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- Communication studies
- Cultural studies
- Development studies
- Education
- Geography
- History
- Journalism
- Language
- Law
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- Linguistics
- Literature
- Novels and short stories
- Philosophy
- Poetry
- Religion
- Teaching

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Developing Writing Skill of Language Students by Applying Innovative Teaching Strategy Model Based on Social and Local Wisdom Contexts

Syarifuddin Achmad
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Keywords: Model, Innovation, Teaching, Writing Skill, Local Culture

Abstract

The aim of this study is to build up students' writing skills through Innovation Teaching Strategy Model (ITSM). This study was conducted in Letters and Culture Faculty of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG), with the students of English and Indonesian department as the participants. The current study is based on the social culture and local wisdom context utilizing Information Computer Technology (ICT). This model supports the students to have a high level of thinking and performance in writing skills in English and Indonesian language. This study utilized Research and Development (R &D) approach using Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Reflection method with the strategy of one group pre-test and post-test design. This study reaches two target achievements; firstly creating the effective innovation teaching strategy model after statistic examining through one group pre-test and post-test design, and secondly improving the students' competencies and writing skill through learning and teaching process treatment of writing course as an effect of applying Innovation teaching strategy model application.

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Developing Language Students' Writing Skill by Applying Innovative Teaching Strategy Model Based on Social and Local Wisdom Contexts

Syarifuddin Achmad[1]

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to build up students' writing skills through Innovation Teaching Strategy Model (ITSM). This study was conducted in Letters and Culture Faculty of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG), with the total of 23 students of English Department and 21 Indonesian Department students as the participants. The current study is based on the social culture and local wisdom context utilizing Information Computer Technology (ICT). This model supports the students to have a high level of thinking and performance in writing skills in English and Indonesian language. Furthermore, this study utilized Research and Development (R&D) approach using Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Reflection method. It also employed one group of pre-test and post-test design. In conclusion, this study reaches two achievements; firstly the study successfully designs the effective innovation teaching strategy model after conducting a statistical examination through one group of pre-test and post-test design, and secondly the developed innovative teaching model is able to enhance the students' competencies and writing skill through learning and teaching process as well as the treatment of writing course.

Keywords: Local Social Culture, Model, Innovation, Teaching, Writing Skill.

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1. Introduction

Writing is one of the compulsory subjects taught on the language learners at Language Department of Language and Literature Faculty. However, some students find it difficult to write, especially completing their final academic writing task or undergraduate thesis (well-known as Skripsi). The data from the academic affairs in language department of UNG (2016) reveals that only average 10% the language learners can finish their study in four years or eight semesters. Most students are able to complete their study in above 5 to 6 years, some of them even finish their study in more than 7 years.

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This blames the students' inability to write academically. An interview conducted by the author reveals that the problems faced by the language learners are not only about grammar, building up a paragraph, and creating discourse, but also develop an academic style of writing based on the students' school of thought.

Writing is regarded as among the language skills used to communicate. It is a fact that human as a social creature needs communication to interact through writing for any purposes of our life (Khoshsima, 2016; Xic, 2016). It can be inferred that interaction strengthens human relationship through sharing feelings, thoughts and ideas from one to others. As a matter of fact, the effective instrument used in building up communication is a language. It comprises of a set of systematic elements ranged from phonological, morphological, syntactical level, to a text or at a discourse level. Austin (1965) argues that communication can be built up from speech act that supporting from competencies of expressing and interpreting the ideas. This is through utterances based on contexts and condition that emphasizing on pragmatics power (Leech, 1983; Brown, and Levinson 2000).

From the interaction of communication perspective, the media of language skills can be categorized into two, oral and visual media. Oral media consist of speaking skill and listening skill in one line while visual media cover writing skill and reading skill altogether (Koutsoftas and Gray, 2012). This is different with the perspective of the communicant's competencies which comprises of productive (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). In language learning and teaching, the four language skill is related from one to another. For instance, one's speaking skill is determined by the capability of his or her listening and reading skill contributes to writing competence and vice-versa. Some studies report that the reading and writing is closely related compared to the other skill pair (Zhou and Siriyothin, 2009). Interestingly, it is reported that a set of different activities is possible to implement in a class if reading and writing are taught separately.

