

A CASE STUDY ON ADVANCED WRITING STRATEGIES THROUGH WRITING PROCESS IN ACADEMIC WRITING

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Abstract: This qualitative research with a case study approach aimed to find out the strategies that tend to frequently do in writing process according to the outstanding fourth-semester students of English Education Department in University of Islam Malang. The participants are 5 selected of the outstanding fourth-semester students recommended by the Writing IV lecturer. The data were collected by distributing questionnaires and doing interviews via online with the selected students. The finding of the research indicated that in completing their writing paper, the students have some different strategies in every step of the writing process according to their needs.

Key words: academic writing, writing process, writing strategies, outstanding students

INTRODUCTION

English has four skills that must be learned. There are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. One of the most difficult and complicated skills is writing because it needs hard thinking to make ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or even components. In the university level, academic writing is one of the subjects that must be learned by the students in English Education Department program. Students in the writing course learn how to write in English in order to improve their writing skills and develop ideas into written form. However, since English is

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not the Indonesian first language, English academic writing also be more difficult for the students to learn because they have to both learn the target language and develop their academic writing abilities, they also still did not get used to writing in English, especially for academic context.

According to Harmer (2001), when students lack the words or the grammar, they need to express themselves in writing, they can become very frustrated. The students also have difficulties when they are asked to write about topics that they do not interest to do, perhaps in unfamiliar topics, and without the necessary information. Writing encourages students to concentrate on proper language use; they can review what they already know or even consult dictionaries, grammar manuals, and other references (Harmer, 2004). It means that writing is not just writing a non-sense idea, but it needs some good ideas to build a sentence that can be a perfect paragraph.

Therefore, the researcher want to conduct this study because many of the students still do not find the suitable strategies to face the difficulties in writing. So, this study is intended to find out the strategies that tend to frequently do in writing process according to the outstanding fourth-semester students of English Education Department in University of Islam Malang that have the best score and a well-written in writing course.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher used the qualitative research with case study approach which is an approach that explores *what* or *how* rather than *why* something has happened Cohen et al. (2018). This study is attempted to analyze the strategies in the writing process for fourth-semester students of English Education Department at University of Islam Malang.

The subject of this research is the outstanding fourth-semester students of English Education Department at University of Islam Malang who have an A score in Writing IV and have uploaded their journal in journal Sinta 2. In this study, the researcher chose only 5 fourth-semester students of English Education Department at University of Islam Malang.

In this study, the researcher used two instruments to collect the data that were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaires was adapting from Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies by Soltani & Kheirzadeh (2017). The developer of this questionnaire was Rahman (2011). The questionnaire consists of three sections with 48 items in total. The first part is the pre-writing process which contains of 14 items, the second part is the while-writing process which contains of 15 items, and the third part is the revising process which has 19 items. The second instrument was interview. This research used structured interviews that contains of 10 questions that directly ask to the chosen students of this research via *WhatsApp messages*.

There were some procedures to follow in order to obtain valid data to address the research question. There are prepare the instruments, here the researcher has to have the questionnaires and the interview drafts to be asked to the respondents that fit with the criteria. The second procedure is to ask permission to the respondents. In this step, the researcher has to ask permission from the chosen students before filling and answering the research instruments. The researcher only asks them by text on *WhatsApp* to ask whether they want to be the participant in this research or not. The next procedure is to share the instruments. After having permission, the researcher shared the questionnaires via *Google Form* on 5th of September 2022. After the students filled out the questionnaires, the next step was doing the interview. The interview has been done via online on 20th of September 2022. The last procedure is summarizing the result data. Since all the instruments have been filled and answered then the researcher summarized the result to know the findings.

After obtaining the result of questionnaires and interviews, the researcher collected the number of responses of each question. The questionnaires were collected and saved in Google Drive, then it is analyzed using charts and diagrams. Categorize each response to know how the students' preparation of the writing process and what are the students' strategies in academic writing. While the data from interviews were analyzed by describing and classifying it based on

each question. Then describe the result in descriptive form based on the result of the data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The data was collected from the questionnaire and interview based on the response of the students. To find the result, the researcher analyzes the data using a questionnaire with five students as respondents and two chosen students as interviewees. It explains in the following results.

