

Analysis of Students' Point of View Regarding to Writing Skill at English Education Section of IAIN Bukittinggi

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ABSTRACT

Writing skill has been widely known among students as one of challenging skills in English. It is categorized challenging since writing involves many aspects, such as grammar, vocabulary, spelling, cohesion, content, organization of ideas and the L1 interference. This research aims to explore students' points of view related to writing skill. It aims to analyze students' points of view regarding to some elements that may influence students' acquisition in writing. They are students' view of writing role, the way the lecturer teaches, media used in teaching, strategy used in teaching, learning resources and students' difficulties in writing lesson. The research was conducted under mixed method research design. The data of the research were collected through questionnaire and interview. The population the research was students at the second year of English education section academic year 2019/2020 for about 115 students and 69 were chosen as the respondent of this research. The finding showed that mostly students agree that writing skill is an important skill in English. Besides, the students opined that there were many aspects that hamper their writing learning process, such as the media used, teaching strategy used by lecturer, and learning resources. Additionally, the students also argue that there 4 elements of writing which become high problems in their writing skills; they were grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and L1 interferences. This research is expected give contribution to help the educators to plan and design a better model for teaching writing.

Keywords: *students' points of view, writing, analysis.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Being able in English is commonly associated with an ability to communicate actively by using English, whether it is written or oral communication. Nowadays, the pressure of English learning goal is on building a meaningful communication while making sure that the English users are good enough in using the language. Considering this goal, the ideas of the experts which are in line with the stakeholders' and practitioners' ideas is on developing English learning process that may help the students to be able to build a meaningful and acceptable communication.

Writing, as one of skills used in communication, has its own position in English learning. It cannot be denied that writing is an essential skill that needs continuously effort. Klimova strongly argued that writing has important social function and has a high prestige among the other skills in a language[1]. However, mostly students, even worst, college students, argue that writing is one of challenging skills that should be mastered. Writing is not an easy skill. Writing demands the students to face many processes to finally produce a good writing[2]. In short, writing is a kind of skill that deals on-going process. It will

never be only about the product but also the process to achieve the product.

Based on the preliminary research at English education section of IAIN Bukittinggi, one of state Islamic college at West Sumatera, Indonesia, it was found some problems deal with writing skill. The preliminary interview proved that the students found some problems about students' difficulties in writing. Most students interviewed argued that writing was important subject but it was also a difficult subject. Additionally, some students stated that writing was a complicated skill because it combines many sub-skills and components in one writing subject.

Considering students' opinions about learning writing logically may influence the lecturer's decision in conducting writing class. Shortly, it is important to analyze students' point of view toward writing subject in order to find out their perception toward writing itself and some components that contribute in writing class, such as teaching method, teaching strategy, media, learning resources that finally impacts on students' success or their difficulties in learning writing.

This article aims to analyze students' points of view in writing that can be used as a consideration in developing the appropriate instructional model for writing. Through analyzing the students' perspectives and their problems regarding writing lesson, the possible model of writing instruction could be developed well to fulfil students' need in writing. Thus, it can be stated clearly that analyzing students' points of view regarding writing lesson is an essential step to improve students' writing ability.

2. METHOD

This research was conducted under the mixed method design which combines quantitative and qualitative research. The informants of the research were all English education students at the second grade who took Writing for professional Context Subject. The instruments used in this research were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was used as the main instrument to analyze students' points of view regarding writing skills. Above all, some chosen were also interviewed to strengthen the data gotten from the questionnaire. It aimed to validate the data and get a more comprehensive data. The data were collected through online access because of covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was distributed through Google form while the interview was conducted through Whatsapp app. The data then were analyzed by using Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) which consists of 4 main steps in analyzing qualitative data taken from interview[3]. Meanwhile, data taken from questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the percentages and frequency of the appearance of students' problems in writing.

Here is the description of data analysis on qualitative data:

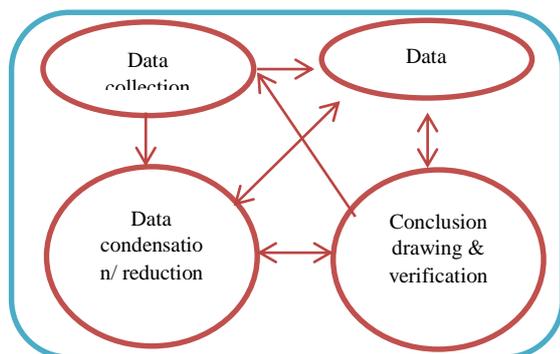


Figure 2 Data Analysis taken from Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the interview carried out to twenty students of English education department who were selected by snow ball sampling, the researcher found

that mostly they said that writing was important to learn in order to help them speak and write. Their answers are presented in some quotations as follow:

“For me writing is very important because it is one of skill in English”. (S1)

“Very important, because writing help me to share my ideas in written communication”. (S2)

“Without writing we can't pass bachelor degree. We have to write a thesis as an academic writing. It means of course writing very important”. (S13)

