

THE USE OF GUIDED WRITING TECHNIQUE TO ENHANCE THE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

Bibit Purnomowati, Martono, Ellisa Indriyani Putri Handayani

**English Education Department
Teacher Training and Education Faculty
Sebelas Maret University**

Email: bibitpw@gmail.com

Abstract: This research is written to describe whether guided writing technique can enhance the students' writing skill and class situation. It was conducted at second-grade of Junior High School 1 Puring. The research method used in this study is a classroom action research which was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research data were collected through observation, field notes, photographs, interview, questionnaire, and tests (pre-test and post-tests). The technique of analyzing the data consisted of assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building interpretation and reporting the outcomes for the qualitative data. While the quantitative data were analyzed by comparing the mean scores of pre-test and post-tests. The results of this research show that the use of guided writing technique could enhance students' writing skill and class situation.

Key Words: Writing, Guided Writing Technique, Classroom Action Research

INTRODUCTION

Writing becomes one of the English skills that should be taught and practiced in schools because it supports in all the language skills. Besides, writing also helps the students to learn. This statement is supported by Raimes (1983: 3). He states that there are some reasons why writing becomes an important aspect which helps the students to learn. First, writing reinforces students' idioms, vocabulary, and grammatical structures. Second, writing gives a chance to the students to be adventurous with the language, to go further what they have just learned and to take a risk. Third, through writing, the students necessarily become very involved with the new language, the effort to express their ideas and the constant use of their brain, eye, and hand to reinforce learning. From the statement, it can be

concluded that through writing the students can explore and express their ideas into written form. In another word, writing helps the students to make written communication. Therefore, writing should be taught and learn in the schools.

Meanwhile, based on the syllabus in curriculum 2013, the second-grade students of Junior High School 1 Puring must achieve some competences in writing. One of the competences is to arrange short functional text of descriptive, recount, short messages, and notice which concern on the social functions, generic structures, and language features of the text based on the context. In order to achieve the competences, there are some requirements that students must have in writing such as, students can write using correct grammar, vocabulary, and

mechanics; and students can organize and elaborate their ideas. However, based on the pre-research data, the students still had some problems in writing. The problems came from internal and external factors.

Related to internal factors, the students faced some problems in writing. Those problems are: (1) the students faced difficulty in developing the idea. Therefore, they took a longer time to start writing. Some of them also could not finish their sentences; (2) the students faced difficulty in organizing text coherently. Most of them were confused to add the supporting sentences; (3) the students had low vocabulary mastery and could not use appropriate vocabulary; (4) the students faced difficulty in constructing grammatically correct sentences; and (5) the students faced difficulty in using correct mechanics.

In addition, the external factors were related to the teaching technique that was used by the teacher and classroom situation. First, in terms of teaching technique that is used by the teacher, based on the data from the interview, one of the students said that the teacher only taught using a conventional technique. She only gave the exercises from the book, then the students were asked to read, to translate, and to do those exercises. Second, in terms of a classroom situation, based on the data from questionnaire and interview, it showed that the students did non-academic activities during the lesson. Some students were busy with themselves and they kept talking with other friends about things that are not related to the teaching material, some students sleeping during the lesson, some of them seemed to be passive, and some of them making noise during the lesson.

To solve those problems, the researcher chose guided writing as a technique for teaching writing. According to Reid (1993: 25) guided writing is free writing

that is bounded to structuring sentences, direct answer to questions, and the result usually in the form of paragraphs. Besides, the exercises were language-based that focused on reading comprehension, vocabulary building, grammar, and oral skill that finished in a piece of writing.

In this situation, the researcher chooses guided writing technique to enhance students' writing skills. Guided writing can enhance students' writing skill on the second-grade students of junior high school because it provides some exercises that help the students to understand what they have to write before they practice writing. Those exercises also make the class situation become more active. Besides, the exercises also attract the students' interest to join the teaching and learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Sokolik in Linse (2005: 98), writing is a combination of both process and product. A process means the process of thinking or how we put our ideas into written form as a product. Similar to Sokolik, Macaro (2003) in Pachler and Redondo (2007: 74) states that writing as part of a process the focus of which is not only on the finished product but also on the writer as he is writing. It means that writing not only focuses on the writing product but also focuses on the writing process. From the definitions, it can be said that writing is not only the process of written language but also the process of thinking.

Meanwhile, Spratt et al. (2005: 26) have a different point of view. They state that writing involves communicating a message by making signs on a page. It means writing is a form of written communication which is in the form of signs that we write on the paper. Further, he states that besides the signs, the writers need to understand how to

form letters and words and to join these together into words, sentences or paragraphs that link together to communicate. It can be said that writing is a productive skill because it produces signs to make written communication.

