

The Effect of Using Outline Technique to Students' Writing Ability

By Rika Riwayatningsih



The Effect of Using Outline Technique to Students' Writing Ability

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ABSTRAK

In the four skills of English language, there are receptive and productive skills. Writing is one of the productive skills which requires us to use our hands and our brains to produce the written symbols that represent our spoken language. The aim of this research is to investigate whether the use of outline is effective to improve students' writing ability. Action research is chosen as the research design. The focus is limited into students writing component especially content and organization and the use of outline in writing descriptive paragraph. One class of second grade is the participant of the research, since that class is the one which has a problem in developing ideas in writing process. Pre- test and post- test are used to get the data. The outline technique is given directly after getting the results of pre- test scores. The findings indicates that there is significance changes between pre- test and post test scores where the post- test has higher scores than pre- test. It is also found that outline helps students' writing especially in the content and organization of their essay. However, there are not improvement in other language components such as grammar and vocabulary.

Kata Kunci: outline, writing, descriptive paragraph

INTRODUCTION

English has four skills and they are divided into two parts, receptive and productive skills. Writing is one of productive skills. Bell and Burney (1984) in Nunan (2005) state that the most complicated activity is writing skill, where the writer or the student has to arrange several sentences into an essay. In the writing, the important things that have to be focused are on the content, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, organization, spelling, and so on.

In writing activities, the students sometimes find many difficulties for example, they do not know how to begin to write, how to combine one sentence to another, how to organize the idea, and so on. Commonly, some students have a problem when they want to good writing such as they are afraid of making mistakes. Therefore, to solve those problems, a teacher has to be more creative so that the students will ease to catch the material well. The teacher can use various appropriate techniques so that the students can comprehend the material easily and quickly, especially teaching writing in a short duration of time. Meanwhile, the process of writing is very necessary to be mastered since the students can learn how to share their ideas and how to organize them into a good essay in writing. Therefore, outline is one way that can be prepared before starting to write since it helps to organize some ideas in partial order. Also, outline is one of technique that can be used by the students in writing classroom. It is a plan that helps to organize the arrangement of ideas in good order. By making outline, the students' writing



will be good in order and also the readers can catch the information easily. So, the benefits will be gotten by two subjects, the writer and the readers. That is why, the students need to learn and practice to make it. Furthermore, outline is also a toll to help the students to arrange the main idea and the supporting details in writing. A correct outline will give impact to the writing itself, therefore a good writing depends on how the students make outline based on the process of making outline. According to Stanley (1988), the definition of outline is the scheme of meaning that appears from the body of the writers taken. After they have transferred all their thought to their notes and the main ideas under that they arranged these notes. They will start to look how the main ideas are related to another that main ideas should be written first or the next. According to Tardiff & Brize (2010), there are two main reasons for making an outline, the first is to help the students in the process of writing and to make a good organizing idea. So, an outline is a simply technique that can help writers to keep their ideas in good order.

Outline is a plan before writing a paper or essay or a form plan to think and organize some ideas which will be arranged into a good writing. By using outline, the students could recognize further about the subject that they will be discussed. Furthermore, the format of outline consists of subject and detail information about the subject that will be discussed. Not only that, they can identify which the supporting ideas that has relationship or not with the main topic. Sometimes, writers write a paper or essay which does not have any relationship between the first topic sentence that is presented with the supporting ideas. It makes the readers confused what the passage is talking about. Sometimes, some students get confuse what they are going to write because they have many topics that would be written. The best way to solve that problem is making outline. They can start by making an outline after that they can write easily.

Making the outline is needed for students in writing since an outline is a technique to ease and organize their ideas. Furthermore, outline would guide them to focus on the subject and they will be guided automatically by outline in finishing writing from the first paragraph until the end paragraph. Unfortunately, many students cannot write well for example, they write whatever they want to write, they do not think how to organize their idea. According to Kaplan (1966) English can be included by a straight line. The communication is direct and the thought process is linear. So, Indonesian students have to adjust their culture because learning language-is also learning the culture. Therefore, outline can help to fix the procedure of writing well by using the pattern of outline.

