



THE ABILITY OF STUDENTS IN WRITING PROCESS ESSAY

Siti Sopiah

Universitas Nasional PASIM
ambusitisopiah28@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Writing assessing to measure the ability of the students in writing is needed to measure the ability of the students in writing. Brown (2007) has formulated standards that is used to asses students' writing. It includes content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanism. Process essay is one kind of essay that was taught in a second year University National Pasim students. Although, this kind of essay tends to be considered light in writing compared to other types of essay, the researcher thought that some students may face problems in writing it. Therefore, to obtain valid data, a study to investigate the issue needs to be conducted. This research tried to study the ability of students in writing Process essay at Nasional Pasim University. The participants are twenty- eight psychology students who were taking English Writing class. The study shows the average of score is 78,2 which can be said that the ability of the students in writing process essay is moderate. The students seem to be strong in content but still need improvement in grammar, vocabulary and mechsansm. The data indicates that writing English essay needs to be in line with the mastery of English language skills especially Grammar.

Keywords: Process essay, writing asesment, students' writing ability

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of English competencies that is taught in many Indonesian Universities. Teaching writing is regarded crucial in English learning since as Harmer (2007) argues that writing provides students more thinking time than they get when they attempt spontaneous conversation. Moreover, he argues that writing is able to give more opportunity for language processing, that is thinking about the language. In terms of material taught, the students are exposed to identify as well as to write particular kind of writing. The purpose for the writing activities is that students become better in writing whatever kind of writing that might be (Harmer, 2007). In other words, writing activities can improve the ability of the students in it.

This study aims at answering: how is the ability of students in writing process essay at the second year of psychology students of National Pasim University.

To know the ability of the students, teachers need to evaluate their writing which is able to measure the level of students' writing proficiency as well as the effectivity of the teaching. One of the activities exposing students in writing is to write various kinds of essay. Essay belongs to some kinds of form. They are, for example, narrative, argumentative, compare and contrast, and process essay. Process essay seems to be the easiest essay to write since the structure of the essay is not as difficult as the other kinds of essay. By this, the researcher



assumes that the ability of students in writing this kind of essay will be in moderate level among 30 students of business logistics students in Bandung.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aspects of Writing

There are two skills that a writer should master to perform the writing process; the micro-skills and macro-skills. Ur argues (1996) that in terms of the macro, learners emphasize content and organization. The micro, however, demands learners to practice specific writing in the level of word or sentence, such as handwriting or typing, spelling, and punctuation. More specifically, Brown (2004) classifies produce graphemes, orthographic patterns of English, writing at an efficient rate of suit the purpose, an acceptable core or words and uses appropriate word order as activities of micro skills as well as use acceptable grammatical system, pattern and express a particular meaning in different grammatical form, use cohesive devices in writing discourse, generating, focusing, structuring, reviewing, evaluating, and drafting.

Meanwhile, macro-skill includes use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse, accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose, convey links and connections between events, and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification, distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing, convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text, develop and use a battery of writing strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience's interpretation, using pre-writing devices, writing with fluency in the first draft, using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback, and using feedback for revising and editing.

There are six characteristics to make successful writing (Nunan, 1998). They are being skillful with the mechanics of letter formation, implementing conventions of spelling and punctuation, using the grammatical system to convey one's intended meaning, organizing content at the level of paragraph and the complete text to reflect given new information and topic comment structures, polishing and revising one's initial efforts, and selecting an appropriate style for one's audiences. Meanwhile, Heaton (1998) argues that there are five general components of writing skills. They are firstly is language use. It is the ability to write correct and appropriate sentences. Next, is Mechanical skill. It is the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language, e.g. punctuation and spelling. Third, treatment of content. It is the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information. Fourth, stylistic skills. It is the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs and use the language effectively. The last, judgments skills. It is the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize, and order relevant information.



Writing Assessment

There are three scoring methods for intensive writing (Brown, 2004). They are, holistic scoring, primary trait scoring, and analytic scoring. In holistic scoring, each point on a holistic scale is given a systematic set of descriptors, and the reader-evaluator matches an overall impression with the descriptors to arrive at a score. It means that the teacher makes a table of scores with the description. In primary trait scoring, the type of scoring emphasizes the task at hand and assigns a score based on the effectiveness of achieving a text with one goal. For example, if the purpose of an essay is to persuade the reader to do something, the score for the writing would be on the accomplishment of the function. In this scoring method, there are four point scale ranging from one to 4. In analytic scoring, Brown and Bailey in Brown (2004) offer five major categories (organization, logical development of ideas (content), grammar, mechanics (punctuation and spelling), and style and quality of expression (vocabulary) and five different levels in each category ranging from “low” to “high”. In summary, the categories and levels will be scored in total as follows (Brown, 2007)



Aspect	Score	Performance Description	Weighting
Content (C) 30%	4	The topic is complete and clear the details are relating to the topics	3 x
	3	The topic is complete and clear but the details are almost relating to the topics	
	2	The topic is complete and clear but the details are not relating to the topics	
	1	The topic is not complete and clear and the details are not relating to the topics	
Organization (O) 20%	4	Identification is complete and description are arranged with almost proper connectives	2 x
	3	Identification is almost complete and description are arranged with proper connectives	
	2	Identification is not complete and description are arranged with few misuse of connectives	
	1	Identification is not complete and description are arranged with misuse of connectives	
Grammar (G) 20%	4	Very few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	2 x
	3	Few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies but not affect on meaning	
	2	Numerous grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	
	1	Frequent grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	
Vocabulary (V) 15%	4	Effective choice of words and word form	1,5 x
	3	Few misuse of vocabularies words, word forms, and not understandable	
	2	Limited range confusing words and word form	
	1	Very few knowledge of words, word forms, and not understandable	
Mechanics (M) 15%	4	It uses correct-spelling, punctuation, and capitalization	1,5 x
	3	It has occasional error of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization	
	2	It has frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization	
	1	it is dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	

Process Essay

Process essay is one kind of papers that explains how something is or was done. This, the writer brings the readers step by step through the process. The objectives of this essay is to instruct, so that readers can complete a similar process or to inform, so that a deeper understanding or appreciation of some process can be developed. The characteristics of process essay are demonstrates the writer's familiarity with the subject, gives step-by-step directions or explanations, clarifies cause-and-effect relationships, follows a chronological order, includes illustrations, examples, and other specific details, includes ample transitions to allow the reader to follow the logical steps, and uses terminology appropriate for the audience, but avoids overly technical words.