Furthermore, Bell and Burnady (1984) in Nunan (1989: 36) state that writing is a complex cognitive activity that demands the writer to demonstrate the control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Besides, the writer also has to understand how to structure and integrate the information into coherent and cohesive paragraphs. It can be said, when we write, we should consider some aspects of writing and develop the paragraph coherently and cohesively.

Moreover, Patricia et al. in Nunan and Richards (1990: 227) state that writing can be viewed as a way to explore, generate and connect the ideas, and connect abstract ideas and experiences.

Based on the explanations above, the writer concludes that writing is a productive skill, which involves both process and product. The activity of forming symbols into words, sentences, and paragraph (product), as a result of exploring, generating and connecting the ideas (process) which consider the content, vocabulary, organization (format), language use (sentence structure/grammar), and mechanics (punctuation and spelling).

There are many experts that define about guided writing technique. Patel and Jain (2008: 130) state that in guided writing the students are supplied all necessary structural and lexical items related to the thoughts and ideas to be expressed. The teacher is only as an improver or guide. The teacher gives the students guidance to make them work independently. It means the teacher does not guide the students in the

processes of writing completely. As a result, the students can work by themselves through the guidance from the teacher.

Oczkus (2007: 3) states, "guided writing is a bridge between shared writing and independent writing, a scaffold that supports students with helpful tools as they move into writing on their own." It means that in guided writing, it uses the scaffold to help students write independently. Scaffold means a way in teaching writing by using some instructions such as teaching reading: modeling, shared reading, guiding students in cooperative or teacher-led groups, and encouraging them to work independently, Oczkus (2007).

Moreover, Reid (1993: 25) states that guided writing is free writing that is bounded to structuring sentences, direct answer to questions, and the result usually in the form of paragraphs. Besides, the exercises were language-based that focused on reading comprehension, vocabulary building, grammar, and oral skills that finished in a piece of writing.

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that guided writing is an individual or group writing activity which is guided by the teacher, to control students' writing in structuring sentences, direct answer to question, and language-based exercises that focused on vocabulary building, reading comprehension, grammar, and oral skill with the aim to produce sentences or paragraph in written form independently.

In addition, there are some processes in guided writing technique. Reid (1993: 25-26), there are some processes of guided writing. They are: (1) model paragraph, the teacher gives the model paragraph for the model text ; (2) comprehension questions that are related to the model paragraph; (3) vocabulary building; (4) oral composition; and (5) written composition.

Moreover, Oczkus (2007: 1) states that there are some teaching steps in guided writing. They are: (1) modelling, the teacher gives the text for students as a model paragraph in their writing; (2) shared writing, the teacher involves the students to participate; (3) guided writing, the students write their ideas in group follow the teacher's guidance; (4) independent writing; and (5) guided conferencing.

From the discussion above the researcher concludes that there are some steps in teaching writing by using guided writing technique. They are: (1) modelling, the students are given the model paragraph for the example; (2) comprehension questions that are related to the model paragraph; (3) language based exercises that consist of vocabulary building and sentence pattern; (4) oral composition; and (5) written composition, the students practice to write.

The use of guided writing technique in teaching writing has many advantages for both the teacher and the students. According to Madsen (1983: 112), there are some advantages of guided writing. They are: (1) guided-writing test is rather quick and easy to construct; (2) guided testing technique gives the appearance of being an effective measure of writing because it requires an active rather than a passive response; (3) guided-writing test provides appropriate control for those students who are not ready to write on their own.

Besides, Department for Children, Schools, and Families (2007: 6) mentions the advantages of guided writing. They are: (1) enables the teachers to fit the teaching to the group's need; (2) facilitates the teaching and learning of individual students; (3) gives the opportunity for the teachers to extend and challenge more-able groups of students; (4) encourages the students to be active participants; (5) builds the students' confidence; and (6) allows the teacher to give

immediate feedback and the opportunity to discuss another area for improvement.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that guided writing gives the advantages for both the teacher and the students. For the teacher, guided writing allows the teacher to give feedback in the teaching-learning process. It also allows the teacher to fit the teaching to the students' need. Besides, through guided writing, the teacher can monitor and control the students' writing activity. Meanwhile, for the students, guided writing encourages the students to be active in writing activity, encourages students to write independently, and builds students' confidence.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is classroom action research. This research was carried out on the second grade of Junior High School 1 Puring in the academic year of 2016/2017. This school is one of the favorite school in Puring. The subject of this research was class VIII D. The reason because based on the observation and pre-test data, class VIII D did some mistakes in writing.

