Fun and collaborative learning to increase students' confidence in writing

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Article info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Collaborative learning Confidence in writing Fun learning Narrative writing *Corresponding author:* Rosdiana English Education Study Program, Setia Budhi Rangkasbitung University Email: dros15521@gmail.com	The aim of this research was to find out the implementation of fun collaborative learning to increase the second year of junior high school students' confidence in writing. Classroom Action Research (CAR) with two cycles was deployed. The findings revealed that all criteria of success were achieved in the second cycle. It is shown that there is 90% of students were confident to write. In addition, 80% of students are getting involved actively during teaching learning process of writing class and the implementation of fun and collaborative writing is in good level. The fun and collaborative learning is proven to be effective when certain media and game are added.

1.   INTRODUCTION

EFL learners encounters difficulty in mastering language skills, especially writing since writing is a complex skill which requires merging thoughts and knowledge to convey meanings (Kleinbort et al., 2020). In addition, they often experiencing a crisis of confidence (Bozgün & Akın-Kösterelioğlu, 2021). However, self-confidence is one of influential factors on students' writing abilities (Yao, Guo, Li, & Mc Campbell, 2021). Furthermore, self-confidence has significant role in developing writing skills (Ling, 2021; Rada et al., 1989).

To solve students' self confidence in writing collaborative learning can be applied due to its working together (Deana, 2019). According to Mandikonza (2022), Collaborative learning is a study of group work activities that can provide opportunities for nuanced mediation and enhance learning capabilities for both groups and individual members. Furthermore, studies have shown that collaborative learning can boost students' confidence and beliefs in their writing abilities (Chen & Hapgood, 2021). This approach is particularly effective in addressing the confidence issues that students often encounter during individual writing tasks (Zotzmann & Sheldrake, 2021).

Additionally, the relaxed atmosphere and feeling happy during teaching learning process may lead students to have confidence in writing (Cake, 2018). By implementing fun learning, students will feel engaged and willing to study without being coerced (Bukit & Marcela, 2023). Moreover, relaxed and stress-free environments promote fun learning, resulting in student excitement and happiness (Zhao, 2019). Considering the benefits of collaborative and fun learning, this study is conducted with the aim to explore how the implementation of fun and collaborative learning strategies can increase EFL students' confidence in writing and enhance their involvement in the learning process.

2.   METHOD

The research design employed in this study was classroom action research (CAR). It can be initiated individually or collaboratively, and it aims to understand and improve the educational process (Posch, 2018). In conducting the research, the steps cover preliminary study, planning, acting, observing, and reflection. The research was conducted at one of Islamic junior high school in Rangkasbitung, Indonesia.

Observation checklist, sheet, and students' self-assessment form were used to collect the data. The criteria of success of this research are:

a) 70% of the students are actively involved during teaching learning process. The students are considered active when they are asking questions, responding the questions, and doing the teacher's instruction during teaching learning process.

b) 70% of students are confidence during writing process. It can be seen from their response to the students' self-assessment form. They are considered confidence when they claim themselves as a confident learner in the students' self-assessment form.

c) The implementation of this strategy is in good criteria. The good criteria are achieved when 80% up to 89% of fun collaborative learning activities are implemented.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of cycle 1

During the planning phase, the teacher-researcher prepared the lesson plan, teaching materials, instructional media, worksheets, observation checklists, and students' self-assessment forms. In the acting phase, the teacher introduced vocabulary related to the material, explained the structure of narrative text, and stimulated students with questions. After that, the students were divided into groups for collaborative learning. Instructional media, such as animated videos and pictures, were used to maintain student engagement. Then, the teacher explained about narrative text and its structure. The last, the students summarized the video they watched and explained it orally.

In the observing phase, the teacher observed students' responses and encouraged group discussions. The results, based on student self-assessment forms, revealed that 60% of students were actively engaged during the teaching process. However, only 40% of students who were confident to write. The implementation of fun collaborative learning was reported at 60%.

The reflecting phase led to the conclusion that the criteria for success had not been met in the first cycle. It is because the fun collaborative learning strategy had never been used by the teacher before, secondly the students were still shy and not very confident, and they did not work together in groups because they were afraid of being wrong. Therefore, the researcher further improved the fun learning method in the learning process so that all success criteria could be achieved in the next cycle.

Findings of cycle 2

In the planning phase, the lesson plan was revised based on the first cycle's reflection. The researcher focused on narrative text structure and students' confidence in writing. Interactive elements, such as animation videos, pictures, colored paper, card roll papers, and game were incorporated into the revised plan.

In the acting phase, students were grouped for collaborative learning, and animation videos were used to introduce the topic. Students were encouraged to use dictionaries and discuss their narratives collaboratively. Colored papers with narrative clues were distributed, and students filled in story structures. A "Guess the Title" game added an element of fun to the learning process.

At the first, the students watched the animation video and saw pictures related to the narrative writing. After that, the researcher and the students discussed the narrative writing and its example. During the discussion, all groups were allowed to use dictionary. Then, the researcher gave colored paper to all groups. The paper was about the clue of narrative text. Next, the researcher played game to guess the title of the narrative text. After the title was guessed, all group filled in the structure of narrative text, filled in the blank with part of story and compose a narrative text. When each group had completed in writing the text, each group demonstrated body movement related to the title of their group story and other group guessed it.

During the observing phase of the second cycle, an improved classroom atmosphere was found. Student engagement and confidence levels in narrative writing had significantly increased. The data indicated that 80% of students were actively involved in the teaching-learning process, while 90% reported confidence in their writing abilities. Furthermore, the implementation of fun collaborative learning reached 90%. In the reflecting phase, the data from student self-assessment forms demonstrated that the criteria for success had been achieved in the second cycle.

Based on the findings, it can be reiterated that the use of interactive elements such as animation videos, colorful materials, and games significantly contributed to making the learning process enjoyable and effective. It was seen that the students felt more relaxed and enthusiastic to write, leading to enhanced learning outcomes.

In addition, Collaborative learning played a crucial role in fostering a positive classroom environment. Students learned to work together in groups, improving their confidence and engagement. Thus, it is in line with Brandle (2020) and Whitton & Langan (2020) who argued that incorporating fun and collaborative elements into teaching can increase student interest and engagement. Furthermore, fun learning strategies, including the use of games and interactive materials, can positively impact student attitudes towards learning.

4.   CONCLUSION

The implementation of fun and collaborative learning strategies has a positive impact on students' engagement during the teaching and learning process in writing class that leads into the improvement of students' confidence to write. It is considered effective when the fun and collaborative writing implement using animation videos, related pictures, colored paper assignments for group work, card roll papers with narrative content, games involving picture guessing, collaborative story filling using sticky notes, and collective guessing of story titles through body movements.

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