There are two types of Process writing. The first one is Directional and the second one is Process explanation. Directional enables readers to perform a process. It uses imperative mood. The subject of sentences is "you". It speaks directly to reader. More specifically, this type describes how to do something. The examples are A recipe, a handout, an operating manual. Process explanation is to help reader understand how a process is carried out. It explains how something happened. It uses either 1 st person or 3 rd person; not second person or imperative mood may be in present or past tense. takes place regularly or one that occurred in the past, and on whether the writer or someone else carried out the process.



METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative research applying descriptive research. Descriptive method is applied to describe a situation or event which is intended to accumulate data. With regard on this, the percentage of students' ability in writing was shown in this research. In qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize to a population but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2003), so to best understand the phenomenon of lesson study, this study selected the site and the participants purposefully. The site was University National Pasim that is located in Bandung. The participants were twenty-eight students who are taking business logistics as their major at Polytechnic post. As a matter of the fact, the role of the researcher in this study is non participant-observer. The data were collected by delivering Test to the twenty-eight students of class A. The researcher conducted test to measure something in a circumstance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study tries to investigating the ability of students in writing process Essay. The data to answer the question can be shown in the following table.

No.	Content	x3	Organization	x2	Grammar	x 2	Vocabulary	x1.5	Mechanic	x1,5	Score
1.	4	12	4	8	3	6	4	6	3	4,5	91,25
2.	4	12	4	8	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	87,5
3.	3	9	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	75
4.	3	9	4	8	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	80
5.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
6.	3	9	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	75
7.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
8.	3	9	3	6	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	70
9.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
10.	3	12	2	4	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	65
11.	3	9	3	6	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	70
12.	3	9	3	6	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	70
13.	4	12	3	6	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	77,5
14.	3	9	2	4	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	70
15.	4	12	2	4	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	77,5
16.	3	9	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	75
17.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
18.	3	9	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	75
19.	3	9	3	6	2	4	3	4,5	3	4,5	70
20.	4	12	2	4	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	77,5
21.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
22.	4	12	2	4	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	77,5
23.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5



24.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
25.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
26.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
27.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	82,5
28.	4	12	3	6	3	6	3	4,5	3	4,5	75
Total	102		82		78		85		84		
Average											78,2589

The table above

e shows the result of assessing writing of process essay. The table shows that from 28 students, the average score of all is 78,25. The lowest point is grammar while the highest point is content. This implies that the students understand more to the content on how to make a process essay than others aspects (grammar, organization, mechanism, and vocabulary. Moreover, the table shows that there is no student who has got a perfect score. The highest score is reached by one student (student 1), that is 91,25 while another student (student 10) has got the lowest score, that is 65. Student 5 has got the highest score because she could develop complete and clear topic with the details are relating to the topics. In organization, she wrote with complete identification and description are arranged with almost proper connectives. In terms of grammar, she committed to few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies but not affect on meaning. She used effective choice of words and word form. In terms of mechanism, she made occasional error of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Excerpt 1

“What impact will we receive if we adopt a healthy lifestyle? Pain is expensive, therefore it is better to prevent than to cure. This is the reason for everyone to keep their bodies healthy. By doing a healthy lifestyle, it can maintain and support the body's functions properly. This will have a good impact on the health of the body, both physically and mentally. A healthy lifestyle is an activity carried out by a person to maintain the health of their body... In order to make it easier for you to carry out a healthy lifestyle, there are four steps that can be taken.”

Excerpt 1 is student's 1 introduction of process essay. It begins with Hook typed question. Hook in the introduction is used to grab reader's attention to the writing. Here, thesis statement is also appeared “...there are four steps that can be taken” The details also support the topic that is keys to maintain health”

Excerpt 2.

“First, start by eating healthy foods with balanced nutrition. This step is the basic for carrying out a healthy lifestyle, because no matter how good the exercise is, it will not have a good impact if we have the wrong consumption....”

In body, she elaborated the steps of maintaining health or the keys into specific paragraphs in which she uses process explanation types. It is to help reader understand how a process is carried out. It explains how something happened. However, she uses second person here “you” that



supposed to use in directional types of process essay in which process explanation uses either 1st person or 3rd person; not second person or imperative mood may be in present or past tense.

Excerpt 3.

“In conclusion, everyone is obliged to carry out a healthy lifestyle with four steps, such as maintaining food intake and nutrition, regular exercise, maintaining mental health, and avoiding smoking and alcohol consumption habits”

In terms of organization, effective transactional device have been used, such as in conclusion. The use of in conclusion here is as a sign of a closing paragraph that is also an indication of effective content that was made. Organization means that Identification is complete and description are arranged with almost proper connectives.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that in writing process essay at 28 students of psychology at Pasim National University, the ability of them is in moderate level which is obtained an average as many as 78,25 %. A small number of students still need to develop their ability in building content. On the other hands, many students still need to develop their grammar in writing. Valid number from the data will be used by the researcher as the evaluation.

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