According to Mills (2000: 1) in Hopkins (2008: 48), he states that action research is any systematic research conducted by the researcher to collect the information about the way school operates, how the teacher teaches, and how well the students learn.

Furthermore, Tomal (2003: 5) states that action research is a systematic process to solve the problems and to make improvements. It means when the researcher will conduct the action research, they must know about the students' problems first. After that, they decide the media, method, or technique that will be used to solve the problems and to make an improvement.

Meanwhile, Elliot (1991: 69) defines that action research is the study of a social situation to improve the quality of action within it. It means the purpose of action research is to improve the quality of the subject of the research.

Therefore, it can be concluded that action research is the study of the social situation that is done systematically by someone in order to collect the information about the ways the school operates, how the teacher teaches, and how well the students learn, with the aim to make an improvement.

According to the model of action research that was stated by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (1994: 33), the implementation of action research includes four stages. They are: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Meanwhile, the technique of collecting data consists of qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data includes observation, field notes, photographs, interview, and questionnaire. While quantitative data was taken from the tests (pre-test and post-tests).

Besides, the techniques of analyzing data consist of two kinds. For qualitative data, the researcher used some steps. According to McKernan in Burns (1999: 157), the steps in analyzing data are (1) assembling the data; (2) coding the data; (3) comparing the data; (4) building interpretation; and (5) reporting the outcomes. While the quantitative data were analyzed by comparing the mean scores of pre-test and post-tests.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted pre-research in class VIII D of Junior High School 1 Puring to find out the problems during teaching and learning process. Based

on the pre-research data, the researcher found some problems in writing skill. The problems were dealing with students writing skill, teaching technique, and classroom situation. First, in terms of students' writing skill, the students faced difficulty in developing the idea, the students faced difficulty in organizing text coherently, the students had low vocabulary mastery and could not use appropriate vocabulary, the students faced difficulty in constructing grammatically correct sentences, and the students faced difficulty in using correct mechanics.

Second, in terms of teaching technique, based on data from the interview it showed that the students were not given an opportunity to promote and develop their writing because the teacher only taught using a conventional technique. She only gave the exercises from the book, then the students were asked to read, to translate, and to do those exercises.

Third, in terms of a classroom situation. The students felt bored during teaching and learning process. Based on the data from questionnaire and interview, it showed that some students did non-academic activities during the lesson. Some students were busy with themselves and they kept talking with other friends about things that are not related to the teaching material, some students sleeping during the lesson, some of them seemed to be passive, and some of them made noise during teaching and learning process.

After identifying the problems, the researcher conducted pre-test to know the students' writing skill in writing recount text. The mean score of pre-test was 57.06. It was below the passing grade for English lesson which was 75. The details of the students' writing score of the pre-test can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Writing Aspects Mean Score of Pre-test

Aspects of Writing	Mean Score	Passing Grade
Content	19.61	22.5
Organization	13.1	15
Vocabulary	10.64	15
Language Use	10.93	18.75
Mechanics	2.77	3.75

After finding the students' problems in writing, the researcher prepared the plan for teaching writing. The researcher made a lesson plan and prepared the materials, students' worksheet, students' paper for post-test, etc. The lesson plan consisted of three meetings. Two meetings for implementing guided writing technique in teaching and learning process, and one meeting for conducting post-test 1.

In the first meeting, the researcher focused on content, organization, and vocabulary. She provided a recount text entitled "My Holiday" for model text. The students were asked to read the text. Then, they were asked to read activity 2 which was about the definition, social function, and generic structure of recount text. Next, the researcher explained the material. The researcher asked the students to work in the group of four students and asked them to do the exercise in activity 3 about identifying generic structure of the model text in activity 1. Still, in the group, the students were asked to answer questions in activity 4 related to the text in activity 1 to check students' understanding of the text and build their basic knowledge about the material (comprehension questions). After that, the students in the group were given the exercise for Language-Based Exercises and asked to do activity 5. This activity was about vocabulary building. The students were asked to write new vocabularies or unfamiliar vocabularies in the model text in activity 1 and search the meaning in the dictionary.

In the second meeting, the researcher reviewed the material in the previous meeting (definition, social function and generic structure of recount text). Next, the researcher discussed the homework in activity 6 about language features of recount text. The researcher explained about that activity because most of them were still confused. Following the previous activity, the students in the group were asked to do activity 7 about Language-Based which focused on simple present tense. The exercises were changing the verbs in brackets from simple present tense to simple past tense. After that, the researcher asked the students to do activity 8 about practicing to make a recount text. The students did it individually. The third meeting was post-test 1. The students were asked to write a recount text about their holiday that consisted of orientation, event, and reorientation.

