

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN TEACHERS' STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY

Nurul Fajri

STKIP An-Nur Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam
nurulfajriabdullah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research is done to find out teachers' strategies in writing and the correlation between teachers' strategies and students' writing ability. This study employs a qualitative research, where all the data are described in a systematic way based on the asserted research questions. The subject for this research was the second year students of English Department of Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIN Ar-Raniry that consisted of 35 students. To obtain the data, the writer applied questionnaires, interview and document analysis. As a result of this research, it is found that there were good influences between teachers' writing strategies and students' writing ability. It could be proven from the students' responds of questionnaires' distribution that 88, 57 % of the students improved their writing ability. Meanwhile, 88, 57% was motivated to write and 92, 43% of them said that teachers' strategies made them easy to generate their ideas. Besides, based on the document analysis, it is found that there were no strongly different among each class in average value; unit one was 80.7, unit three was 77 and unit four was 78. Hence, it could be said that the hypothesis of this research was proven.

Key Words: Writing Strategies, Writing.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Writing is challenging for some people, especially for novice writers or those who do not know how to organize their writing, and how to produce good writing. It is believed that writing is very difficult, thus the students need to have great attention to organize the sentence in order to be able to deliver the ideas, messages and feeling to the reader through writing.

Basically, writing is media transforming information from one to another. It is also as a media social communication that relates people to know each other and to know about issues developed in the world. Moreover, writing is someone's expression; ideas, feelings, and thoughts. It is power expression which makes someone feel comfortable about him or herself.

Sometimes, writing seems easy, but its process for most people is not an easy task. It needs ideas and ways to be developed in sentences, paragraphs and essays, or to be produced in writing. Producing an idea depends on one's feelings and mood. It is also common that environment or situation influences the idea releasing.

Nevertheless, many people want to express their feelings, thoughts, and ideas in writing, but they rarely can create them; they lose their ideas when they want to put them into paper. As they are hard to be produced, the people need great attention of making writing.

Meanwhile, good English writing competence is widely recognize as an important skill for educational, business, and personal reasons. Omaggio (1986) states that if learning to write in a second language was simply matters of knowing how to "write this down" in the new code, than teaching writing would be a relatively easy task. But writing is a complex process which demands cognitive analysis and linguistics synthesis. (Tan, 2007)

Besides, Nunan (1999: 98) says, "Writing is an important one; because teaching writing covers all aspect of language, involve grammar, vocabulary, etc". It means that writing is a combination of all aspects in English that is deeply integrated in sentences in order that it could be good writing. It ought to be combined with reading, grammar, listening, speaking and thinking.

As, writing is believed is very difficult so that the learners also need to have a comprehensive understanding to pattern the language in order to be able to reach the sense and good writing criteria based on the content. Hence, the idea, message, feeling, and thoughts could be delivered smoothly to the readers through writing. Therefore, to fulfill it, teachers should engage their students in the process of writing. Writing process is intended to provide a step by step model for writing so that students are able to finish their writing as expected. The steps in this case are ways or strategies taught by teacher to students in writing classes.

It is crucial for teacher to help students improve their writing ability. Teaching and showing them the ways to get their good job is one way to have students spirit to produce good writing. The most important factor in writing exercises is that students need to be personally involved in order that they have their experience in learning

process. Moreover, encouraging student participation in the exercise, while at the same time refining and expanding writing skills, requires a certain pragmatic approach.

Furthermore, some drills given by teacher in practicing the strategies are a part to improve students' ability and then by that way teachers help them expanding, generating, and collecting their ideas in writing. Finally after the students get the way how to get their idea, teacher show them how to arrange their idea in sentences, paragraphs, and essays based on strategies used.

Therefore, it is important to help students learn writing well. To do so it is necessary for teachers to apply suitable strategies in teaching writing. Theoretically there are so many strategies in teaching writing, such as pre writing, brainstorming, WH-question, drafting, clustering, responding, revising, editing, and may be there are so many other strategies that can help students in getting good writing on their job.

