

English Sentence Writing for Kids at SDN 1 Unggulan Pulau Morotai

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Abstract: *English class consists of four main skills including listening, reading, speaking and writing. However, most of the time, writing has almost always received the least attention. This activity aims to introduce the English sentence writing highlighting subject-predicate-object-complement to 25 of fifth grader elementary school students throughout once a week meeting for one month in November at SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai. The methodology for this activity includes a lecture, a game using four different colors of cards with words in English and Indonesia, a game with one color of cards with words in English and Indonesia, and then a written exam quiz. The result shows that (1) Students are excited and motivated learning English writing through games (2) Students are not only excel in four different colors cards game but also in one color cards game (3) The result from quiz at the last meeting shows more than half of the students (14 out of 25 students) can answers half of the questions right, while approximately one-third of the students (8 out of 25 students) earn excellent scores. In other words, the program that had been done is impactful for students that can be seen by their understanding of English sentence writing using subject-predicate-object-complement and ability to form a correct sentence.*

Abstrak: Kelas bahasa Inggris terdiri dari empat kemampuan utama yaitu mendengar, membaca, berbicara, dan menulis. Akan tetapi, sering sekali, menulis mendapatkan perhatian paling sedikit. Aktivitas Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan kepenulisan bahasa Inggris yang berfokus pada subjek-predikat-objek-komplemen kepada 25 siswa kelas lima di sekolah dasar seminggu sekali selama satu bulan di November pada SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai. Metodologi untuk aktivitas ini terdiri dari penjelasan ceramah, permainan menggunakan kartu yang memiliki empat warna berbeda yang bertuliskan kata bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia, permainan menggunakan kartu yang hanya memiliki satu warna bertuliskan kata bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia, dan kemudian ujian kuis tertulis. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa (1) siswa-siswi merasa lebih bersemangat dan termotivasi belajar menulis dalam bahasa Inggris melalui permainan (2) siswa-siswi tidak hanya unggul dalam permainan kartu berbeda warna tapi juga pada kartu yang hanya memiliki satu warna sama (3) Hasil dari quiz pada pertemuan terakhir menunjukkan lebih dari setengah siswa bisa menjawab benar

setengah dari total pertanyaan (14 dari 25 siswa), sedangkan satu pertiga dari total siswa mendapat nilai bagus. (8 dari 25 siswa). Dengan kata lain, program yang telah dilaksanakan berdampak pada siswa yang bisa dilihat dari pemahaman para siswa tentang penulisan kalimat dalam Bahasa Inggris menggunakan subjek-predikat-objek-komplemen serta kemampuan membuat kalimat yang benar.

Introduction

English as a subject within the context of elementary school in Indonesia has experienced a lot of changes from the removal in the past and then the reintroduction through Kurikulum Merdeka, Merdeka Belajar (Sukarno & Jinabe, 2024). With that said, both the primary school students and teachers have lost its access to English for a while. Therefore, it is important that more research regarding English subject to be conducted as an attempts and efforts to fill the gap for its years of in the past. This article aims to contribute as an additional discussion of English teaching within this context.

As a general information known by many, English is consisted of four main language skills including listening, reading, writing and speaking. However, English writing skill is often considered as the most challenging skill in English compared to listening, reading and speaking, this notion has been spread and believed by many (Widiawati & Cahyono, 2016). While within the context of teaching English to young learners in Indonesia, Apriliana (2018) found that major challenges include students' lack of attention during the class, teachers often too focused on teaching the students to pronounce the English words, and the lack of attention from the government towards English class in elementary schools. Despite this information about imbalance about the attention been given around the issue of English speaking is being preferred compared to English writing, more studies keep highlighting English in elementary school that put more focus on the speaking skill (Sinaga & Oktaviani, 2020; Fransisca, 2023; fauzi et al, 2024). Therefore, the importance of English writing as a topic is justified due to its limited existence.

Referring to previous community service or Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat with related and similar topics, there have been several projects or activities being done in the past. For example, Rihlah et al (2022) focusing on Fun English with emphasis on demonstrations and performances to build students' interest and confidence. While Anisa (2023) conducted Fun English activity to improve students' vocabulary through songs and games. Then, Bouti et al (2024) who did the activity aimed to teach the students on how to write a simple sentence by integrating local culture together with Simon Says technique. Based on some of the previous community services that have taken place in the past, it can be concluded that there is a gap in terms of the focus in which generally being put on vocabulary building. There has been a lack of community service that specifically focuses on English writing.

