IMPROVING STUDENTS’ ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION TEXT WRITING SKILLS THROUGH GUIDED PROMPT-RESPONSE ACTIVITY

(A Classroom Action Research to the Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak in Class IPA 1 in Academic Year 2011/2012)

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TANJUNGPURA UNIVERSITY
PONTIANAK
2013
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Abstract: Dealing with persuasive messages is one of the most common engagements with text that happens in people’s daily life. Public service campaigns about recycling and smoking are some examples of persuasion that have one purpose that is to persuade people. Eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak learned this text’s social function through analytical exposition text. They are required to perform the text both in spoken and written form. Unfortunately, in analytical exposition text writing task, they did not use correct structure of compound and complex sentences as one of the language features of the text. Besides, they had not been able to write complete stages of the text including thesis, arguments, and reiteration. This classroom action research was aimed at solving the problems. It involved 32 students from class IPA 1 as the research subjects. After applying guided prompt-response activity, the students’ achievement in writing analytical exposition text improved from 66.59 in cycle 1, to 73.94 in cycle 2. With this activity, students had more practice in writing compound sentence and complex sentences through sentence completion exercise. Besides, during the writing process a guided prompt-response frame was used to assist students in writing complete stages of the text. Consequently, the technique successfully improved the students’ achievement in writing analytical exposition text.

Key words: analytical exposition, prompt-response activity
Writing is challenging especially when it should be done in foreign languages. As one of the foreign languages learned at school, English becomes one of some demanding subjects which take the students to experience how difficult it is to write in languages other than their first language. It is hardly ever found where the students do not make any mistake in their writing task, even when the task is merely about writing sentences in English. The mistakes vary from using inappropriate diction, using incorrect sentence structure, ignoring the importance of capitalization and correct spelling of words, until putting punctuation marks inappropriately. Learning to write is not simple. It takes long process to get it developed.

Learning to write in senior high school engages various types of text. As Soehendro (2006:126) states in the content standard of elementary and secondary education that in senior high school, there are twelve text types that students are expected to write. They are procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, report, news item, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, spoof, explanation, discussion, and review.

This research focused on analytical exposition text. Eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak were expected to master this text type both in spoken and written form. Unfortunately, the students did not get satisfactory result in their last analytical exposition text writing task. The average score achieved was 60 and this score did not fulfill the minimum achievement standard or Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum (KKM) of English subject at the school which was 68. After assigning the students in an analytical exposition text writing task, teacher as well as the writer of this research checked the students’ work and identified the most common mistakes in it. Some problems which led the writer to conduct this research were found.

The students’ first main problem was in using one of the language features of analytical exposition text that was the use of compound and complex sentences. In teaching analytical exposition text writing, teacher had taught the students about writing various sentence types including simple, compound, and complex sentences. However, when the students worked with a paragraph, most of them only succeeded in writing their ideas in simple sentence and failed in using compound and complex sentences. Furthermore, in giving reasons to support their arguments, most students wrote sentences without subordinate clause though they inserted connectors in their sentence. As a result, the sentence they wrote did not show one complete thought and was grammatically incorrect.

The second main problem was that many students did not write complete organization of analytical exposition text. Teacher had exposed the students with examples of analytical exposition text and practiced them in identifying the generic structures of the text including thesis, arguments, and reiteration. Unfortunately, even though they succeeded in identifying the generic structures in the text samples, they failed writing complete organization of analytical exposition text in their writing task.

In their paragraph, the students wrote the thesis statement correctly but they did not complete it with the preview of the arguments. In writing the arguments they neither arranged the arguments in ‘point and elaboration’ sequences nor discussed all of the points of arguments. Most of them put all of the points of arguments first and wrote the elaboration after all. Moreover, the elaboration they wrote referred to only one or two of the three points of arguments they had. Since analytical exposition text usually presents more than one arguments, it is important to elaborate each argument in sequence.
Elaboration should be written after each point of arguments so it becomes clear that each argument is proved with evidence. Reiteration became something left behind. It was the last stage the students had to write and most of them did not include this stage. There was no conclusion in most of their paragraph.

