HIGHLIGHTING GRAMMATICAL ERRORS BY USING WRITING JOURNAL TO IMPROVE WRITING ACCURACY

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Abstrak: Kesalahan dan kekeliruan dalam penggunaan bahasa asing merupakan cerminan dari proses pembelajaran bahasa. Peserta didik dapat mengambil keuntungan dari kesalahan mereka, jika umpan balik yang tepat diberikan setelah kesalahan dilakukan oleh peserta didik. Bahkan di zaman modern, kesalahan belum dapat ditoleransi di kelas bahasa dan dilihat sebagai kekurangan dalam penggunaan bahasa. Namun, menurut para ahli pentingnya kesalahan menyajikan pandangan yang berkaitan dengan penemuan pembelajar bahasa asing. Dalam perspektif ini, penelitian yang saat ini dilakukan bertujuan untuk menganalisis masalah tata bahasa dan mengatasi masalah yang berkaitan dengan menulis jurnal. Selain itu, penelitian ini berusaha untuk mengungkapkan masalah tata bahasa dan solusinya, pesertanya adalah mahasiswa tahun ketiga program studi pendidikan bahasa Inggris. Peneliti mengungkapkan dalam makalah ini, bahwa penelitian tindakan dengan desain kuasi kuantitatif dan kualitatif, untuk memberikan beberapa wawasan penting terkait dengan penggunaan penulisan artikel jurnal sebagai sarana untuk meningkatkan akurasi tata bahasa tanpa memberikan penjelasan sebelumnya terhadap penulisan artikel jurnal dalam bahasa Inggris. Data tentang akurasi tata bahasa mahasiswa akan dianalisis melalui entri jurnal yang mencakup entri jurnal dialog dan penulisan proses, sementara pendapat mereka tentang entri jurnal dan akurasi tata bahasa diperoleh melalui entri jurnal dialog dan tanggapan wawancara. Temuan dibahas, dan rekomendasi untuk penelitian masa depan dibuat. Penulisan jurnal juga diharapkan dapat menjadi kegiatan belajar lain yang lebih bermanfaat dan memberikan alternatif pengajaran untuk meningkatkan akurasi tata bahasa mahasiswa EFL.

Kata kunci: *masalah tata bahasa, mahasiswa tahun ketiga jurusan bahasa Inggris, menulis jurnal, keterampilan menulis*

Abstract: Errors and mistakes in foreign language use is the reflection of learners' language learning process. Learners can profit from their errors if appropriate feedback is provided after errors or mistakes have committed by learners. Even in modern times errors have not been tolerated in language classrooms and seen as a deficiency in language use. However, according to important scholars errors present a view which is related with learners' discovery of a foreign language. Within the light of this perspective the current research aimed to analyze the grammatical problem and overcome the problem with writing journal. Besides, this study investigated grammatical problems and its solution, the participants were third years students of English department. They The researcher proposes, in this paper, the action research with a quasi quantitative and qualitative design, to provide some important insights into the use of journal writing as a means to improve grammatical accuracy with no prior exposure to journal writing in English. The data on the undergraduates' grammatical accuracy will be analyzed through

their journal entries covering both dialogue-journaling and process-writing entries, while their opinions of journal entries and grammatical accuracy were obtained through their dialogue journaling entries and interview responses. Findings are discussed, and recommendations for future research are made. It is also hoped that journal writing can be another useful learning activity and a teaching alternative to enhance EFL undergraduates' grammatical accuracy.

Keywords: *grammatical problems, third years students of English departme, writing journal, writing skill*

A. INTRODUCTION

English is as a compulsory subject in all level of education; schools, colleges and universities. The communicative approach also they are still having difficulty in using English to communicate, particularly one of the barriers to writing performance in English for most Indonesian learners is that they lack the ability to use appropriate grammar in their English writing. They still have difficulty both in applying the grammatical rules of English in order to form grammatically correct sentences, and in knowing when and where to use these sentences and to whom in writing (Harmer 1985, Lush 2002). Moreover, although they have studied English tenses since primary school, only a few of them can apply their grammatical knowledge in communicative use (Pong siriwet 2001, Intratat 2004, Charoenroop 2006).

The aim of a genre, text and grammar approach was to provide students the ability to use the codes of writing (the genres and grammar) effectively and efficiently. How many times did we see students staring at a blank piece of paper because they did not know how to start, let alone proceed with a writing task? A primary aim of teaching writing, therefore, was to provide students with the knowledge to become effective users of written English (Knapp &Watkins 2005, p.17). The aim is not to provide students with simplistic formulas or rules and regulations for 'correct' English. While rules and formulas have their uses, on their own they do not produce powerful writers, writers who will become competent, confident and articulate users of the English language.

