Using Quickwriting in Improving the Students' Ability to Write Paragraph

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to find out: the ability of the second semester students of Informatics Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University in writing paragraph through quickwriting. This research employed quantitative method. The method used in this research was pre-experimental with one group pretest-posttest design. The istrument was writing test. The results of the research shows that quickwriting is effective to be used to improve students' ability in writing because there was a significant difference between the progresses in writing of the students who were studying through quickwriting and those are not. By quickwriting strategy, the students can express their ideas easily without stopping and rushing. It gave them writing power and easy to understand. No more stopping in writing because it's under the pressure of time, and the students' attitude of the second semester students of Informatics Study Program Cokroaminoto Palopo University in learning English writing was positive and more interested in learning English writing through quickwriting strategy. It was proved that there was significant difference between the result of students' pre-test and post-test by the value of t-test is greater than the value of t-table($T_{test\ value}$ (12.50) > $T_{table\ value}$ (2.011)).

Keywords: Writing, Paragraph, Quickwriting

1. Introduction

Writing is one of the language skills that plays an important role in human communication. The most important of writing is coming to be more and more recognized. It is the written mark that links with the outside world is formed. Writing means that how to communicate our opinion to another on the paper. But reality shows that, it cannot be done as well because it is very difficult to express. Furthermore, Heaton (1984) states that many students still encounter difficulties in writing because it is complex and difficult. In studying English, many students who study in the tertiary level still often make errors in writing though they have learned it for many times, even years.

Writing through process helps students become aware of their skills. In addition, Winner and Murray in Indrayani (2017) consider that creative writing is not only to communicate information but also to make the reader cares about that information, makes him understand and has many experiences, must be developed by encouraging students to discover who they are and what they have to say. After that they put words into sentences, into paragraph and paragraps into free composition. In relation to the importance of material, the researchers have an alternative to use quickwriting, especially to help the students to express their idea or opinion into written form, but sometimes they have a limited idea and their writing cannot run well. So through quickwriting, it tends to help the students express their ideas easier. It gives them writing power.

Quickwriting means that how to write freely without stopping. To make clearly, Temple, et. al. (1982) define that quickwriting is just what the name suggests, a strategy in which students simply begin to write and let their thoughts flow freely without focusing on mechanics or revisions. So through quickwriting, it tends help the students to express their ideas easier. It gives them writing power. Based on the previous background, the researchers formulate a research question as follows:

"Is the quickwriting effective to improve the students' ability to write paragraph at the second semester students of Informatics Study Program Cokroaminoto Palopo University?"

This research aims to expose the ability of the second semester students of Informatics Study Program Cokroaminoto Palopo University in writing paragraph through quickwriting. The result of this research is expected to be a piece of useful information for teaching of English writing by hoping that quickwriting can develop the students' ability in writing paragraph at the second semester students of Informatics Study Program Cokroaminoto Palopo University.

1.1. Concepts of Writing

Heaton (1984) argues that writing is kind of activity where the writer expresses all ideas in his mind in the paper (print) from words to sentences, sentences to paragraph to essay. In relation about it, Elbow (1998) describes that writing is process of transforming the material you discover by research, accident, trial and error, or whatever into message which has a meaning. In short, writing is deliberated process. Writing is transferring data or feeling to another as the reader. In another word, it is a communication process by undirected speech or reported speech.

In addition, D' Angelo in Indrayani (2017) considers that writing is a form of thinking for a particular audience, and for a particular occasion. According to this concept that one of the most important tasks as a writer is to master the principles of writing and thinking that will help to achieve his goal. The most important of these principles are those of invention arrangement, and style invention is the process of discovering ideas for speaking or writing arrangement. According to Trimmer and Summer (1983) that writing is one way to convey something about ourselves or to communicate ideas to people beyond our immediate to learn something you did not know.

Based on some definitions presented, writing could be defined as a complex process where by looks at and understands what has been written, the combination of some components that result of one active attempt the part of the reader to understand writer's message. Writing is a part of language skill which requires and elliptical ability in order to construct a brief and good order of sentence. As one of the language skill in English, writing is used to express the student ideas, opinion or comments which are conveyed in the written form.

