

Escalating Ability to Write Papers: To Make Use of Direct Instruction

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to determine whether using a model of direct instruction can improve writing skills on papers for students of Primary School Teacher of Education (PGSD) at University of Muhammadiyah Gresik (UMG). This research is a classroom action research (CAR) with the subject of class "A" of the first semester. The research also involved two fellow lectures as observers. This research was performed in three cycles by focusing on students' ability to write the cover, introduction, background, systematic procedures of writings, and a list of references, where all these things are indispensable in preparing a good paper. The results show that the students have been able to write representative papers indicated by improving the quality of papers that have been collected. It can be concluded that the model of direct instruction can improve students' writing ability to compose papers.

Keywords: Writing Papers, Direct Instruction

Introduction

A Language skill plays an important role in human life, because all areas of life need it. Based on the index survey of language skills (especially reading) of the population of Indonesia is in position of 39 in the world rank. This reality is an irony given the importance of the language skills for communication in the world. Lack of language skills, according to Muslim (2011), is due to many factors, including: curriculum, teachers, students, infrastructure, and the government as policy maker. Another problem worsens this condition is that the common practices of conventional learning and teacher-centered (not student centered), too many numbers of students in a class, and too many administrative tasks of teachers.

Therefore, we need innovations to go out of this problem by innovations in learning. To learn the language cannot be separated from the four aspects of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the four language skills in which it essentially is an attempt to convey messages, ideas, and feelings to others through graphic symbols or texts

(Mulyati, 2002). Writing is also considered an effective form of communication besides oral communication.

Language learning goals are to improve the ability of learners to be able to communicate well, both orally and in writing (*Depdiknas*, 2006). At higher education level, aspects of speaking and writing are important because both are needed to support learning other subjects. Aspects of speaking are needed when presentations, discussions, submission of ideas, questions and answers, etc., while writing aspects are needed during the composition of writing papers, book reports, resumes, manufacture thesis, and even a dissertation.

Writing has a strategic and significance role for the students, as a means of publication in the academic world. Therefore, writing needs to be trained, habituated, and familiarized when someone studying at college. Writing is not easy, because many students have difficulty when given the task to make writing such papers and thesis. Frequently, someone is failing to study in college because he or she is not able to finish thesis.

In particular, students' paper focuses more on products' writing or articles of researches and non researches. According to Heuboeck (2009), domain and level of significance of text are divided into three groups: global, macro and micro. Global domain consists of text loads that describe the relationship between pragmatic (global coherence) and logical (functions). Domain of macros illustrates the semantic linkage (propositions), while the micro domain consists of a linkage between units and syntagmatics (textual).

Therefore, the understanding of ways and structures of academic papers must meet the good rules particularly when making the introduction. To write the introduction becomes a very important part because readers will easily capture the contents of the paper if the preliminary information is able to describe the importance of the reasons to be put forward by the authors in it. Thus there are some important things to consider (Swales: 2004) they are::

1. To express current knowledges in the areas being studied.
2. To explain the summary of previous findings and provide a broader context and background of the importance of the focus.
3. To provide an overview of writing plan and show the gap on the focus by presenting the question.
4. To introduce the objectives and designs of the plan.

Furthermore, according to Agrawal (2015), to develop introduction in the paper, exactly there is a difference between native authors and non natives in which the writers of non-native usually are not interested in using claiming a nich, but they tend to use establishing a nich, as well as the use of gap, the non-native writers are not easy to use in writing a paper.

To create the adequate introduction it needs review of theories related to the focus or the main purpose of the article. Thus the study of theory is essential to support the quality of the article that is being developed. Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins (2012) explains that to support the review theory in a paper needs efficient ways because the purposes of the theoretical review itself are as follows:

1. Clarify the research problems being studied as optimal as possible.
2. Provide supporting relevant resources.
3. Demonstrate reasons to use related references.

4. Clarify the terms used in the keywords.

5. Indicate the main sources used and summarize them well.

Many students' writing are mostly not quite readable and complicated because some terms are usually difficult to understand and many times jumping due to unclear wordings. To overcome these problems require serious and structured efforts so that similar bad conditions will not occur again. Because the researchers intend to act in class 'A' on the Elementary School Teacher of Education Program, University of Muhammadiyah Gresik.

At this department, subject of writing paper is given for three semesters, namely semester 1, 2 and 3. This course contains 9 credits which becomes the core course of science educationa. The learning competencies include four types, namely; to understand the general guidelines of papers; to write introduction according to the standardized rules; to review related literature; and to report findings and conclusion properly.

Based on the preliminary observations of the writing problems of students, on average, their capabilities are still not good. There are nine out of ten papers that have many errors especially on the background development which is not original yet. Similarly, when writing the formulation of the problem, the purpose is not stated clearly so that the information is sometimes not related at all with the focus to be investigated on title.