Outline is one way to guide the students to start their writing. Before they start to write, they have to think the topic then making the outline. It is very useful for students since by making outline, they can organize their ideas into a correct order. Furthermore, outline is useful in writing especially in the descriptive text. The arrangement of this text is needed to be spatial order and the clear description.

By making outline, students will get easily in developing their description

in essay.. Outline is very helpful and has been used in some studies that the researcher has explained before. Paying attention to the benefits and previous studies about the use of outline, the researcher is interested to focus outline technique in English teaching process. Based on this point, the researcher concludes that outline can be used in English teaching process as well. This technique also may help students easy to make a paper or essay. According to the discussion above, the research problem that the writer will investigate is the use of outline can improve students' ability in writing descriptive in term of content and organization. According to the discussion above, the research questions that have to be answered in line with the problem stated above are formulated as follows:

1. To what extent does outline technique improve the content of students' essay ?
2. To what extent does outline technique improve the organization of students' essay?

The scope of this study is focused on the effect of using outline technique to improve students' writing ability in second grade of university students. Outline strategy is used in pre-writing because before students begin their writing, the thing that they have to do first is making outline. Outline has three types, rough outline, the topic outline and the sentence outline. This research only focus to the sentences outline since it will very easy to the students when they copy it into an essay.

Writing is a skill which needs more time to do since it is an activity to organize some ideas. Writing is not an easy activity therefore it must be learned. Indeed, it needs some steps to do writing such as planning, drafting, checking, revising, etc. Oshima and Hogue (1993:3) stated that writing skill is a skill that needs to learn more and always keep practice to improve the way to write well. Therefore, writing will be difficult if the writers do not know the steps of writing. Of course, it needs some stages to make a good writing.

According to Kirszner and Mandell, (1983) there are three writing process, namely prewriting, arranging and drafting or revising. Invention is a planning stage, where the students think the topic, collect some information and make list of vocabularies. The second is organizing. It is to start making an outline. After the students make a list of vocabulary, they can create outline by using outline form that had been learned before. Outline is part of arrangement stage where the students can begin to write it. The last is drafting or revising. After they make an outline, they can start to make draft 1 or start to write. By focusing the punctuation, spelling, etc.

Oshima and Hogue (2007) also stated that the writing process several steps. Prewriting is the first step. It is a process to collect some thought. In prewriting, the students find a topic and collect ideas to present the topic. For example, they can make listing vocabularies. Organizing is the second step. In organizing is to organize the ideas into outline. The students have to make an outline after choosing the topic then listing many words. The third step is writing. In this step, the students can start to write first draft by using their outline as a guide. The last step is revising and



editing. Where they can revise their writing after they write all, their friends can help to check each other.

In the rest chapter, the researcher only focuses on the arrangement stage because the outline is one of ways in arrangement or organizing idea. It can be written if the idea had been done listed then outline can be made to organize or arrange the idea. Then, the researcher can continue to the next stage.

In brief, the explanations above are correct that writing is a tool of communication to organize the message that is in the form of writing. It is written by correct order and related with correct step. In writing, language used is word choice, phrase arrangement, sentence structure and paragraphs and the language used correctly. Moreover, outline is organizing or arrangement process writing that this study focus how outline

According Ramelan (1992) stated that writing is very important and a part of human 'culture since it can be used for transferring thought, idea and speech sounds. From the statement, the researcher summarizes that writing is one of need for human in communicating by making an essay. According to Oshima and Hogue (1988) writing is a skill that needs to learn more and always keep practice to improve the way to write well and it is difficult to learn quickly. Therefore, it is very needed for students to learn it seriously because between four skills, writing is difficult subject for students. It can be solved by using appropriate technique which is outline.