Yarber in Fitriani (2017) says that an effective writer agrees that good writing has several important characteristics, they are: (1) Good writing is not boring; it keeps your interest by what is says and how to say; (2) Good writing is easy to follow because it follows a plan; (3) Good writing presents ideas that are fresh; (4) Good writing is free of serious mistake in grammar, spelling, and punctuation because those errors get in the way of the writers idea and distract the reader; and (5) Good writing uses language that is right for the job formal when required and informal when appropriate.

There are five significant components of writing according to Jacob in Indrayani (2017) they are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic. They are as follows: The first is content. Content of writing should be clear for the readers so that the readers can understand the message conveyed and get information from it. The second is organization. In organization, the writing concerns with the ways the writer to arrange and organize the ideas or the messages in the writing. The third is vocabulary.

The effective use of words will always result good writing both specific and technical writing, the dictionary is very considerable vocabulary is one in writing. The fourth is language use. Language use in writing description and other form of writing involves correct language and point of grammar. The last is mechanics. There are at least two parts of mechanic in writing, namely punctuation and capitalization.

1.2. Concepts of Paragraph

Lindbolm in Indrayani (2017) describes that a paragraph is a group of sentences. It is composed by expressing one central idea, complete itself, and also subdivision or a part of something larger such as a composition or a chapter in a book. Paragraph is a group of sentences. It means there are some sentences are grouped with one central idea. In addition, Barnett (1974) defines that a paragraph is a group or related sentences about a single topic. It has four essential parts: topic, idea, details, and transition.

Tarigan in Rasdianah (2016) explains that a good paragraph should have four characteristics. The first is unity. A paragraph has a unity if every sentence in it develops one central idea. When a paragraph a unity, it sticks to the topic. It develops without getting of track. This means that all developments support the topic sentence. The second is completeness, a complete paragraph provides information well enough and it develops the truth for the reader. In complete paragraph, the writers provide the readers with restricted topic sentences and sufficient information to clarify analyze and support the main idea that which is stated in the topic. The third is order. Order in paragraph can be achieved by presenting the information of paragraph in a desirable sequence. The order of information is a paragraph depends on the subject matter, the purpose of the writing, and the writer's preference. The last is coherence. Coherence means sticking together and in paragraph can be achieved by connecting one sentence to other. Each sentence in a paragraph is closely related to the next. It takes the reader logically and smoothly from one sentence to the next so that ideas stick one another.

1.3. Quickwriting

Temple, et. al. (1982) explain that quickwriting is just what the name suggests, a strategy in which students simply begin to write and let their thoughts flow freely without focusing on mechanics or revisions. In quickwriting, students focus on content, and later, if they choose, they can revise and polish their compositions using the writing process. In quickwriting, we are talking about how to write freely. It is similar to freewriting, means that let us our opinion or our feeling are expressed with freely without rushing and stopping. It is under the pressure of time and let the students write whatever they want to write. Furthermore, Elbow (1998) has described that quickwriting is an opportunity for students to write freely for a brief period in each class, usually 10 minutes or thereabouts. The nature of quickwriting as having three important aspects "concentrating on content, not worrying about form, and writing without stopping"

Quickwriting is an opportunity for students to write freely for a brief period in each class, usually 10 minutes or thereabouts. This offers students a rewarding experience of writing because it can avoid the inhibitions which normally influence writing, inhibitions that have developed since first grade of elementary school, i.e. writing had to be clear,

correct and neat. To be successful, though, quickwriting, while free for the students, still requires the teacher to be organized, disciplined and methodical. The method of this strategy is at the beginning of each class, allocate about 15-20 minutes for the whole freewriting exercise.

Elbow in Temple, et. al. (1982) has developed into two types of quickwriting, they are: (1) Unfocused Quickwriting. In unfocused quickwriting, students let their thoughts ramble from topic to topic. Quickwriting can end after the first quickwrite and then students write again for a period of 5 to 10 minutes or students can write second; (2) Focused Quickwriting. More focused quickwrite that develops and expands one of the ideas mentioned in the first attempt. If students are going to continue, they reread what they have written and choose one idea to develop in the second try. According to Elbow (1998), quickwriting is a good way to help student develop ideas, and words to express ideas, by separating the creating stage of writing from the editing stage. Other possible advantages of quickwriting according to Elbow (1998) are: in generating writing quantity, thinking in the target language, developing the ability to write under pressure of time, warming up for other writing, and Understanding the need to edit.