Surveys on language teaching, whether Second Language Teaching, Foreign Language Teaching, and even teaching Indonesia language show that the four language skills are taught separately being excluded from the social contexts and local wisdom. This ultimately affects the students resulting in a number of issues, e.g., grammatical error, tenses, cohesion, and coherence in constructing an essay. This is echoing the results seen in Koutsoftas and Gray (2012). The study shows that students consider the grammatical aspect the most rather than the lexical choices in writing. It is revealed that the issue also happens to most of the undergraduate students of Letters and Culture Faculty, UNG. The problem revolves around the process of writing an undergraduate thesis as a fulfilment of completing the bachelor degree. Therefore, an effective approach is necessary to alleviate the problem.

Lawrence (2002) states the needs of learning to communicate, in the spoken or written form, with people with different background are through hands-on practice. As a result, these competencies should be incorporated to help students shaping their communication skills, particularly in language-related aspect. Li (2012) states that teaching writing should include socio-cultural context, subject curriculum, and technology education.

In assigning writing ability, Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, and Allen (2001) argue that writing competence is not only represented by skills but also the facilitators' need to hand over to learners the task for choosing a particular content to be developed in a meaningful way. Therefore, assigning writing should be in comprehensive ways that might include in the rubrics text. This covers several aspects, such as grammar, arranging sentences, paragraph, discourse and text, types of essay, and also the content of the writing. The length of writing is not the only factor to consider. It also concerns the comprehensive information within an essay (Biria and Jafari, 2013).

Considering the above discussions, this study offers a socio-cultural-based strategy of teaching writing. Yet, the idea of utilizing ITC is also included in the implementation of such values. This results in an Innovation of Teaching Writing Strategy Model which involves the higher level of thinking strategy in the cognitive domain, such as analysis, application of a particular concept, synthesizing, and evaluating information resources.

The research questions this study are (a) what do innovation teaching strategy concern, especially on writing skill? (b) How effective is ITSM to develop writing competence on language? (c) How to utilize ICT on applying innovation teaching strategy on writing skill? (d) How is the strategy to develop teaching material and assessment of writing competence and skill?

2. Materials and methods

This section provides a number of conceptual topics that will be applied according to the methodology of this study. Each is elaborated in a separated section as follows.

2.1 Writing as a competency and skill in communication

Generally, people communicate through two media: oral and visual media. Oral media focus on speaking integrated with listening and visual media encompass writing and reading (Margana and Widayanto, 2017). Furthermore, the language skills, from the aspect of competence, is classified into two, namely receptive (relating to listening and reading) and productive skills (involving writing and speaking). It can be inferred that a good communication depends on the competence of all four language skills. Such a notion addresses to all students regardless their major, it is not limited to language department students (Zhou and Siriyothin 2009; Lloyd, 2007).

2.2 Learning writing as an educational process

It goes without saying that educational objectives, e.g., cognition, skills, and affective domain, must be integrated into the learning the four language skills. These objectives are to develop learners' skills and competence, for instance, in writing (LILI, 2016). An effective strategy of teaching writing is, therefore, required to achieve such a target. The effective strategy of teaching writing focuses on a higher level of thinking represented by the way of analytical thinking operated in organizing and constructing ideas in the essay systematically and comprehensively.

To improve one's academic writing skills and competence, Lloyd (2007) argues that several aspects should be regarded in improving academic writing skills of a student. This covers the draft of academic work, references, organization in a logical order, developing an academic style of writing based on the purpose, demonstrating professionalism through the use of appropriate grammar, spelling, and structure, and presenting academic work in affective and aesthetic format.

2.3 Innovation strategy application on teaching writing

Innovation strategy on teaching writing is based on six dimensions of development. First is based on the content material. As a matter of fact, writing material regarding the learners' environment might help the learners to set up the concept in their insight or knowledge (Lloyd, 2007; Lawrence 2002; LILI, 2016). This best practice the writing contents adopted consist of the elaboration list as explained in the following table:

