

## **ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING SHORT STORY USING TOPICAL PERSPECTIVE TECHNIQUE**

**By:**

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**Abstract:** This study investigated whether topical perspective technique was able to improve students' writing achievement or not and to know the students' perception toward topical perspective technique in improving students' writing achievement. Quasi-experimental method and non-randomized control-group pretest-posttest design were used in this study. The whole population was the eleventh-grade students of MA Al Aqidah Kutapandan taken as the sample consisted of thirty students. The data were collected by a written test which asked students to write a composition and was evaluated by using short story scoring rubric and questionnaire in order to know students' perception toward topical perspective in improving writing achievement. Since the sampling method used the study population, so the data obtained were analyzed by using gained score. The findings showed that students who were exposed by using topical perspective technique had higher mean of a gained score (6.48) compared to students who were not exposed (2.19). It meant that topical perspective technique was able to improve students' writing achievement. Based on the questionnaire given, it could be inferred that most of the students thought that topical perspective helped the students to respond the story they read so that they could improve their writing ability and fond of writing after using topical perspective technique. It meant that the students' perception toward topical perspective technique in improving writing achievement were better than before.

**Keywords:** topical perspective, writing a short story|

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of communication form is to send a message from the writer or speaker to the reader and listener. Therefore, it

is a necessity for us to learn writing skill to communicate with others. According to Nunan (2003, p.88), writing is the mental work of inventing

ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. In other words, in the writing process, someone should create ideas, think about something to express it, and try to make the sentences into paragraphs so that the reader can understand the content of the text. Likewise, Milarisa (2019, p.121) assumes that writing aims to express ideas, opinions/thoughts, and feeling, that understandable to others. Even though writing is an essential ability in mastering English.

Harmer (2004, p.38) also adds that when writing, students frequently have more time to think than they do in oral activity. They can go through what they want in their minds, and even consult dictionary, grammar books, or other material to help them.

Writing encourages them students to focus on an accurate language use because they think as they write it will provoke language development as they resolve problems which the writing puts into their mind. In short, in writing something, the students have much time to do it because they can open their dictionary to choose the appropriate words and check their writing using the grammar books or grammar tools, for example grammarly so that their writing becomes better.

However, Kim (2008) states that learning the process of writing is a difficult skill for a student to develop and learn, especially in EFL context, where exposure to English is limited to a few hours per week. Consequently, students found difficulties to write words with correct spelling, appropriate word choice, and basic

mechanics such as letter formation, grammar, and punctuation. Furthermore, Sartika and Nery (2018, p.21) state that writing English is very difficult for students to master because English is a foreign language, has different rules than the first language mastered by students, and involves several aspects of writing, such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. In conclusion, the students still have problems in practicing writing in the class because of the limitation of the time, different rule in their mother tongue, several aspects in writing, such as correct spelling, appropriate word choice, and basic mechanics such as letter formation, grammar, and punctuation.

Since the students have difficulties in learning writing, the teacher should use one technique to

develop students' writing achievement.

One of the techniques can be used is a topical perspective technique. Based on Beach and Marshall (1991, p.321-326), topical perspective is one of the ways of appreciating short story which is able to create meaningful learning for the students in relation to the appreciation of literary works. Students are directly involved in the world of the text so that they will have a deep understanding of what it actually talks about. They also add that in topical perspective technique, the students apply what they know about certain topics, field, or subject-matter areas to stories. The appreciation of the text will come to the connection of students' prior knowledge to the topics, fields, and matters discussed in the text which seem interesting to them. By applying a topical

perspective into literary appreciation, the students will have experience in reading the text. In short, the students can understand well about the story so that they will be easy to respond and connect the story with the condition of their life.

Moreover, in applying the topical perspective technique, it needs a short story as the media to develop their topical perspective comprehension so that students can enjoy learning English and can develop their writing. In addition, by using story, the students understand the positive or negative effects from the story and know the content of the story well. Fitzgerald (1993, p.643) also says that a short story can be vehicled to improve students' overall language skill because it can expose students to a wide variety of stylish

and genre. Besides, a short story can become function as an outline of the story that can help students to remember the story itself and feel the plot of the story. In other words, the short story can prepare the words in the students' mind.

