THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EGRA TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE THE STUDENTS' GRAMMAR MASTERY

(A Classroom Action Research at the Second Semester of English Department of Madiun State Polytechnic in the Academic Year of 2017/2018)

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Abstract

This research aims to prove that EGRA technique (Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, Application) can improve the students' grammar mastery. It was conducted in State Polytechnic Madiun from April to September 2018. The subjects of the research were the second semester students of English Department consisting of 27 students. This action research covered two cycles. Each consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In this research the researcher employed qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Based on the research findings from teaching-learning process in the two cycles, the researcher can draw some final conclusions. The students' response was very good after implementing EGRA technique. The students were active in giving answer of each question.. It was also shown from the improvement of the mean scores in every cycle as follows : mean score in pre-test was 63, post test in the first cycle was 70, and post-test in the second cycle was 80. There was improvement in every cycle. Additionally, there were 24 of 27 students who got point up 75 in the second cycle, it means it was 89 %. Based on the finding, the alternative hypothesis stating that EGRA technique can improve the students' grammar mastery.

Keywords: Implementation, EGRA Technique, and Grammar Mastery

1. INTRODUCTION

English as Second Language is needed by the convention of written English to express at a precise level of grammatical accuracy and rhetorical organization in written expression of the students (assignments, final project, final report, etc) than in spoken language. Grammar can be introduced in a number of ways, or we can show students grammar evidence and ask them to work out for themselves how the language is constructed (Harmer, 2007 : 210). Grammar is the structure and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar. And each language has its own grammar. It is one of the essential skill should be mastered by students. The skill deals with knowing how to form sentences and use it in appropriate way. Lock (1997: 1) argues that grammar is a set of rules which specify all the possible grammatical structures of the language including two aspects. They are the arrangement of words and the internal structure of word. In line with Lock, Brown (1994: 347) states that grammar is a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence.

According to Curriculum of English Department 2017/2018 in *Buku Pedoman Akademik*, grammar is one of essential language elements taught to support the mastery of four skills

namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. Besides, to achieve the standard and basic competence, the students need to understand grammar, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation. In fact, the students of English Department, especially the second semeter academic year 2017/2018, still find many problems with grammar. They say that grammar is one of the most difficult subject of others. The students are still looked confused in identifying tenses, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, reported speech rules and its application in a sentence. It can be reflected from the result of their task that they have done.

EGRA, stands for Experience / Exposure, Generalization, Reinforcement and Application, is one of techniques to teach grammar. The students are given chance to find out the form and function of the sentences by themselves. Brown (1994 : 351) says that it is built more intrinsic motivation by allowing the students to discover rules rather than being told them. Every step of EGRA has a particular objective. The objective of the experience unconsciously learners to expose a particular structure item in use. At this stage, the researcher begins the class by asking the students some leading questions related to the material that is going to be discussed. The objective of generalization is that learners better remember conclusion about form and function, they make by themselves. At this stage, the students are led through task to discover form, meaning, and fucntion of sentences in tenses, relative pronouns, reported speech. The objective of the reinforcement helps the learners to check or revise their generalization. They do task again to check and strengthen their understanding. The objective of the application uses or applies all materials items learned in the previous stage to communicate information or messages. (Adrian, 1998). At this stage, the students are expected to be able to apply the pattern of tenses, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, and reported speech based on the picture given by the researcher.

The researcher formulated the problems of the research, whether Egra technique can improve grammar mastery of the students at the Second Semester of English Department of Madiun State Polytechnic in the Academic Year of 2017/2018. This research also aimed to prove improvement of students' grammar mastery through EGRA technique at the Second Semester of English Department of Madiun State Polytechnic in the Academic Year of 2017/2018.

Bowen (1985:161) argued that grammar is the rules by which we put together meaningful word and parts of words of language to communicate messages that are comprehensible. And, grammar can be understood in different ways by different people with different purposes.

