TEACHING WRITING SKILLS FOR INTERNATIONAL CLASS AT TERTIARY LEVEL: A CASE STUDY

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan proses, masalah dan solusi keterampilan menulis dari mahasiswa tingkat Universitas. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di Universitas Muhammadiyah. Jenis penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner, analisa tugas mahasiswa dan wawancara mahasiswa. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa dalam menulis mahasiswa melakukan 4 proses menulis yaitu : merencanakan apa yang mahasiswa mau tulis, mengkonsep tulisan, menedit tulisan lalu menyelesaikan tulisan dengan hasil yang dirasa cukup. Kemudian, ada beberapa permasalahan mahasiswa dalam menulis yaitu, membuat isi tulisan seperti contoh mengembangkan isi cerita yang mau ditulis. permasalahan kedua yaitu organisasi tulisan sehingga tulisan dapat dibaca secara rinci. permasalahan ketiga yaitu bahasa yang digunaka dalam mentraslate tulisan inggris kebanyakan mahasiswa salah mentranslate sehingga pembaca salah memaknai tulisan. permasalahan yang keempat adalah mekanika dalam menulis, mahasiswa masih banyak yang salah penulisan huruf besar. Solusi untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut adalah mahasiswa harus banyak belajar membaca dan menulis dan menambah kosa kata dalam bahas Inggris.

Kata Kunci : menulis, proses penulisan, permasalahan menulis

Abstrak

The purpose of this research is to describe the processes, to classify problems and solutions of students' writing skills at the university level. This research was conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Central Java. This type of research is descriptive qualitative. The data of this descriptive qualitative were carried out through questionnaires, student task analysis, and student interview. The data were analyzed by Harmer (2014) theory Based on the analyzed data, the findings show that students carry out four writing processes, namely: planning what students want to write, drafting, editing, and then completing writing with results that are considered sufficient. Then, there are some students' problems in writing, namely, making writing content such as an example of developing the contents of the story they want to write. The second problem is the organization of writing so that writing can be read in detail. The third problem is the language used in translating English writing, most students translate it wrong so that readers misinterpret the writing. The fourth problem is mechanics in writing, many students still write capital letters incorrectly. The solution to overcome these problems is that students must learn to read and write a lot and increase their vocabulary in English.

Keywords: writing, process of writing, problems in writing

1. INTRODUCTION

Mastering an international language is something that needs to be developed at this time.

With the appointment of Indonesia as a member of the AEC (ASEAN Economic

Community), it fits for the nation's generation to be more advanced in terms of science and technology supported by good and correct mastery of the language of instruction. English is an important international language that can connect people in various aspects, including aspects of education. This has been shown by government regulations which make English a compulsory subject for students to study from elementary school to high school level. Even at the higher education level, all study programs must provide English courses for 1 or 2 semesters although the disciplines taken are not related to English. It shows how important mastering a foreign language, especially English. English is as an introduction to success in one's academic field to support career in the future Abdullah (2009).

Communication can be realized if someone masters the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This also applies to the process of learning English which is called listening and reading as receptive skills while writing and speaking are productive skills. People often say that only by mastering speaking, that person can be said to be proficient in language. This is not entirely true. Writing is also important to master. For example, when we open the Internet and want to respond to an e-mail, of course we need to be able to read carefully and write with the correct language structure so that we can give an appropriate answer.

In addition, there are three language elements that play an important role in supporting the four skills, namely pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. To achieve optimal English language skills, professional language instructors are needed to produce quality students. In addition, mastery of the material and practice must be given in a balanced portion. However, to realize the ideal language class is not easy. To have a sufficient mastery of the material, a language teacher should know the level of mastery of each student's language. If all conditions are generalized, it will be difficult to achieve the expected learning objectives. Because basically every student has different characteristics including learning techniques and the portion of absorption subject matter such as the concept of multiple intelligence

(Stanford, 2003).   In the process of learning English, a student certainly has experienced an obstacle in learning. These obstacles can lead to less than the maximum student learning outcomes. This can happen to anyone, including students who take English and non-English study programs. Al-Khairy (2013) states that the difficulty faced by many English learners as a foreign language is a lack of understanding of English pronunciation which is expressed at normal speed through listening material. Regarding reading skills, Batalla (2019) argues that the problem faced for understanding reading texts is the lack of knowledge about reading material and ignorance of how to connect ideas between sentences with one another. Writing skills are difficult because these activities require complex and systematic thought processes, however, they need to be mastered by English learners. According to Al-Khairy (2013), in communication writing skills are also important to master. The benefits will be felt when the written language is published and read by many people. Therefore, the quality of writing must always be improved. For speaking skills, Toba, Noor & Sanu (2019) in their research found that the difficulties students often faced when speaking English is in the lack of English vocabulary.

From the problems faced, of course, it encourages a teacher or language instructor to pay more attention to the condition of their students, followed by readiness in implementing learning. Without proper preparation, learning activities will not run effectively. These preparations can be seen from the Learning Implementation Plan, materials, media, and assessment. By understanding the problems faced by students, an educator can self-reflect to find out how effectively the learning process is implemented in class and to improve student quality.

