



Improving Students' Writing Skill in Writing Paragraph through an Outline Technique

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Abstract

This research was classroom action research. Classroom action research was a research that was conducted by a teacher in order to find out solutions of any problems found during teaching and learning process. In this research, it was done to explain whether by using an outline technique could improve the students' writing paragraph and also to investigate some factors that influenced the students in writing descriptive paragraph. This research was done at grade VIII B of SMP Negeri 6 Sungai Penuh in academic year 2017/2018. From the result of the test in this research, the result was increased in cycle and two. In cycle one, the mean score was 58.25% and it increased to 76.87%, it increased 18.63% point. It meant that teaching writing through outline improved the students' writing skill. The improvements were also improved on the result of each sub-indicators of writing test between cycle 1 and 2.

Key words: *Writing, Outline*

INTRODUCTION

Language is very important tool of communication used to communicate between two or more people in carrying out their daily activities and had main role to make people had mutual understanding. By using language, we could communicate with others. In learning language, there were four skills that should be mastered, they were: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Writing is one of the four language skill. It is not a natural skill because one could not acquire this ability automatically and easily. To acquire it, the students should get sufficient writing practices. These practices are supposed to stimulate the student's skill in writing and expressing thoughts in a good passage. Without

practicing, it is impossible to write well and effectively.

There are many kinds of writing. One of them is writing paragraph. Paragraph is the basic unit of organization in writing that consisted of more than two sentences. A paragraph has three major structural parts: a topic sentence, supporting sentence, and concluding sentences.

There are some kinds of paragraph that can be used such as narrative, explanation, recount, information, report, exposition, argumentation and descriptive.

In teaching and learning writing especially on the senior high school students, the students are asked to know how to write a paragraph well. However, most of the students face some problems

in writing it. Most of the students are not interested in learning English. As a result, most of them get low writing score. It means that students have problems in writing paragraph.

There are some problems are faced by the students; they feel that writing paragraph is difficult because they have no ideas to develop their sentences, students' writing knowledge is low because they have lack of writing models, and they do not have any clues to write so that they difficulties to organize ideas. It made the students feel bored and they are not interested in learning.

It is a responsibility for the English teacher to fix the problems, especially in teaching writing a paragraph. Inteachng writing, there are some strategy that can be used, one of them is outline strategy to improve the students' ability in writing paragraph. According to Harmer (2001: 255) states that written text has a number of conventions which separate it out from speaking. Apart from differences in Grammar and Vocabulary, there are issues of letter, word, and text formation, manifested by handwriting, spelling, and layout and punctuation.

It also helped us to write the paragraph quickly because the ideas had arranged. It meant that by learning an outline, the students improved their writing and made their paragraph was easy to be understood, comprehended and organized.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Writing is one of the communication tools. One can express his idea, thought, and feeling through writing. Writing is also a medium for sharing information. Nunan (2002: 86) says writing as a process and it more focuses on various classroom activities which are believed to promote te development of skilled language use. Nunan (2002: 91) also adds writing is a clearly a

complex process, and competent writing is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired. Few people write spontaneously, and few feel comfortable with a formal writing task intended for the eyes of someone else.

In writing, students feel hard to develop their ideas, knowledge, or their ability. According to Bailey in Utami (2018: 109), some considerations in writing an academic text. The first is that writers should consider the vocabulary used in their writing. He suggests several guidelines for vocabulary used: (1) use vocabulary accurately, (2) avoid using idiomatic, instead use standard English, (3) be as precise as possible, (4) use tentative language for conclusions, (5) avoid adverbs that show personal attitude, (6) do not use contract verb forms, (7) passive voice may not be over-used, (8) avoid using the word *like* to introduce examples, the word *thing*, instead use *factor*, *aspect* or *issue*, the word *lots of* and *little* or *big*, instead use *a significant*, *small* or *large*, (9) do not use question forms, (10) avoid numbering sections, (11) avoid using *etc* or *and so on*, and (12) avoid using phrasal verbs.

It can be said that good writing is very important for every student. So that, reader can easily understand what a writer has been written, and make the reader can catch writer's ideas. So the writer has to know how to write or make a good writing.

Furthermore, according to Hughes in Suharni (2016: 11), there are five components that should be taken into account in order to compose a writing product:

1. Content; The term of "content" relates to how well the students put the thesis statement and supports it with some related ideas. It can be personal experience, illustration, facts, opinion, and the use of description, cause/effect, and comparison/contrast. It also demands the

students to keep focus and consistent with the key idea.