Another similar definition of grammar stated by Penny (1996:75), she defines that grammar as the way words are put together to make correct sentences. Furthermore, she inferred that grammar may be roughly defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bit of words) in order to form longer units of meaning.

The word grammar has several meanings and there is no universally accepted definition. Different experts define the term grammar differently. There is no fixed definition of grammar. Leech (1988:2) defined that every time we write or speak, we are faced with a large array of choices: not only choices of what to say but of how to say it. The vocabulary and grammar that we used to communicate are influenced by a number of factors. Such as the reason for the communication, the setting, the people we are addressing, and whether we are speaking or writing.

According to George Yule, there are three types of grammar. Those are: (1). Mental Grammar. Mental Grammar is a form of internal linguistic knowledge which operates in the production and recognition of appropriately structured expressions. And this is not the result of

any teaching (pusrely skill), (2). Lingustic Ettiquette. Linguistic Ettiquette is the identification of the proper or best structures to be used in a language, (3). Traditional Grammar. Traditional grammar involves the analysis study of the structures found in a language.

On the other hand, Kolln and Funk divided the types of grammar into two, namely structural and Transformational Grammar. The structuralists recognize the importance of descibing language on its own terms. Istead of assuming that English words could fit into the traditional eight word grops of Latin, the structuralists examined sentences objectively, paying particular attention to how words change in sound and spelling (their form) and how they are used in sentences (their function). Another important feature of structuralism, which came to be called "new grammar", is its empasis on the systematic nature of English. Unlike the structuralist, whose goal was to examine the sentences we actually speak and to describe their systematic nature, the transformationalist wanted to unlock the secrets of language: to build a model of our internal rules, a model that would produce all of the grammatical – and no ungrammatical – sentences. It might be useful to think of our built – in language system as a computer program. The transformationalists are trying to describe that program. The several important concepts of transformational grammar are: first, the recognition that a basic sentence can be transformed into variety of forms, depending on intert or emphasis, while retaining its essential meaning; for example, questions and exclamations and passive sentences. Another major adoption from adoption from transformational grammar is the description of our system for expanding the verb.

Grammar is still an important component in English no matter how many experts classified it into several types. In conclusion, the most important thing in learning language is the learners have to know the language structure as well as possible in order to increase their ability in using the target language itself.

EGRA was the example of grammar presentation technique which was once popular in the 1980's. It suggests a squence of instruction, moving from giving example, drawing generalization, providing reinforcement, and assigning tasks to students for application. Such information is frequently obtained more from interaction and activities with teachers in various occasions than from the literature.

EGRA is a technique develop from communicative approach which views language as a means of communication and the activities of language have to guide students to communicate it refers to experience, generalization, reinforcement, and application. It actually the steps of the technique itself. The detail explanation of the steps are as follow; (1) Experience. Experience is a learning stage where students are subsconsciously expose to the meaningful use of particular structure item. The students are not aware that they are led to find a particular grammar structure. The students are provided by activity that explores their knowledge. Here the learning experience will be the main gate for the students' understanding about correct grammar structure. (2) Generalization. In this step, the students are led through tasks to discover form, meaning and function of a generic structure they have been exposed to. The learner will get experience about the structure rules by themselves. It means that they can get the pattern of sentences by themselves and it will affect on theit understanding about it. Harner states that the best way to ensure learning was for the students to work out the rules himself. Here, the students focus on the rules of the generic structure rather than the language context. (3) Reinforcement. Reinforcement is a step where the students are provided with correct and conscious knowledge of the genre, generic structure, and purpose text item that they have been exposed to. It is aimed at helping the learners to check or revise their generalization. The students have right to know the right genre,

generic structure, and purpose of a certain structure role of the text. At this step, the teacher explains again what the students have discovered. The teacher gives feedback to the students' work so that they get reinforcement. (4) Application. Application is the learning step when students are given opportunities to use or apply the certain structure role of the text that they have learned in communication either receiptively or productively. Kenneth states that the objective of the application is to determine whether the students know how to apply text that they have previously been presented.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted in the class at second semester of English Department Students. It is conducted by applying Classroom Action Research (CAR). Wardani and Kuswaya brought the opinion of Carl and Kemmis in their book Penelitian Tindakan Kelas stated action research is a form of self-reflective inquery undertaken by participants (lecturer, students, or principle for example) in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, and the situation and institutions. In addition, Suhardjono said the action research that be done with aim to increase the quality of learning practice in the class.