Based on the explanation previously, the researchers were interested in conducting a research entitled "Enhancing Students' Writing Short Story Using Topical Perspective".

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study applied the quasi-experimental method and nonrandomized control-group pretest-posttest design. The students who involved in this study were all the eleventh-grade students of MA Al Aqidah Kutapadan. Since there were

only two classes of the eleventh grade, so the study population was applied in order to collect the data. To decide the experimental and control groups, the flip of the coin was used. After flipping the coin, class XI IPS 1 was elected as the experimental group and class XI IPS 2 was elected the control group.

Moreover, the students in the experimental group followed the steps in teaching writing a short story by topical perspective technique as follows; 1) engaging; the students involve their imagination feeling and thought. They are also engaging with the text whenever they articulate their emotional reaction or level of involvement, 2) connecting; the students try to connect their own experience or other stories with the story they read and the story become

most evident. When reading the story, the students feel that they have read the same story or can write their same experience as in the story, 3) describing; the students tell about the intrinsic value of the stories. They restate a text or reproduce information that is provided verbally in the text, 4) conceiving; when conceiving the characters, setting, and language, the students are moving beyond the description of the information in order to make statements about its meaning. They may also describe the fact that the young couple in the story of neighbor is not friendly for instance, 5) explaining; the students tell about their point of view towards characters' action and have constructed a tentative conception of characters' behavior, and 6) interpreting; the

students' try to interpret the implicit meaning in the story.

To obtain the data, a written test was applied in which the sample students chose one topic out of five topics given and wrote a composition based on the instruction given. To check the validity of the test, content validity was used in which the English syllabus of the eleventh grade and test of specification test were matched with the test given. Then to check the reliability of the test, interrater reliability was applied in which there were two raters chosen based on the criteria of having S1 qualification and having been taught English for five years. The two rates scored the students' writing test based on an analytic scoring rubric. Finally, the data were analyzed by using gained score.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the calculation of gained score between pretest and posttest of the experimental and control groups, the result showed that the mean gained score of the experimental group after treatment was 6.48, whereas the mean gained score in the control group was 2.19. It meant that students who were taught by using topical perspective technique had improvement compared to the students who were not taught using topical perspective technique. It was happened because the students were follow the instruction stated in a topical perspective technique which included seven reader responses, such as engaging, connecting, describing, conceiving, explaining, interpreting, and judging to create meaningful learning in relation to appreciation

story. The students were also directly involved in the words of the text so that they could have a deep understanding of what actually the text was talking about. In other words, a topical perspective technique helped the students to correlate the story with the students' imagination so as to write the story using their own words. However, the students who were taught without a topical perspective technique had less improvement because they studied writing theoretically and had less time to practice writing and the teacher rarely did the correction of the writing that the students made in the classroom. As a result, the students did not know whether their writing were good or not.

After giving the treatment in the experimental group, the questionnaire

was given in order to know the students' perception toward topical perspective technique in improving students' writing achievement. The first question asked whether students liked learning English or not. The result showed that nine students (30%) liked English very much, twenty one students (70%) liked English, no students did not like English, and no students did not like English very much.

The second question asked whether writing was difficult or not. The result showed that no students said that writing was easy, ten students (30.3%) said that writing was not really difficult, twenty students (66.6%) said that writing was not difficult, and no students said that writing was very difficult.

The third question asked what was the difficulty faced by students in writing. The result showed that were three students (10%) said that ideas for writing as their difficulty; nine students (30%) said that topic was as a difficult one, nine students (30%) considered vocabulary the most difficult especially when they had to respond the story, and nine students (30%) mentioned grammar as the most difficult part in writing.

The fourth question asked what kind of writing that students learned. The result showed that eighteen students (60%) wrote a composition, four students (13.3%) wrote a letter, one student (3%) wrote a report; and seven students (23.3%) wrote an essay.

The fifth question asked whether or not topical perspective helped students to generate ideas in

writing an essay. The result showed that there were eight students (26.7%) said that topical perspective helped a lot to generate ideas in writing an essay; twenty students (66.7%) told that that topical perspective helped to generate ideas in writing an essay, two students (6.6%) said that topical perspective did not really help to generate ideas in writing an essay, and no students said that topical perspective did not help to generate ideas in writing an essay.