“Yes, writing is important to me because writing appears in many aspects of language”. (S9)

“Yes, because I think writing is very important in mastering English”. (S6)

Based on the interview, the researcher concludes that mostly students have the same view on the role of writing, but for students' attitude toward writing is not the same. Some of them thought that writing was fun and like writing but not for some others who had perception that writing was very difficult and boring. Their answers are depicted in the following citations:

“Because writing sometimes so fun and sometimes so difficult” (S1)

“Not really, because I still difficult in form writing” (S2)

“I like writing because I want to be an expert in writing” (S7)

“I like writing because if I can I think I will be a good writer”

(S8)

(Yes, I like writing because writing is interesting” (S15)

Based on the interview, it can be inferred students' attitude toward writing was influenced by their background knowledge on it. If they understood writing, they liked it, and vice versa. It is in line with the research finding conducted by Setyowati and Sukmawan in which they found that the students view writing as a difficult and stressful subject[4]. Furthermore, for students who have high interest in writing argued that writing is challenging and interesting subject.

Another point that was interviewed to the students was related to the way the lecturer taught writing. Based on the result of students' interview, the researcher got data from them that they had their preferences in learning regarding to the lecturers. It was due to the media used by the lecturers. They argued that some lecturers never used media in teaching like zoom meeting; she only recorded her voice or wrote in Whatsapp wall. As stated in this citation:

"I like lecturer 2 because I think she can explain to me with good explanation. But not for lecturer 1. Lecturer 1. I don't understand enough with her explanation. Lecturer 2. I understand her lesson. Lecturer 1. Nothing media she uses." (S8)

"Lecturer 1. I don't understand about her explanation. Lecturer 2. Good explanation material. Lecturer 2. I think my lecturer good." (S9)

"Lecturer 1. I like. Lecturer 2. She is very good. I understand with her. Lecturer 1. Only explain through voice recording. Lecturer 2. Teach with varied media. Lecturer 1. Only explain via whatsapp application. Lecturer 2. Frequently used varied media." (S10)

On the other hand, some other lecturers were favorable since she applied varied media, managed the class well, and explained theories of writing in detail until students understood the lessons. The complaints for them are writing book used in learning should not only be *Writing Academic English* by Oshima (2006) but also other books designed with contextual situation by inserting picture, graph or text. Another was the method of teaching they applied did not fulfill the need of analytical students who like challenging in learning writing like discovering the title of the text or the topic sentence by their own. Students also needed explanation related to cultural elements in the text which is clearly different between *Bahasa* and English. In short, they need learning resources that fulfill their needs to learn better.

It is further explained by Rao that mostly students face problems in writing because of the influence of their interest in writing itself[5]. In a more detail explanation, Rao claimed that use of old-fashion method by the lecturers is one of causes why the students reluctant in writing[5]. Moreover, Khoja et al said that teacher-centered in teaching and learning process created un confident students who only relied on the ready-made samples and focused on the teachers only as the main sources of knowledge[6]. As the impact, the students are not able to develop their

own writing while they only copy paste and modify the writing examples given.

The next point which was being interviewed was related to the media used in teaching writing. Based on the information got from students, some lecturers always used Whatsapp application as a medium in teaching, but other lecturer used varied kind of media, such as Whatsapp, zoom and Google classroom. This statement is shown in the following quotations:

"Lecturer 1. Only Whatsapp media she uses. Lecturer2. Combine Whatsapp, Google classroom, email and zoom meeting" (S8)

"They Whatsapp and sometimes use zoom and Google classroom" (S1)

"The lecturer usually gives reference book" (S3)

"text from Google" (S4)

The result of students' interview related to media used teaching writing confirmed that one of the lecturers explained the writing material by writing the theories via Whatsapp and sometimes recorded her voice only. Students just listened and took notes material that she explained. Meanwhile, another lecturer employed varieties of media, such as zoom meeting, Whatsapp, Google classroom, e-mail, etc.

Moreover, according to students' interview result, the strategy used by the lecturers in teaching was also influence their writing ability. They stated that some lecturers often explained the writing features by lecturing in half semester and in another half she applied presentation and discussion of kinds of paragraph writing by students. This strategy only made students able to know the writing theories and they got lack of correction from the lecturers. Likewise, other lecturer often presented the writing features by her own to students and sometimes followed by students' discussion.

"Group discussion". (S2)

"Explain and discussion"(S3)

"She uses feedback to make me understand. I like simple explanation because I hate long explanation" (S7)

"Lecturer 1. With using books. Lecturer 2. With group presentation" (S8)

"Discussion and presentation" (S9)

“Lecturer 1. Only explain. Lecturer 2. Explain, presentation of group.” (S10)

“Lecturing” (S11)

Based on those interviews, it can be stated that most lecturers applied lecture and group presentation strategies during their writing teachings. According to Ngussa and Chiza media give high effect on students’ achievement[7]. Thus, they suggests the writing instructor, whether they are teachers or lecturers, to use varieties of media which can increase students’ interest in writing while also improving their writing ability. Moreover, Bakeer adds that the teachers are suggested to maximize the use of ICT in writing subject[8]. The teachers may use the available technology or social media that may have positive effect in developing students’ writing skill.