Classroom Action Research consists of three words that can be understood as follow ; Firstly, Research; examine the activities of an objects, use the result of a particular methodology to obtain data or information useful to improve the quality of a thing that interest and important for writer. Secondly, Action; something movement activities that are deliberately made with a specific purpose, which in this study from a study form a series of cycle of activity. Thirdly, Class; is a group of students who are in the same time receive the same subject from a teacher.

Harmer (2003: 414) states that Action Research is the name given to a series of procedures teachers can engage in, either because they wish to improve aspects of their teaching, or alternatively, because they wish to evaluate the success and/or appropriacy of certain activities and procedures.

Instrument is a device to get the data. For doing this research, the researcher needs the instrument that was used to collect the data. The data is quantitative and qualitative data. In quantitative data, the researcher used test as instrument. In qualitative data, the researcher uses observations, diary note, and document.

This research is applied two instruments for data analysis, qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data will be analyzed in observation checklist and diary note. Quantitative data will be analyzed in score while the students' do English learning process by implementting EGRA technique. Through quantitative data the researcher will know there is improvement or not on the students' grammar mastery through the implementation of EGRA technique.

There are two main categories of data called quantitative and qualitative. Koshy explained that qualitative data can be measured and represented by numbers. This kind of data can be presented in the form of tables and charts. Besides, qualitative data can be presented in the form of transcript, descriptions, and document for analysis. In addition, in quantitative data, the researcher uses test as instrument to measure their grammar mastery. In scoring the students' test, the researcher uses some points. To get the point in comparing the result between before and after implementing Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, Application (EGRA) Technique, the researcher gave test, test on a certain picture to the students. The test is called pre-test and post-test.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

The researcher would desrcibe about the result of the research from the first section by giving pre-test to the students of the second semester of English Department. It was expected to understand English especially on grammar knowledge by using EGRA technique. From chapter I, it is presented that there were some problems found in the English teaching learning for the students. The main problem is the lack of grammar mastery. It can be seen from their score, most are in low score. It was hard for them to finish the exercises about grammar. In fact, grammar is the main subject of all. So, It is impossible for them, there were no difficulties in finishing the exercices for all subjects, if there were still difficulties in grammar. The difficulties of grammar mastery were caused by many reasons. They were still confused about pronouns, relative pronouns, tenses (active and passive voice), conditional sentences, relative pronouns, and reported speech. Besides, the lack of students' cognition in learning grammar.

The result of the pre-test with the passing grade 75 could be seen as follows:

Criteria	Total Students	Percentage
Pass / Success	5	18,5
Failure/Unsuccess	22	81,5
Total	27	100 %

From the result of the students' score in pre-test above, the students' ability in grammar mastery was still low. It could be seen from the mean of the students' score was 63. The percentage of the students' score was 5 students got success score or it was 18,5%. Beside that, 22 students got under passing grade or it was 81,5%. It can be concluded that the students' ability in grammar mastery in pre-test was low.

After the pre-test, the researcher asked the difficulties, almost all the students told that they made mistakes on making the patterns of sentences. The others could not organize the sentences to become a correct sentence. The rest got confused on applying the theory of tenses, relative pronouns, and conditional sentence in a sentence and even combination of some lessons.

Based on the observation and interview, the researcher concluded that the students had some problems on tenses, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, reported speech and content of the implementation of grammar theory to make a good and correct sentence.