The sixth question asked whether or not the students were agree that the use of the theory of topical perspective could be applied in teaching and learning of English writing. From the result it showed that, six students (20%) were strongly agree, twenty four students (80%) were agree with that opinion, no



students were disagree and strongly disagree with that opinion.

The seventh question asked whether topical perspective technique helped students to write an essay. The result showed that there were five students (16.7%) thought that topical perspective helped them a lot in writing an essay, twenty one students (70%) said that topical perspective helped them in writing an essay, four students (13.3%) said that it did not really help them in writing an essay, and no students said that it did not really help them in writing an essay.

The eighth question asked whether the use of topical perspective was needed to respond the story they read. The result showed that thirty students (100%) were agree to use topical perspective technique to respond the story they read, no

students were said that it was very necessary, it was not necessary, and it was not necessary.

The ninth question asked what another advantage of topical perspective technique was. The result showed that eight students (26.6%) said that it helped student write faster, thirteen students (43.3%) said that it helped student improve his/her ability in writing, nine students (30%) said that it had a wide range of vocabulary, and no students said that it could be done in groups.

The last question asked whether or not students liked writing subject after studying writing using topical perspective in responding the story. The result showed that twenty six students (86.7%) said that they liked writing, four students (13.3%) said that they do not like it, and no

students liked it very much, and no students did not like it very much.

In conclusion, topical perspective technique was able to improve students' writing achievement, especially writing short story. Based on the questionnaire, it was found that twenty one students (70%) liked English, twenty students (66.6%) said that writing was not difficult, nine students (30%) said that topic was as a difficult one, considered vocabulary the most difficult especially when they had to respond the story, and mentioned grammar as the most difficult part in writing, eighteen students (60%) wrote a composition, twenty students (66.7%) told that that topical perspective helped to generate ideas in writing an essay, all of the students were agree that the use of the theory

of topical perspective could be applied in teaching and learning of English writing, twenty one students (70%) said that topical perspective helped them in writing an essay, all of the students were agree to use topical perspective technique to respond the story they read, thirteen students (43.3%) said that topical perspective technique helped student improve his/her ability in writing, and twenty six students (86.7%) said that they liked writing. In short, most of them thought that topical perspective helped the students to respond the story they read so that they could improve their writing ability and fond of writing after using topical perspective. It meant that the students' perception toward topical perspective technique in improving writing achievement were better than before.

## **CONCLUSION**

Students who were taught using topical perspective had improvement than students who were taught using lecturing. It meant that the exposure of writing using a topical perspective can help and motivate students to write, therefore, teachers should modify the way to make students active to write something. In other words, teachers should know a technique that can improve students' writing achievement so that students will have fun to write because the interesting technique that teachers applied in teaching and learning process of writing skill.□ Using topical perspective, students knew how to response a story, extend and generate question from the text they read and could analyze the author's message and construct meaning of the

text. Moreover, topical perspective kept students' mindactively and activated their prior knowledge in a topic or subject. Therefore, topical perspective involved the teacher and the class in a collaborative process of building understanding in writing process.

Based on students' score of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group, it was found that the students' mean score in pre-test was (3.99) and after treatment students' mean score had increased from (3.98) to (11.18).

Based on analysis of posttests score in the experimental and control groups, it was found that t-obtained (17.57) was higher than t-table (2.04) and  $p_{\text{value}}$  (0.000) was less than  $\alpha_{\text{value}}$ (0.05). It meant that null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and

alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. In other words, there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement between the students who were taught using topical perspective and that of those were not. It happened because the students were more interested in writing so that they had improvement in their writing achievement and gave good response during the treatment. Using topical perspective, students knew how to response a story, extend and generate question from the text they read and could analyze the author's message and construct meaning of the text. Moreover, topical perspective kept students' mindactively and activated their prior knowledge in a topic or subject. Therefore, topical perspective involved the teacher and the class in a

collaborative process of building understanding in writing process.

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