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Editor : Khristianto & Bustanuddin As Suaidy

Selection Team : Santhy Hawanti, Ph.D.

Drs. Pudiyono, M.Hum.

Rina Agustina, S.S., MAppLing. TESOL

Language Editor : Titik Wahyuningsih, S.S., M.Hum.

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Website : www.cotefl.ump.ac.id

e-mail : cotefl.sastra.ump@gmail.com

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Fax : 62-281-637239

Website : www.cotefl.ump.ac.id

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IMPROVING STUDENT'S WRITING ABILITY THROUGH OBSERVATION REALIA

Siti Mafulah

Kanjuruhan University of Malang

Abstract

To Indonesian students writing is the most difficult lesson. It is teacher responsibility to improve student's writing ability. Teacher should be creative in choosing media. Interesting media and appropriate techniques are essential to help learner improve their writing ability. Many EFL students of the fourth semester English Education, Kanjuruhan University of Malang still found the difficulties in developing and organizing the ideas of narration. Therefore using observation realia was suitable to be implemented as a medium to help the students solve their problem in writing narrative text. This action research on the use of observation realia was done through process-genre based approach which consisting of 4 stages: planning, implementing, observing and reflecting. The result of the action research showed that observation realia improved student's writing ability in terms of context, organization and language use. Suggestions proposed on the basis of the results are addressed to writing teacher or lecturer as well as other researchers who wish to pursue related topic in the future research. The suggestion is concerned about the use of the observation realia for different level of education and for different kinds of text types.

Keywords: *writing, narrative, observation realia.*

Introduction

To Indonesian students writing is the most difficult lesson. Writing is complex thing to do not only getting the idea but also give the idea into a paper. Brown (2001) described writing as a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words, to sharpen main ideas, and to give them structure and coherent organization. Writing is a process of thinking during which a writer puts many elements into account, such as accuracy in the spelling words, words arrangements, and sentence grammaticality and selection of the right words. The complexities of writing is also how to connect sentences to form them into coherent text such as Richards (1990) stated that the complexity of writing lies not only on the linguistic organization of written discourse but also on the process of moving from concepts, thought and ideas of written texts. This idea is powered by Some previous researchers; megawati (2010), ningrum (2013), and Irmawati (2013) finding that students still have difficulty in writing in term of content, giving ideas and linguistic used.

Writing skill in university is not only to deliver message to the reader but also to academic purpose. To deliver message to the

readers means the writer has to sustain the whole process of communication on his/her own and try to stay in contact with the readers through words alone without the presence of the writer. While for academic purpose, students do many assignments in written form. Therefore they should improve their writing ability.

To help students' ability, English department of Kanjuruhan university of Malang divides writing into four sections they are writing I, writing II, writing III and writing IV. Designed from the simplest or the basic and raised to the complex one. In writing I, the subject contains the theory of making English sentences, simple paragraph. Writing II contains the way how to organize an essay and kinds of essay writing and being able to write some types of essay. In writing III the subject is to develop the student's ability in writing various types of essays, including narrative, descriptive and expository. And writing IV is intended to develop the student's ability in writing argumentative essay and persuasive essay.

Although the students of the fourth semester who take writing III have took the two courses before, many students still have difficulty in writing essay especially narrative essay. They had less skill in exploring ideas for writing and ordering the ideas to make an outline of their topic, writing a rough draft,

which focus on content and meaning as a development of their outline, revising draft, editing draft and publishing their writing.

To help the students solve their problem in writing narrative essay, relevant and good media and strategy needed. Therefore, using observation realia through process-genre based approach needs to be implemented. Realia allows students to see, feel, hear, and even smell the object being explored. In this teaching context the realia used is real object such as people, place and real things surrounded. Realia found its success in previous study to enhance students' ability such as research done by Suharsih and Hamidiyah (2012) in SDN 03 Serang through qualitative design. The result showed that realia is one of the effective media to help students' vocabulary. Realia can help students to comprehend real meaning from the object seen. Moreover Irmawati (2013) using observation realia through process-genre based approach had succeeded result in improving students' writing ability in paragraph writing.

The effectiveness of using realia in teaching writing make the researcher needs to apply such kind of media and approach to be implemented to solve the student's difficulties. The difference between the previous and current study is in the field of writing. If the previous study applies realia through process-genre based approach to solve students' difficulties in descriptive text, the current study use the realia through process-genre based approach in narrative one. Realia used in this study is not realia used in writing course but in observation. It means that realia used is from the observation's result. This classroom action research is done to help students solve their difficulties in exploring idea, content, choosing the words and publishing into good essay.

Method

Classroom action research is used in this research since the study related to the difficulty found in the class. Classroom action research is done to help students solve their difficulties in the teaching learning process. Suyanto and Sukaryana (2001) stated that classroom action research is a

form of various activities as one of efforts made by teacher or practitioner which is conducted to improve unsatisfactory condition or to increase learning community in the classroom.

This study is done in kanjuruhan university of Malang in English department for the fourth semester students. There are 35 students in the class as the subjects. The study applies the the four steps they are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Set as the first step, in planning, reseacher makes preparation such as instructional preparation, materials and media to support the teaching learning process of writing. Moreover the researcher also determines the criteria of success that is 70 for minimum score and 75% students gain the score. The content (idea), organization and grammar are the writing elements that analyzed.