Elbow (1998) describes clearly and simply the philosophy of quickwriting in writing without teacher, they are: (1) The idea is simply to write for 10 minutes, don't stop for anything; (2) Go quickly without rushing; (3) Never stop to look back, to cross something out, to wonder how to spell something, to wonder what word or thought to use, or to think about what you are doing; (4) If you can't think of spelling, just use a squiggle or else write, 'I can't think of it'; Just put down something; (5) The easiest thing is just to put down whatever is in your mind; (6) If you get stuck it's fine to write 'I can't think of anything to say' as many times as you want; or repeat the last word you wrote over and over again; or anything else; (7) The only requirement is that you never stop.

It seems that, students will be more interested and more stimulated to write about something which is related to students' lives. Writing about students' experience will be very interesting, however, the quickwriting experience is valuable because students are developing writing fluency, learning a strategy to use when they do not know how to start a writing assignment, and learning that they usually do have something to say on almost any topic. Moreover the students will be more interested in writing when they are given certain topics. Through quickwriting they will be able to express their ideas, vocabulary and sentences easily to write. Quickwriting can help students overcome the sense of block. It give them writing power.

2. Method

The method used in this research was pre-experimental with one group pretest-posttest design. This design involved one group which is pre-tested, exposed to a treatment, and post-tested. The population of the research was taken from the students at the second semester students of Informatics Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University. The researcher used random sampling technique. It was expected to be more accurate. It was taken 45 students (15 male students and 30 female students) from two classes. The researchers used writing test. The test consisted of pre-test and post-test.

The procedure in collecting data is presented as follows: (1) The first meeting. It was the socialization: the researcher socialized the way of the research that would be conducted to the students; (2) Giving a pre-test: the students wrote a paragraph according to the topic that the researcher given; (3) Giving treatments: after giving the pre-test, the students got a treatment for eight meetings. In each meeting the students would be given materials; (4) It was giving a post-test: after the treatment, the post-test was conducted to find out the students' achievement and their progress. The test was similar to the pre-test.

The data collected through the test were analyzed by using pre-experimental method. The researcher observed only one aspect in writing. The aspect observed was content.

Table.1. Content Classification

Classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent to very good	100-84	Knowledge, experience, suitable substance, fluent expression, ideas clearly stated.
Good to average	83-68	Some knowledge and experience of subject, advantage range.
Fair to poor	67-51	Limited knowledge and experience of subject, little substance.
Very Poor	50-34	Does not show knowledge and experience of subject, no substance.

(Heaton, J. B: 1984)

The classification of the students score is as follows:

Table.2. Scoring Rank

No	Classification	Range of Score
1.	Excellent to very good	100-84
2.	Good to average	83-68
3.	Fair to poor	67-51
4.	Very Poor	50-34

(Heaton, J. B: 1984)

To find out the mean score, the following formula was applied:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

$\overline{X}$: Mean score

$\sum X$: The sum of all scores

N : The number of students

(Gay, 2006)

To find out standard deviation of the students' score in pre-test and post-test by applying formula below:

$$SD = \frac{\sqrt{\sum x^2 - \frac{\left(\sum x\right)^2}{N}}}{N-1}$$

Where:

SD : Standard deviation

$\sum x$: The sum of all score

$\sum x^2$: The sum square of all sore

N : Total number of students

(Gay, 2006)

To find out the significant differences between the score of pre-test and post-test by using the formula:

$$t = \frac{\overline{D}}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum D^2 - \dfrac{\left(\sum D^2\right)}{N}}{N(N-1)}}}$$

Where:

t : Test of significance

$\overline{D}$: The mean of the differences score

$\sum D$: The sum of total score of difference

D : The Square of the sum score of different

N : The total number of students

(Gay, 2006)

To find out the mean score differences by using the formula:

$$\overline{D} = \frac{\sum D}{N}$$

Where:

$\overline{D}$: The mean of the differences score

$\sum D$: The sum of the differences score

N : The total number of students

(Gay, 2006)

3. Results

3.1. Findings

3.1.1 Total Score of Students' Pre-test and Post-test

The scores of the students were observed on the one component of writing, namely content. The data is presented in the following table:

