IS OUTLINING USEFULL IN WRITING?

Agung Wicaksono
(Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas PGRI Nusantara, Agung_cerveni@yahoo.co.uk)

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to find out whether outlining is effective to the students’ writing ability or not. This experimental research is conducted in first year students of English Department Nusantara PGRI Kediri. The instrument used was a writing test. The result shows that mean of pre test is 51.02 and mean of post test is 70.29. It indicates that after being taught using outlining the students’ writing is getting better. From the t-test computation it is found that the t-score is 5.94 and the t-table at the degree of freedom (db) 36 is 2.021 at the level of significance 5% and 2.021 at the degree of significant 1 %. So it is very significant, the Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Thus it can be interpreted that the use of outlining is effective to be used in teaching writing. This result supports the proposed theory stating that outlining is a way in helping organizing ideas, it helps planning the essay before beginning to write.

Key word: Outlining, Teaching Writing, Writing Achievement.

Abstrak


Kata Kunci: Outlining, pengajaran menulis, keberhasilan menulis
INTRODUCTION

In learning English the students have to learn about spoken and written English. Written English is probably more familiar to most teachers as a subject of analysis; a subject that needs an analysis on putting ideas in making paper, than spoken English. Written English is only an imperfect representation of speech and involves extra problems of orthography, the transfer in learning from the spoken to written form is greater than the reverse, because speaking before writing is natural order in first language learning. Writing is defined as a process of translating thought into language. (Byrne 1989: 1). For further definition of writing, Meyers in line with Byrne strengthens his opinion as: “Writing is speaking to others on paper or on a computer screen. Writing is partly a talent, but it is mostly a skill and like any skill, it improves with practice. Writing is also an action a process of discovering and organizing your ideas, putting them on paper, and reshaping and revising them” (2005: 2). Those statements mean that writing is the activity, in which we explore our ideas to communicate with others by expressing into a written form. But in the language skills, writing is still considered as a most difficult skill than others. “Writing is much like speaking-a way to discover and communicate our ideas. But unlike speaking however, it doesn’t happen all at once; we can’t see and hear the readers, so we must think about their reactions. We must choose a subject that will interest them and try to present it in an interesting way” (Meyers 2005: 2). Relating to the statements, it can be seen why writing is commonly a difficult activity for most people both in the mother tongue and in a foreign language. A foreign language learner considers that writing is not as easy as speaking. When we’re speaking, we see and hear our listeners directly, answer their questions and restate ideas and we are also exploring our thought. If there are mistakes or unclear structures of the sentences stated, using gesture, facial expression or intonation can be
applied in order to build an effective communication successfully. It’s different from writing because we cannot use the gesture, facial expression or intonation to explain about the information that we mean. In writing, the reader and the writer are able to do communication indirectly. In expressing ideas, they don’t need to meet each other and to talk face to face since the ideas can be poured out into clear and vivid sentences. For further illustration, our writing should be as easy as possible to be understood. It can be done by composing our writing using grammatical structure correctly and using the suitable word’s choice in order to avoid the ambiguous sentences. As a result, it is a must for all writers to ensure their writing as something understandable since there is impossibility for the readers to meet the writers. However, they find some difficulties in making paragraph. They have difficulties to express their ideas since they have some different reasons, they are: 1) they are not familiar with the topic, 2) they are not able to predict the topic given, and 3) they are not interested in the topic. Sometimes they run out of the idea because of getting stuck in the middle of writing process, so they are not able to develop their writing since there is no more idea to write. In writing process, it is known that there are some certain steps followed by the students in order to help them in composing their writing as well as possible. How can the students reach the goal if they lose their ideas? It will be quite difficult for them to write since each step of writing process needs ideas to be explored. The six steps in writing well are: explore ideas, pre write, organize, write a first draft, revise the draft and produce the final copy. Now, how can the students produce a written form if they can not explore ideas that will be used to organize their writing, as stated by Heasly: “Essentially we see writing as a form of problem solving in which the writer faces two main tasks: (a) Generating ideas in language, and (b) Composing these ideas into a written structure adapted to the needs of the reader and the goals of the writer”. (1987: 1). In other words, it can be