Writing error rate even reached 85%, including the systematics, spelling, and citation. This errors must be addressed, because it can adversely impact when the students make a paper, a research proposal, even thesis. Therefore, a team of lecturers plan to hold actions in the classroom by using the directinstruction model. The rationales of the use of this model are:

1. This model is suitable for developing performance-oriented capabilities, one of which is the ability to write;
2. This is suitable for the skills and abilities related to task-oriented;
3. This is suitable to help learn the basic knowledge or procedural skills ;
4. This model allows the students to master in a short time;
5. Writing is a basik skill that should be structured and performed gradually (Nur, 2011:27).

Rüütman & Keeper (2011) states that there are two general teaching strategies that lead to learning outcomes, namely direct and indirect instruction. Direct instruction is usually used to equip students to understand the facts, rules, order, and so leading to pshycomotor domain. While indirect instruction is a teaching strategy that helps students understand abstract concepts or things that require a high complexity. However, in the implementation of the class, usually two types of strategies can be combined in the form of problem solving, cooperative working, or case studies. Furthermore, Moore (2012) explains that the direct Instruction has five steps, namely orientation, presentation, structured practice, guided practice, and independence practice.

This study, therefore, uses a direct instruction of teaching strategies to improve students' ability to develop the ability to write paper.

Research Method

This research is a classroom action research which is conducted in the classroom of "Morning" first semester of the department of Elementary School Teacher at University of Muhammadiyah Gresik with the subjects of 45 students of class "A". The research also involved two fellows of faculty members and observers. Specific Learning Outcome (CPK) which is the target of the research is the students are able to write according to the standard rules of writing papers.

Designs of this study are: Reflection at the beginning → planning actions 1 → implementation of measures 1 and observation → reflection and evaluation 1 → plan of action 2 → implementation of actions 2 and observation → reflection and evaluation 2 → plan of actions 3 → implementation of actions 3 and observation → reflection and evaluation 3. The procedures of the research are: planning action, implementation of action of learning, plan of recording, and analysis of data.

The analysis model is the strategy developed by Miles and Huberman, whose activities include 3 things done simultaneously: (1) data reduction, (2) presentation of data, and (3) conclusion / verification. After the data were analyzed, the results were used as reflections conducted at each end of the cycle. In addition to discussing the shortcomings of action, reflection is also addressed at all stages of the research process. Results of reflection will be used as input for improvement in the preparation of an action plan in the next cycle.

The data used is the result of observation and reflection of the impact of action. Results of observation are all recorded related to the attitude and student response to the actions of researchers. The action impact is a skill that is achieved by the students as a result of actions taken by researchers. Results are included in the group impact studying of this action. Data from the study was then assessed and classified based on the established criteria. Data were obtained through two ways: through observation in the classroom and by measuring student learning outcomes.

Findings and Discussion

This study was conducted on 23 November to 7 December 2015. The results of the research are as follows:

Cycle 1

Skills to be achieved in this cycle is the students can write the cover, write the preface, write background, and write formulation of the problem. Action cycle 1 was conducted on Monday, November 23, 2015 at 12:30 to 14:30 pm on the subject of writing paper. There are three categories of assessment standard: good, sufficient, and fair. Description of the assessment standards can be seen in the following table:

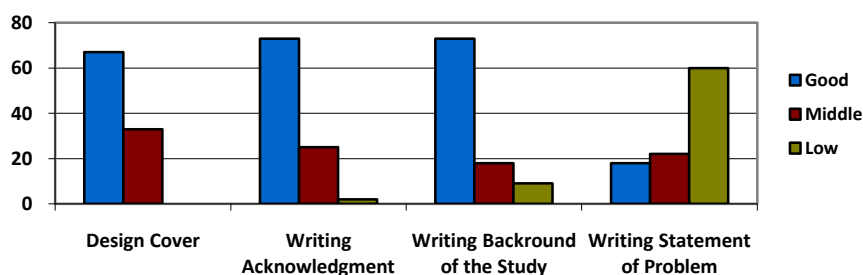
Table 4.1. The category of assessment in cycle 1

Skills	Assessment		
	Good (91-100)	Sufficient (81-90)	Fair (71-80)
To write Cover	The writing is complete, appropriate, and proporsional.	The writing is complete, appropriate, but not	The writing is complete, but not appropriate, and

		proporsional	not proporsional
To write aknowledge dgement	The writing includes gratitude, title, objectives, thanks, expecting input from reader, and the name of the author-town	Same with the good category, but does not mention the purpose of writing and acknowledgments,	Same with the good category but does not mention the purpose of writing, thanks, and do not ask for input.
To write backgrou nd	The writing mentions the urgency of the theme, there is field data and mentions the impacts if the problem is not examined / investigated	Same with the good category but does not mention the field data.	Same with the good category but does not mention field data as a the impacts if the problem is not studied.
To write problem statemen ts	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the phrase is clear, and the statement is right.	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the phrase is clear, but the writing is less precise.	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the sentence is less clear and less precise.