Responding to this issue, the goal of this current activity attempts to provide more research a similar focus topic of learning English to elementary school students with the focus will be put more on the English writing. In other words, this activity aims to make sure students understand how to write a correct sentence grammatically and logically by following the subject-predicate-object-complement through games and quizzes. Students are also expected to comprehend what each of S-P-O-C means and recognize vocabularies belong to each of the element.

SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai is located in Morotai island, North Maluku province. It is also located at one of the farthest north islands in Indonesia; frontier, outermost and least developed regions or 3T (tertinggal, terdepan, terluar). This unfortunate and less privileged location has also caused both the students and teachers to suffer from lack of access to resources and information. It makes the rationale of choosing this school to do the activity.

Related recent previous community service taken place in Merauke, south Papua as a rural area from Indriyani & Wakerkwa (2024) focusing on increasing students' vocabulary through English songs has proven to be successful. The activity also proved that limitation recourses can be tackled by creative approach in solving the challenges through the creation of teaching aids with local resources. Another community service in remote area done in Saparua, central Maluku by Syafira et al (2024) highlighting fun learning methods through recycle, nature, reading, and English day proven to increase students' excitement in learning English and being more active

throughout the process. The activity has been positively received by the students proven by their understanding of basic English like introduction and vocabulary.

Method

After considering the problems that have been stated in the instruction section, this current activity is structured to be conducted in four meetings. In other words, the meetings will take place once a week for four weeks. For the first week, the meeting only focused on the lectures by introducing the students to sentence writing and the four components of a sentence such as subject (s), predicate (p), object (o), and the complement (c) as the foundational knowledge about how to write a sentence.

The games are placed during the second and third week. Both of the games are similar but with different challenges. For the game during the third week, it is about cards in four different colors based on the four components (S-P-O-C). Each of the cards is written with an English card on the front and its translation in Bahasa Indonesia at the back of the card. Students will build their vocabulary and form a sentence with cards with limited time. In contrast, the game on the third week will no longer have four different colors. The cards on the third week will only have one same color for all of the S-P-O-C. Other than that, there will no longer be the Bahasa Indonesia translation of the word written on the back of the card. This challenge is necessary to see how students overcome such situations as well as to see students' development in building their vocabulary and building their understanding of sentence logic.

There are 80 cards or 80 words in total including 20 cards/words of subject, 20 cards/words of predicate, 20 cards/words of object and then 20 cards/words of complement. The decision to include these number of numbers of words is to build students vocabulary by having not too little but also not too many words. That is why, 20 words each make up 80 words in total is considered as an adequate number of words.

The mechanism of cards distribution is done based on the total number of elements in a sentence that is S-P-O-C. In other words, considering there are four different elements or four different colors that is why there are also four different groups. Therefore, group 1 will read cards of subject, group 2 will read cards of predicate, group 3 will read cards of object, and then group 4 will read cards of complement. Then after an estimated reading time has passed the cards move to the next group in order, this makes sure each group has access to only one element of sentence during each of the given reading time.

The rules for the cards game consisting of (1) reading/memorizing time one group one element in order until all groups have read all of the four elements (2) all of the cards are taken then put at the center of the class on the floor (3) each group is being called based on the order groups' names that are group 1, group 2, group 3, and group 4. (4) the group being called gathered at the center of the class where all of the 80 cards being placed (5) each group complete the task of forming as many sentences as possible within a certain amount of time allocation (6) continue to the next group until all groups take turns.

The activity involved 25 fifth graders at SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai consisting of 15 males and 10 females. The students are expected to have different English proficiency in terms of vocabulary. Therefore, groups for the game on the second and third week will be made randomly to make sure each group has the same chance of winning the game. The fourth week will be dedicated to a quiz. The quiz is important to find out students' success in learning sentences throughout the four weeks.

Result and Discussion

1. First week

The first meeting accommodates lectures about how to write a sentence that should consist of subject-predicate-object-complement (s-p-o-c). Students are introduced to each of the four components to form a sentence in English. It is also important to explain the logic of how to form a sentence. For instance, in order to form a sentence, it is not only about the existence of S-P-O-C. This is because the sentence should also make sense. For example, "they drink chocolate milk in the morning" is correct while "they drink meatballs today" is incorrect. That is why students need to not only recognize different word classes representing each of S-P-O-C but also

comprehend the meaning behind each word to successfully form correct sentences in English.



Figure 1: First Week: (1) Delivering the lecture about S-P-O-C in sentence (2) Photo session after lecture

The reason behind the decision on why the activity involves four meetings with the first meeting focusing on the lectures about S-P-O-C is because considering previous similar activity that has been done in the past by another project. For example, Sinega et al (2024) that only dedicated one day to teach about how to write in English based on the rules of S-P-O-C, argued that the limited knowledge possessed by the students requires them to take extra efforts even though they can compromise the time by having many people involved during the activity teaching the students, therefore they recommend that future similar activity to consider last several days. That is why, this current activity lasts for four meetings with the first meeting only focusing on the lectures.

