think-Pair Square have a higher writing achievement than those taught using individual work?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, the purpose of this study are to find out whether there is a significant difference between the writing achievement of the students taught with Think-Pair-Square and those taught with individual work.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to give some valuable contributions to English teachers to teach writing to Elementary School students so that it can help the students write a composition with good ideas and atmosphere.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the following points:

- a. This study only deals with writing.
- b. In this study, the writer will use Think-Pair-Square (adapted from Think-Pair-Share) technique as a part of Cooperative Learning to the students who are going to work in pairs, then in groups.
- c. The writing being researched is a paragraph writing that may consist of 5 – 10 sentences or 40-50 words.
- d. The subjects of this study are the third grade of Xin Zhong Elementary School students.

1.6. Hypothesis

1.6.1. Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the writing achievement of Elementary School students taught using Think-Pair-Square and individual work.

1.6.2. Alternative Hypothesis

There is a significant difference between the writing achievement of Elementary School students taught using Think-Pair-Square and individual work.

1.7. Definition of the Key Terms

To make the study clearer, the writer gives some definition related to her study.

a. Writing

According to Calkins (1994:8), writing is not only a process of recording; it is also a process of developing a story or an idea.

b. Cooperative Learning

Kessler (1992:1) states that cooperative learning is carefully structured – organized so that each learner interacts with others and all learners are motivated to increase each other's learning.

c. Think-Pair-Square (adapted from Think-Pair-Share)

Lyman (1981) states that Think-Pair-Square (Share) is a cooperative discussion strategy. It gets its name from the three stages of student action, with emphasis on what students are to be doing at each of those stages. The stages are: (1) the teacher poses a question, (2) the students think of a

response, and (3) the students work with the partner they choose. The difference between Think Pair Share and Think Pair Square is based on the fourth stage; that is the students share the discussion with another pair.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the background of the writer's study. Chapter 2 conveys some theories and the previous studies related to the writer's study. The writer presents the method of the writer's study in Chapter 3. In chapter 4, the writer shows the data analysis and findings. The writer covers the conclusion and gives some suggestions for further research in Chapter 5.