After analyzing the observation and the test result in cycle 1, the researcher did reflection to evaluate the teaching and learning process in cycle 1. The researcher found some students' improvement both in students' writing skill and class situation. The students' writing skill improved. It can be seen by comparing the result of pre-test and post-test 1. The result of pre-test was 57.06 and post-test 1 was 71.39. Most of the students could write a recount text completely and could make a longer paragraph than before.

Besides, the classroom situation also improved. The class situation and the

students became active. Most of the students also participated in group discussion and in answering the teacher's questions. Most of them paid attention to the lesson. They were also interested to join the lesson.

However, the researcher still found some problems in students' writing skill and the class situation. For the students' writing skill, the mean score of vocabulary (13.68); language use (15.74); and mechanics (3.45) were still under the passing grade. The students still had difficulties such as, they used limited vocabulary in their writing, they had difficulty in constructing the sentences in past form, and they had difficulty in using correct mechanics. Besides, some students were also still busy with themselves and kept talking to other friends during teaching and learning process.

Related to the problems in cycle 1, the researcher revised her plans to solve the problems in the cycle 1. In cycle 2, the researcher planned three meetings. Two meetings for implementing guided writing technique in writing class and one meeting for conducting post-test 2. She provided a different text with new vocabularies to help the students' vocabulary building. Besides, the researcher gave more exercises about simple past form to help the students in language use and mechanics.

In the first meeting, the researcher focused on content, organization, vocabulary, and language features. She provided a recount text with a new theme entitled "Won the Race" for model text to help the students get new vocabularies. Then, the students in the group were asked to read and identify the generic structure of the text. Still, in the group, the students were asked to answer some questions related to the model text to check their understanding. Following the previous activity, the students were asked to write new vocabularies or unfamiliar vocabularies in the model text and search the

meanings in the dictionary. The research also gave the exercises about past tense that was changing the verbs in brackets from simple present tense to simple past tense.

In the second meeting, the researcher focused on language use. She prepared a new exercise about simple past tense. The exercises were about changing the sentences from Indonesian into English by using simple past tense. She also asked the students to practice writing. In cycle 2, the students were asked to write a recount text. The theme was free. The third meeting was post-test 2. The students were asked to write a recount text about holiday or experience in joining competition consisted of orientation, event, and reorientation.

After analyzing the observation and the test result in cycle 2, the researcher found some students' improvement both in students' writing skill and class situation. Dealing with the students writing skill, the students' writing mean score improved. It could be seen by comparing the result of pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2. The result of pre-test was 57.06, post-test 1 was 71.39, and post-test 2 was 79.83. The students could write a recount text completely and could make a longer paragraph than before. Their vocabulary, language use, and mechanics were also better than previous one.

Besides, in terms of a classroom situation, the class situation and the students became more active than before. The class situation was more conducive. The students also could ask, share their opinion, and learn together during the discussion. Most of the students also participated in group discussion and in answering the teacher's questions. The students paid full attention to the lesson. They were also interested to join the lesson.

In conclusion, the research findings showed all of the indicators of writing improved. The improvements are as follows: first, the students could develop the ideas that

relevant to the topic. They are also able to finish their sentences and start their writing immediately. Second, the students could construct their ideas into a coherent and cohesive paragraph. They used connection word between the sentence or paragraph to make the text well organized. Besides, the students could make a longer paragraph with more supporting details than before. Third, the students' competence in vocabulary improved. The students could use various words and choose appropriate words in their writing. Fourth, the students' competence in producing grammatically correct sentences improved. The students' mistakes in using past form were decreased. The last, the students' competence in applying mechanics improved. The students' mechanical mistakes were reduced. They also paid attention to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Besides, in terms of a classroom situation, the improvements are as follows: first, the class was more active because the students joined group work discussion. They could ask, share their opinion, and learn together during the discussion. As Department for Children and Families (2007: 6) stated that guided writing encourages the students to be active participants. Second, the students were active during teaching and learning process. They raised their hand when they were asked to answer the questions. They also gained their confidence in answering questions. It is appropriate with a statement from Department for Children and Families (2007: 6) that guided writing builds students' confidence. Every student also participated voluntarily in group discussion and paid full attention to the lesson. In addition, the students were brave to ask the researcher than their friends if they got difficulty. Third, the students paid full attention to the lesson, They focused on their worksheet and group discussion. None of the

students were talking to other friends and busy with themselves during the lesson. Fourth, the students were enthusiastic and interested to join the lesson because the activity was varied. The students were given some exercises which give them an opportunity to practice their writing.