summarized that writing’s problems can be identified as the two above generally, they are: generating ideas and composing ideas. It is clear enough for us to understand now, that ideas are the most difficult problem in writing. Considering the problems above, the researcher assumes that English teachers should be able to find out the appropriate way for teaching writing in order to solve the general writing problem dealing with ideas. Many ways that can be taken by teachers to solve the problem of ideas, such as: brainstorming, key words, outline, mind mapping, etc. One of them that can be applied is outlining. According to Widarso, outline is defined as: “Outline atau kerangka yang mendasari tulisan adalah pedoman yang akan mengarahkan atau membimbing kita dalam menulis, supaya kita ingat apa yang harus kita tulis dan membuang apa yang semestinya tidak kita tulis”(2006: 69). Outlining is made before beginning the paper that is most helpful in organizing one’s thoughts. If the outline is good, a paper should be easy to write. It means that outline is used to put the ideas about the topic on paper in a moderately organized format. The sentences that have been made may still change before the text or paragraph is complete. So, the students can decide what the sentences that is used on their writing or erase the sentences that they don’t need on their writing. When we begin to write, however, we can not remember on impulse. We must remember on purpose, searching our past for information we may want to use. Select a key word or an image to unlock our memory and focus our attention. After planning, we have to know whether the information we discover in planning can be shaped into successful writing. Now, we can begin to organize them. This process involves selecting, subtracting, adding ideas and then outlining them. Oshima and Hogue (1988: 130) say, “Outlining is a way to help you organize your ideas, it helps you plan your essay before you begin to write”. In other books of them, it is stated that an outline is the planning to write something or paragraph to make sure that all of your ideas will
According to Langan (2001: 35), “Outlining is central to writing a good paragraph”. Based on those statements, outline will help us organize thoughts and stay with the topic. Our writing will depend on our outline because our outline is central of writing. We make an outline before we begin to write. If the outline is good format, our writing will be good too. Outline can be made by the students based on their writing, purpose, etc. The students can choose one of outline form that they like as written by Oshima and Hogue (1983: 21) in their book that there are several different outline forms that can be used, they are: simple outline or framework, the “equivalent value” rule and the “parallel form” rule. A simple outline is used for a short paragraph. It is used by the writer to write a well organized paragraph that is easy to understand. For example: Topic sentence, First Supporting Point, Second Supporting Point, Third Supporting Point, and Concluding sentence. In a formal outline, ideas that have the same kind of letter or number must have equal value. This means that every capital letter must be equal in value and every idea given a small letter or Roman numeral must be equal. For example: Topic sentence, Reason; Example, Example, Reason, Example, Concluding sentence. Equal parts of a formal outline should be written in parallel form. This means that all ideas given the same kind of letter or number should be written in complete sentences, clauses, phrases, or single words such as adjectives, etc. Based on explanation above, the students can choose what kind of outline that is suitable and easy to make it for helping their writing. Eventually this research is intended to know whether teaching writing using outline effective to the student’s writing ability or not.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The variables of this research are, first outlining as an independent variable and the students’ writing as a dependent variable. It is used Pre-Experimental Research design since this research used pre-test and post-test. The aim
of Pre-Experimental Research is to know the influence in teaching writing using outline. On this method, the control and experimental class are not used but this research used pre-test and post-test design to the same class, means that the researcher used one class only. Test is used to measure the student’s ability in writing before and after they are taught using outlining. The statistical technique of t-test computation is used in analyzing the data.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to find out the answer whether teaching writing outlining is effective to the students’ writing ability or not. Test is used in this research to get the score of the students’ writing ability. There are two kinds of tests, they are: pre-test and post-test. Scores in pre-test are the scores that are obtained before they are taught using outlining and the scores in post-test are the scores that are obtained after they are taught using outlining. Based on the research that had been done, the scores of students after being given a treatment are better than the scores of students before being given a treatment. The scores of the students that are obtained from pre-test and post-test are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Class Limit</th>
<th>Class Boundaries</th>
<th>Mid Point</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>34.5-39.5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>39.5-44.5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>44.5-49.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>49.5-54.5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>54.5-59.5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>59.5-64.5</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>64.5-69.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the diagram frequency of pre-test above, it can be seen that there are 1 students got score 35-39, 2 students got score 40-44, 13 students got score 45-49, 13 students got score 50-54, 5 students got score 55-59, 2 students got score 60-64, 1 students got score 65-69. There were so many students who get low score. From the table of frequency above, it can be formed into diagram below.
From the diagram above it can be seen that the average score of student between 45-49. That was shown that the writing ability of students are very low.