Based on the problems described and the students’ achievement in writing analytical exposition text, it is necessary to conduct a research in order to solve the problems and to improve students’ writing achievement. In this research, the writer applied guided prompt-response activity to support the students in writing analytical exposition text. The writer taught the students to do writing through the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and editing. The writer included a prompt-response activity through sentence completion as an activity to build students’ knowledge on a writing topic as well as a practice in writing sentence especially compound and complex sentences. Furthermore, a guided prompt-response frame was used to assist students during the drafting process. According to Dunigan (2005:5), “In Prompt-Response guided paragraph writing, one prompt guides the whole paragraph, and individual sentence prompts guide each sentence within the paragraph.” Guided prompt-response frame was a supportive tool for good text organization. It was a table with two columns. The first column had prompts for each sentence of the paragraph while the student wrote a response in the corresponding box of the second column.

The writer conducted classroom action research to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012 with the purpose of solving the students’ problems in writing analytical exposition text. By applying guided prompt-response activity, the writer provided supports to guide the students through the writing process. The writer believes that guided prompt-response activity is the best technique to use in order to solve the problems encountered, and to improve the students’ skills in writing analytical exposition text. Thus, the ideal achievement in which the students passed the KKM can be achieved and the students’ skills in writing analytical exposition text can be improved.

GUIDED PROMPT-RESPONSE ACTIVITY IN TEACHING WRITING ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION TEXT

Analytical exposition is an expository composition which develops a topic by distinguishing its components and discussing each in turn. It is used for analyzing or explaining questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ something works. Texts about traffic jam and a law banning cigarettes can be some examples of analytical exposition when they contain exploration about how traffic jams occur (what causes them), and why is it important to ban smoking. The texts are written for one communicative purpose that is to persuade the audience about something important to call for attention. In persuading the audience, some supporting ideas or arguments on why something is important are presented.

Writing analytical exposition is not an easy task. This text type requires students to be knowledgeable about the issue being discussed so that they can come up with an opinion as well as some points to support it. Starting to write with a blank page may lead students to get frustrated. They may not know what to write first or get their ideas blocked in the middle of their writing process. In addition, it becomes more challenging when they have to do it not in their native language. Problems with vocabulary, sentence structure, and writing convention are some of the challenges the students have to face during the writing process.
Regarding to the challenges in writing, there is a necessity to model, guide, or apply particular scaffolding strategy to support the students’ writing activities. Oczkus (2007) as cited in Byrd (2009:27) contends that modeling writing alone is not sufficient to produce effective writers; rather, teachers need to scaffold students through guided writing techniques. Further, Oczkus (2007:3) defines guided writing as a bridge between shared writing and independent writing with support to move students forward in their writing development. Writing is learned as the teacher assists the students during writing using guided practice. Many students need this expert guidance as they attempt to bridge the gap between the teacher's demonstration and modeling and their own independent writing.

The concept of scaffolding students in writing comes from Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) as cited in Frey and Fisher (2010:84) who define it as a process that enables a child or novice to solve a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts. Scaffolds require an interaction between a more knowledgeable other and a learner. The more knowledgeable one plays role in assisting the learners to move from her actual knowledge level to the more advance level. The idea of scaffolding learning traces the Vygotsky’s theory (1978) who introduced the world to the zone of proximal development (ZPD). As cited in Frey and Fisher (2010:84), Vygotsky believes that learners operate on two levels: the ‘actual developmental level’ and the ‘potential developmental level’. The ZPD is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. In addition, to scaffold also means to provide supports by giving necessary input for the students’ learning. The input can be in form of knowledge of the subject, skill practice, or particular technique and strategy to be used in accomplishing an activity.

Dunigan (2007:2) states, “Prompt-Response is a scaffolding strategy that provides a topic and a prompt for each sentence of the paragraph. Each sentence is boxed so the students can focus on just one sentence at a time. Sentence stems (sentence beginnings) can be provided for the students”. Guided Prompt-Response Activity is a technique in guided writing method that can be used in analytical exposition text writing lesson. In applying this technique, sentence completion activity is used to give students practice in writing with prompts. Besides, a writing frame called guided prompt-response frame is used to assist students during the writing process. Dunigan (2005:58) describes that a prompt-response frame is a table with two columns. The first column has prompts for each sentence of the paragraph and the students write a response in the corresponding box of the second column. At the first try, sentence beginning can be provided to guide a response to each prompt. Prompts are a single word, a short phrase, a complete paragraph or a picture to give students something to focus on as they write.