The problems of writing also happened to the students of English Department of Tidar University, especially for for grader. Although writing is very important for us, it is a difficult subject, especially for students. The reason is because writing is a combination of our idea, vocabulary and also grammar. Writing skill is more complex and difficult to teach, require, and master, not only the grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judgment.

The general difficulty of the students in writing is how to organize their ideas. They have difficulties to remember their past experience clearly and how to organize that idea into the appropriate generic structure. As we know that each text has different generic structure, so hopefully, the students can write the text

better if they follow the generic structure of the text itself. For eight graders in State Junior High School 7 Mataram, they still faced problems in organizing ideas systematically. They had some ideas but they had difficulties to express them into sentences or writing form. So, they had difficulties to develop their ideas into paragraph. Based on the problems faced by the students, the writer concluded that the weaknesses of the students in writing were the organization of ideas and vocabulary mastery.

Besides those reasons, there was another factor that made writing became most difficult subject. Another reason was there are a lot of kinds of texts in English, such as narrative, descriptive, recount, spoof and the others. Each text has different characteristics. There are generic structures, social function, and lexico-grammatical features. Students usually could not differentiate each text from the others so they mixed all kinds of texts. This would be a challenge for the teacher to find out how the students can distinguish each kind of text from the others.

Based on those perspectives and problems, the current research aimed to analyze the grammatical problem and overcome the problem with writing journal. Besides, this study investigated grammatical problems and its solution where the participants were third years students of English department.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Grammatical Accuracy

In writing, grammatical accuracy is essential to ensure the writer's intended meaning and to avoid communicative misunderstanding (Lush 2002, Larsen-Freeman 2003). In Indonesian EFL context, Indonesian learners still have problems with verb tense accuracy. Learners frequently make tense errors in their writing though verb tense is one of the most important aspects of grammatical knowledge that non-native English language learners should master (Pongsiriwet 2001, Lush 2002, Intratat 2004, Charoenroop 2006). In English, a sentence cannot exist without a verb (Master 1996). The form of a verb represents 'tense', which shows past, present, or future time (Davis and Liss2006). When students write an essay, tense is very important (Master 1996, Davis and Liss 2006, Roehampton 2008). The use of grammar tenses differs based on types of discourse (Van Dijk 1988 and Fowler 1991 cited in Posteguillo and Palmer 2000). Master (1996) and Byrd and Benson (2001) point out that in general, the individual tenses contain several functions in discourse. Larsen-Freeman (2003) points out that although form, meaning and use are interrelated, each of them can appear diversely challenging for language learners. A challenge may be in the case that a learner knows how to form a grammatical structure but doesn't realize that the structure includes more than one meaning and can be used in different situations. In this Action Research study, grammatical accuracy refers to the student of third years of English Department

ability to use verb tenses accurately interpreted through content analyses of their journal entries.

Journal Writing (JW)

JW is a tool of the 'write to learn' conceptin that it improves learners' writing skills and simultaneously provides a chance for them to reflect on their learning (Cobine 1995, Hogan 1995, Brown 1985b cited in Oxford 1996, Freeman 1998, Burton and Carroll 2001, O'Leary Wanket 2005). Given the nature of AR, JW has an interactive role in the learning-teaching process in revealing unobservable aspects of classroom experience (e.g., psychological factors: learning strategies; affective factors: attitudes, anxiety and motivation; or even learners' tacit knowledge and their problematic situations); thus, a teacher can better understand learners' psycho-affective conditions and their learning process (Allwright 1983, Bailey 1983, Genesee and Upshur 1996, Nunan 1999, Marefat 2002, Rubin 2003, Lê 2006, Altrichter et al. 2008).

Journals, in this study, cover the features of dialogue journaling and process writing. Both dialogue journaling and process writing are experience-based and assigned as out-of-class activities. Regarding the main purpose of JW in the study, accuracy in grammar is focused on and assessed through the instructor's indirect feedback (i.e., clued underlining of grammatical errors with written correction symbols) and the students' self-correction.

Dialogue Journaling

Given the importance of reflection, journals are categorized as an important introspective tool based on the process of observing and reflecting on learners' thoughts, feelings, motives, reasoning processes, and mental states influencing behavior (Nunan 1999, Bailey and Oschner 1983 cited in Bailey et al. 2001). Journals serve important pedagogical purposes as an interactive tool: using writing as a 'thinking' process, and communication like 'dialogue journals.' Keeping dialogue journals creates a mutual relationship between student(s) and teacher in a nonthreatening environment, and this can bring about autonomous.

learning (Staton 1987, Dam and Legenhausen 1999, Vygotsky 1978 cited in Burton and Carroll 2001, Trites 2001, Brown 2004). Moreover, the new learning situation can force the learners to rely more on themselves and their own experience than when they areoperating within the classroom context.

