



Students' Skill in Paragraph Writing Subject of English Department FKIP UNES Padang

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Abstrak:

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui keterampilan siswa dalam menulis paragraf. Penelitian ini mengambil mahasiswa tahun pertama jurusan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UNES Padang. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 15 siswa. Seluruh siswa telah mengambil mata pelajaran Penulisan Paragraf pada tahun ajaran 2023/2024. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi penelitian deskriptif. Instrumentasi yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah tes tertulis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan siswa dalam menggunakan urutan kronologis sangat bagus. Sejalan dengan itu, kosakata dan mekaniknya juga bagus. Sementara itu, beberapa siswa masih kurang pada bagian pengembangan ide. Kemudian, ada beberapa siswa yang tidak mampu menerapkan tata bahasa yang benar dalam paragraf mereka. Secara keseluruhan, terdapat 36,3% siswa memperoleh nilai tinggi dalam menulis paragraf. Kesimpulannya, keterampilan siswa dalam menulis paragraf dikategorikan sangat baik.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan Siswa, Menulis Paragraf.

Abstract:

The aim of this research is to find out students' skill in writing paragraph. The research took in the first year students of English department, FKIP UNES Padang. The sample of this research was 15 students. All of the students have taken Paragraph writing subject at the first-year of 2023/2024 academic year. This research used descriptive research methodology. The instrumentation which used in this research was a writing test. The finding of the research showed that the students' skill in part of using chronological order is great. In line with it, their vocabulary and mechanic are also good. Meanwhile, some students were still lack in the developing idea part. Then, there were some students not able to apply correct grammar in their paragraph. In a whole, there were 36,3% of the students got high score in writing paragraph. In conclusion, the students' skill in writing paragraph was categorized as very good.

Keywords: Students' Skill, Paragraph Writing

1. PENDAHULUAN

There are four skills that must be mastered in learning English, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides that, students are also required to

learn the grammatical structure of English. These four skills are the foundation for someone to master English. This is what will be a benchmark for someone's English language skills. the language appropriately in social interaction. The variety of

interactions includes not only verbal communication, but also parallel everyday elements such as tone, stress and intonation. Writing is one of the skill that should be taken by the English department student of FKIP Ekasakti University. The curriculum established in English Department of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education in Ekasakti University, it has four compulsory writing courses. The writing courses students should be taken are Paragraph Writing in the first semester, Essay Writing in the second semester, Academic Writing in the third semester, and Article Writing in the fourth semester.

Writing is basic language skill that becomes the hard skill to master for the learner in university level especially in English department, FKIP, UNES Padang. It is well known that writing is a productive skill that involves the way to generate and organize the ideas in written form. Writing considers as the most difficult skill by the international students which English is not their first language Maggie Sokolik said that writing is a mental process of generating ideas and thinking about how to present them effectively in the form of a written text (Nunan, 2015, p.78). It means that writing is unusual activity that every learner can do. The learner needs to have the ability in *m a n a g i n g i d e a a n d* thinking about how to express it.

Furthermore, the aspect of writing arranges a good text. That components can help the writer control their writing. Baker (2011) mentions there are three components in writing skill. First grammatical still is the ability to construct meaningful sentence. It is the ability to arrange the sentence to be more meaningful. Second, compositional skill is the ability how the writer composes their ideas in writing. The last, domain knowledge is a component of writing skill that allows the writer to appreciate the perspective of the user. In short, component in writing such as content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanic.

The writer must pay attention to these components because can support students' achievement in writing. It also can help them to arrange and organize the paragraph as well based on the five components of writing; content, developing ideas, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics.

The researchers consider in choosing on the second semester in English department. Based on the interviews in pre investigate exercises, the analyst found that the understudies confronted trouble in doing composing particular paragraph. Additionally, the understudies confounded in applying the component of the composing that ought to be known by them are content, ideas, vocabulary, language structure and mechanics. The issues found amid the interviews were the research still found challenges in deciding a great structure of the dialect and its lexicon. Since, they do not utilize to type in a section when they were in senior high school, they might not create the thoughts of the composing based on the subject given by the educator at that time.

Based on the interview done by the researchers, there were some problems found. The problems are: First, the students faced some difficulty in writing the topic sentence. Second, they have limited vocabulary. In order to make the topic sentence more understandable the students have to master the vocabularies. Third, the students do not know how to develop the ideas in the paragraph because they did not use to write, they prefer speaking to writing.

2. REVIEW

Process writing is an approach that encourages English learners to engage in writing even as they are developing the companion literacy skills of reading and speaking. (Walter, 2004. p.78) Learning to write is a matter of learning about the stages and efficient methods of working through each stage and combining them

into and efficient process. There are four stages in the writing process, they are (Renandya, 2002, p.316). from the theory above it can be stated the stages prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing will be analysed below.