Jacob et.al. (1981) stated that writing has five components:

- a) Organization: how the idea is presented. The students should focus how well the arrangement details information.
- b) Content: the ability to write some ideas in a good appropriate manner by selecting, organizing, and clear information and the number details of description that are relating to the purpose of the essay.
- c) Vocabulary: the students should use appropriate word choices and usage which are related to the subject itself.
- d) Grammatical skills: the ability to construct meaningful sentences. The students should know how to use correct language assessment which consists of effective construction of simple present tense, effective usage of an action verb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction and adjective.
- e) Mechanical skills: the writers should know how to use correct spelling, punctuation, neatness and so on.

There are five components that have to be concerned but this study only focuses on two components, organization and content because outline helps the students or writers how the writers organize their idea into an essay.

According to Kirszner and Mandell (1983) state that when the students write a descriptive essay. They will probably begin with a brainstorming list of details that need to be organized. They do not need write all the detail description of the topic since an essay of

descriptive is an essay that describes a thing from the specific to the general. The important of descriptive essay is thesis statement and the body is partial order. They can start to make a list of vocabularies that are related to topic presented. Oshima and Hogue (2007) stated that essay is as like as a paragraph, it just has more paragraph than a paragraph. Moreover, essay is more detail than paragraph. An essay consists three parts such as introduction, body and conclusion. If body of an essay has two paragraphs, there are two topic sentences of every paragraph. Furthermore, how many topic sentence has, it depends on the thesis statement.

An outline is a plan before writing and listening that is usually used by writers to make easy in writing a paper. Furthermore, Reinking (1981:289) stated an outline is the blue print that consists of main idea and supporting ideas of an essay, organizes the thoughts, connects between the topic and supporting details in presenting an essay and check the organization of the drafts in order to focus on the topic. It means that the list of idea is arranged into an essay that consists of main idea and supporting details.

As Johnson and Morrow (1981) explained making an outline has more than one way, the researcher can adapt the best one. The students can choose which type that will use, the most important is they understand and use well as the outline forms while, the teacher's job is to help them the process of making outline. There are three kinds of outline, namely:

1. Rude outline

Rude outline is like note taking which is included some thoughts. So, it is not formal outline since it just graffiti used by the students in learning process.

2. The topic outline

The topic outline is the short phrases. It is very useful for some different topics that can be arranged in several ways in the paper. It is like point by point so, the writers just need to write important word that can help them in writing their paper.

3. The sentence outline

The antonym of topic outline, full sentences. It is usually used for paper that has complex details. The writers have to write full sentences such as in the first paragraph they have to write topic sentence and also be followed by controlling idea. While in supporting sentences they have to write detail information in full sentences also

This study only focuses to the sentence outline because it can make the students easy to move from outline to the full essay. They just copy the topic sentence and supporting into their essay, not to think again to make a sentence.

According to Oshima and Hogue (2007), the process of writing outline has four steps, namely:

1. Think the topic. The first thing that has to do is to find the topic and try to sum up the point of the paper or essay in one sentence or phrase. It

- can help students to focus on the main point.
2. Start the introduction and body. The students have to write them with Roman numerals: I, II, and III. In introduction, they can write two or more general statements while, in thesis statement, they only write one sentence.
 3. Make the topic sentence of each subsection is written in a upper case. In this stage, the students write the topic sentence one or more than based on the purpose of the essay.
 4. Each supporting sentences are written in a lower case. In this stage, the students can write two or more than sentences to support the topic sentence itself.

To avoid any duplication, the researcher has learned some previous studies which were done by another researcher about the use of outline in writing activity. The first study was conducted by Haryanto Syahputra Sinaga (2015). He conducted a study of the implementation of outline technique to teach writing recount text to eighth graders of SMP Negeri 43 Surabaya. That study showed the implementation of using outline for junior high school students and the result of this study is outline technique was useful and effective to teach writing recount text since it can overcome students' ability in writing recount text.