Thus, in this thesis, the teacher's teaching strategies in writing were researched. It is assumed that teaching strategies play important roles in improving students' ability in writing. And so, the problem of this study can be clearly formulated in the following two questions:

1. What are the teachers' strategies in writing?
2. What are the correlations between teacher's strategies and student's ability in writing?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing

Writing is someone's expression about his/her thoughts, ideas and feelings which all of them are part of his/her life when they are shown in writing so that writing is also can be one of the most powerful forms of expression. Through writing someone can bring his/her thoughts, ideas, and feeling to life - and his/her can share them not just with one or two people, but with many. Schiller (1973: 10) states that writing is one way of preserving ideas, facts, and discoveries passed one the others. It is also a way of distribution news or messages to the other

Troyka (1996:2) state that writing is a way of thinking and learning, a way of discovering, writing creates reading, a way of creating reading, and writing is a way of communicating a message to a reader for a purpose. Through writing everyone has the opportunity to explore ideas and understand information, it allows people to make connections among ideas and language and writing also create a permanent and visible record of everyone's ideas for others to read.

According to Schiller's (1973:10) writing is one way of preserving ideas, facts, and discoveries passed one to the others. It is also a way of distribution news or messages to the other. Besides, Hornby (2000: 997) says that writing is a process of expressing ideas, wants, hopes and thoughts visually from someone passed on the other people.

Besides, Simon and Schuster (1996: 2-3) say: "Writing is a way of thinking and learning, a way of discovering, writing creates reading, and writing is a way of communicating a message to a reader for a purpose." Hornby (2000:997) says that: "Writing is a process of expressing ideas, wants, hopes and thoughts visually from someone passed on the other people.

Based on some definitions above the writer concludes that writing is a way of sending information, thoughts, feeling, ideas, and a way of discovering, communicating, or expressing oneself. Different people define writing based on their perception toward writing.

The Purpose of Writing

Purpose is a reason for someone to do something. For instance, human in their life need something to be gained. They need not only for eating, drinking or sleeping but also for getting something more complex than they imagine. So, the more they know the purpose of their life the more they know about themselves. It is similar to writing; the purpose in writing is the reason for writing, the reason why a person composes a particular piece of writing. Focusing on purpose as one writes, it helps a person to know what form of writing to choose, how to focus, and organize the writing. What kinds of evidence to cite, how formal or informal the writing style should be, and how much should be written.

Furthermore, the reason also makes writer get his or her spirit in doing writing. It affects all parts of writing; the content, the form, the style, and the tone of writing. The clearer someone knows his purpose, the easier to reach his or her target. Crimon (1984; 23) says that: Your purpose is your reason for writing. Your purpose will affect the content, the form, the style, and the tone of your writing. If you were going to shoot an arrow, you'd look first at the bull's - eyes on the target. Just as seen the bull's eyes would help your aim, knowing your purpose will help you reach your writing target.

Purpose also overall designs that govern what writers do in their writing. When writers have determined their purpose, they know what kind of information they need, how they want to organize and develop that information and why they think it is important.

For instance, if a person want to write in the purpose to express him/herself, the person should write the writing expressively, the goal is to put thoughts and feelings on the page personally. Otherwise, if a person wants to develop his/her writing descriptively, it means that the writing will portray people, places, things, moments and theories with enough vivid detail. Moreover, such as exploratory writing, the writer purpose is to ask key questions and reflect on topics that oppose simple answers. On the contrary, when a person writes to entertain, exactly a purpose or goal of writing is often used to entertain others with humor. This is the main goal of the writing.

However, if the writing is to argue, a person attempts to convince his/her audience or reader to believe or act in a certain way. Moreover, if the writing is determined to persuade, of course the writer should write persuasively, the terms have slightly different meanings, it appeals to logic and reason will be the primary means of persuasion. Meanwhile, if someone writes to explain about something occurred, exactly the purpose is to gather facts and information, combine them with his/her own knowledge & experience, and clarify for some audience who or what something is, how it happened or should happen, and/or why something happened.

Therefore, Reid (1994; 66) also divides the purposes of writing into two groups; the purpose related to the writer and the purpose that related to the audience.

The purposes that relate to the writer contain the benefits directly or indirectly from everything ones writes. Someone may write to; express his feeling and thought, entertain his self, observe something more clearly, help someone remember, and investigate and learn something new.

Additionally, Simon and Schuster (1996: 4-5) also state the purpose of writing in their book as follow:

- Writing to express yourself
- Writing to inform a reader
- Writing to persuade a reader

Thus, there are many purposes to write. Because of that knowing the purpose of the writing, it will be strategically to get the sense of good writing. It depends on how the author reveals his/her ideas in a writing integrated to the purpose of the writing.

