

USING ADBUSTING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

By:

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Abstract: Writing is an important subject which needs to be taught from elementary to university level. However, students still get difficulties in doing writing activities. Adbsuting technique can be used to improve students' problems in writing skill. Therefore, the objective of this study was to find out whether or not adbusting technique could improve students' writing achievement. A classroom action research (CAR) was used in this study as the method. The participants were second-semester students of English major of FKIP UNISKI Kayuagung which consisted 26 students. To collect the data written test was used. The students chose one of the topics which consisted five topics then they wrote a paragraph based on the topic. Mean score was used to analyze the data. Based on the result, the mean score of students on writing before the treatment was 60. The mean score of post test 1 at the first cycle was 66,58. The mean score of post test 2 at the second cycle was 74,15. The mean score of post test 3 at the third cycle was 80.92. Thus, the data showed that adbusting technique could improve students' writing achievement.

Keywords: writing, adbusting technique

INTRODUCTION

Writing, as one of the four skills, is an important subject which needs to be taught from elementary to university level. Indeed, the students can express their ideas, opinions, and plans through writing. However, writing is still neglected in Indonesia. The result of the survey conducted by Alwasilah (2004),

involving 179 EFL students at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia found that 48% respondents reported that writing has been neglected in the national education from elementary to college and that writing lessons and courses have failed to provide them with writing skill. In fact, teachers seldom ask students to practice writing

in a class because they need a lot of time to correct and give feedback to their students' compositions.

According to Gebhard (2000, p.238), writing teachers often spend many hours reading and marking students' papers, offering revision suggestions and feedback on language errors. Students also consider that writing is a waste of time because they need more time to write down their ideas and revise them. National Commission on Writing (2003, p.3) reported that writing is time-consuming for students and teachers. Therefore, it is neglected skill in English language teaching.

Research on learning to write indicates that a good piece of writing is considered as a complex and difficult skill even in one's own native language. Floris (2008, p.56) conducted a survey of 1.450 students in a private university in East Java, Indonesia. She reported

that the rate of their proficiency level on writing was 61, 5%. Some students interviewed said that it was difficult for them to apply their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in writing. They already had problems in writing the Indonesian language, therefore it was even more difficult for them to write in a foreign language.

Moreover, writing is complex and difficult because students need to manage the composing process which involves a number of activities such as setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, making a draft, reading and reviewing, then revising and editing. According to Jun (2008), L2 writing is a complex process of discovery which involves brainstorming, multiple drafting, feedback practices, revision, and final editing. In addition, writing is not easy for both native speakers and EFL

students. It needs a lot of practices to develop this skill. For both native speakers and foreign learners of English, it is important to note that writing is a process, not a “product” (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). It means that the writer always needs to review and revise her/his writing again and again. Good writers should be engaged in a recursive and generative process, and reread their work in meaningful chunks, such as paragraphs and evaluating them for possible improvement (Hedge, 2007).

Being poor writers, are not because they are incapable of learning to write well but they have never been taught the foundations of process approach. Graham and Perin (2007, p. 22) state that some teachers may overemphasize correct grammar or spelling at the expense of the expression of ideas. Excellent instruction in writing not only emphasizes correctness of

forms and conventions, but also instills in writers the command of a wide variety of forms, genres, styles, and tones, and the ability to adapt to different contexts and purposes.

In addition, teachers are seldom involved critical thinking in the process of writing instruction. According to Graham (2008, p.5), the most common writing activities that their students engaged in were writing short answer responses to homework, responding to material read, completing worksheets, summarizing material read, writing journal entries, and making lists. These activities do not require students to analyze the topics, think critically and practice real writing. In fact, the most common assignments are basically writing without composing.

Furthermore, writing is an intellectual process that involves all the major forms of critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, comparison,

inference, deduction, conclusion) and the ability to organize information, evidence, arguments, and counter-arguments in a logical and compelling form (Tollefson, 2002). Perhaps the major problem for most students in writing is lack of experience in developing ideas and thinking critically. According to the New York Times article cited in Paul and Elder (2003, p. 1) “a 2002 study of California college students found that most freshmen could not analyze arguments, synthesize information, or write papers that were reasonably free of language errors.” If students have the conceptual apparatus for thinking about and working on the mechanics of writing, contents, grammar, connotation, word choice, spelling, punctuation, commenting on and ending the text, organization, clarity and so on—they are able to produce better writing (Bashyal, 2009). By analyzing and involving critical

thinking, students can write much better.

Based on the explanation above, teachers can use an appropriate strategy to help students to write a good paragraph and increase students' writing achievement. Grigoryan and King (2008) proposed Adbusting technique as a critical media literacy in the academic writing lesson. Adbusting technique is a form of media that looks like an advertisement but actually opposes the values and assumptions presented by a corporation through its advertising campaigns (Grigoryan and King, 2008). Adbusting technique can improve students' writing skill and critical writing by following the steps: free writing, understanding, analyzing, and evaluating hidden messages of advertisement, brainstorming, outlining, making drafts and peer review, revising and final draft. Furthermore, brainstorming one of the steps of

adbusting technique have a positive effect on developing writing skills in terms of content and organization, mechanics of writing, language use and thinking skill (Ibnian, 2011).

Based on the description above, the writer was interested in conducting research by using adbusting technique to the second-semester students of UNISKI Kayuagung. Therefore, the objective of this study was to find out whether or not adbusting technique could improve students' writing achievement.

METHODOLOGY

A classroom action research (CAR) was used in this study as the method. The participants were second-semester students of English major of FKIP UNISKI Kayuagung in the academic year of 2016/2017 who took writing I class which consisted 26 students. In implementing the classroom

action research in writing class, the writer used adbusting technique and did the observation to teach writing I class. The writer conducted three cycles and gave the test in each cycle. To collect the data, written test was used. The students chose one of the topics which consisted of five topics then they wrote a paragraph based on the topic. Mean score was used to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the preliminary study, the mean score of students on writing before the treatment was 60. The mean score of post test 1 at the first cycle was 66,58. The mean score of post test 2 at the second cycle was 74,15. The mean score of post test 3 at the third cycle was 80.92. The data showed that adbusting technique could improve students' writing achievement.

Table 1
The Analysis of Data from Pretest, Posttest 1,
Posttest 2, and Posttest 3

Score	Pretest	Post test 1	Posttest 2	Posttes t 3
Students' means score	60	66.58	74.15	80.92

Although writing activities seemed to be difficult for the students at the beginning of the treatment, they eventually enjoyed them. This was probably due to adbusting technique that used by the lecturer as interactions among the students which result in the willingness to write their own paragraph. Based on the result, such progress was caused by the frequency of practice using systematically structured format in adbusting technique such as free-writing, showing sample paragraphs and adbusting, analyzing and evaluating the hidden messages, brainstorming, outlining and designing adbusting, making first draft and peer reviewing, making second draft and designing final adbusting, doing class presentation and making draft,

evaluating student's work and finally doing peer and self assessment in their writing activities. In addition, the finding showed evidence that the adbusting technique was quite effective in improving students' writing achievement in the experimental group.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result, it showed that adbusting technique could improve students' writing achievement. Students' writing achievement was improved due to the systematic exposure of the adbusting technique followed by the frequency of writing either individually or in groups.

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