The first finding is about the outstanding students' preparation from pre-writing, while-writing, and revising. The questionnaire used in this research is adapted from Rahman (2011). The data was presented in the explanation below.

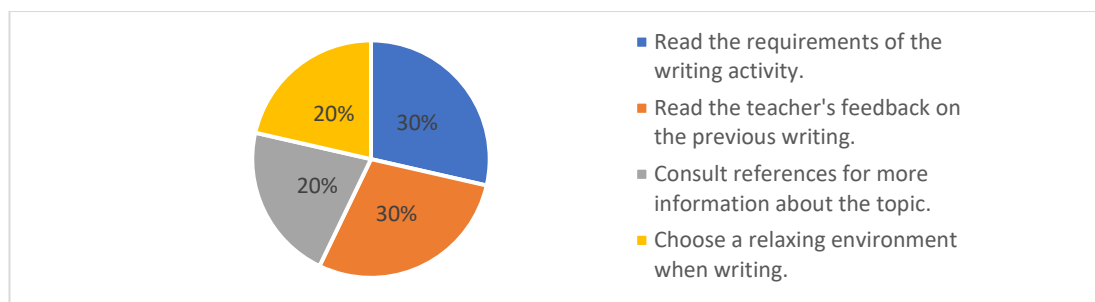


Diagram 4.1 Pre-writing process

Diagram 4.1 explains about the results of the most used students' pre-writing activities. Based on the result of the questionnaires above, the most used preparation in pre-writing is reading the requirements of the writing activity which 30% of the students choose to highest option. Besides that, around 30% students also choose that read the teacher's feedback on the previous writing and try to learn from the mistakes also be students' favorite preparation in pre-writing process. The next activities around 20% chosen by the students is to consult references for more information about the topic and choose a relaxing environment when writing.

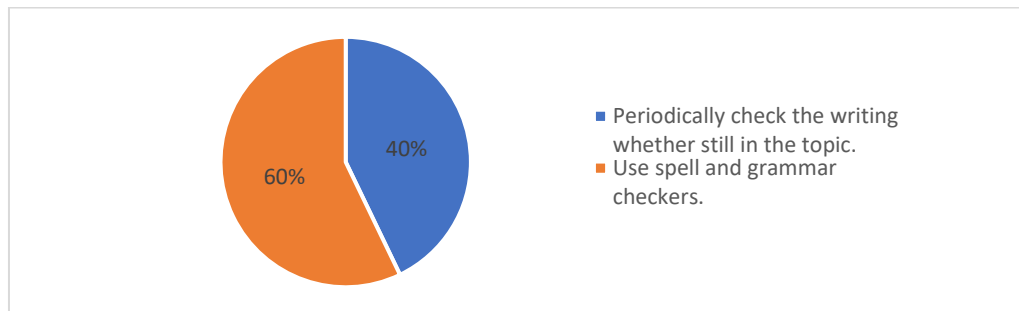


Diagram 4.2 While-writing process

From the diagram above it can be seen that there are 40% that always periodically check the writing whether still in the topic or not. It is because they want to consistently stick to the topic that they have been chosen. There is also four of five students or around 60% that always use spell and grammar checker because it minimize the amount of mistakes that probably made by the students before they turn their paper to the teacher or publish it in a journal.

