

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS OF ELEMENTARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract

Writing activity is a challenging for elementary school students. The numbers of students have different characteristics and learning styles in the learning process, so the teacher needs to find appropriate teaching strategies to maximize young language learners' skill particularly in writing. In line with those issues, the aims of this study are: 1) to identify the teaching writing process of elementary school students and 2) to explore the teaching writing strategies used by teachers for improving students' writing skill. In this article, the researchers use descriptive qualitative as a method of the research by observing the teaching process and interviewing teachers and students of SDI Durrotul Hikmah. Findings and results of the study show the strategies which used by teacher in improving students' writing skill particularly English as a foreign language. In this case, teacher needs to use appropriate teaching strategies in teaching writing to meet the students' need, characteristics, and their learning styles.

Keyword: *writing skill, young language learner, student's characteristics, learning styles.*

INTRODUCTION

Learning writing in the modern era is an important as learning speaking, reading and listening, especially in elementary school. Many students think that writing does not have much impact on the success of communicating, even though the involvement of writing learning is one of the important values to have a broad relationship. Someone who understands and know how to pouring their sentences into proper grammar has great confidence to be able to learn the whole world to their advantage. Learning English in elementary schools is basically just an introduction. However, the material taught must be in accordance with the English

learning curriculum. Of course, this writing learning cannot only be taught normally without the right strategies and methods from the teachers given to students. The purpose of this study was to explore the teaching strategies used by teachers in improving students' writing skills, especially English as a foreign language. Especially in grade 6 elementary school learning which really needs an effective strategy to support the improvement of English in students' writing skills.

In this teaching process, it is necessary to have a strategy when compiling learning methods in delivering material to students so that students can understand and in

accordance with the ultimate goal of learning. The research of this article focuses on the teaching strategies of grade 6 elementary schools in showing what they have learned in learning English in Writing Skills. One of the important factors in the success of learning English in elementary schools is how teachers can develop effective strategies to improve teaching English, one of which is writing and whether this method of teaching writing can improve students' motivation and writing skills. Writing skills are taught with the aim that students have the ability to express ideas, ideas, thoughts, experiences, and opinions correctly. Then according to Dilnoza&Makhmuda (2020) states it is vital that writing is not simply producing in written form, it symbolizes a useful way of communication, creativity and critical thinking.

The selection of a teaching method or technique that will be used in the classroom must be made as attractive as possible and must be in accordance with the characteristics and age of students. If the method used by the teacher for the development of learning English is made in an interesting way, then students will be motivated and more enthusiastic in learning the language, especially in improving writing skills. Putra (2012) stated that The teachers' teaching style includes their ability to keep the learners' motivation high or generate energy to learn in class, 2) handle the problem of giving rewards and punishment, 3) establish rapport and 4) use certain teaching technique. The success of teaching English is that the teacher can be able to carry out activities and increase student motivation in learning. Marcellino (2008) also associated the failure in teaching writing to the following aspects: the teacher's class preparations, mastery of the discussed topics, teaching learning strategies, class size and allotment time.

In addition, Suriyanti and Yaacob (2016) discovered that the lack of understanding on knowledge of writing approaches and strategies contributed to the writing problem. Furthermore, in English writing instruction, the teachers applied the approach of controlled composition and current traditional rhetoric (Ignatius, 1999; Latief, 1990; Sulistyaningsih, 1997). Therefore, the application of teaching English writing is very necessary for the creativity of teachers in designing an effective learning strategy that suits the needs of each student's characteristics. This difference in student characteristics is a strong reason for teachers to create and find appropriate teaching strategies to maximize the ability of language learners, especially in writing skills in order to achieve the ultimate goal of learning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the researchers had their own guidelines and goals for the learning process of students' writing skills. The researcher believes that the interactive strategy in the deductive approach is very helpful for students in developing their writing skills. This approach has been applied and studied in basic learning in teaching which has been applied by several teachers and the deductive approach was found to be preferred by the majority of students in several research studies (eg, Jean &Simard, 2013; Rahmatian&Zarekar, 2016; Vogel et al., 2011). From this approach students will interact and students will be more active during the learning process. With that, the researchers conducted this research to find out whether the teacher's method was appropriate and suitable in learning writing as the researchers expected. This framework explicitly takes into account the following:

1. A deductive approach to the English learning process can be

- used to help students improve their writing skills
2. Learners need to be actively involved in the learning process.
 3. The more individual the teaching, the more effective the teaching.