The second study was conducted by Christian Sabrina and Yunita Agnes Sianipar (2012). They conducted a study of improving students' achievement in writing descriptive paragraph using outline technique. That study showed the improvement of their writing after using outline and the result was an improvement after the students learned outline, the score of second cycle was higher than first cycle. Their score improved better from treatment to treatment. By using outline technique the students' writing improved and they could express their ideas easily.

The implementation of outline had been conducted by two researchers above. The result of their research is outline is useful for students in recount text and descriptive. The reason of conducting this study is the successful of two previous studies therefore the researcher decide to investigate the significant improvement of students' writing descriptive in term of content and organization and also to solve the problem that happened in the classroom when teaching practice. Furthermore, the result of this study was success.

In writing outline, the researcher also needs to assess the outline itself the measure the outline has been good or not. By using rubric, the researcher knows which outline is good or not. The best outline, also the best writing.

Criteria Very well Good Poor Notes Correct use of outline format

Correct use of the purpose. For example, the thesis statement, each topic sentence and supporting details are related with the purpose of the essay.
 Organization has clear identification and also between the topic and the description relatd



by using correct connectives.
 The appropriateness of the headings are related with the topic sentence.

Completeness of outline covers the full of generic structure of descriptive such as identification and description.
Mechanics: spelling, grammar, punctuation, neatness.
Adapted from Brown (2003)

The rubric outline above helps the researcher to check the students' outline before they start to write full essay. The researcher also gave some comments to their outline. The students have to make best outline to improve their writing in descriptive. By using rubric outline, the researcher knew students' comprehension in making outline.

METHOD

According to the research questions and research objectives ⁶ this research, the researcher decided that this study used action research. This study was conducted to solve the way of students' process in writing activity by investigating the use outline technique in improving the students' ability in writing descriptive. According to Frost (2002:25), action research is a process of systematic reflection, investigation and an action that is done by individual about their own professional practice in classroom. Additionally, Hopkins (2002) stated action research incorporates substantive doing with research procedure; it is also discipline doing by investigation, a private action comprehends and also includes the process of improvement and reform. According to Kemmis and McTaggart, as quote by Wallace (1998), an action research consists of one until three situations namely, first a project which relates with social practice an action which is in the form of improvement. Second, it has three situations scheming, doing, monitoring and depicting. The last, action research includes them in practicing in every moment activity, all participants includes all important people by the practice and keep the process collaborative.

The subject of this research was second grade students at university students. The researcher chose them to be the subject of this research for they had a problem in writing descriptive. There were 30 students, 17 females and 13 males. The sample of this research was 30 students because all students in that class participated in this research.

Instrument was used ¹¹ to collect the data in this research, the writer only applied one instrument to collect the data that is writing test. It was a test that students had to write descriptive essay by following the instruction but before the students made it, they had to fill outline form. This test was included subjective test because it was an essay.

To collect data, the researcher used a test as instrument. When in the teaching learning, the students wrote a descriptive essay by giving only 60 minutes. Then, after the result of the writing collected, the teacher used descriptive rubric. In the first meeting the researcher taught them as usual then asked them to write descriptive text. The second meeting, they



learned outline technique then they tried to make the outline. Then, the third meeting, they discussed their outline and continued to make a descriptive text. The last, they submitted their work.

³ The process of data analysis was used quantitative. The researcher

got the number of data and scores the writing from two elements of writing essay such as content and organization. While, to know the score of their writing, the researcher used the rubric.