Furthermore, the learning resources were also one of the indicators of students’ points of view in writing. According to students’ interview result, all lecturers used learning resources like books of writing as suggested in syllabus. The books were Oshima’s book *Writing Academic English* (2006). As explained by Kurgatt and Omuna ,the availability and use of visual materials as learning resources highly contributes to students’ achievement in writing[9]. They add that the visual learning materials used as learning resources in writing subject should also be varied. They argued that it may help the students to get more knowledge, help them to learn through students-centered learning and avoiding depending on the teacher as the only one learning resources.

By considering the facts found above, the students must have such problems in their writing class. To get data about students’ problems in the writing learning, the questionnaires were distributed to the students. Based on the questionnaires, mostly students answered that they were difficult to apply correct grammar in their writing. They got problems to differentiate between structure in English and Indonesia, but others answered variously like following citations:

“grammar is my problem in writing. I mostly make mistake in grammar.” (S5)

“my choice of vocabulary is one of my big problems in writing. I think I don’t have enough vocabulary.” (S6)

“I think I have problem in grammar because my writing is still influenced by my first language. I tend to think in Indonesia and then translate it into English.” (S15)

“Hard to apply correct grammar in writing. I often forget the rule of grammar when I write. Maybe because I translate it literally into English.” (S17)

To dig more information related to students’ difficulties in writing, the researcher distributed questionnaire to students. The result of it is as follows:

Table 1. Students’ Difficulties in Writing Instruction

No	Indicators of writing	Aspect	Percentage	Remarks
1.	Grammar	I find it difficult to use correct grammar in my writing	71.6	High
		I find it difficult to produce a complete sentence	67	Mid
		I find it difficult to differentiate between a sentence, a clause and a phrase	59.7	Mid
2.	Vocabulary	I find it difficult to find an appropriate vocabulary when I write	67.8	High
		I find it difficult to vary my vocabularies in my writing	71.6	High
3.	Punctuation	I get problem to use correct punctuation in my writing	65.8	Mid
4.	Spelling	I get problem to use correct spelling in my writing	60	Mid
5.	Word order	I get problem to make a correct order of words in my sentence	73	High

6.	Using spoken and informal style	I find it difficult to differentiate between spoken and written expression	64.1	Mid
		I find it difficult to avoid spoken expression in my writing	65.5	Mid
7.	Cohesion	I get problem to choose the appropriate transition signal in my writing	70.4	High
8.	Elaborating ideas	I find it difficult to elaborate my ideas related to topics for my writing	70.4	High
		I find it difficult to organize my ideas well into a paragraph	72.5	High
		I often repeat my ideas in one paragraph	65	Mid
9.	Differentiating the structure of L1 and English	I find it difficult to differentiate the structure of English and My first Language /Bahasa Indonesia	69.8	High
		I make my writing draft in Bahasa Indonesia and then translate it into English as my final draft	61.7	Mid
		I process the content of my writing by using Bahasa Indonesia in my mind and then translate into English in my writing	70.1	High

Note: 0-33,3 means low; 33,4-66,6 means mid; 66,7-100 means high.

Based on Table. 1, items which remarks high become problems for students in writing instruction. They are using correct grammar in writing, finding an appropriate vocabulary, using varied vocabularies, making correct word orders, choosing appropriate transition signals, elaborating ideas in writing, differentiating the structure of L1 and English and processing ideas by using in English in their mind. Based on these high problems, it can be simplified that the students' problem are related to grammar, vocabularies, word orders, cohesion.

Students' problem in writing commonly appears on the same components of writing. Rahmatunisa writing; they are (1) grammatical problem, (2) sentence structure, (3) problems of word choice, (4) cognitive problems that deal with punctuation, capitalization, spelling, content and organization, and (5) problem organization[10]. In line with Rahmatunisa's research, Fareed et al also argued some common problems on students' writing. It consists of grammar, spelling, punctuation, word orders, spoken and informal style of writing, cohesion, repetition of ideas and the influence of students' first language[11]. Thus, the problems in grammar, cognitive problems, cohesion and content organization appear as the main problems in students' writing.

4. CONCLUSION

Students' points of view regarding to writing class is categorized important since it may give valuable input for the lecturers to develop an appropriate instructional model for students. Students at English education section IAIN Bukittinggi assumed that writing is an important skill that students should acquire. Besides, the students also argued that teaching methods, strategy, media and learning resources used in their current writing class were not appropriate with their needs. Thus, it leads to some problems of students' writing; they were related to grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, word order and first language interference.

By considering these facts, it is suggested to writing lecturers to develop an appropriate instructional model for teaching writing which can fulfil students' need and solve their problems.

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