Student results are seen from the quality of their writing products. Data shows that in writing cover there are 67% of the students get a good value, 33% sufficient, and no student whose value is fair. Writing the acknowledgement, 73% students are good, 25% adequate, and 2% fair. Writing background, 73% students are good, 18% sufficient and 9% lfair. Writing formulation of the problem 18% of students are good, 22% adequate, and 60% fair. To facilitate a comprehensive analysis, the data is presented in graphical form as follows:

Graph 4.1. Learning outcome of cycle 1



The graph above can be described as follows:

1. Most of the students have been able to write the cover, write acknowledgement, and write the background well.
2. Most of the students are sufficient for all three of their above mastery.
3. Most of the students have not been able to write good formulation of the problem.

Results of the observational record show that: 1) the classroom atmosphere is relatively ordered although there is little noise; 2) students make notes when researchers present; 3) When the researchers give the students feedback they are not motivated; 4) researchers are in rush during presentations and demonstrations; 5) researchers are in a hurry while giving a guided exercise; 6) targets of students skills that must be mastered are too much; 7) the potentials of students are diverse; 8) there are still students that are difficult to focus after ice breaker; 9) some students are confused and difficult at the moment of guided exercises; 10) one student got impaired vision. After considering the observational record and after associating it with learning outcomes that the less optimal of student learning targets, especially the ability to write formulation of the problem, are caused by:

1. targeted skills to be mastered are too many, while time is limited.
2. The potential of students is diverse, so it takes different approach;
3. Researchers are in a rush when delivering presentations and demonstrations, causing the student does not understand;
4. Motivation of student learning is not optimal;
5. The way the students learn manytimes is not appropriate;
6. Ice breaker causes some students not be able to focus, so it needs some breaks until they are really ready.

Based on the above descriptions it is suggested that: 1) When presentation it should not be in a hurry; 2) There should be sufficient time at each stage of learning; 3) To condition the students after the ice breaker to have better preparation; 4) Modify the guided exercises so that the result is optimal; 5) To repeat the background material and formulate the problem in cycle two.

Cycle 2

The material of cycle 2 is writing background and writing the problem formulation. This material has actually been in cycle 1, but because the results are not satisfactory and many students who have not completed are decided to repeat cycle 2. This cycle was held on monday, November 30, 2015 at 12:30 to 14:30. Standard assessment is the same as in the first cycle with three categories: good, sufficient, and fair or low. Description of the assessment standard can be seen in table 4.2.

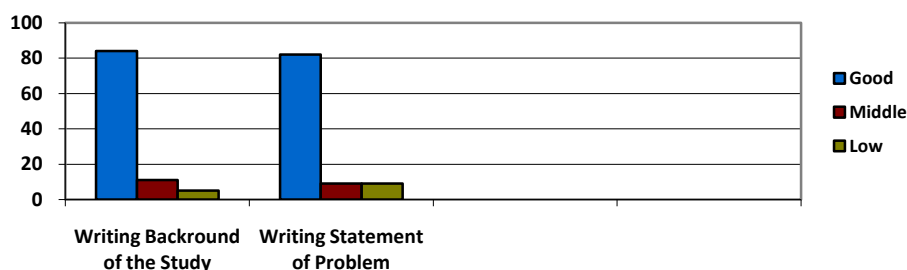
Table 4.2. The category of assessment in cycle 2

Skills	Assessment category		
	Good (91-100)	Sufficient (81-90)	Fair (71-80)
To write background	The writing mentions the urgency of the theme, no field data and mentions the impacts if the problem is not examined /	The writing is same with the good category but does not mention the field data.	The writing is same with the good category but does not mention the field data and the impacts if the problem is not studied.

	investigated		
To write problem statement	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the sentence is clear and precise	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the phrase is clear, but the formulation is less precise.	Formulation of the problem is according to the theme, the meaning of the sentence is less clear and precise.

Data from the study shows that 84% of students get good grades, 11% adequate, and 5% fair for the writing background. Meanwhile writing formulation of the problem shows that 82% of students get good grades, 9% adequate, and 9% fair. To facilitate the analysis, the data above are presented in graphical form as follows

Graph 4.2. Learning outcome in cycle 2



The graph above shows that over 80% of the students have been able to write background and formulation of the problem well which means they have been completed.