Table.3. Frequency and Rate Percentage of the Students' Score in the Pre-Test

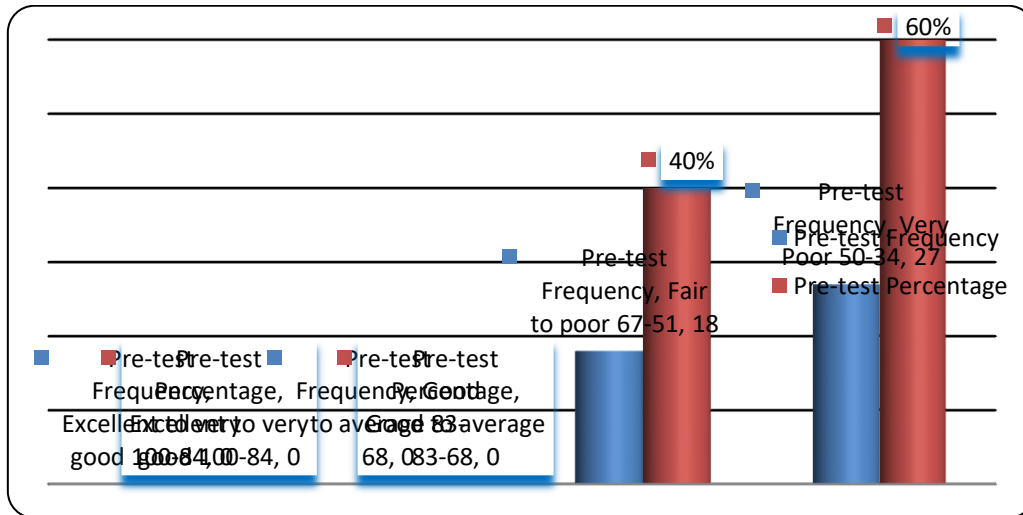| No	Classification	Range	Pre-test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1.	Excellent to very good	100-84	-	-
2.	Good to average	83-68	-	-
3.	Fair to poor	67-51	18	40%
4.	Very Poor	50-34	27	60%
	Total		45	100%

Diagram.1. Frequency and Rate Percentage of the Students' Score in the Pre-Test

The table 3 above indicates that, in the pre-test there were only 18 (40%) students' score classified as fair to poor (67-51), and 27 (60%) students' score classified as very poor (50-34). Mean score of the students' ability in writing paragraph for pre-test was 43.91. In this case, the researcher concluded that, students still low and cannot be able to write. It means that, the ability of writing still low. Therefore, the researcher considered that the students need many exercise and interesting technique to develop writing ability.

Table.4. Frequency and Rate Percentage of the Students' Score in the Post-Test

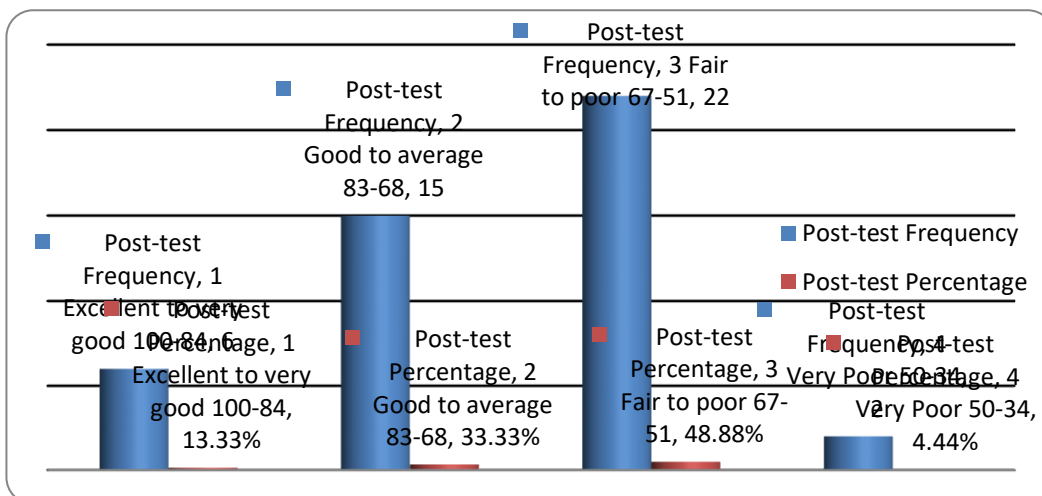| No	Classification	Range	Post-test	
			Frequency	**Percentage**
1.	Excellent to very good	100-84	6	13.33%
2.	Good to average	83-68	15	33.33%
3.	Fair to poor	67-51	22	48.88%
4.	Very Poor	50-34	2	4.44%
	Total		45	100%

Diagram.2. Frequency and Rate Percentage of the Students' Score in the Post-Test

The table 4 above indicates that, in the post-test there were 6 (13.33%) students' score classified as excellent to very good, 15 (33.33%) students' score classified as good to average, 22 (48.88%) students' score classified as fair to poor, and 2 (4.44%) students' score classified as very poor. Mean score in the post-test was 66.88.

