

# Writing Ability

*by Ana Maghfiroh*

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**Submission date:** 19-Jun-2023 04:05AM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 2118423179

**File name:** 550-1944-1-PB.pdf (114.13K)

**Word count:** 3552

**Character count:** 19174



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### ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY BY IMPLEMENTING PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING METHOD AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF PONOROGO IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020

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#### Abstract

Writing is an important language skill because it becomes a means of learning, discovering, developing, and perfecting language skills. The researcher using Problem-Based Learning method to enhance students' writing ability. This research aims to develop the students' intelligence by learning to solve problems and shapes students' interaction with the new environment that confronts students to real world problems to begin learning so that the students become critical thinkers. The researcher used a classroom action research design. The subject was the English department students at Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in the academic year 2019/2020. The class consists of 16 students. Before implementing, the researcher made a lesson plan, the steps of Problem-Based Learning method, and prepared instruments, questionnaires, observations, field notes, and test will be conducted in the last meeting. The research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of two meetings. Based on the result of the observation it showed that the students were more active than the previous meeting, the percentage was 52% in cycle one and 84% in cycle two. The result of the questionnaire score was 84% in cycle one and 96% in cycle two it means the students were more enjoyed, gave a positive response and looked more fun with the implementation of this method. The result of the writing test in cycle one is that 13 students or 81% who got score  $\geq$  B- (2.5), in cycle two was 100% or all students got score  $\geq$  B- (2.5). The result of writing test in cycle two, it showed improvement. The research finding proves that Problem-Based Learning method was successfully improve writing ability. Hopefully, this research can be a reference for the lecturer of writing course to teach and learn writing and for the next researcher for conducting the next research.

**Keywords:** *Writing, Problem-Based Learning Method*

**How to Cite.** Windi Astuti (2020). Enhancing Students' Writing Ability by Implementing Problem-Based Learning Method at The English Department Students in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in Academic Year 2019/2020. *Edupedia Journal Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo*, 4(2), 155-161.

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ISSN 2614-1434 (Print)  
ISSN 2614-4409 (Online)

#### INTRODUCTION

English is a prominent global language that has an important role in education, especially in Indonesia. English also significant for the education area, in overseas children are encouraged and

taught to learn English as a second language, even in countries which is not an official language (Nishanthi, 2018).

In English, there are four skills in the learning and teaching process they are speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Those skills are related to each other, therefore learners are required to master all of those skills. According to Sadiku (2015) in order to make the success of English teaching the four skills must be applied effectively.

Writing is important to pass the academic process. According to Durga&Rao (2018), The meaning of writing is the activity from the writer which is express the ideas, thoughts, and facts in easy and clear language on a paper or other areas. The students need to learn writing to make the students able to convey their ideas, thoughts, and feelings in a written form so that it can be understood by everyone who read it. On the other hand, the students need to master a good writing skill to finish their education.

Teaching writing is a sustainable process that has various ways in the learning process. In language teaching, writing has a particular position because it implicates a practice and the other skills in a language such as reading, speaking, and listening (Klimova, 2014:147).

Based on the preliminary study that the researcher did at the English department students in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo, the researcher found some problems faced by the fourth semester students in writing learning especially in the way expressing their ideas into a written form. When the lecturer asked them to write, they found the difficulties to bring up the ideas. Moreover, the students also difficult in composing word by word in English into sentences. This condition happened since the lack of students' knowledge about the topic to be written. In addition, the lack of students' ability to think critically in developing an idea. It happened since the lack of lecturer in generating students' critical thinking, the lecturer not presenting or describing the problems before assignment. In the assignment, the lecturer only instructs to write essays on certain topics.

One of the ways to address the problem of students in writing is by using Problem-Based Learning method. This method is basically a teaching and learning approach that uses real life problems that is used to start, motivate, and focus knowledge. In general, Problem-Based Learning method is a learning approach that uses the real world problems as a context for students to learn about critical thinking and problem solving skills, this method uses the problems as a first step in collecting and integrating new knowledge then determines the direction learning done in a group (Kurniawan et al., 2012:167). From this statement, the writer believes that Problem-Based Learning can make the students active and also make the students think more critically to get the ideas in writing. The students can explore ideas so that they can be motivated to write and how work in a group.

Based on the statement the writer wants to conduct a collaborative classroom action research entitled "Enhancing Students' Writing Ability by Implementing Problem-Based Learning Method at The English Department Students in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in Academic Year 2019/2020".

## REVIEW AND LITERATURE

### 1. Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the important parts of language skills besides speaking, reading, and listening that learners need to learn. Writing is very important in the academic process, the students need to master a good writing skill to finish their education.