Aspect Score Performance Description

<p>Content (c)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Topic · Details 	<p>2 The topic is complete and clear, but the details are <u>not relating to the topic.</u></p> <p>1 The topic is not clear, and the details are not relating <u>to the topic.</u></p> <p>4 Identification is complete and descriptions are <u>arranged with proper connectives.</u></p> <p>3 Identification is almost complete and descriptions are <u>almost arranged with proper connectives.</u></p>
<p>Organization (o)</p> <p>3 Identification · Description</p> <p>4 The topic is complete and clear, and the details <u>are relating to the topic.</u></p> <p>5 The topic is complete and clear, but the details are <u>almost relating to the topic.</u></p>	<p>2 Identification is not complete and descriptions are <u>arranged with few misuse of connectives.</u></p> <p>1 Identification is not complete and descriptions are <u>arranged with misuse of connectives.</u></p>

Adapted from brown (2007)

The function of the above table is to assess the content of the writing by using rubric then finds the mean of score by using the formula. While, to answer second research question, the researcher would assess the organization by using rubric then found the mean of score by using the formula. To know the outline could improve student's writing in content and organization, the researcher would compare the two works by using paired sample t-test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section would to like answer the research questions that investigating the use of outline in improving the content of students' essay and that investigating the use of outline in improving the organization of students' essay.

The use of outline in improving the content of students' essay In order to reveal the first research question that the use outline improves the content of students' essay, paired sample T-test was used. There is a significant changes at the level of (p < .05) based on the content of students' essay. The result of first and second writing test was used to compare the significant different between the first writing test before the students did not learn the outline and the second writing test after they learn outline



	deviation of <u>difference</u> df	
Test N Mean Std	Std of mean <u>for</u>	
	<u>difference</u>	
	30 30	2.57 0.60 29
Pre- test Post- test	1.27 3.83	Significant

There was a statistically significant decrease in writing descriptive in term of content's essay from (M =1.27, Mean of difference = 2.57, SD= 0.60) to (M = 3.83, Mean of difference = 2.57, SD= 0.60) , t (23.36), p < .05 (two

tailed). The η^2 (.94) indicated a large effect size.

The table above shows the findings of students' first test and second test. The researcher compared the findings between students' pretest and posttest scores. The result of this analysis is analyzed to know before they use outline and after they use outline in writing descriptive. According to the first table, it could be seen that there is an improvement of students' scores. The total of mean posttest is better than mean pretest. Furthermore, the table shows the significant different between students' pretest and posttest scores after treatment. t.value is 23.36 more than that required for significance at the .05 level, the writer concludes there is significant difference of their essay also indicates that outline shows significant changes before the students use outline and after they use outline technique especially in content of their essay.

The use of outline in improving the organization of students' essay

In order to reveal the first research question that the use outline improves the organization of students' essay, paired sample T-test was used. There is a significant changes at the level of ($p > .05$) based on the organization of students' essay. The result of first and second writing test was used to compare the significant different between the first writing test before the students did not learn the outline and the second writing test after they learn outline.

Test N	Mean	Std deviation	difference of	df
30	1.03	0.30	3.95	29
29	2.9	0.3	Significant	

There was a statistically significant decrease in writing descriptive in term of content's essay from (M =1.03, Mean of difference = 2.9, SD= 0.3) to (M =2.93, Mean of difference = 2.9, SD= 0.3) , t (23.36), $p < .05$ (two-tailed). The η^2 (.98) indicated a large effect size.

The table above shows the findings of students' first test and second test. The researcher compared the findings between students' pretest and post-test scores. The result of this analysis is analyzed to know before they use outline and after they use outline in writing descriptive. According to the first table, it could be seen that there is an improvement of students' scores. The total of mean posttest is better than mean pretest. Furthermore, the table shows the significant different between students' pretest and posttest scores after treatment. t.value is 58 more than that required for



significance at the .05 level, the writer concludes there is significant difference of their essay also indicates that outline shows significant changes before the students use outline and after they use outline technique especially in organization of their essay