The Strategies of Writing

Writing is as a process of thinking. It needs several ways that help the writer more easily to write. The ways called “strategies”. It can be found when someone reads or learns about writing not only in classrooms but also in outside classes. The strategies could belong to students or teachers. However, what the writer means in this thesis are teacher’s strategies; teacher’s strategies influence student’s motivation and ability in classes.

According to Hornby (2000:1284), “strategy is a process of planning something or carrying out a plan in skillful way.” Here, a strategy is a way used by the teacher to make his or her students easier to write in writing class. Generally, there are no special tricks to write well, it just needs time, energy, imagination, thoughts, and a little persistence. Moreover, there are not stated the particular strategies to be implied in writing process but it is just stated the stage of writing process to be run away in writing classes in order to have the student reach good writing.

The process of writing as a classroom activity gives way in having or choosing each different stages of writing to the students. Richards and Renandya (2002:316) cite: “Process writing in the classroom is highly structured as it necessitates the

orderly teaching of process skills, and thus it may not, at least initially, give way to free variations of writing stages.” Suzanne (1998: 319) states some references that state the stage of writing process in teaching writing, there are: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Related to this case, Stephen (1994: 70-71) states that the process includes collecting, shaping, drafting, and revising.

Glass (2000: 182-186) says six stages of writing, there are: prewriting, drafting, self-review and peer review, revising, editing, and publishing. Furthermore, Richard and Renandya (2002: 314-317) list eleven point of writing process, there are: planning (Pre-Writing), group brainstorming, clustering, rapid free writing, WH-Question, drafting, responding, revising, editing, evaluating, and post – writing.

The Significance of Strategies for Students’ Writing Ability

When teachers offer some strategies for students, it means they offer teachers offer some ways that help their students get easy to do something. Moreover, it also means that teachers give the students motivation and inspiration, make them creative, believe with their ability, and make them more confident and more spirited to do writing.

Making something especially in writing process is not as easy as someone imagines but it could be easy when he or she gets the ways. When someone has the ways, he or she knows what to do, what step he or she should do to make something hard seem simple to follow. As a result, it could make his or her job more effective, more interested, and easier to produce his or her writing product.

To write well, students have to encourage themselves. They need to know what the benefit of writing. In this case, forcing students to write is not a good choice. Besides, the teachers also do not need to give some assignments and ask them to finish the work in a time the teachers were determined because students will be bored with all of this.

However, what the teachers need to do is giving them some stimulation, such as teaching them by using some good strategies because teachers’ strategies support the students to get their ways to be applied in their writing and allow them to get their

inspiration or idea. The strategies also have student believe in their ability and more confident to apply everything in their mind in a sheet. They make the student more spirited to write. In other word, the student will be easy to practice their writing.

To show the ideas to be read by the readers is not a simple work. Sometimes, people spend much their time to think about how to do it. however, teachers could guide their student to be more creative to find out their ideas by applying some writing strategies or giving them some writing instruction such fill in blank sheets, make them as interesting arrangement work as attractive as floral arrangement, than arrange them from words become a phrase, a sentence and an essay so that people can read it.

In conclusion, it is crucial for the teachers to apply some strategies in teaching writing to guide the students to write. It is considered as a way to improve students' ability to produce good writing since the strategies help students stimulate their talent, make them more spirited and more creative, and increase their motivation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study that intends to find out teachers' strategies in writing and the correlation between teachers' strategies and students' writing ability. This research took place at English Department of Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIN Ar-Raniry. The subjects of the research were 35 students.

Meanwhile, to get the data, the researcher used Questionnaire, Interviewed, Document analysis as the instruments of this research. The questionnaires consisted of 10 questions in closed-ended form, which were written in the students' native language in order to make them easier to be understood and answered correctly without raising any misunderstanding. Next, in analyzing the questionnaires, the researcher translated them into English.

Further, researcher also applied interview as the supporting technique. Here, it was applied face to face interview. The researcher interviewed lecturers to gain more concrete data about lecturers' perception on their strategies applied to improve students writing ability. It was used unguided and guided interview that contained 7 questions. It consisted of some questions; teachers' strategies used in writing,

students' perception on teachers' strategies, the influence of the strategies, the correlation between strategies and students ability, the students' writing improvement and the obstacles faced by teachers in teaching writing class.