Giving prompts in writing can be a stimulus to encourage students to achieve successful completion in writing. The detailed description of specific situation that the students expected to write is provided. It benefits students with information to focus on. However, the description of the situation which is too long should be avoided since it leads to a more of a reading comprehension test. Heaton (1988:138) says that sufficient information must be conveyed by the rubric in order to provide a realistic, helpful basis for the composition. This means that right amount of context should be provided, not more, or less. As a practice in writing appropriate response to the prompts in the frame, students are set in sentence completion activity. In this activity they are given a sentence
completion worksheet. It contains several questions which work as a prompt for each sentence the students have to produce. The students practice writing responses in pairs. They discuss the prompts, learn what the prompts ask, and respond to the prompts together with their partner. As a result, it makes them easier when they write individually.

Guided prompt-response activity is one of the strategies in guided writing method that can be applied in analytical exposition text writing lesson. In this activity, students will be guided through the stages of writing process. Simpson (1998:1) says that demonstrating correct writing procedures will show the students what the teacher expects them to do when they write on their own. Classroom writing tasks need to be set up in certain ways that reflect the writing process in good writers. This concept follows the theory of writing as a process which put more emphasis on the most common steps a writer follows in writing a composition. Badger and White (2000:154) say, “Writing in process approach is seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge about grammar and text structure.” The process approach is an approach to teaching writing that places more emphasis on the stages of the writing process rather than on the final product. In this approach, students are taught to plan, writing a draft, to do revision, and practice editing to help them write a good final writing product.

Teaching students the writing process in applying guided prompt-response activity is done when the students use a guided prompt-response frame. The prompt-response frame covers the generic structures of analytical exposition text including thesis, arguments, and reiteration. For each of those parts of the text, there are sentences or questions as the instruction to guide students in writing responses in form of sentences. The steps of using guided prompt-response frame are as follows:

**Plot and Plan**

This step consists of: writing the title, discussing the writing topic, and making a list of ideas will be included. Teacher starts with giving students the description of the writing situation and guides the students in discussing the situation. Students discuss the writing situation in pairs.

**Package the First Draft**

In this step the students are given a guided prompt-response frame as their worksheet. The frame has two columns. The first column says “Prompt” and the second column says “Response”. The box in the prompt column contains specific instruction about type of information and type of sentences required in the response boxes to the right. Each sentence has its own prompt and room for a response.

**Prune and Plump**

This is a revising process. The prompt-response frame allows the students or the teacher a quick and easy way to look over the paragraphs for errors. Each sentence is separated from the other sentences by the box. To revise a sentence, erase the one sentence and rewrite the one in its place. Another way to revise is to use a different coloured pen and over-write on the top of the first word. To ‘prune’ is to cut off or cut out. We might need to cut out unnecessary information or words.
To ‘plump’ means to make fuller looking. We might need to add more information or more descriptive vocabulary to make a paragraph more interesting and meaningful.

**Polish and Rewrite**

We polish up by checking the vocabulary choices to make sure we have made the paragraph interesting. Then we check all punctuations: look for end marks, comma, and other punctuation. Look also for capitalization. Each box should have a capital letter at the beginning. Each proper noun needs a capital letter. Finally check over the spelling. Ask a peer, the teacher, or check a dictionary for uncertain words. Once we are certain we have written a good paragraph, we may re-write a final draft.

**METHOD**

In this research, the writer applied classroom action research because it was in line with the purpose the writer trying to achieve, that was to find solution for the problem she faced in her classroom. Norton (2009:59) explains:

*The fundamental purpose of pedagogical action research is to systematically investigate one’s own teaching/learning facilitation practice, with the dual aim of improving that practice and contributing to theoretical knowledge in order to benefit student learning.*

Classroom action research has a practical, problem solving emphasis. It is carried out by individuals, professionals, and educators, and it aims at improving educational practice. It offers a process to change the current practice to become better practice. The writer planned an activity that she believed could solve the problems she found in her classroom.

The writer chose the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak in class IPA 1 as the subjects of this research due to the problems in writing analytical exposition text there. The total number of students in this class was 32 students and this numbers showed the total number of the subjects of this research.