The Implementation of the Research

Cycle I

It had been stated that the second semester students of English Department of Madiun State Polytechnic faced some difficulties on grammar. They faced the problem on tenses, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, reported speech, and content of the implementation of grammar theory to make a good and correct sentence. The suitable strategy chosen was EGRA Technique. It was used to make the goal of the research. The first cycle was used to describe the process of teaching and learning by using EGRA Technique in order to improve the students' skill on grammar mastery. It was done in four steps such as; 1) planning; 2) acting; 3) observing; and 4) reflecting.

Planning

After finding the problems faced by the students, the researcher prepared to conduct the research. She looked for many techniques appropiate with the students' condition. After looking for many references, she finally chose EGRA as the technique in teaching grammar. It needed lessons

plans for the first cycle. The researcher prepared the teaching materials based on the syllabus for the program study. The material was about tenses, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, and reported speech. For the first cycle, the researcher planned two meetings. The meeting was conducted once a week according to the schedule of lecturing. Before doing the treatment to the class 2A, the researcher gave the students pre-test. It was aimed at knowing their grammar mastery in the first. The test was also given in the end of the first circle, namely post-test.

All about the paragraph above had been prepared in teaching process, such as lesson plan to teach, teaching material that was used to EGRA technique, conducting students' test, and also preparing observation sheet. The lesson plans were as follows: 1) expanding a sentence in many kinds of tenses; 2) making sentences using relative pronouns; 3) using the students' experiences in reported speech; 4) completing clause for conditional sentences; and 5) designing good and correct sentences.

Acting

In this step, there were some activities that had been done by the researcher, they were:
- ➢ The researcher asked the students to form group. Every group consists of 4 - 5 persons.
- ➢ Every group was given the difference picture about tourism and journalism. The students described about the picture on their opinion through their own words.
- ➢ Every group asked to look for what the pictures described about.
- ➢ Then, the researcher explained what the picture about, the reported speech, the sentence using relative pronouns, and conditional sentences. However, the researcher gave praise to the students for their hard work in answering questions.
- ➢ Before learning process ended, the researcher gave the next picture more complete for them one by one to answer the questions on the paper. They are asked to work individually.

Observing

The observation was aimed to know the influence of the method applied during the process of teaching and learning. The observation consisted of three phases such as observing the class during EGRA technique; interviewing the students after giving their opinions by using EGRA technique; and holding written test to know the improvement of grammar mastery.

The atmosphere of the class was little bit noisy because some of them asked to their another friend. But researcher gave role that every student who wants to ask something must up hand. Fortunately, they obeyed the role and the atmosphere of the class become quiet.

Reflecting

In the cycle I, the researcher evaluated the teaching learning process in the end of the meeting. The researcher asked the students how the students felt when learning grammar through EGRA technique, the students' difficulties and problem while learning. All of it would be asked by the researcher in the end of the meeting. Through the reflection, the researcher knew the problems and the result of the students' when tested. The research was conducted by observer also in the same time when the researcher doing treatment or action to improve students' ability in comprehending grammar by using EGRA technique.

Based on the research and test that was conducted in the end of cycle I, the researcher found the data about : a) representation of teaching learning material of grammar b) representation of students' activities; and c) representation of result of students' score in comprehending grammar mastery at the second semester students of english department by using EGRA technique. The percentage of students who got success in test could be seen as follows:

Criteria	Total Students	Percentage
Pass / Success	10	37 %
Failure / Unsuccess	17	63%
Total	27	100%

Based on the data from table above, it can be shown that the result of students' score in grammar mastery by using EGRA technique in class of the second semester of english department in cycle I improved. It could be seen from the means of the students' score was 70 and the percentage of the students' score was 37 % for the success category. It means there were 10 students who got score above the passing grade. In the othe hand, there were still 17 students (63%) who got the score low the passing grade (unsuccess).