In acting stage observation realia is done through Process-genre based approach. Process-genre based approach is combination between process based approach and genre based approach. In this step not only the process of writing which is considered to be analyzed but also the result that is the narrative essay. In writing process, the students do the following stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. While in genre-based approach students do the following steps, they are building knowledge of Field (BKOF), modeling of text (MOT), Joint construction of text (JCOT) and independent construction of text (ICOT). In BKOF students understand the social context and and the function for the text produced. In MOT stage, students learn about model and characteristics of the text that should be produced. Students in pairs or group write the essay based on the strategy given in JCOT and for the last stage they should produce their own final writing individually. Figure 1 describes the process-genre based approach in writing.

The implementation of observation realia is conducted during the teaching learning process. This process is done in three meetings in which each meeting lasted for 90 minutes, first meeting for BKOF and MOT, second meeting as JCOT and the last meeting for ICOT where students write narrative using

observation realia.

Researcher observes the data which uses observation realia to help the students solve their problems in writing narrative essay, this is done in observation phase. Moreover the data is the students score from the essay that they produce in ICOT phase. And for the last step, reflection, researcher compare the data with the criteria of success. If all criteria of success have been fulfilled, the action will be stopped but if not, the teaching and learning activities will be revised and implemented the following cycle.

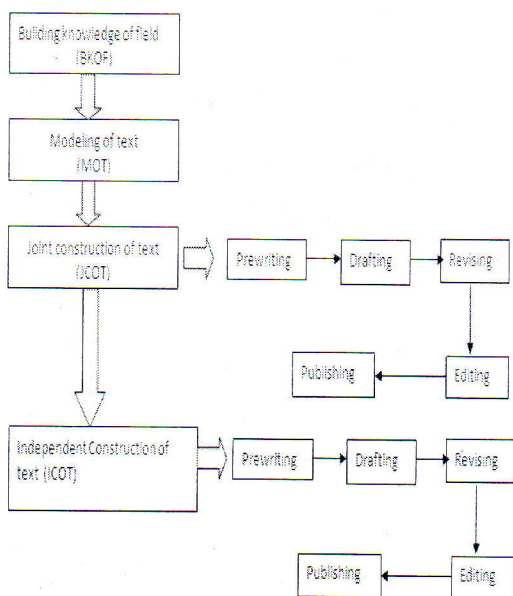


Figure 1. The procedures of process-genre based approach

Finding and Discussion

The findings of this research showed that the use of observation realia through process-genre based approach got its succeed. In term of content 57% students achieved excellent level, 40% students achieved good level, 3% students reached fair level and there was no students who got poor level. It means that more than 75% students reached the minimum criteria of success.

In the organization criteria, 88% students reached the minimum criteria of success. They are 37% students reached excellent level, 51% students reached good level, 12% students got fair level and no students got poor level.

In term of grammar, the result showed that the criteria of success was fulfilled. It can be known from the data gathered that 20% students reached the excellent level, 66% students reached good level, 14% reached fair level and there was no students got poor level. This final students' writing product can be seen at the following table.

Composition of writing	excellent	good	fair	poor
content	57%	40%	3%	0%
organization	37%	51%	12%	0%
grammar	20%	66%	14%	0%

Table 2. the result of the students' writing ability product in each component

From the overall criteria, the study showed the use of observation realia through process-genre based approach was able to improve the writing ability in writing narrative essay. It can be seen from the table 3. There was 1 student got score 100, 13 students got score 91.7, 10 students got score 83.3, 4 students got score 75. It means 28 students (80%) reached the minimum score that was 70 and 7 students (20%) were not able to reach the minimum criteria of success.

The findings showed that the use of observation realia through process-genre based approach achieved its succeed. That 75% students got the minimum score, 70 for the final score in writing narrative essay.

The improvement of students writing ability (content, organization and grammar) could be achieved through the use of observation realia as media to gather and develop the idea. And through the process-genre based approach as process to organize the idea to be a good essay. Moreover the use of observation realia could improve the content or idea though narrative scaffold as a guide to place the information that student gathered in observation and interview. Narrative scaffold included the organization of the information with the characteristics of narrative text.

Besides of the use of observation realia as a writing media, process-genre based approach also gave contribution in improving students ability in writing. In BKOF phase, students gathered many information to enhance their knowledge in knowing the characteristics of narrative essay. In MOT phase, students learn more about narrative essay through the model. Furthermore,

students could write the narrative essay with their pairs in JCOT phase. By using observation relia in all three phases, students were ready to write narrative individually in ICOT phase. Through JCOT and ICOT process gave chance to the students in making the essay better. Through suitable media and good approach students could improve their writing ability.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The observation realia through process-genre based approach is one effective way to improve students' ability in writing narrative essay. The criteria of success that is related to teaching learning process, this study has met the criterion of success prescribed that most of students or at least 75% students achieved good level of all criteria; content, organization and grammar in the marking scheme.

Regarding this findings that this research is only focused on improving the writing ability on narrative essay at Kanjuruhan University of Malang. Since this study is action research, it is advisable that the future researchers carry out the research on improving the ability in writing students of other universities or different level and with other types of essay. Moreover, since this research is only scored by the researcher herself, it is advisable that the future researchers use inter-rater score to make it more reliable.

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