In obtaining the data, the writer used observation and measurement techniques. Through observation, the researcher collected data or information which had connection with the research focus. The result of the observation was recorded in an observation checklist table and field note. Since the research tried to investigate the students’ skills in writing analytical exposition text, the students’ writing was analyzed. The focus was given on the aspects of ideas and organization, language use, and mechanics used in the students’ writing. These aspects are important to consider in assessing the students’ analytical exposition text writing. Individual files of the students’ work were collected as the main data to calculate the mean score of the students’ writing.

In this research, the writer rolled as the teacher. She was helped by the other student from English Education Study Program as her collaborator. The collaborator helped the writer in collecting data for this research and to observe the students’ improvement.

In collecting data in this research, the writer used three tools of data collecting as follows:
**Observation Checklist Table**
Observation checklist table was used to observe the students and teacher’s behaviors during the implementation of guided-prompt response activity. It recorded any impact of guided prompt-response activity in teaching writing analytical exposition text. The descriptions of aspects to be observed had been written before in the table form. The observation checklist table was filled by the collaborator.

**Scoring Profile**
Scoring profile was used to score the students’ writing after they follow the guided-prompt response activity. Scores was given to the students’ writing considering ideas and organization, language use, and mechanics.

**Field Note**
Field note is a record of other aspects or things that are not available in the observation checklist table. It was used to make notes on unpredictable things happened in teaching and learning process. This form was filled by the collaborator while observing the teaching and learning processes.

In the process of data analysis, the writer analyzed the data that was taken from written test, observation checklist and field note. Since this research concerned with the study of aspects of students and teacher’s behavior during teaching and learning process, and there were more than one ways in collecting data, the data analysis used triangulation. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000:112) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behavior.

The primary data to be analyzed was the result of the students’ writing task while the data from the observation was used as the secondary data. In analyzing the students’ analytical exposition text writing, the writer used a scoring profile which covered several writing aspects including the ideas/organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The research purpose is considered as achieved if the mean score of students’ writing achievement reach 68 points.

In this research, the writer focused on the computation of mean score. Mean score is all the students individual scores were summed and divided by the number of the students’ in the class. The formula is described as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Where:
- $M$ = the students’ mean score
- $\sum fx$ = the sum of students’ individual score
- $N$ = the number of students

(Heaton, 1975:169)
When the mean score had been calculated, the result was categorized based on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Harris, 1969:134)

In order to determine the student’s individual score whether the students passed or not passed, the standard of minimum score for English subject at the school was used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total individual score</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-67</td>
<td>NOT PASSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68-100</td>
<td>PASSED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the standard of minimum score for English subject at the school, the students pass the subject when the students get score ≥ 68. According to Harris (1969), the students pass the lesson of English subject in the Average, Good, and Excellent category.

**RESULT**

In applying guided prompt-response activity, firstly, the writer used a sentence completion activity. Sentence completion activity was done with purpose of improving students’ ability in writing compound and complex sentences. The students practiced writing the two sentence types collaboratively with their partner. Teacher equipped them with a sentence completion worksheet and told them to do it in pairs. The students helped each other by discussing the prompts in the worksheet and wrote one compound or complex sentence from each prompt. Discussion is crucial in doing a task, especially the complex one since it allows a problem to arise. By doing a discussion in groups, small groups, or in pairs, the students can share the problem or difficulty they face in order to accomplish the task together. Webb (2008:202) states, “A principal way in which students can learn from collaborative work is to engage in help-related behavior, both giving help and receiving help.”

After giving the students practice in writing compound sentence and complex sentence, teacher used a guided prompt-response frame. This writing frame was used for organizing the student’s paragraph writing. Lewis and Wray (2002:2) states that writing frames are templates consisting of starters, connectives and sentence modifiers which offer children a structure for communicating what they want to say. The guided prompt-
response frame was used to keep students to write complete stages of analytical exposition text which consisted of thesis, arguments, and reiteration. The frame contained writing situation and instruction which described the writing topic, and several prompts to assist students in writing sentences on each stage. It was used to assist students in writing individually.