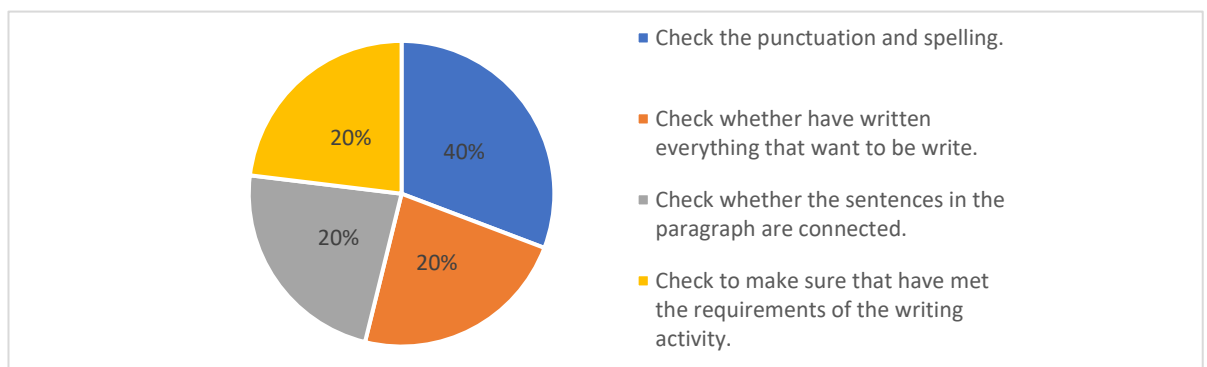


Diagram 4.3 Revising Process

The diagram above shows that there are 40% of students that always checked the punctuation and spelling of their writing. They proofread their writing to make sure there is not any mistakes before they turn to the teacher or publishing their writing. This activity can minimize the mistakes so that the students can produce a good academic writing. Around 20% students also check whether they have written everything that want to be write, check whether the sentences in the paragraph are connected, and check to make sure that have met the requirements of the writing activity.

The next finding is about the outstanding students' strategies in every step of the writing process. The researcher conducted an interview with the same five students in the previous questionnaire for this research. Based on the interview, it was discovered that they had several similar strategies in writing process. The result of the research findings was explained in the following descriptions.

There are four strategies that students tend to frequently used in pre-writing. The students' strategies when read the requirements of the writing activity are there is a student who did not read all of the requirements and just skimmed it in case to shorten the time, and also there are students that always read all of the terms or requirements before doing the writing activities to make sure they will not miss it and to avoid mistakes when writing. The students' strategies after reading the teacher's feedback on the previous writing are they recheck their writing and try to fix the errors with the new insight from the teacher, they will revise their writing with the feedback given by the teacher, they read the feedback first to know which their error part that needs to be fixed, and they will try to connect the feedback with their topic first whether it is in accordance or not. The students' strategies in choosing the references to get more information related to their chosen topic is they choose to use books or journal articles that can be accessed online that relate to their topic. The students' strategies in finding a relaxing environment to start their writing are find a fresh, green or natural, and calm atmosphere to help them keep focused when writing, they also prefer a quiet environment that is not too noisy and far from the crowd to be a suitable place to write.

In while-writing process there are two strategies that that students tend to frequently do. The students' strategies in checking whether their writing is still on the topic or not are they always read or double-check to make sure that their writing is still in line or relate to the topic, they also checking their writing to those who more expert on the topic or asking friends to read their writing. The students' strategies in choosing the type of spell and grammar checker are all of them use the help of an automatic writing evaluation application called

Grammarly to minimize any spelling or grammar errors, they also use a dictionary to check the correct grammar and spelling.

The following are four strategies that students tend to frequently do when revising. The students' strategies in checking the correctness of the punctuation and spelling in their writing are they still use Grammarly App to correct if there any punctuation or spelling errors, they also used the error detector in Microsoft Word that can automatically correct the mistakes. Re-read and asking friends to check their writing are also be the strategy in checking the errors. The students' strategies in checking whether they have written everything that wants to be write in their writing are they always read back or re-read their writing to make sure that they did not miss any sentences or ideas, before writing some paper or text they usually write a rough draft or outline first and then develop it into a paragraph so that they can write in sequence without worrying about something that want to be write. The students' strategies in checking whether the sentences in the paragraph are connected to each other are by re-reading the sentences one by one or if possible they will check their writing to the expert that knows more about their topic, same as the previous strategies they write some points related to the topic before developing it into paragraphs so they are automatically connected to each other, they also make sure the cause effects of the sentences. The students' strategies to make sure that they have met the requirements of the writing activity are by having a checklist of the requirements so that will not miss it, re-read or re-check the requirements again, and because they have read the requirements in the beginning and made an outline first, so they convinced that they have met all of the requirements.

Every student has their own strategies for completing their academic writing papers. Among the 48 questionnaires, the researcher chooses the activities that the students tend to frequently used according to the stages of writing.