The reason for choosing the lecture method on the first week is to ensure that all the participants within this community service who are students in the class are equipped with the same and shared understanding on how to write a sentence in English that includes subject-predicate-object-complement. It is also important to specifically discuss each of the element and then elaborate them collectively to make sure the students comprehend the function and characteristics of what each of the element in a sentence about.

Based on the lectures on the first week, it can be argued that the students have been familiar with some of the basic English vocabulary. However, they are not quite familiar with the elements of a sentence such as subject, predicate, object and complements. Therefore, after introducing the sentence elements, students are introduced to several sentences with each of the words being highlighted with each element of the sentence. The sentences were written on the white board then the students were asked to come in front of the class to have a closer look then read and guess the meaning of each word as well as the whole sentence at the end.

2. Second Week

The second week is dedicated to a game using cards with four different colors each representing subject, predicate, object and complement (SPOC) in a sentence. The card has twenty words written in English and Bahasa Indonesia on each side of the card. In other words, students have access to twenty English words with its translation when they turn the card. In order to motivate the students to be more active during the activity, the twenty-three students participating are split into four groups through random counting from one to four.

Each group is given time to read the 20 cards of subject, 20 cards of predicate, 20 cards of object and 20 cards of complement. After several minutes allocated for reading, the card will move to another group. The rotation keeps going until every group has the chance to read all of the different color-coded cards. This instruction is aimed to build students' vocabulary. It is also important that these words are the only words being used during the four weeks meetings. Therefore, the students have the same starting point of words they learn, and have the same chance of building the new vocabulary, it is also fair since there will be no other additional words during the activity. Therefore, students have access to 80 English words in total for the whole four weeks.



Figure 2: Second week: (3) Students read different cards in order (4) Students form sentences

(5) Checking students' performance after they finished form sentences

After completing the reading, all of the students are back to their seat then wait for their turn to be called. Each of the groups have the chance to go to the center of the class again to form as many sentences as possible they can possibly create using the four different color-coded cards. Then each of the groups will be given points based on the number of sentences they can form. Approach the students through game is proven to increase students' motivation in learning, similarly with the project conducted by Nikijuluw et al (2022) where they did the game in terms of playing with English words as well as English sentence where students are given certain time to filling out a worksheet that includes 50 words in group in which each of the group only has two students as members. This current activity is somewhat similar where students are split in groups and work with limited time to finish a task that is designed like playing a game. In other words, approaching young learners through games is effective.

The rotation of the cards with different colors help improving students' understanding of the S-P-O-C because they are given specific time for reading and memorizing the vocabulary associated with each element of a sentence that are subject, predicate, object and the complement. The rotation of Subject cards, Predicate cards, Object cards, and Complement cards to four different groups is important since it can be used as a strategy for vocabulary building. Students can look at the card with two sides, English word on one side and Bahasa Indonesia word on the other side. The activity is being done in the group also improve students collaborative learning and collaborative memorizing before going at the front of the class to form a sentence with cards.

3. Third week

Third week is filled with another game with cards



Figure 3: Third Week: (6) Observing students form sentences (7,8) Checking students' performance

During the meeting in the third week, a similar game is conducted but with a little challenge. The challenge is that the cards are no longer in four different color codes. All of the cards are now visually the same white color. This decision is taken in order to assess students' comprehension and skills of whether or not they can still manage to form sentences without different colors highlighting the difference between subject, predicate, object, and complement. Considering the words remained the same during four weeks of meetings, students are expected to not only already build their vocabulary they have been exposed to but also make sense sentences.

The use of chain card games in teaching English writing has been proven to be not only effective but also improving students' motivation in the past. For instance, Sutorialistya (2018) who did the study that aimed to help students to understand how to form a sentence easier by playing the cards where players in the game are competing to create correct sentences through the cards. The difference compared to this current activity is that the game is played in groups where each group has to take the chance in turn with limited time to create the sentences. The individual task will take place in the fourth meeting through a quiz related to write a sentence.

The use of one-color cards helps the students to maximize their memorization. This is because students are having privilege in memorization and sentence formation during the game with multiple color-coded cards. Therefore, using one color only for the cards game during third week can be used as a tool for testing students understanding of the S-P-O-C order as well as their memorization. This is done by challenging the students to keep recognizing the different vocabulary and put them in order even though the different colors as privilege has been eliminated.