The Writing Process

In teaching second language writers, experts suggest identifying the specific genres students will need for academic or occupational purposes. By focusing on these, students will become competent in both the analysis and composition of these

specific genres. Johns (2003) and Hyland (2003) also suggest the importance of scaffolding based on students' previous knowledge of genre. The most consistent recommendation from the literature is that teachers explicitly instruct their students in writing in different genres to ensure their success in the classroom and in the workplace.

According to Dudley-Evans & St. John in Rahman et al (2009, p.39), developing writing skills also involves other skills, notably the skills of planning, drafting and revising so that the end product is appropriate both to the purposes of the writing and the intended readership.

1. Prewriting guide

   Students need to discover what they already know about a given topic. The Prewriting Think Sheet is designed to elicit this type of information through a variety of questions focused on a particular topic (Urquhart and McIver, 2005).

2. Generating Ideas

   Collecting formation and developing ideas. Four useful techniques for are journal writing, listing, free writing, and clustering.

3. Writing

   When students start to write, one of the difficulties they face is narrowing the focus of their writing. Rather than focusing their thoughts on the most important message, they try to include everything.

4. Revising

   There are two ways you can use this strategy. In a "closed sort," you provide predetermined categories and words, and then ask your students to sort the words according to the categories. In an "open sort," students self-select the categories and the key words. In either case, students can use the resulting word lists as they revise their written work (Urquhart and McIver, 2005, p.74).

5. Editing

   This step is also called revising and editing. First, attack the big issues of content and organization (revising). Then work on the smaller issues of grammar and punctuation (editing).

6. Publishing

   As a sort of recognition of the writing accomplishments, the participants have to share their topics with their peers through publishing their essays on the group's web page by portfolio.

C. METHOD

Research design

This research was conducted for changing the teaching and learning process in the classroom activity through action research. According to Cohen (2007, p.297), action research is a powerful tool for changing and improving the local level. In this

research, the researcher applied some cycles to overcome the problems that students had in writing recount text, especially how to organize the ideas. After some cycle, the researcher will find that students have a better understanding about grammatical problems and higher ability in their writing. This activity involves some cycles which has four elements: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

Subjects of the Research

The subjects of this research is the third years students of English Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Tidar University in the academic year of 2021/2022. It consists of 3 classes and then for choosing the sample it is used a class by purposive random sampling because it is regarded in the middle intelligence of all writing classes.

Research Procedure of each Cycle

The procedures of this study consisted of some cycles. Each cycle was begun with planning the action until revising the plan (Burn, 2010, p.22). The procedures were as follows:

1. Pre – Observation (Reconnaissance)

   It was done based on the interview and observation in teaching and learning process, the writer identified the problems.

2. Planning of cycle 1

   Based on the problem formulation, the researcher uses some following plans:
   a) Preparing a suitable strategy
   b) Designing lesson plans of writing class
   c) Preparing media and facilities
   d) Preparing some specific criteria of the improvement of students' writing skills.

3. Acting

   The researcher gave assessment to the students in the end of each cycle to know the students' improvement in writing recount text. The writer applied some actions based on the planning of lesson plan. The teaching and learning processes were started from pre, main and post activity by using open ended questioning technique in each cycle. The action of cycle II was the re-plan of the reflection cycle I result.

4. Observing / Evaluating

   The observation covers the process of implementation of writing journal in writing. The observation shows the notices of classroom events and classroom interaction.

Table 3.3.1 Rubric for evaluation writing skill

Component of writing	Score	Indicator
Content	4	The content is relevant to the topic and easy to understand
	3	The content is almost relevant to the topic and easy to understand
	2	The content is relevant to the topic but it is not easy to understand
	1	The content is irrelevant to the topic and incomprehensible
Organization	4	Most of the ideas are logically ordered
	3	some ideas are logically ordered
	2	few ideas are logically ordered
	1	The ideas are unrelated each other
Grammar	4	Almost all grammatically accuracy
	3	numerous grammatically accuracy
	2	some grammatically accuracy
	1	a few grammatically accuracy
Mechanics	4	Almost all of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are correct.
	3	There are some mistakes in spelling, punctuation and capitalization.
	2	Mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization and sometimes interfere with understanding
	1	Mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization and severely interfere with understanding.

5   Reflecting

After analyzing the data, the writer did a reflection toward the implementation of open-ended questioning technique in writing recount text. It was important to do because it was used to evaluate the effects of the implementation of open-ended questioning technique. In addition, it was also used to improve the students' ability because it was used to determine each cycle, whether it should be continued with the next cycle or not.

Method of Collecting Data

This action research needs data to support the investigation. According to Sringer (2007, p.68), the primary data in action research were interviews, focus groups, participant observation, questionnaires, documents, records and reports, surveys, and the research literature.