The first result discusses the students' preparation of the writing process from pre-writing, while-writing, and revising. Students have their own activities of preparation in academic writing. They can choose which activities will make it

easier for them to complete their essay writing paper. Similarly, Whitaker (2010) stated that starting writers should have a decent plan to work best of them. That statement is proven by the data that found 10 activities that students tend to frequently do for their preparation in the writing process that summarized in three stages, there are pre-writing, while writing, and revising.

The result of the finding shows that in the pre-writing process, there are 4 activities that the students tend to often do in pre-writing process. Those activities are read the requirements of the writing activity, consult the references for more information about the topic, read the teachers' feedback, and choose a relaxing environment. In while-writing there are two activities that they tend to do frequently in while-writing. There are periodically check whether keep in the topic and use grammar and spell checkers to correct the errors. For the revising, there are four activities that they tend to do oftentimes. Those activities are check whether have written whatever that wanted to write, check whether the sentences in the paragraph are connected, check the punctuation and spelling, and check to make sure that have met the requirements of the writing activity.

The second finding is in line with Zemach (2009) that when writing, the writer does more than merely put words together to form sentences. To create a piece of writing, a good writer uses a variety of strategies. Whitaker (2010) also recommends students to follow the strategies she outlines in her book, such as selecting a topic, brainstorming, conducting research, developing a thesis, planning (outline), connecting to the last sentence of the previous paragraph, summarizing the findings of the paper, demonstrating the significance of the findings, concluding the paper with a strong, memorable concluding statement, connecting between ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading. The result of the finding shows that the outstanding students use some of those strategies, there are selecting topic by conducting a journal or textbook, making an outline, revising, editing, and proofreading.

Similarly, in the previous study by Munadhiro (2019) found that making an outline is the most used strategy by students. Ozagac (2006) adds that the students

start composing their writing by checking the outlines and may rearrange their minor supports or adjust the order of their key supports. The finding of this research show that the outstanding students mainly use cognitive strategies such as using sources, making an outline, revising, and editing. This is somewhat different from the research finding by Vianti (2017) indicate that the students use all of the strategy from cognitive, emotive, metacognitive, compensatory, social, and memory strategies.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of the chapter I until chapter IV, the researcher attempts to give the conclusions of this study. This study used qualitative methods with case study approach. The subject of this research is the outstanding of fourth semester students of English Education Department in University of Islam Malang which consists of 5 chosen students with an A score in Writing IV course. This study used questionnaire and interview to collect the data.

The first finding about the preparation of the writing process is different depending on their need and ability. The tend to frequently do activities in pre-writing process are read the requirements of the writing activity, consult the references for more information about the topic, read the teachers' feedback, and choose a relaxing environment. In while-writing stages, periodically check whether keep in the topic and use grammar and spell checkers are the activities that tend to do often by the students to minimize the amount of mistakes that probably made by the students before they turned their paper to the teacher. Then in revising, check whether have written whatever that wanted to write, check whether the sentences in the paragraph are connected, check the punctuation and spelling, and check to make sure that have met the requirements of the writing activity are the activity that tend to do frequently in the final stage to make sure and proofread that their writing is good and proper to be published or shared.

The findings about strategies are supported by some previous studies mentioned that starting write should have a decent plan to work best of them. Whitaker (2010) recommends students to follow the strategies that she outlines in

her book, such as selecting a topic, brainstorming, conducting research, developing a thesis, planning (outline), connecting to the last sentence of the previous paragraph, summarizing the findings of the paper, demonstrating the significance of the findings, concluding the paper with a strong, memorable concluding statement, connecting between ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading. The result of the finding shows that the outstanding students use some of those strategies, there are selecting topic by conducting a journal or textbook, making an outline, revising, editing, and proofreading.

Based on the finding of the research, it is addressed to Writing Lecturers to know how the students' strategies in completing their writing, so that the lecturers can provide suitable teaching methods in Writing subject and after knowing the strategies used by the outstanding students, the lecturers can recommend those strategies to all of their students in order to improve the writing skills of other students or those who are still lacking in writing. For future researcher, they can investigate one of the strategies that are frequently used by the students, such as writing the rough draft or outline to determine how those strategies affected the students' potential.

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