Table 1: The vocabulary being exposed to the students throughout the four weeks meeting

Subject	Predicate	Object	Complement
I	eat	the meatballs	today
you	drink	the chocolate milk	in the morning
they	drive	the schools bus	everyday
you	ride	the motorcycle	tonight
we	fly	the helicopter	once
He	sail	the ship	twice
She	turn on	the air conditioner	every week
Sarah	turn off	the computer	every month
Anton	push	the door	every year
John & Diana	pull	the chair	now
the fisherman	feed	the cats	at the house
the army	break	the rules	in the classroom
the doctor	listen	the songs	in the bedroom
the teacher	watch	the movies	in the living room
the student	wash	the dishes	in the kitchen
the policeman	cut	the fruits	under a tree
the policewoman	cook	the food	in a restaurant
the president	boil	the eggs	in the woods
the king	answer	the questions	at the palace
the queen	read	the books	at the library

4. Fourth week



Figure 4: Fourth Week: (9) Student take the quiz (10) Photo session after the quiz
 (Week 4: Quiz completed individually by each of the student)

No.	Name	Write a sentence	Scramble sentence	Make a sentence with arrows	Total score
11.	Student 11 (F)	1/5	4/5	3/5	4.5
12.	Student 12 (F)	4/5	4/5	3/5	7.5
13.	Student 13 (M)	4/4	4/5	5/5	8.5
14.	Student 14 (M)	5/5	4/5	5/5	9.5
15.	Student 15 (M)	0/5	0/5	2/5	1
16.	Student 16 (M)	5/5	4/5	4/5	9
17.	Student 17 (F)	3/5	1/5	2/5	4.5
18.	Student 18 (M)	3/5	5/5	3/5	7
19.	Student 19 (M)	2/5	0/5	1/5	2.5
20.	Student 20 (M)	0/5	0/5	4/5	2
21.	Student 21 (M)	0/5	0/5	0/5	0
22.	Student 22 (M)	1/5	0/5	0/5	1
23.	Student 23 (M)	2/5	0/5	1/5	2.5
24.	Student 24 (F)	2/5	2/5	4/5	5
25.	Student 25 (M)	5/5	0/5	2/5	6

Based on the quiz that taken place on the fourth week, the students are successfully scoring higher correct answers for question type of “write a sentence” and “make a sentence with arrows” on average. It can be compared with the question type of “scramble sentence”. Based on these findings, it can be argued that students possessed the knowledge of forming a sentence in order based on the S-P-O-C rules explanation that has been given for three weeks before the quiz on the fourth week. Moreover, students facing challenges when it comes to scramble sentence is interesting to discuss for any further research or activity in the future.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The conclusion after conducting English Sentence Writing for Kids at SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai:

1. Students are excited and motivated when games involved during the lesson. This can be seen on how their interaction in forming a sentence when they discuss and work together to complete the task as group.
2. Students feel more competitive when working in groups. This competition between group to earn more points by forming a more correct sentence has helped improve students' value in competitiveness.
3. Some students show excellent skills of memorizing new vocabularies. This can be found especially when the groups are working on the cards game that are not only using one color but also has no meaning written on the back of the card unlike the cards game with multiple color-coded on the second week
4. Games with different colors and with one color show not significant difference. This means even with the absence of different colors students can still score quite high when forming correct sentences.
5. More than half of the total students can answer the questions right during quiz. This information can be taken as a consideration to show the success of the current community service.

In other words, the goal of this community service has been met. Students are aware of each of the element in an English sentence. This can be proven during each of the game, whether cards are color-coded based on their type or even when there is only one color for all the 80 cards representing 80 English words. Students can form a sentence using the given cards specifically in order based on the rules of S-P-O-C. This understanding is being tested through collaborative work in groups activity as well as in individual work during the quiz in the fourth week. This community service has also met its goal for contributing to the existing literature when it comes to English language teaching for elementary school students especially regarding English writing.

The suggestion after conducting English Sentence Writing for Kids at SDN Unggulan 1 Pulau Morotai:

1. There should be more people being involved when teaching and leading the lesson during the activity in class. The existence of more people can help the focus each of the lesson in every week.
2. Future similar activity should consider recruiting couple of people to help organizing the students. This is because teaching young learners has its own challenges. That is why a small group dedicating for the activity

- will bring beneficial in terms of organizing the students during each of different activities during a meeting such as grouping the students and confirming rules for students who need clarification.
3. Any similar activity can also consider create more groups with less group members. This consideration is important to maximizing the learning experience and making sure each student is actively engaged.
 4. Other similar activity in the future might also consider including the pre-test before the class. It is essential to bring the pre-test before any treatments are given so that the progress can be seen throughout.
 5. More people involving during the activity will help to make sure more students get attention. It is especially important when dealing with young learners with limited attention because they are easily distracted.

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