Table 1: Social culture based on local content as learning writing material

No.	Content Theme	Writing Topics Alternatives
1.	History of Local Culture	a. Celebration of Patriotic Day January 23rd as the patriotic day of Indonesia b. Kinship history of Gorontalo, such as Raja Iyato, Sultan Hariji, Sultan Botutihe, etc. c. Religious history: The Earlier period of Muslim existing in Gororontalo, Christian, Buddha and Hindu etc..
2.	Local Culture Processing	a. Wedding party cultural: such as in pembaiyatan, upacara adat (traditions of celebrations female teenagers adolescence), perkawinan (marriage). b. Funeral traditions day based on religions, for example: a). Funeral tradition of Gorontalo people (Upacara pemakaman) b). Takziah or well-known as doa arwa hari ke 7, hari ke 40 (The tradition of sending pray and condolence to the family)
3.	The Destination of Tourism Object	Some famous Gorontalo tourism icons, such as Olele Beach with its marine park
4	Pilgrim of Religious	Dikili as a Gorontalo religious tradition
5	Specific Culinary	Gorontalo Culinary: e.g., Milu Siram, Tinutuang,
6	Arts Creativity	Some art performance, such as Saronde Dance.

No.	Content Theme	Writing Topics Alternatives
7	Home Industry & Souvenir	Karawo

The second dimension refers to the strategy of teaching writing due to the importance of emphasizing the way to create innovation in learning and teaching writing. The language learners' mental involvement should be regarded. Therefore, promoting a condition that may facilitate the learners to utilize their higher level of thinking in writing exercises is essential. This transforms the activities from simple to be more complex. In fact, writing exercise is dominated by the students' central strategy (Hu dan Chen 2016). Some activities, such as Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Forming Collaborative Writing and Reflecting, as well as Plan, Do, Check and Act (PDCA) are recommended.

Table 2: Strategies of teaching writing

No.	Material & Teaching Strategy	Learning & Teaching Activity		Learning Outcomes
		Learners' Role	Teachers' Role	
1.	Expressing some information or ideas in simple and complex sentences	FGD writing a simple and complex sentence, peer reviewer	Designing learning and teaching questions; Facilitating; Reflecting; Revising and demonstrating model, Renewing material plan	Able to write sentences, gaining new inspiration for exploring ideas; having an in-depth knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Development
2	Describing things, ideas or process, accident or event through various kinds of texts,	FGD, demonstrating, exercising, revising, drafting texts or paragraphs, peer reviewer	Designing learning and teaching questions; Facilitating; Reflecting; Revising and demonstrating model, Renewing material plan	Able to write texts and paragraphs, and gaining inspiration to explore ideas; having a depth knowledge on texts
3.	Building up an Essay and Discourses	Investigating recourses and FGD, demonstrating, exercising, revising, drafting essay, peer reviewer.	Designing and investigating learning and teaching writing material through probing questions; Forming Collaborative Writing, Facilitating; Reflecting;	Able to develop essays and discourses and to explore ideas; Gaining an in-depth understanding regarding various genres of the essay.

Utilizing ICT is also a medium to improve writing skills and competencies. Technology is, without question, able to shape students' ability in writing. Some activities that can be applied are (a) Focus Group Discussion, (b) Forming Collaborative Writing, (c) searching for data and writing resources, e.g., location information, history, data, and formulation knowledge; (d) Peer review, reflecting, and revising, (e) sharing with peers in a group, (f) Applying ICT for reflecting, accessing and citing resources, submitting task.

The fourth dimension is rubrics of assessing writing which encompasses aspects, namely grammar, punctuation, spelling, referencing, and the originality of the content (Tantowi, El, Al-Ansari, Sadaf, and Alhumaid, 2016). Accordingly, Jocobs et. al (as cited in Yaghoubi and Mobin, 2015) present the component of composition profile as a basis to assess writing skills and competencies; it consists of (a) content of essay, (b) organization, (c) vocabulary, (d) language use, (e) mechanics.

A comprehensive model of the strategy of teaching writing is the fifth aspect. This is able to create a model after synthesizing some theoretical concepts of teaching writing and resources from linguists through their publication.

The treatment of the model is through one group pre-test and post-test design. The respondents of this study are not only English Education department students (EFL) but also students

from Indonesia Language Department (SCL) of Letters and Culture Faculty. The total respondents are 44, which comprised of 23 students majoring English education, and the 21 students are in Indonesia Language Department.