DISCUSSION

Writing is an activity which needs more time to do it. It needs more preparation than the other skill such as think the topic will be written, search

information more, know how to write any text well, and so on. Moreover, writing is a skill which needs more time to do it since it is an activity to organize some ideas by writing. Writing is not an easy activity therefore it must be learned. Indeed, this needs some steps to do writing such as planning, drafting, checking, revising, etc. As stated, David Nunan (2005) there are two approaching writing, the process and the product. The process of writing consists of checking and drafting. This process of checking includes the preparation before writing an essay. Before the students write a paper or an essay, they think the topic and also more information. While, the drafting of writing is during they do and have done, they will ask the teacher or their students to check the result of their writing. It means draft 1, if there is still wrong they can continue to revise first draft to make it well. Then, if the second draft is correct all, it means the writing is really well it is called the product of approaching writing. The product of writing is the last draft which had been well by the students. In the writing, the important things that have to be focused are the content, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, organization, spelling, and letter formation. Indeed, the writer must be able to make some information to be cohesive and coherent in an essay and so on. Unfortunately, most of them do not care about the content of their writing. They write which is in their mind, they do not think the sentence has correlation with the topic that will be discussed. It is a big problem for students and the teacher. Whereas, Morris et al, (1999) stated a perfect writing can called perfect if it uses correct word choice, is interesting topic and etc. A writing will not be called perfect if it is hard to comprehend by the readers. It means a good writing can be easy to be read by the readers, catch the main point of the text, get information easily. Therefore, the students need to have techniques in the process of reading, in order to comprehend how to make a good writing. The researcher used outline technique to teach writing comprehension and also to solve that problem in that class. The result of this research that conducted at English department at UN PGRI Kediri is described in the following section.

From the result of the use outline improves the content and the organization of the students' essay, it can be seen that students show the improvement using paired sample T- test, it means outline can help in writing descriptive by looking the changes from the score.

According to the findings above, it can be stated that outline technique in teaching learning process improves their writing descriptive especially in content and organization. The result was the same with the statement of Tardiff & Brize (2010), there are two main reasons for making an outline, to help the students in the process of writing and to make a good



organize the idea. In short, an outline is a simply technique that can help writers to keep their ideas in partial order. Oshima and Hogue (2007) also state that making outline is more important when the writers want to write an essay for they have many ideas and detail to organize them. Therefore, outline is really needed for students in writing comprehension.

They will not make a bad writing if the make an outline first. In brief, the researcher could state that making outline helps students in content and organization of the essay. Their writing will has good content and the ideas connect to each other and be structured well. Before students start to write, making outline is one of techniques to help the writers understand what they

are going to write. It would give the opportunity for students to be easy in making essay. Based on the problems in chapter 1 that are students' writing were low. There are many reasons such as they do not know how to organize their ideas, how to transfer their thought into a writing. Those problems have been solved by using outline. It can be seen from result of their writing descriptive in term of content and organization and it can be looked from the improvement of their writing.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

This study tries to investigate whether there is a significance changes in scores of writing descriptive text by using outline technique. From the result, it could be seen from the p value for this improvement was 23.36 in content and 58 in organization for 29 degrees of freedom, a t, 2.045 is significant at the level .05. This means outline technique improves students' ability in writing descriptive text. Outline technique gives positive effect to the teacher. It gives the opportunity to select the best technique to teach writing. The teachers will also be motivated to create interesting and easy technique to attract the student's attention and participation when they are teaching by using outline. According to the problems in chapter one that are students' writing were low. There are many reasons such as they do not know how to organize their ideas, how to transfer their thought into a writing. Those problems have been solved by using outline. It can be seen from result of their writing descriptive and it can be looked from the improvement of their writing in term of content and organization.

Suggestions

Related to the conclusion stated previously, the researcher is going to give several suggestions for English teachers and other researchers who want to continue this study. For English teachers, the researcher suggests that outline technique is very needed for students to improve students' ability in writing in term of content and organization. Moreover, students' attention is also important since this technique become big factor of teaching learning process using outline. Sometimes, some students confuse to start their writing or their writing is not partial and they cannot organize their idea easily. Those things are problems happen in the class and those problems have to be solved. The teacher has to do an action to solve that problem



especially in writing by using outline. For other researchers, outline technique is conducted to the second grade, other researcher may develop outline technique on different grade students such as high or low grade.

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