Therefore, it can be concluded that guided writing technique can enhance of both the students' writing skill and classroom situation.

IMPLICATION

To enhance the students' writing skill, it is important for the teacher to choose and implement an appropriate technique and method for teaching. In order to solve the writing problems, guided writing technique is appropriate to be used and implemented by the teacher in teaching writing. This research shows that guided writing technique can enhance students' writing skill. The explanations are as follows: first, by implementing guided writing technique, the students got the opportunity to understand what they have to write. Besides, the students also got the opportunity to promote their writing skill. The reason because guided writing provided some exercises that help the students more confidence to write. Those exercises are: (1) model paragraph that introduced the students about the type of text; (2) comprehension questions that helped the students to understand the content of the text; (3) language based exercises, including vocabulary building that helped the students to get new vocabularies, and grammar that helped the students in practicing the use of simple past tense; (4) oral composition including guiding questions and outlining to help the students to develop their writing; (5) writing composition to implement what the students have learnt in the real writing.

Second, guided writing technique also supported the class situation became more

active because the students joined group discussion. Therefore, the students could ask and share information within their group. The class also became more conducive because none of the students were talking and busy with themselves. Further, guided writing provided various exercises that made the students interested to join the lesson.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The use of guided writing technique gives some improvements in both students' writing skill and classroom condition. The result of the research showed that the implementation of guided writing can enhance students writing skill in writing recount text. The results are: (1) the students could develop the ideas that relevant to the topic. Besides, they could start their writing immediately and finish their sentences; (2) the students could construct their ideas into coherent and cohesive paragraph and they could make longer paragraph with more supporting details; (3) the students could use various words and choose appropriate words choice in their writing; (4) the students could produce grammatically correct sentences; (5) the students could write a recount text with good mechanics.

Besides, the use of guided writing technique gives a positive impact in the class situation. It can be indicated by some points, they are: (1) the classroom became more active because the students joined a group discussion; (2) the students were active during teaching and learning process. The students participated in all activities. They also were brave to ask the researcher when they got difficulty. Besides, the students gained their confidence in answering questions; (3) the students paid full attention to the lesson; (4) the students were enthusiastic and interested to join the lesson.

For the suggestion, is not only for the teachers but also for the students and for a

further researcher. The English teacher is advised to be selective in choosing method and technique that can enhance both students' writing skill and classroom situation. The English teacher can use guided writing as a technique in teaching writing. Besides, English teacher must creative to use the technique to make the students interested and not bored in joining the teaching and learning process.

For the students, they are suggested to be confident and have high motivation in learning English. They also have to practice writing as much as possible in order to enhance their writing skill. They can employ the steps in guided writing.

Furthermore, it is expected that the result of this research can be used as a reference for another research in writing. Then, the other researchers also can apply guided writing technique to another level of students.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative Action Research for English Language Teacher*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Department for Children, Schools, and Families. (2007). *Improving Writing with a Focus on Guided Writing: Leading Improvement Using the Primary Framework*. United Kingdom: Department for Children, Schools, and Families.
- Elliott, J. (1991). *Action Research for Educational Change*. Open University Press: Milton Keynes.
- Hopkins, D. (2008). *A Teacher's Guide to Classroom Research* (4th ed). New York: Open University Press.
- Linse, C.T. (2005). *Practical English Language Teaching: Young Learners*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.

- Madsen, H.S. (1983). *Techniques in Testing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. & Richards, J.C. (1990). *Second Language Teacher Education*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pachler, N. & Redondo, A. (2007). *A Practical Guide to Teaching Modern Foreign Languages in the Secondary School*. New York: Routledge.
- Oczkus, L.D. (2007). *Guided Writing: Practical Lessons, Powerfull Result*. Heinemann.
- Patel, M.F. & Jain, P.M. (2008). *English Language Teaching (Methods, Tools, & Techniques)*. Jaipur: Sunrise Publishers & Distributors.
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Technique in Teaching Writing*. New York: Oxford University.
- Reid, J.M. (1993). *Teaching ESL Writing*. United States of America: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Spratt, M., Pullvernes, A., & William, M. (2005). *The TKT Course – Teaching Knowledge Test*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tomal, D.R. (2003). *Action Research for Educators*. United States of Amerika: Scarecrow Press, Inc.