Table 2
The Score Frequency of Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Class Limit</th>
<th>Class Boundaries</th>
<th>Mid Point</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>59.5-64.5</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>64.5-69.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>69.5-74.5</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>74.5-79.5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>79.5-84.5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post - test is conducted to measure how well the students’ writing ability is increasing. From the table above, it can be seen that the total score which be turned out by 37 students is 2601. It can be seen that there are 3 students got score 60-64, 17 students got score 65-69, 8 students got score 70-74, 7 students got score 75-79, 2 students got score 80-84,. There were so many students who get better score than in pre test. The Diagram of Frequency can be seen in the following.

Diagram 2
Diagram Score Frequency of Post-test

From the diagram frequency of post-test above, it can be seen that there was interesting scores from the student after being taught using tree diagram technique. It can be concluded that the diagram frequency above show the post-test score is better than pre-test score. So we can compare the result of those tests in the following table:

Diagram 3
The Diagram Frequency of Pre-Test and Post-Test
From the calculation of the mean score, it is found out that mean of pre test was 51.02 and mean of post test was 70.29. It stated that the mean of pre test is lower than the mean of post test, so it indicates that after being taught using outlining the students’ writing is getting better. Then to measure whether outlining is effective to be used in teaching writing, the t-test computation is conducted. Based on the analysis of pre-test and post-test scores, the total score of pre-test is 1888 and total score of post-test is 2601. It means that students’ score is increase. The minimum of D (total scoring post-test and pre-test) is 12 and the maximum D is 38. The final result of $D^2$ is 14291. From the result above, it can be seen that the mean different of pre-test; and post-test score are:

1) Calculation the mean different of pre-test and post-test:

$$D = \frac{\sum D}{N} = \frac{711}{37} = 19.21$$

2) Calculating the value of t-test and degree of freedom (db).

This computation is needed to analyze pre-test and post-test in one group design research. The values of t-test is used to know t-table whether the result is significant or not. Then, the degree of freedom is used to know the level of t-table. $t = \frac{D}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{n(n-1)}}} = \frac{19.21}{\sqrt{\frac{14291}{37}}} = 19.21$

$$\sqrt{\frac{37(37 - 1)}{14291 - 386.24}} = \frac{19.21}{\sqrt{13904.76}} = \frac{19.21}{\sqrt{1332}} = \frac{19.21}{10.43} = 19.21 \div 3.22 = 5.94$$

$Db = Degree$ of $Freedom$

$N = Number/total$ of $the$ students

$Db = N-1$

$= 37 - 1 = 36$

$1\% = 2,704$

$5\% = 2,021$
From the formulas above, it can be seen that t-score is 5.94. The last step is finding the t-table on Db 36, the t-table is 2.021 at the level of significance 5% and 2.021 at the degree of significant 1%. It means the t-score is higher than the t-table at both of the degree of significant. So it is very significant, the Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, on the other hand Ha is the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted. Based on the finding in this study, it can be interpreted that first, the using of outlining is effective to improve writing ability, by using outlining the students can develop their idea, focus on the topic and write smoothly. This result is supports the proposed theory that states that outlining is a way in helping organizing ideas, it helps planning the essay before beginning to write. Furthermore, an outline is the planning to write something or paragraph to make sure that all of the ideas will fit and outlining is central to writing a good paragraph.

REFERENCES


Wicaksono, Is Outlining Useful ... 

*Writing With a Purpose*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company

Widarso, Wishnubroto, Drs. 2006. 