This research is viewed from a deductive approach which is supported by a process-writing approach to increase the awareness of ESL students about the inappropriate use of informal language in academic writing. Teachers can also use procedures flexibly to determine goals and scope according to the needs of their students.

METHOD

In this article, the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative method to collect some information about teacher teaching strategies used by grade 6 elementary school teachers in learning writing at SDI DurrotulHikmah. In order to obtain accurate data in research, appropriate data collection tools are needed with the problems in this study, namely the Interview Sheet. This interview sheet contains several lists of questions that have been prepared by the researcher to find out something related to the research.

In this study, researchers interviewed teachers and several students about the learning methods taught in class. During this interview session we asked several questions about; 1) What method is used in teaching writing in class. 2) Does the teacher have the right strategy to achieve student understanding in learning writing. 3) Is the method taught in accordance with the characteristics of students? 4) What are the obstacles that students find during the writing learning process. 5) The purpose of the teacher using this method in the writing learning process. 6) Does the teacher find improvement in students during the learning process in class.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In some of the questions that have been given, the researcher found that in this teaching process the teacher uses a deductive approach, In a deductive approach, students are given explanations or grammar rules, for example, and then, based on these explanations or rules, they make phrases and sentences. using the new language (setiawan 2021). As in the teacher's explanation, students are given several spellings of some vocabulary which students will be asked to make a complete sentence using proper grammar.

The teacher also explains that they use an interactive strategy in which in this activity the teacher invites students to take action and invites students to be active during the learning process. Interactive strategies not only benefit student learning growth but also benefit teachers to be able to know every characteristic possessed by students so that teachers can continue to develop learning methods and strategies that are suitable for students.

For each characteristic of different students the teacher chooses to use the collaborative writing method which is suitable for almost all elementary school students, children are active learners and thinkers (Piaget 1965), learn through social interaction (Vygotsky 1978) and learn effectively through scaffolding by more able others (Maybin et al 1992), who can be adults or peers. Collaborative and well-planned writing tasks encourage the context for all of these characteristics to be fully exploited in the young learner classroom (Imaniah&Nargis 2017).

However, that does not mean that with perfect methods and strategies, students do not experience obstacles during the learning process, the teacher explains that there are

some students who need repetition to maximize their writing skills. In the explanation, the teacher also found the number of children who looked passive during the learning process but they could do the exam perfectly, on this type of student the teacher realized that there were some students who really preferred to listen during the learning process rather than being invited to be active in the classroom. With these differences in characteristics, the teacher knows what things will be given to each student.

In this study the teacher also explained the reason they chose the collaborative writing method is so that students can easily understand each material or teaching material that is delivered so that later students can assemble a sentence independently. In this method, the teacher found that some students experienced improvement in their writing skills. Students are considered to be able to accept the method well during the learning process in class.

The development of students in using this method also increased gradually, although it did not immediately experience significant changes, it was quite clear that students experienced good changes in their writing abilities. Some students are even able to use proper grammar and are experts in expressing their ideas or ideas in written form.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is the importance of strategies in improving writing skills in grade 6 elementary school students who use interactive strategies which are divided into two stages: 1) Practice spelling and memorizing vocabulary by providing some vocabulary. 2) Practice writing from the vocabulary into sentences according to grammar. From the findings and results of this study, it shows that the strategies used by

teachers in improving students' writing skills, especially English as a foreign language, have increased in some students, but in other students, special attention is needed in improving writing skills such as gradual training in order to be able to compose sentences correctly. Correct. For teachers, it is also necessary to improve in managing the classroom by providing other media implementations according to the characteristics of students so that students can also be motivated in learning. Although, this interactive strategy can affect the improvement of writing in some students, teachers should also be able to balance the learning methods provided with the characteristics of students so that students can understand about learning to improve writing skills.

SUGGESTION AND RECOMMENDATION

The methods and strategies that teachers use during the classroom learning process to develop students' writing skills can be said to be close to perfect scores. We as researchers have the same method guidelines, namely the deductive approach, this method is very suitable for elementary school students in starting their writing skills. Spelling out some vocabulary and then following up with instructions for students to compose a sentence is a great first step in developing students' writing skills. Using interactive strategies, the teacher can also create an active class to be able to see each child's characteristics. We as researchers agree that the methods and strategies that teachers use are appropriate for elementary school students at SDI Durrotul Hikmah.

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