Based on the data above, the writer can conclude that before treatment, the students' writing ability was 43.91, which is classified as very poor. After the treatment was given, the students' ability increase to 66.88, which is as fair classification. It was proved that there was a significant difference between the result of pre-test and post-test.

3.1.2. Mean Score and Standard Deviation

After calculating the result of the students' pre-test and post-test, the writer then calculated the mean score and standard deviation. The result also showed that students' writing ability was increased. The result can be seen in the following table:

Table.5. Mean Score and Standard Deviation

Test	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	43.91	1.36
Post-test	66.88	2.15

Table 5 above shows the statistical summary of the students' mean score and standard deviation both in pre-test and post-test. The mean score of the students' pre-test was 43.91 which is classified as poor with standard deviation 1.36 and the mean score of the students' post-test was 66.88 which categorized as fair with standard deviation 2.15.

3.1.3. Test Significance

In this case, the researcher taken test significance in order to know whether or not the mean score is statistically different from two variables (pre-test and post-test) at the level of significant difference (0.05) with degree of freedom (df) = N-1, where N= the total of the students (45).

The following table shows the result of t-test calculation:

Table.6. T-Test Calculation

Variable	T-test value	T-table value
X1 – X2	12.50	2.011

Table 6 above indicates the value of t-test is greater than the value of t-table (T-test value > T-table value). It shows that there is a significant difference between the results of students' pre-test and post-test.

3.1.4. Hypothesis Testing

To find out the degree of freedom (df), the researcher used the following formula:
    df = N-1
    df = 45-1
    df = 44

For the level of significance (α) 0.05 and df =45, then the value of the table is 2.011, while the value of t-test is greater than t-table value (t_{test} (12.50) > t_{table} (2.011). It means that the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

From the analysis above, the researcher concludes, there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the students' writing ability after giving treatment for developing their ability in writing paragraph through quickwriting strategy.

3.2. Discussion

After applying the quickwriting strategy, the researcher found that such strategy was very effective. This assumption is stated with evidence. During the application process of treatment, the researcher shows that the students were very interested to the material that the researcher presented. Based on the result of the writing test, the students' ability in writing is developed. It was supported by the result of pre-test and post-test from the components of writing.

The description of data collected through the writing test as explained in the previous section shows that the students' ability in writing developed. It was supported by the frequency and rate percentage of the result of the students' pre-test and post-test. In pre-test there is no student in excellent to very good and good to average score and the post-test it become 6 (13.33%) students in excellent to very good and 15 (33.33%) students in good to average. In pre-test there are 18 (40%) students in fair to poor score and there are 27 (60%) students in very poor score. In the post-test there are 22 (48.88%) students in fair to poor and there are 2 (4.44%) students in very poor. From the result, it can be concluded that the students' writing ability was increased during the treatment. It means that the students acquired the materials.

Looking at the comparison of the students' pre-test and post-test in frequency and rate percentage, the researcher can conclude that there is an improvement of the students' ability in writing after giving the treatment materials.

4. Conclusion

Quickwriting was effective to be used to improve students' ability in writing because there was a significant difference between the progresses in writing of the students who were studying through quickwriting and those are not. By quickwriting strategy, the students can express their ideas easily without stopping and rushing. It gave them writing power and easy to understand. No more stopping in writing because it is under the pressure of time, and the students' attitude of the second semester students of Informatics Study Program Cokroaminoto Palopo University in learning English writing was positive and more interested in learning English writing through quickwriting strategy. It was proved that there was significant difference between the result of students' pre-test and post-test by the value of t-test is greater than the value of t-table ($T_{\text{test value}}$ (12.50) > $T_{\text{table value}}$ (2.011)).

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