Problems in learning English are not only found at the elementary, secondary and senior education levels, but will continue up to the tertiary level. Several studies have proven this for each English language skill (Kharma, 2010; Megawati & Mandarani, 2016; Lituanas et al 2005, Hasan, 2016). This also applies to students who are not from the English

department. Each student certainly has an interest in a different field of science. So not all who like English, choose English majors. This cannot be separated from the problems that will arise when the learning process taken place. To fulfill their obligations as students at a university, they are required to take English courses and even have to pass the TOEFL test with a fairly high score. For students who do not have a strong background in language knowledge acquired from elementary to high school, they will feel very burdened by this issue. So that as English learners who do not deepen knowledge in their field (ESP learners) have the potential to produce various responses in the learning process (Yastibas, 2015)

Based on the concepts presented in the introduction, it can be concluded that there are many difficulties faced by students when learning English, especially as a foreign language because the language is used in certain conditions not in daily activities. Therefore, in this article the researcher is interested in digging deeper into the obstacles experienced by students in the four language skills especially writing from non-English majors at the tertiary level. It is deemed necessary to do this as information material which can later be used to improve the concept of effective English learning for students who are not majoring in English at the tertiary stage.

2. METHOD

The research used in this study is research descriptive. This study used one variable so that the approach is suitable to use is to use qualitative methods. Study Descriptive was chosen because it presents data in a systematic, factual, and accurate manner regarding the facts on the ground. Descriptive research aims to describing, describing, explaining, and answering in more detail the problems to be examined by studying to the fullest it may be an individual, or a group, or an event. In research Human qualitative is a research instrument and the results of the writing are in the form of words or questions that match the actual situation. Design descriptive research with a qualitative approach aims to explore regarding the fact

of the English language ability of international students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta

3.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Process of English Writing in Undergraduate International Class The process of students' English writing refers to Harmer's study (2014) that there are four stages in writing process: planning, drafting, editing and final version. Based on the interview and open-ended questionnaire, all students did those four stages. For the planning stage, all students collected and read materials such as journals, e-books, and other sources from internet before writing. For instance, S4 said that she googling first before she start the writing. it implies planning to get the material and ideas in writing. S6 also added that she copied some words because she had the insight after she read a lot. She also mixes the idea in internet with her own idea

> *Usually, I use Google using keyword to search information that I need. Most resources are in Indonesian, therefore I read, summarize, paraphrase and translate them into English (S4)*

> *At the beginning, I search materials and read books to do the assignment given by the ecturer. I read all materials and I copy some words, I read and understand them then I try to combine with my own ideas (S6).*

The second process of writing is drafting. After students know the idea of writing, students do not directly write all in English. Some of them write first in Indonesian and then translate it into English by using Google translate. It can be showed from the interview of S1

> *After reading all materials, then I write the main point that I need. I then paraphrased those main points into English. Since the resources are in Indonesian, then I paraphrase them into Indonesian first, after that I translate them into English. I use   Google translate application. I am always confused with my structure, therefore to   ensure the proper use of it, I check it by using Google Translation (S1).*

The third process of writing is editing. after students have the idea of writing, paraphrase and translate their work into English, student reread their writing and edit the sentence by

sentence. because the English in google translate is messy they decided to edit sentence into a good sentence. it can be showed by S1 and S3

> *After finishing translating all paragraphs, then I read twice to three times. During the first reading, I check and if I find mistakes, then I correct it. In the second and third reading, I check the correction that I have made in the first reading (S1).*
> *After I finish my draft, I check and reread it usually twice. If I am not sure with my draft which written in English, I ask my friends to check whether or not my English is correct (S3).*

The last process of writing is the final version. this is the lass process that the student do. if they are sure of their work they directly submit it to the lecturer (S2). some of the student also ask their friend to read their work. because sometime they feel confidence after their work was read by other people (S5 and S6)

> *directly revise the mistakes that I have made then I directly submit it to the lecturer because I do not like postponing submitting the assignment (S2).*

> *I submit it to the lecturer, when I finish checking my draft. I am confident with my work. I do not want to compare them with my friends' work, since I do it online. It is different when I do my assignment in the class room or offline, then I sometimes ask my friends (S5).*

> *I wish I can submit the assignment which can be understood by my lecturer. Although I am not sure with my English assignment because I only compile them from many English resources. I really want to write the assignment in Indonesian but it will not be scored by my lecturer. However, if I force myself to use English, I am afraid of making mistakes and the English sentences that I made cannot be understood by my lecturer (S6)*

4. CLOSING

Writing is an important issue that requires attention and support from academics, especially institutions. It is hoped that the institution will develop a comprehensive curriculum framework effective and gives more time for lecturers to guide the writing process for Innovation and Application of Technology in students start from a basic level of understanding. It is very important for lecturers to have enough time to develop various methods suitable for level conditions students and study programs, as well as writing practice that is implemented and continues evaluated.

6

In order to know the difficulties of the student, we should know their background. in this research it was found that the most difficult word that the student faced is grammar and vocabulary. some student said that vocabulary sometimes get easier because nowadays we can use tools such as dictionary ang google translate. In other hand, if student have difficulties in the use of grammar student should learn more and more. Not Only vocabulary and grammar, students also face other problem in developing content in writing, how to organize the sentence by sentence in writing, the language use in writing, and also the mechanics. most of the student are need to learn more.

In addition there are some factor that student face which make them hindering writing. one of example is the lecturer itself. sometimes student are not motivated when the lecturer is too teacher centered in class. The second factor is they sometimes find that writing is challenging in finding ideas. some students also said that the mood in writing is also important. when they are in the mood of writing they will write a lot but when they have no mood in writing, they write less. the factor that support them in writing is their dream in the future. beside writing is difficult they should do and practice more often because they have a dream in the future. some students said that writing can make them recall vocabulary they they've ever had in mind and also add new vocabulary. some students also added that because they are international student it is their duty to write more and more.

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