However, the data above showed that the result of students' score in gramar mastery by using EGRA technique in class of second semester of english department in cycle I improved or better that the score in pre-test. It was still low, because the passing grade is 75, it could be seen from the indicators below:

- ➤ The mean of students' score in post-test I in cycle I was 70.
- ➤ There were still 10 students (37 %) of 27 students who got the score more than 74
- ➤ There were some students who didn't follow 100 % in every step of EGRA technique.
- ➤ Some of the students were still confused to distinguish and understand the kind, form, and structures of tense, relative pronouns, conditional sentences, and reported speech.

Based on the researcher's observation, the students' response in learning teaching process was good. Although the students looked enjoy during in learning process, the students were not confident to make / explain the picture about in the sentence when the researcher asked them to describe / tell about the picture given to them. Not just it, the researcher felt that it was not satisfied, because there were students who were very noisy.

That's why the researcher needed go to the next cycle. Hopefully, the score result would be better that in the previous cycle / previous post test. The aim to go to next cycle (cycle II) was to improve the students' understanding of all materials of grammar at that semester by using EGRA technique.

Cycle II

Based on the evaluation of the first cycle, the researcher found some students make mistakes on pattern during learning the picture. Their sentences were still error in form and patterns. In cycle II, the researcher also had done some steps, they were planning, acting, abserving and reflecting.

Here the steps that have been done:

Revised planning

In this cycle, the researcher prepared new material that was enclosed in lesson plan and added some activities, so that the students would be more active in grammar mastery. The lesson plan with the new material could be seen in appendix.

Acting

The action was done for four meetings which were based on the revised planning. The researcher tried to do the best while teaching the material. Beside it, the researcher also motivated the students read the text fluently, briefly, and confidently to increase grammar mastery in answering questions to make the sentence from the pictures. There were some activities that had been done by the researcher, they were:

➤ The researcher asked the students to form group. The class divided into 6 groups, so, 1 group had 4 – 5 members.

➤ The researcher wrote the questions on the white board.

➤ Every group asked to tell about the picture and write the sentences of the picture given to them. They could make sentences in any tenses, they could make it in conditional, relative pronouns, or reported speech.

➤ The researcher gave the assignment for every group to tell about the pictures given to them in creative sentence and the sentences were written on the paper given by the researcher.

➤ Before the process ended, the researcher gave the multiple choice questions as the task in learning so that they become accustomed to answer the question based on the picture.

➤ The researcher discussed about the way in choosing the suitable words based on pictures. The second meeting, the researcher explained the way to arrange the words into the sentences according to the material / lesson that they had got before. The third meeting the researcher explained the way in arranging words in sentence according to the picture. In the fourth meeting, the researcher gave opportunities to all the students to present the result of their opinions in front of the class.

Observing

The observation was aimed to know the influence of the strategy applied during the process of teaching and learning. The observation consisted of three phases such as observing the class during EGRA technique activities; interviewing the students after practicing EGRA technique activities; and holding written test to know the improvement of the writing indicators among the students.

Reflecting

The students said that the activities of EGRA technique in creating good and correct sentences in the cycle II impressed them and made them interested in learning English especially on grammar. They cooperated well with their friends and struggled by themselves as it was done in groups and individual.

The researcher gave the pictures for each group but every member got it so that all of students could see the picture focusly. Therefore, the researcher gave a piece of paper that consist of some lessons (the kinds of tenses, conditional sentences, relative pronouns, reported speech) without the title of the picture. Then, they analyze the picture. After that, the researcher gave explanation more of each previous discussion. In this cycle, the researcher could conclude as follows:

➤ The researcher could improve on the students' ability in grammar mastery by using EGRA technique. It was showed by the observations sheet, diary notes that improved every meeting.

➤ The improvement of the students' score was very significant. It was based on the percentage of the students' score, they were 37% got success in cycle I, and it would be 89% in cycle II. It means that there was improvement from cycle I to cycle II. It was 42%.

Based on the students' response above, the researcher got the point that the students' response while learning teaching process in cycle II was kept improving significantly. So, the researcher stated to stop in this cycle.