(1) Pre-Writing

In this stage, learner will be stimulated to gather the idea for getting started. Most of learner often confused how to start writing because they have no idea how to manage the ideas and gathering information for writing. There are some activities provide the learning experiences for students at this stage, they are: Group Brainstorming, Clustering, Rapid Free Writing, and WH=Questions. In Group Brainstorming, learner will be divided into some group. Every group member gives ideas about the topic spontaneously. There are no right or wrong answer here. While Clustering, learner will be given form words related to a stimulus provided by the teacher. The words are circled and then linked by lines. In Rapid Free Writing activity, Learner only have limited time within 1 or 2 minutes, individual students freely and quickly write down single words and phrases about a topic. Finally, in WH Questions, learner have to generate who, why, what, where, when and how questions about a topic. From those activities, hopefully it will help every learner how to get idea to start the writing.

(2) Drafting

Drafting is a design or concept or planning of a topic that will lead the learner in writing process. A drafting contents main idea and the most important point when a learner writing a topic. The draft of a topic that has been built in a paper will be improved by the learner later. At the drafting stage, the writers are focused on the fluency of writing and are not preoccupied with grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft.

(3) Revising

In the revising stage, the learner reviews their writing on the basis of the feedback given by a teacher. They revise what was written to see how effectively they have communicated their meanings to the reader. In revising process, it is done not only checking for language errors such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, et cetera but also improving global content and the organization of ideas so that the learner's intent is made clearer to the reader. According to Barnet, revising stage offered the writers knowing their weaknesses in their writing result. As stated in her book that the best way to learn to write is to do your best, revise it a few days later

(4) Editing

At this stage, learners are engaged in tidying up their texts as they prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teacher. In editing process, learner can edit whether by their own or by their peer's work for grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, sentence structure and the like.

In summary the writing process is started by the Pre Writing activities where the students can start to make their own list and cluster and free writing in brainstorming activities. Second, drafting, in order to make the writing more focus and controllable the students have to make their own draft. Third, Revising, it means the students have to revise every part of their paragraph in order to make it more coherence. The last one is editing, editing can be more easy if the students have revised their writing first, all of this components must be in a good step in writing.

3. METODOLOGI

Students writing in a classroom context should show their awareness of their own communicative goals, of the reader and of the writing context. Paragraph writing, which constitutes a problem for many EFL students in

Ethiopian schools, is a major challenge for both students and teachers of English at Bedeno Secondary School. Despite some approaches to the teaching of writing having been involved from various teaching methods, tackling EFL writing is still one of the perennial challenges for students in developing English paragraph. Therefore, this ever-persisting challenge the EFL students encountered in developing good paragraph associated with various factors, some factors will be described below:

(1) inadequate Exposure to the Target Language

Another factor that contributes to the contributor of the errors is the inadequate exposure to the target language. It is admitted that many students do not have good access or conducive environment to practice their English outside the classroom, especially both in writing and speaking. Therefore, there are no opportunities for students to practice and develop English. Because of this very weak student come to the high schools, with most of them are not anywhere hear to do anything with English at all level (Alemu, 2004 and Awol, 1999). When students have limited exposure to the language learnt, there will be a big possibility for them to commit errors in their language.

(2) Lack of Practice

Converting competence into performance requires practice. Italo (1999) states that the learners must take the responsibility for their learning if meaningful learning is to take place. He also adds that the best ways to learn any skill would be to practice it. To become best driver, the best way is to drive. In addition, using the most effective approach to teaching EFL writing is not enough if learners do not practice enough writing.

Writing is a skill acquired only through practice. It is, like dance and sport, an activity that could be improved only through practice (Andrews, 1999). Bambang (2010) states that mastering the form of passive voice is not the end of the story. Student should experience using passive voice themselves.

Teaching is directing students to practice the language skills. "The psychology of the learning tells as that student is not merely there to absorb knowledge as sponge takes in water" Halliday, McIntosh and Steven, (1965:139). After analysing the theory, it can be concluded that learning is personal experience which requires the active and regular engagement of the learner.

Despite these facts which have been stated above, students in EFL classroom, especially in writing, are not well provided with sufficient writing activities and are not well practiced on regular basis. This problem may be emanated from language teachers' belief with teaching method, or lack of sufficient writing activities and tasks.

(3) Problem of Writing Apprehension

Apprehension is the feeling of being worry about something. With regard to writing, it can be defined as the fear of writing process that outweighs the projected gain from ability to write MacIntyre (1989). Learners could be affected with the understanding of the fact that writing anxiety clearly and negatively affects their writing performance Pajares and Johnson, (1994). This is to mean that when students are given a writing activity they begin worrying about writing a paragraph as psychological rather than assuming it as logistical. This indicates that writing anxiety is distinctive to productive language

particularly of writing Horwitz et.al(1986). From the above context Scholars have become more sensitive to writing anxiety and target language relation recently captured more attention the students to be analysed.