Writing is an instrument that is used as a means to express feelings, thoughts, and students' appraisal about what has been seen, read, or experienced (Ontario, 2005:4). Writing is used as a process of conveying ideas on a paper. The author expresses the notions in a written form using language which is easy to understand

to attain the desired purposes the author conveyed to the reader. Furthermore, Writing is a communication tool that is used as a text in an interactive process between writer and reader (Celce-Murcia, 2017:207).

## 2. Writing Process

Harmer (2004:4-6) states that there are four steps process, they are:

### a. Planning

The writer has to make a plan by thinking, trying, and deciding what they are going to say before the writer starting to write.

There are three main issues that the writer has to consider in the planning process, they are :

- 1) The purpose of writing. <sup>22</sup> It is important to consider the purpose of writing because this will influence the production of a written form as a good writer. In addition, the purpose of writing will influence the use of language, the writer can decide the most suitable form of language. Therefore the information will be delivered well to the reader.
- 2) The audience they are writing for. Here the audience is a reader. The audience will influence the structure of the paragraph, the arranged shape of writing, diction, and language style whether formal or informal tone.
- 3) The content structure of writing. How the best sequence of facts, ideas, or arguments which the writers have decided to insert.

### b. Drafting

The meaning of drafting is getting ideas on a paper in a sentence or paragraph form. Drafting is required in the writing process to help the writer to write ideas and determine what should write first, second, third, and so on, until the last.

### c. Editing (reflecting and revising)

In this step, the writer read what has been written in a draft. If the writer finds the ambiguous or confusing text, the writer may change to be a good writing or remove it. Revising and reflecting are necessary by other readers to help the writer to make a suitable revision.

### d. Final Version

This is the last step of writing. After the writers have edited the draft, make a change in the editing process, then the writer should produce a final process by considering what is necessary. This may look different from the draft. Nevertheless, the writer is ready to send a written form to the reader.

## 3. Students' Problem of Writing

Most students have difficulties in using language, especially in writing. Students consider that writing as a difficult activity, both in a foreign language and in the mother tongue. Some students are not good at writing, the students think that writing is unimportant activity and boring. The teacher has an important role in this problem aside from the students' problem. Problems were found in various aspects during the learning process of writing. In Maysuroh et al., (2017:8) was found the problem on some aspects of writing, they are grammatical problem belonging subject-verb and integrating sentences to be a coherent paragraph, improper choice of words, and other mechanical problems such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

Byrne (1988:4) explains there are three categorizes problems which are caused by writing. The first is psylogical problems which more focuses on the difficulty of composition in developing material or content in writing. The second is linguistic problems like language use, vocabulary, and grammar. Moreover, the choice of a sentence in writing has been fully monitored. Not only the linguistics, but the interference on a cultural level is more

difficult between the foreign language and mother tongue. The third is cognitive problems. Writing is learned even though the process of guidance. Although in speech is less used, but the written form of the language and particular composition should be master and learned like capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing.

#### 4. Problem-Based Learning Method

Problem-Based Learning method is a model learning that can help students to improve their skills which are needed in the current era of globalization. Problem Based-Learning is designed in the last 1970s. This learning model presents a real problem for students as beginner learning, then completed through investigation applied using problem solving approach. The process in Problem-Based Learning method is purposed at enhancing students' learning and motivation by using the power of authentic problem solving.

Problem-Based Learning method is an active strategy which suitable for better preparing information to students for professional practice (Cohen, 2002:105). Students work together in a small group discussion, communicating and integrating information, students also bringing together collective skill at obtaining in a process to get information about the problem that resembles inquiry where make the students think more critically. Problem-Based Learning method can be implemented when teachers choose the materials or topics of a subject which they have a problem and can be solved. The problem used can be taken from books, the internet, events around the environment, an event in a family, or social life.

#### 5. The Steps of Problem-Based Learning Method

Nurdiansyah&Fahyuni (2016:88) explain there are five stages to implement Problem-Based Learning method as follows:

a. Orienting Students to Problem

The lecturer explains the learning objective, the logistics needed, and motivates students to be involved in problem solving activities of their own choosing.

b. Organizing Students to Learn

The lecturer helps students define and organize learning assignments related to the problem.

c. Helping Independent Inquiry and Groups

The lecturer encourages students to gather appropriate information, gather experiment, get an explanation and solution in problem solving.

d. Developing and Presenting the Work of Exhibitors

The lecturer helps students in planning and preparing the appropriate work such as reports, video recordings, and models, and helps students to share their work.

e. Analyzing and Evaluating the Problem Solving Process

The lecturer helps students to reflect or evaluate on their investigation and the processes they use.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study is collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR). It is called collaborative Classroom Action Research because the researcher directly works together with the lecturer to conduct the research to find out solutions to the students' problems about their writing which they encountered in the class. Khasinah (2013:113) explained that action research is a method conducted by teachers to find out what the best way or method to use in a classroom in order to improve student learning.

According to Arikunto (2014:193-201), research instrument is a device used by the researcher while collecting data to make the research easier and to get a better result aimed to make the data easy to be processed. In this research, the researcher used four instruments, they are questionnaire, observation, test, and field notes.