2. Organization; The term of “organization” in writing deals with how well the writers function the introductory, body, and conclusion as well as possible. Besides, the ideas follow the logical sequence.

3. Discourse; The term of “discourse” deals with the use of topic sentence, paragraph unity, transition, discourse marker, cohesion, rhetorical conventions, reference, fluency, economy, and variation.

4. Vocabulary; Vocabulary is all words that a person knows or uses. In writing, the writer should know how to choose the appropriate words to form phrases, clauses, and sentences in order to produce meaningful and effective product of writing.

5. Mechanics; Mechanics of writing are related to spelling, punctuation, citation of reference, neatness and appearance.

Beside that, the skill of writing is an ability to express what someone has read or heard in the written form, or an ability to express ideas, opinion or feeling in the written form. It does not only pay attention to grammar but also to select the appropriate vocabulary. So teaching writing is making students understand how to write well.

According to Muhammed (2015: 24-25), paragraph in English primarily consist of three parts in the following:

- topic sentence,
- support and
- conclusion

If any learners follow and apply these suggested aspects, they may be crucial and helpful in order for them to produce successful and meaningful paragraphs.

In addition, Suriyanti & Yaacob (2016: 4) state that descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative writings are the four most common types of writing (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

However, among these four modes of writing, descriptive writing is the most basic form of writing. At first glance, it seems simple for an academic discourse, yet it is “fundamental and the best way to lay the foundation of the writer’s craft” (Meyers, 2009, p.245).

In addition, all types of writing encompass some elements of descriptive writing that cause a reader to see, think, feel, and react (Meyers, 2009). It incorporates a colorful piece of a person, a place, a thing, or an idea using concrete and also vivid details. Therefore, each mode of writing activates different types of processes in the mind of the writers and it follows different procedures.

In teaching English in Junior high school in Indonesia, descriptive writing is one of the types of writing that should be taught and mastered not only by the English teachers, but also by the junior high school students, particularly those in Grades Seven, Eight and Nine. In 2006, the Indonesian English Language Curriculum made it compulsory for the students to be able to write different types of texts and one of them is the descriptive text (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2006). Language Curriculum has created much stress among EFL teachers in Indonesia since there are many components that must be mastered such as grammar, spelling, content, conjunction, choice of words, and sentence arrangement to produce a unified paragraph.

Moreover, Reinking & Hart (2006: 86) state that by using outline, the writing will focus on the topic. An outline is the blue print that shows the division and subdivision of your paper, order your ideas, and relationship between the idea and supporting details.

It means that, the listed idea which is collected to arrange the paragraph consist of main idea and supporting details. Outline will lead to writing a better composition, as

the subject of the composition and its purpose are clearly stated. It will help the writer stick to the subject and force the writer to list the ideas that will be presented. Thus, the outline assures that the composition will be completed in logical order". It means, outline is very useful to make a good writing, especially in describing the details of the subject.

Before making the subject, firstly, the students have to find many information. Because in an outline, all of the information found must be arranged based on the hierarchical relationship. The students have to find many details to support the outline and make the writing understandable. After that, it will be easy for the students to arrange the composition, which part will be explained at the first, middle, or the last paragraph. Because outline is only a tool to help the students to arrange the main idea and the supporting details in the writing.

Rinking and Hart (2006: 90) adds that there are primary reasons for creating an outline: (a) Aids in the process of writing, (b) Helps you organize your ideas.

Furthermore, there are some steps in making an outline, they are: (a) Figure out the most logical flow information, the best order for the information to be in using the subtopics you created earlier. You can put your note cards in this order now. There is always more than one to do this, so figure out what you like best, (b) Put your subtopics with the key points that support them, in words or short phrases, into a list or diagram that shows how they will flow from the beginning to end. There are many different types of outline diagrams, (c) Start with an introduction and end with a conclusion.

An outline is a way to help the students to improve their writing. According to Oshima and Hogue (2009: 35) state that: an outline is a technique in writing, student design their writing in outline form or plan a

paragraph before writing it to make sure that all of the ideas fit. Learning an outline will improve your writing for three reasons as follows:

1. It will help you to organize your ideas.

An outline will ensure that you won't include any irrelevant ideas, that you won't leave out any important points, and that your supporting sentences will be in logical order.

2. Learning an outline will help you write more quickly

It may take some practice at first, but once you become used to outlining your ideas before you start to write, you will be surprised how fast you will actually be able to write. Preparing an outline is 75% percent of the work. The actual writing become easier because you don't have to worry about what you are going to say; you already have a well-organized plan to follow.