(4) Lack of Appropriate Feedback

Students gain benefits from sufficient writing practice and revisions on their drafts to produce a final piece of writing. In these processes, students often rely on feedback either from a teacher, peer, or self. Feedback that students receive from a source, or a combination of sources, provides them with information about what is good and what needs to be improved so that they can incorporate and use the feedback in their revisions and in the final product of their writing. Most EFL/ESL writing teachers would strongly agree with the statement that teacher correction feedback is a necessary part of any writing activity. Feedback on student writing can make learning more effective, as noted by Cardelle and Corno (1981), the more feedback students receive of their performance the better they understand what they need to do to correct their mistakes. Accordingly, the method of feedback provision could also be other factor that affects their achievement in writing good paragraph. Feedback provided for students is not creative because it doesn't inform them what they are expected to improve and how to formulate these improvement William,(2007). Black and William (1998) elucidate those 19 students can make gains in their learning when a given feedback is focused on the specific problems of the students' work and demonstrate at them the errors with its way of correction.

(5) Carelessness

Because of a variety of reason, EFL/ ESL learners may sometimes become careless in writing or speaking in target language (Norrish, 1983 and Edge, 1989). According to Norrish, carelessness may happen as a result of lack of motivation. This lack of motivation, on its part, may occur when the materials to be taught and the way these materials are presented do not suit the learners especially for the university students especially English department students.

(6) Lack of Vocabulary

In order to write quality paragraphs (or essays), students' lexical knowledge or vocabulary is also vitally important. Words carry meanings and help students communicate with their readers effectively. Lack of words usually creates a breakdown in communication. Researchers such as Laufer and Nation (1995) and Putra (2009) asserted that students' vocabulary knowledge and writing performance correlate significantly. As many agree, vocabulary knowledge alone, however, cannot end in accurate and effective writing.

Communication demands the use of words in sentences; that is, the need for grammatical knowledge is also unquestionable. In conclusion, the researcher thinks that all of this kind problems can be reduced by the students if they follow the writing instructor. In order to make the writing of the students good the teacher or lecturer also concern on the students' motivation and willingness.

(7) HASIL DAN DISKUSI

Hasil

In this study, the researcher chose the first semester as the research sample which consisted of one class. The reason researchers chose the first semester as the subject is because students consider typical cases and the most potential data sources for research because they have experience in Writing. Researchers use techniques that most help researchers understand research problems and questions (Creswell, 2003, p. 166).

The students' scores in writing paragraph were presented in the following description. The real score from each scorer divided into two and the result of those scores were the results from student's total score. 36,3% of the students have good writing skill. In addition, there are 4 students got good score the percentage is 36,3%. There is only student who got fair score, 2 students got weak, and none of the students got poor score. In conclusion students' skill in paragraph writing is very good.

Diskusi

a. Students' skill in developing ideas

The developing ideas is started by choosing a good topic, and topics sentences, it called paragraph unity. Based on the findings the students described the place without organizing it well, and they didn't give specific information about the place. They did not provide any additional information or appropriate explanation to maintain the main ideas, the students only gave a short explanation without organized the ideas.

b. Students' skill in organizing the ideas

In organizing the ideas, the student can use the chronological order. The chronological order is order by time; it uses to explain processes, such as where is Padang beach taken place. The students

can use; first, second, next, etc to explain the place. Chronological order is also used to describe events of period of time. Beside the chronological order, a logical division is also part of organization ideas of writing. a logical divisions of ideas is a form of essay organization that is used to group related items according to some quality they have in common. The large topic is divided into smaller subtopics, each of which can be discussed in a separate paragraph. The introductory paragraph introduces the main topic, and the thesis statement may give the number of subtopic. Each body paragraph discusses one subtopic. The concluding paragraphs the essay to a close by reminding the reader of the essay's main points.

c. Students' skill in using grammar

Grammar is the system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in sentence. Technically, grammar refers to sentence-levels rules only, and not to rules governing the relationship among sentences, which refers to discourse rules. In this case, the students have to write the text with good relational verbs and adjective words to make a good writing text, the students were not able to apply correct grammar in their paragraph. It is illustrated by 36% of the students got poor score for their grammar component.

d. Students' skill in using vocabulary

There are 82 % students got good for the vocabulary. It can be seen that there is no student got poor for their vocabulary component, in the first test there are 4 students got poor for their vocabulary component. Because they did not have an adequate vocabulary to create the good sentences that represent the ideas. Therefore, they just used Indonesian word.

e. Students' Skill in using mechanics.

In the data there was so many errors found in applying mechanics component. They often missed the punctuation and made some errors in capitalization and spelling. There are 36% got good, 45% students got fair, 28.5% and 18% got weak category. None of the student got poor for mechanic component.

(8) KESIMPULAN

Based on Research findings, it can be explained as follows, first, The students' skill in writing paragraph is very good. It supported by the data of the research, there were 36,3% of the students got high score. Second, The students' skill in part of using chronological order is great. In line with it, their vocabulary and mechanic are also good. Meanwhile, in the developing idea, some students were still lack. Then, there were some students not able to apply correct grammar in their paragraph.

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