Method of Data Analysis

This research used qualitative method as the main data. The data will be gained from the instruments and analyzed descriptively. Most analysis was conducted through explanation in words. The data gained from the instruments are coded and interpreted based on the checklist and scale. Numbers are also used to describe the progress made by the students. The analysis of this research uses reflecting section because this research is action research.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze and measure the participants' English writing development, the researcher use eight steps adopted from Reinder's (2010). Those stages are; identifying needs, selecting goals, planning learning, selecting resources, selecting learning strategies, practice, monitoring the progress, and the last was assessment and revision, which explained detail as follows:

1. Identifying needs

   Before the learning, the learners were asked to decide what they need to learn, and what condition they need in order to learn better. Therefore, the researcher asked them to decide the rules of this group learning activities that need to be obeyed by all of the participants. For some of the regulation the most important is all the members must be in active participant and don't be afraid to write although there will be some mistakes.

2. Selecting goals

   The learners were asked to decide what the goals of the learning. They need to know and elaborate what they want to learn and what kind of writing to master through the learning media. Here because it must be suitable with the level of learners and with the syllabus, the researcher asked the learners to use descriptive text.

3. Panning Learning

   It began with the writing comment learning. The researcher posted a brief basic knowledge about how to write a good comment on the internet. Then, they explored their writing comment competency by commenting on other people's English posting, and reported them to the group, as well as their analysis of other comments in that posting. Then, every of them had to comment and revise each other report about writing comment. Trying to understand the postings and the link given about comment, all of the participants have their own way in learning, as well as their strategy to plan their own learning. The participants wrote a reflection on the problem, the feeling toward the learning, etc. one of the participant reflected as follows; I like study about write comment, because I can know new vocabulary from other, but sometimes I can't understand all.

Nevertheless, in the next learning topic, learning about writing paragraph, almost all of the participants wrote their reflection about learning of writing paragraph.

4. Selecting resources

The learners selected their own learning sources. The participants were free to check and search any others as many as they wanted to. From 27 members all participant were active to explain their selecting resource process.

5. Selecting learning strategies.

There are some of learning strategies to use when they post the comment or post the writing such as by arrange a time to learn, trying to understand the materials giving by guessing and if she failed to guest, she would ask the facilitator directly, trying to find the meaning of the material from printed and electronic dictionary even google translation.

6. Practice

In this stage, it was divided into two sections, in group and real writing in paper assignment. Firstly, the learners are asked to practice their learning by writing based on the task given. The task that was given had been designed based on the autonomous learning development consideration. Therefore, their participation in fulfilling the task by writing showed how their autonomous learning in writing developed. To help them practice writing, in the beginning of the learning, The researcher asked the participants to do free writing about themselves as the introduction.

7. Monitoring progress

The monitoring progress was seen from questioners, mark and opinions and activeness in group. Interestingly 100% students participated at this stages, but with the detail that 80% of participant were highly participated observing.

8. Assessment and revision.

Here, the learners were asked to assess their peers learning as well as theirs. Therefore, their feedbacks for other participants were observed through their comments, but the feedbacks that assess others' posting will only be counted. Furthermore, after assessment process (assessing others' postingand their own posting) the participants were asked to revise their posting according to the assessment. After all participants giving the comment, the facilitators gave the feedback and revision, both the writing from the group and assignment in paper.

Data Interpretation

The result of observation and analysis shows that Writing Journal as an media can promote students autonomous learning. The practice stages are considered as the main stages in writing learning, where all of the participants (100%) fully engaged participating. All of the participants actively practice writing. Additionally participants also showed full involvement in monitoring the progress. The

participants stated that they liked this type of learning which was more fun and relax. I can see high enthusiasm of this learning although some of theme is not posting in punctual time, because of some reasons such as, bad connection and stopping idea then they must see first others' posting to rise up again their ideas. In this situation, I started the learning process from the comment writing, and then paragraph writing. To guide the participants to gain better achievement, along with those writing instruction, I provided a slight explanation and basic links, and a rubric, so that they could monitor their learning, as well as their peer learning.

From the data analysis it is got that for 27 participants, 100% said that they love using writing journal because it can learn writing freely and enjoyable and also when the researcher checked from the mark before and after they used it, there were significant improvement in this result. From those explanations it can be said that, by using writing journal, it can facilitate the learners to do the autonomous and interesting learning to make better writing, because they write such a habit and they can pour the idea freely without being afraid in making many that leading them to write progressively.

E. CONCLUSION

The demand of perfect writing is such a crucial issue to be focused on. It's way, this research try to make enjoyable and interesting activities in writing by using writing journal. It promotes students not only to practice writing more often but also monitor it, besides learning by them is felt free and enjoy and also as a tool where learners are encouraged to use their creativity combined with personal expression to improve and strengthen their writing through consistency, feedback, confidence and collaboration.

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