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The research in analyzing the observation and questionnaire uses the formula below:

The percentage =

$$\frac{\sum \text{amount of obtained score}}{\sum \text{amount of maximum aspect}} \times 100$$

17 Here the researcher defined that if the students of the fourth semester at the English department students in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in academic year 2019/2020 reached the percentage criteria score  $\geq 75\%$ , it means that enhancing students ability in writing using Problem-Based Learning method was successful.

To obtain the score of the test, the researcher used scoring rubrics by Jacob. the maximal score is 100.

The researcher defined that if the students of the fourth semester at the English department students at Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in the academic year 2019/2020 have reached the minimum score is B- they passed the minimum score in writing course. According to the academic guide book at Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo the score B- is 2.5, if it calculated is around  $\geq 65$  up to  $\leq 74$ . If the students can get score B- meant that enhancing students' writing ability by using Problem-Based Learning method is successful.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 until July 01<sup>st</sup>, 2020. This classroom action research was conducted at the English department students in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in the academic year 2019/2020 which consisted of 16 students. There were two meetings in the first cycle and the second cycle consisted of two meetings.

### 1. Cycle I

Learning activities were done in online learning environment by using google

classroom, all of students had already joined the online class before the lecturer began the class. Besides, the class used whatsapp group to make the discussion clearer and easier.

The lecturer began the class by greeting the students, asking the students to pray together, checking the student's attendance list, and delivering the aim of the learning. The lecturer explained the procedures of the teaching learning process, the learning objective, and activities that would be carried out by implementing the Problem-Based Learning method. The lecturer gave the motivation to the students to be involved in problem solving activities and understand the learning that would be done.

Then, the lecturer divided the students into four groups consisted of four students. The lecturer gave the definition, the generic structure, the purposes, and the example of an argumentative essay in a text. The lecturer oriented the problems that have been written in the example of argumentative essay text. After that, the lecturer asked the students to read the text that had been given while discussed and analyzed the problem situation. Here, the students were asked to find out some of the argumentative statements in the example of the text that had been given. The lecturer helped students to define and organize assignments learning related to the problem.

In the next steps, the lecturer encouraged students to collect data, the information needed, carry out the experiments and investigation to get explanations and problem solving until the students understand the text. Every group analyzed the text and delivered their opinion if one of them found the argumentative statements from the text. The students also used the dictionary to help them easily find vocabulary that they did not know. The lecturer monitored the

students' activities and helped the difficulties of students. The students discussed in their groups, discussed each other and wrote their opinion about argumentative statements.

When the students learned in the class, the researcher observed the activities of the students' responses and class situations. This observation aimed at recording data about the aspect that occurred in the classroom. Most of the students have a good attitude and perform actively to deliver their opinion when they were discussing, but some of the students were passive and some of them did not give opinions.

After the students got their opinions about argumentative statements and wrote in a book, the lecturer had allowed the students to ask about the difficulties in understanding the material. Some of the students ask a question to the lecturer because they were confused, whether the sentences the argumentative statement or not. During the learning process, the lecturer and researcher provided feedback on learning outcomes. After the lecturer answered their question, the lecturer closed the meeting because time up and the meeting will be continued at the second meeting.

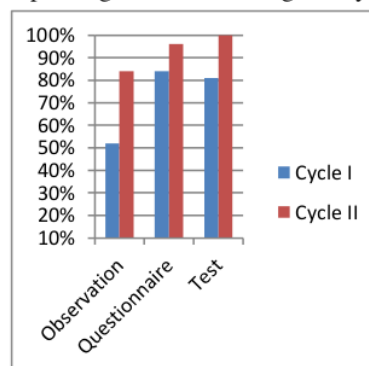
Based on the score percentage of students in writing skill test in the cycle I, there was 3 students or 19% students who got score C (2), 9 students or 56% students who got score B- (2.5), and 4 students or 25% students who got score B (3). It meant that 19% students got low scores (the criteria of minimum standard is  $\geq$  B-). There were 81% of students passed the minimum standard, but the score can still be improved again on the next test to get a better score.

## 2. Cycle II

In the cycle II, there were 7 meetings.

Based on the score and percentage of the students in writing ability in cycle 2 were 16 students (all of the students) passed the criteria of minimum standard or

$\geq$ B- (2.5). It meant that the implementation of Problem-Based Learning method to enhance students writing ability was satisfying and successful. The score of students was increasing from the test I to test II. It meant that Problem-Based Learning method was interesting in improving students' writing ability.



## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result and discussion of the research, it can be concluded that Problem-Based Learning method in enhancing students' writing ability was successful. It can be seen from the result of observation, questionnaire, and test. Problem-Based Learning method was proven successfully improved the writing ability of English department students at Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo in the academic year 2019/2020.

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