Cycle 3

Skills to be achieved in this cycle are the student able to: 1) quote well; 2) write with correct systematics; 3) write a list of references properly. The actions of cycle 3 was held on Monday, December 7, 2015 at 12:30 to 14:30. This skill of assessment standards is grouped into three categories: good, sufficient, and fair. Description of the assessment standards can be seen in the following table:

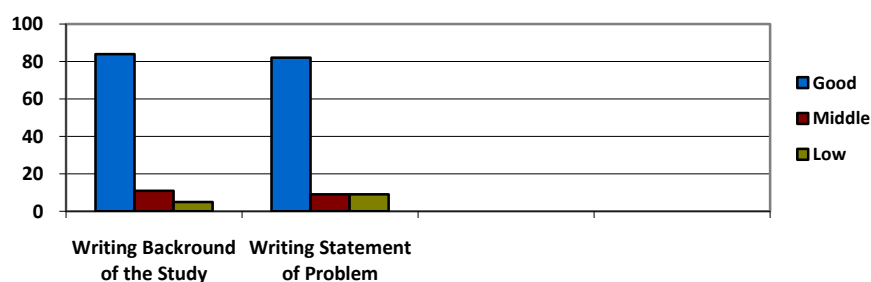
Table 4.3 Assessment category in cycle 3

Skills	Assessment category		
	Good (91-100)	Sufficient (81-90)	Fair (71-80)

Ability to quote	The writing of citations and punctuation are correct and the sentences flow well.	The writing of citations and punctuation are correct, but the sentence is less flowing properly.	The writing of citations are correct, but it is still with wrong punctuation and the sentences are less flowing well.
The systematics of writing	The writing is coherent, structured, neat, straight, and spaced regularly.	The writing is coherent, structured, but less neat and straight.	The writing is less coherent, sloppy, and less regularly spaced.
Ability to write the list of reference	The writing the name of the author, year, title of the book, the town, and publisher is correct.	Writing the name of the author, year, title of the book, the town, and publisher is less precise	Writing the name of the author, year, title of the book, the town, and publisher is not appropriate.

Based on data from study it is found that: 60% of students in citing are good, 40% sufficient, and no fair value. For systematics of writing 80% of students are good, 16% sufficient, and 4% fair. Meanwhile writing the list of reference, all the students get good value. The display of total learning outcomes of this cycle can be observed in the following graph:

Graph 4.2. Learning outcome in cycle 3



The graph above shows that:

1. Completeness of writing the list of reference is the highest of 100%;
2. The majority (80%) students have been able to write good systematics writing ;
3. The interval of citing skills between categories of good and sufficient is in small margin with 20%.

Meanwhile, based on the observation in the classroom, the data shows that:

1. The classroom atmosphere is better than the second cycle: more calm and conducive;

2. When researchers presenting the material and feedback three active student asked;
3. The time to have guided practice is quicker.
Based on the data from cycle 1 to cycle 3 it can be stated that:
 1. The student motivation to learn is an important role;
 2. It needs necessary analysis and careful calculation in determining the learning targets associated with available time;
 3. The need to learn proper way of sharing with students is crucial;
 4. There should be proper arrangement between the students with learning resources;
 5. The need for personal guidance is intense because of the potential of different students;
 6. Repeated exercise and continuous guidance are to improve the skills of students.

Results of this study, therefore, have been consistent with what has been done by previous researchs (Moore, 2012; Rütmann & Kipper, 2011), especially Mart (2013) who also have tested the direct instruction in which this strategy has a positive impact not only on student writing skills but also the ability of oral communication.

The successful use of direct instruction is also the case in the development of the ability of students' reading (Kamps, Greenwood, Wills, Veerkamp, & Kaufman, 2008; Crowe, Connor, & Petscher 2009; Stockard, 2010) where direct instruction in this regard has been given a boost to students to get a better reading scores so as to encourage the spirit of learning which is further improved.

This study not only supports the improvement of reading skills of students but also even help improve math skills (Stockard: 2010).

Thus the use of proven direct-instruction can be used to help increase students' ability both in terms of cognitive, psychomotor, and good critical thinking in reading, oral communication, even in writing academic papers.

Conclusion

The conclusions can be made as follows:

1. Using the three cycles, teaching strategy using direct instruction has a positive effect on students' ability to write the cover, introduction, background, systematic of writing, and a list of references, where all the points are indispensable in preparing a good paper. The results show that the students have been able to write a paper representatively supported by improving the quality of paper that has been collected.
2. Thus, this research concludes that the model of direct teaching can improve students' writing ability

Based on the results of the study, the researcher wants to make suggestions as follows:

1. For students, it should be capable of increasing self-motivation to learn because motivation plays an important role. To set correctly all learning sources and practice many times to really succeed.
2. For lecturers / researchers, they should analyze carefully in determining the target of learning, sharing need to learn in proper ways to students and guiding them personally because they are with different potentials.

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