Using writing frame is one of the strategies in supporting the students writing. In using guided prompt-response frame, students followed four stages of planning (plan and plot), drafting (packaging the first draft), revising (prune and plump), and editing and rewriting (polish and rewrite). Planning consisted of students reading aloud the situation and instruction followed by teacher’s explanation about the writing topic. In drafting students wrote sentences to respond several prompts provided in the guided prompt-response frame. After students finished drafting, they checked each sentence they had written in each sentence box in the frame and revised the sentences. Then, they continued with editing by checking the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation marks. When all the steps were done, they rewrote all sentences in the frame into paragraphs. After applying the activities, students succeeded in writing good analytical exposition text. By following the writing process, students wrote better, and their achievement improved. Ho (2006:2) states that teaching the students the writing process helps them to write freely and arrive at a product of good quality.

After applying guided prompt-response activity, the students’ mean score for writing analytical exposition text was improved from 65 to 66.59. This score had not achieved the KKM score which was 68, so the cycle had to be continued to the second cycle. In the second cycle, the students’ mean score became 73.94. It meant the score had achieved the KKM. The students’ mean score improved 7.35% from the first cycle to the second cycle. This result showed that the technique used in this research had successfully improved the students’ ability in writing analytical exposition text.

Along with the improvement of the students’ mean score, the numbers of students who passed the KKM score was increased from the first cycle to the second cycle. At the first cycle, there were only 13 students who passed the KKM. It equaled to 40.63% of the students in the class. In the second cycle, the number of students who passed the KKM increased became 25 students and this equaled to 78.13% of the students in the class. This meant that there was improvement 37.5% in the number of students who passed the KKM score.

Specifically, the students’ mean score for writing compound and complex sentences increased from 17.34 in the first cycle to 20.5 in the second cycle. There was improvement 9.03% for the students’ ability in writing compound and complex sentences. At the first cycle, there were still a limited number of students who use compound and complex sentences in their analytical exposition text. The students’ achievement for writing compound and complex sentences at this cycle was not satisfactory. The students were still reluctant to write their ideas in compound and complex sentences even though during the writing process the teacher had encouraged them verbally to use compound and complex sentences in writing responses. From 29 students who joined in the writing activity, 10 students did not write any compound and complex sentences in their paragraph. At the second cycle, students were given a practice of writing compound sentence and complex sentence through sentence completion activity before they were set in an individual writing task. After having enough practice in writing the two sentence types, students used compound sentence and complex sentences in their paragraph well.
The students’ ability in writing complete organization of the text including writing complete thesis, complete arguments, and complete reiteration also improved after following guided prompt-response activity. For writing complete thesis, the students’ mean score increased from 17.07 in the first cycle to 17.66 in the second cycle. There was improvement 2.95% for this writing aspect. For writing complete arguments, the students’ mean score increased from 17.41 in the first cycle to 17.5 in the second cycle. It meant there was improvement 0.45%. For writing complete reiteration, the students’ mean score improved from 11.03 in the first cycle to 14.22 in the second cycle. There was improvement 15.95% for this writing aspect. The prompts for reiteration stage in the guided prompt-response frame succeeded in improving the students’ ability in writing complete reiteration including the sum up of the arguments and the conclusion of the text.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of research findings indicates guided prompt-response activity improved students’ analytical exposition text writing skills. Sentence completion provides enough practice for the students in writing sentences from the provided prompts. Since the activity was done in pairs, it allows a discussion between the students about difficulty or problems they found in doing the activity. Thus, the students could help each other and they were easier in writing sentence to respond the prompts. Guided prompt-response activity is useful in helping the students in getting ideas, organizing them and developing the ideas. The use of guided prompt-response frame in the activity worked well to make students wrote well-organized analytical exposition text. The prompts in the frame worked as a cue to make the students easier in writing down their thought as well as elaborating it in various sentence types including compound and complex sentences. The three stages of writing analytical exposition text—thesis, arguments, and reiteration—were also specified in the frame. Thus, responding all prompts in the frame then automatically led to the students’ completion of writing complete stages of the text.

The steps of the guided prompt-response activity which followed the writing process including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing made the students aware of what to do in writing. As they applied the technique more frequently, they will be more independent in following the processes in writing. Their experience in following the writing process will be helpful in their next writing season.

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