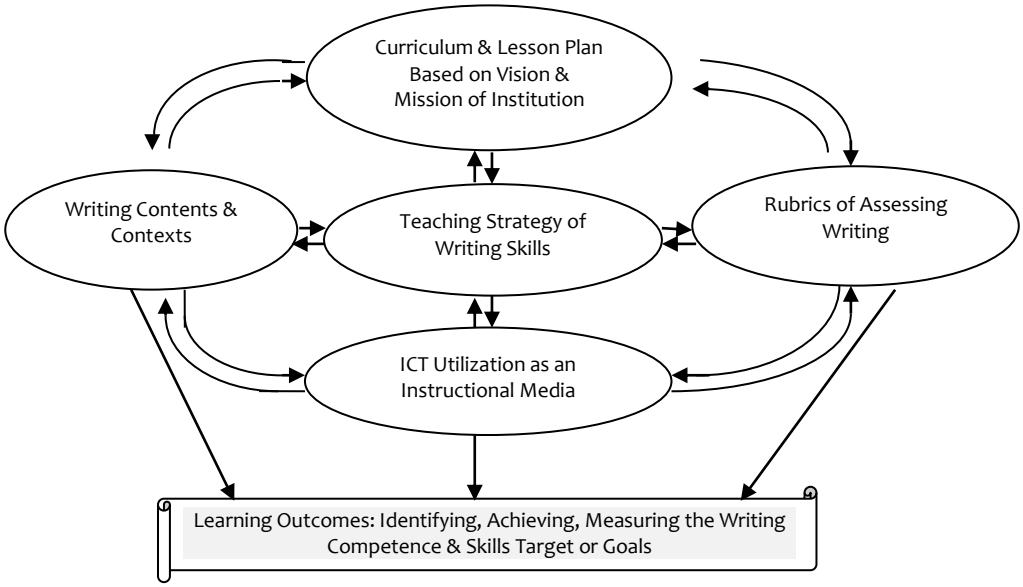

Diagram 1: Model of teaching writing strategy

3. Discussions

3.1 Description and discussion of research finding

Preceding the process of designing an innovative teaching writing model, is the treatment to observe the effectiveness of the model in its practice through a statistical analysis. The focus of the treatment is the capability of thinking to write an essay. Other aspects, such as fluency of writing, the way to organize ideas, vocabularies, language use, and mechanism of writing are also included (Yaghoubi and Mobin, 2015).

Table 3: Mean score and its improvement of the EFL students group and SLC-students group

Class Group											
EFL-students group (1st group)						SLC-students Group (2nd group)					
Pre-test			Post-test			Pre-test			Post-test		
Higher Score	Lower Score	Mean Score	Means score	High Score	Lower Score	High Score	lower score	Mean	Mean	High score	Lower Score
90	75	82.35	85.61	92	76	91	75	83.73	86.63	93	80
Std. Deviation: 6.13			Std. Deviation: 4.65			Std. Deviation: 4.98			Std. Deviation: 2.77		

The data above shows that in the EFL-students group, there is a rise in the mean score of 3.26. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the innovative teaching writing strategy found is represented in the rise of 2 points in the higher score data; this also applies to the lower score and the standard deviation data. In other words, the teaching strategy offered in this study is effective to improve EFL students' writing with the percentage of the improvement of total score 74%.

In the SCL-students as the second group, the improvement of mean score data is 2.87. Other raise is in the higher score data of 2 and the lower score of 9. The other evidence is std. deviation for pre-test is bigger than the post-test, namely, std. deviation pre-test is 4.98 while in the post-test is 2.77. These data indicate that the innovation of teaching strategy is effective to be implemented in writing. The percentage of this students' group is 73.68%.

Based on the above data, it is confirmed that the model innovation teaching writing strategy is applicable for both EFL-students and SCL-students. The finding of this study implies that integrating the local content and ICT in teaching writing is able to enhance the learners' writing competence.

4. Conclusion

The current study breaks down the conclusion into three: (a) The innovation of teaching strategy model based on local context and utilizing ICT contributes to the development of EFL-students and SCL-students writing; (b) Utilizing local content and context and ICT as learning resource of writing motivate the language learner to improve their self-capacity as well as to express their ideas and thought; (c) In strengthening learning outcomes, the product of learners' writing need to be promoted through Disseminating the students' writing is required to support the learning. This is through several activities, such as reflection, focus group discussion, presentation, and publication (either printed or digital media).

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