Based on the research and test that was conducted in the end of cycle II, the researcher found the data about : a) representation of teaching learning material of grammar mastery; b)

representation of students' activities; and c) representation of result of students' score in comprehending grammar mastery in the second semester of english department students by using EGRA technique. The percentage of the students who were success in post-test cycle II could be seen as follows:

Criteria	Total students	percentage
Pass / Success	24	89%
Failure /Unsuccess	3	11%
Total	27	100%

Form the table analysis in Post-Test Cycle II, the researcher concluded that the students' ability in comprehending grammar mastery improved significantly. It could be seen from the mean of the students' score was 80. The percentage of the students' score was 89% for the success score, or there were 24 students. In the other hand, there were still some students who got under passing grade, there were 3 students, or 11 %. It can be concluded that the students' ability in grammar mastery in post-test cycle II was categorized success and improved. So, the researcher stopped in this cycle, and continue for next lesson using EGRA technique.

Discussion

Every step in EGRA can improve the students' grammar mastery. From the experience where the students are exposed to the meaningful use of particular structure item; generalization which is improved the students' exploration. The improvement of students' grammar mastery and classroom situation can be found by implementing EGRA technique in the class. The grammar test covered the English grammar competences including tenses, conditional sentences, relative pronouns, and reported speech. The proofs of the improvement were on: 1) Tenses. Most of the students could create their opinion in a certain tense according to the picture. Some of them wrote in active in simple present and simple past tense sentence and other tenses; 2) Conditional Sentence. Most students could create their opinions by writing each type of conditional sentence based on the pictures; 3) relative pronouns. They told about the picture using relative pronouns, such as who, whom, whose, which, etc. and 4) Reported Speech. Most students could use complicated sentence in reported speech. Most of the students could choose the words which related to the pictures being given.

The improvement could be seen from increasing of the students' score and the improvement of the classroom situation. The table below reflected the improvement that the students' score achieved.

No	Level	Pre-test	Post-test Cycle I	Post-test Cycle II
1.	Highest	90	95	100
2.	Average	63	70	80
3.	Lowest	40	55	70

The students' passing grade

No	Passing grade	The students' score	The sum of students		
			Pre-test	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	>74	Above Passing grade	5	10	24
2.	>74	Below Passing grade	22	17	3

EGRA also had some weaknesses. The first, it needs much time allotment in generalization stage. The generalization can be considered as the central of EGRA technique because the students are expected to make a discovery of language structure. The researcher did generalization phase in the form of sentences and paragraph analysis. The students need much time in finding opinion. Secondly, the students sometimes bored in meeting with structures many times. EGRA consists of a sequence of instruction, moving from giving example, drawing generalization, providing reinforcement, and assigning tasks to the students for application.

4. CONCLUSION

After conducting the research, the researcher can conclude that EGRA Technique can show the improvement on students' grammar mastery, become the effective way to teach and practice English on grammar, and has many strengths to make the students able to understand Grammar well. The Students' response was very good after implementing EGRA technique. It could be seen from the students' response while learning process. The students were active in giving answer of each question that was delivered by the researcher. It was also shown from the improvement of the mean of scores every cycle as follows: 1) mean of score in pre-test was 63, post-test in the first cycle was 70, and post-test in the second cycle was 80. There was improvement in every cycle. Additionally, there were 24 of 27 students who got point up 75 in the second cycle, it means it was 89 %. Based on the finding, the alternative hypothesis stating that EGRA technique can improve the students' ability in grammar mastery. From the conclusion stated above, the researcher would like to give some suggestions dealing with the improvement students' grammar mastery by using EGRA technique. Hopefully the suggestions will be beneficial to the other researchers regarding to improve the students' grammar skill. They can use this result of the research as the starting point to continue the next research by using another research design and model. They can also use the result of this research as the additional references in understanding and mastering grammar, and finally they can create better research after they know the weaknesses of this research.

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