3. Your grammar will improve

Your grammar will improve because you will be able to concentrate on it, not on your thoughts or organization. Improved organization, speed, and grammar make learning to outline well worth the effort.

Based on the explanation, it can be said that an outline is a good way to improve writing because before writing it into a paragraph, we design it first. So we don't need to worry about the logical order because we can organize the ideas systematically. It means that an outline can improve our writing skill.

RESEARCH STUDY

The participants of the research were the students at grade VIII of SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh. The researcher chose this class because they were learning about writing descriptive. This research was conducted at SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh. The school was located in Jln R. E.

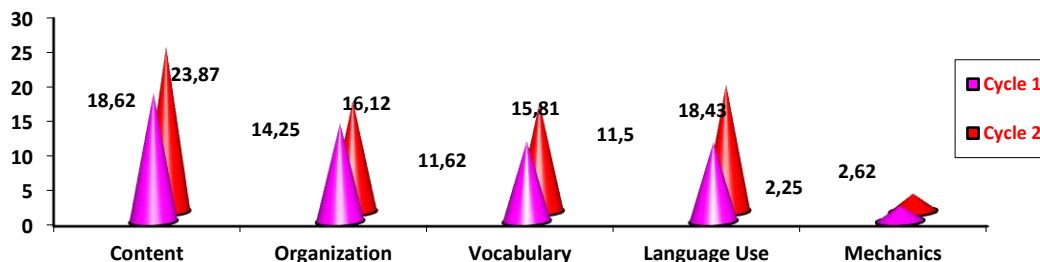
Martadinata Kumun Mudik Kota Sungai Penuh.

The researcher was the key instrument in this research. The researcher got involved in every step of the each cycle in the classroom for collecting data. The researcher used test, observation, and field notes along process in this research.

From the result of the test in cycle one and two, the result was increased in

cycle two. In cycle one, the mean score was 58.25% and it increased to 76.87%, it increased 18.63% point. It meant that teaching writing through outline improved the students' writing skill. The improvements were also improved on the result of each sub-indicators of writing test between cycle 1 and 2 that as follows:

Picture 1: The Result of Each Sub Indicators Of Writing Test



From the picture above, sub-indicator of cycle 1 and cycle 2 showed improvement. All of the sub-indicators of writing increased from cycle to cycle two. It means that the students' writing of descriptive paragraph was increased. It other word, outline increased and improved the students' writing skill especially in writing descriptive paragraph at grade VIII B of SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh academic year 2017/2018.

There are some factors improved the change of students' writing skill especially in writing paragraph, the factors were as follows:

1. Materials

The researcher chose the materials that were known by the students and the purpose of the interesting material was to make students interested in learning. The materials used were supported with pictures to

increase their background knowledge about that and it made them easier to understand the lesson.

2. Media

Media helped the students in this research because the media supported the material in order to help students in learning or understanding the lesson. Pictures as media were also helpful. The pictures were shown in front of the classroom, so the students can see the picture as well as what picture it was. Picture was important for enabling them to know an object by activating their visual sense.

3. Teaching Technique

There are various kind of technique can be used in teaching but in this research, the researcher use outline technique to improve students' writing skill in writing descriptive paragraph at grade VIII B of SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh. An outline is a technique to

help the students to improve their writing. It is like an architect's plan for a house. An architect plans a house before it is built to make sure that all the parts will fit. You should plan a paragraph before you write it to make sure that all of your ideas will fit.

4. Classroom management

In doing the research, the researcher could manage the class by helping students or monitored them in designing their writing. The students were motivated to finish their task, the situation in the class also became conducive. All of students focused on their writing, and the teaching process became more meaningful.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion was the use of outline technique could improve students' writing skill especially in writing descriptive paragraph at grade VIII B of SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh academic year 2017/2018. Based on the data analysis, it was concluded based on the two research questions in this research as follows:

1. Outline technique improved students' writing skill. The students were easier to design their writing, organized idea and constructed their sentence into a good paragraph. It could be seen from the students' score in cycle one and two. The result was increased, in cycle one, the students' mean score was 58.25% and it increased to 76.87%, it increased about 18.63% point. It meant that teaching writing through outline improved the students' writing skill.
2. The changes of students' writing skill at grade VIII B of SMP N 6 Kota Sungai Penuh were influenced by several factors namely materials given is interested, media increased students' knowledge about the lesson, the teaching technique was improved students' writing skill and classroom management was made the situation in the class more conducive.

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