The researcher also used document analysis. Moreover, the researcher analyzed students' written midterm test. It was used some indicators that indicated them as good writings. They were topic sentence, ideas, coherence, and sentence skill.

In analyzing the data, Sudjana (1992:50) provides the following pattern that is used to calculate the percentage of the answers of questionnaires' distribution:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

In which:

P = Percentage

f = Frequency of Respondents

N = Number of Sample

100 % = Constant Value

Moreover the researcher also concluded the answers of some questions given in the interview for the lecturers to take the conclusion of this study. Besides, the researcher also analyzed the students' writing as document analysis by using the formula of Mean that suggested by sudjana (1992: 88) as follow:

$$M_x = \frac{\sum fX}{N}$$

Where: M_x = Mean

f = frequency

X = the Midpoint of the interval class

N = the total number of the sample

Before examining the value of Mean (M_x), the researcher has to look for the value of Range (R), Class Number (CN) and Interval class (I) to make it possible to tabulate the students' scores in a table. Sudjana (1992: 66) provides the formulas as:

a. Range :

$$R = H - L$$

Where: R = Range

H = the highest score

L = the lowest score

Range is used to see the distance between the lowest and the highest scores. Before the researcher found out the value of I , she should find the value of the class number.

The formula is:

$$CN = 1 + (3.3) \log n$$

And, to find out the space of interval class (I), the formula is:

$$I = \frac{R}{CN}$$

DISCUSSION AND RESEACH FINDINGS

Based on the result of questionnaires, interview and document analysis, the researcher found that teachers' writing strategies not exactly influence the students writing ability. However, they only help students to have motivation in writing and generate their ideas. This statement agrees with the result of questionnaires' distribution (questions 7 and 10). In question 7, almost all of the students said that the strategies motivated them in writing but in question 10; they said that sometimes they were difficult in applying teachers' strategies.

Moreover, the result of lectures' interview said that the ability of students was not exactly depended on lecturers' strategies, it depended on the students. If they followed the strategies seriously and then practiced in their writing, it would help them improve their ability. This was in line with one of the lecturer's opinion; the strategies did not determine students' ability but the strategies outfit with their ability.

Meanwhile, from the document analysis, it found that the strategies applied did not determine either the success or the failure of teaching writing. From the students' score analysis, the average value of each class stood in the middle. There was no one of them stood in the highest place. This assumption based on the consideration, if the average score filled in alphabet score, all of them would get B.

Briefly, this research answered the research questions and hypothesis. In line with the first research questions, the research approved that there were some strategies used by the teachers in applying writing I class; group discussion, personal

presentation, change story and active learning. Further, the questionnaires, interview, and documents analysis approved that there were none of each strategies above was the best one. This assumption was agreed with one of the lecture statement that said “there were no strategies determined students’ ability”. From document analysis, it was also found that all of the students got the same grades in academic standard based on statistic value. It was measured by using “mean or average score”.

Moreover, this research also answered the second research question that was about the correlation of teachers’ strategies and students’ writing ability. It was showed that there was relationship both of them; the strategies motivated the students to release their ideas. However, they also got some difficulties in applying the strategies. This assumption could be looked from the results questionnaire and mean value of each class. In conclusion, the result of this research approved the statement of hypothesis of this research that stated the strategies that teachers used influence students writing ability.

CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

This study investigated teachers’ strategies and students’ writing ability. Based on the result of the research, the researcher concluded that there were several teachers’ strategies applied in teaching writing, namely: group discussion, personal presentation, change story and active learning. Besides, there were good correlation between teachers’ strategies and students writing ability. It is motivating students to generate their ideas to write. Futhermore, it also could improve students writing ability. (It was showed by students’ responds of questionnaires’ distribution that 88, 57 % of the students improved their writing ability. Meanwhile, 88, 57 % was motivated to write and 92, 43% of them said that teachers’ strategies made them easy to generate their ideas.

Suggestions

With regard to the result of the study, there are some suggestions that the researcher intends to offer. The teachers should not to use a single or the same strategy in every meeting but they could suit the strategy used with the students’

needs. It is also suggested to the students to adapt the teachers' strategies in order to generate their ideas in writing. Besides, it is also necessary for English Department students to improve their grammar skill since it could influence their writing ability.

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