



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH-BASED TEACHING METHOD IN THE ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Writing has been regarded as the most difficult language skills since students in Indonesia were not familiar with this skill in the early and middle education level. On the other hand, in higher education level the students should produce a thesis to complete their study. Facilitating the students to be ready for the thesis writing, English for Academic Writing course was delivered to the students. Research-based teaching method was implemented in the course in order to help the students improve their writing skills. The purpose of this research was to investigate the implementation of the research-based teaching method in the English for Academic Writing course. Case study was implemented to reach the conclusion. Thirty seven (37) Global Class students majoring in Information Technology were observed to gain the data. Questionnaire result was also used to support the observation data. The result showed that the students had improvement in writing skills after implementing the research-based teaching-learning method, especially the skills in citation, referencing, quoting, and paraphrasing. Besides, the feedback from the lecturer had a significant role in the implementation of research-based teaching method. This method also could facilitate the students to gain the knowledge and skills related to their field of study, in this case in the information technology field. This method also helped the students to improve and implement the 21st century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, information literacy, technology literacy, initiative, and productivity.

Keywords: research-based teaching; English for academic writing; 21st century skills

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic writing became a challenge for the students in Indonesia, since Indonesian students were not used to write academic paper in early and middle education level. In higher education level, the students had to produce an academic paper or *Skripsi* as the requirement for their study completion. To produce an academic paper, the students would need to study academic writing because *Skripsi* writing required the students to do a research. As noted by Swales & Feak (2012) and Murray (2009) that academic writing is closely related to research writing and defined as a personal writing that has set of rules because research is related to the researcher's own interests and perspectives. This condition aligned with the research done by Ghufron, Saleh, and Sofwan (2016) that revealed the students' need in studying academic writing in order to prepare the students for the final project for their completion from the

university. Ghufron, Saleh, and Sofwan (2016) also found that instructional materials with different strategies that focused on research paper writing will be essential for the students.

The condition as found by Abas and Aziz (2016) that Indonesian students faced difficulty in writing during the undergraduate study suggested the students to have a certain course that might help them to produce academic writing papers. Preparing the students for writing the final paper or *Skripsi*, Bina Nusantara (BINUS) University set a course that might help the students to write an academic research paper - English for Academic Writing course. The output of the course was a research paper. This course was given to the students who is in the 3rd semester. Delivering the course to the 3rd semester students has its own challenge. As Fadda (2012) found that students faced many difficulties and stress while studying academic writing that might be caused by the cultural background of students' mother tongue and English still became the challenge in academic writing class (Ariyanti, 2016). These research findings aligned with the situation in which the Indonesian students were not familiar with research writing in their early and middle level school. Al-Khairy (2013) found that the inappropriate teaching method might cause the weak academic writing skills. Thus, find out the new technique to be implemented in teaching writing to the Indonesian students will be necessary (Ariyanti, 2016).

Since academic writing is closely related to research writing, research-based teaching method was chosen to be implemented in the English for Academic Writing course. This research aimed to (1) investigate the implementation of research-based teaching method in that course, (2) figure out to what extent the method facilitated the students in studying academic writing, and (3) to find out how the method helped the students in studying academic writing. Since it is difficult to figure out the best teaching method to teach academic writing, this research would be beneficial in enriching the methods to teach academic writing in the future. The lecturers might have consideration and input in planning the lesson of the academic writing subject. It might help the lecturers to be more focus and determine the aspects that might affect the successful of the students' outcomes.

In academic writing, Swales and Feak (2012) noted six things to consider, they are audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation. Audience of an academic paper may affect the content of the paper. The purpose of an academic paper is interconnected with the audience. Thus, the purpose and strategy to display the academic paper might be affected by the audience as well. The organization of a research paper should be well structured and appropriate for the particular-predictable pattern of organization. The next thing to be well considered is style of the academic writing paper. In teaching academic writing, it is suggested to teach the

appropriate writing style to students that has been set as the standard of the writing style by the institution. Further, the flow of an academic paper is crucial to consider. The flow from one sentence to another should be cohesive and coherence. Finally, the final presentation of the paper will determine the success of the writing. For a paper to have a good quality, it is suggested to have proof reading and spelling check to avoid grammar errors and other unnecessary mistakes.

Further, in writing an academic paper, Hartley (2008) and Murray (2009) suggested to write the paper collaboratively since collaborative writing was one of the aspects of academic writing. Hartley explained that collaborative writing had positive relation with research writing. Collaborative writing might improve the quality and the richness of the research paper. Hartley also suggested that it will be better if the number of writers in a writing team were more than two people. Since the paper was done by certain number of writers, every writer may enrich the paper from different perspectives and expertise. Further, Hartley explained that there were three ways of collaborative writing, namely parallel writing, sequential writing, and reciprocal writing. Parallel writing happened when every writer has their own section to write. Sequential writing happened when the second writer had to continue the writing of the first writer, and so on and so forth. And finally, reciprocal writing happened when the entire writer work together and give contribution to every part of the writing.

Reisas (2015) defined research-based teaching as the method in which the students do research in their courses independently and with an open outcome. Healey (2008) noted that the relationship between research and teaching was still debatable since there were different characteristics between those two activities. Yet, Healey also explained that research-teaching might contribute to the teaching-learning process in self-identity and learning style of the students. The method enabled the students to internalize and experience in doing a research. Further, this method also helped the students to gain abilities in dealing with uncertainty, independence, teamwork, and organizational skills. Martel (2009) found that research-based teaching method would improve students' academic and behavioral performance in various settings.

In implementing the research-based teaching, Baldwin (2005) noted nine guidelines to consider, such as (1) personalize the research in designing and teaching course, (2) always use the most current research in the teaching-learning process, (3) design the learning activity that require the students to explore by doing research, (4) teach the students about research

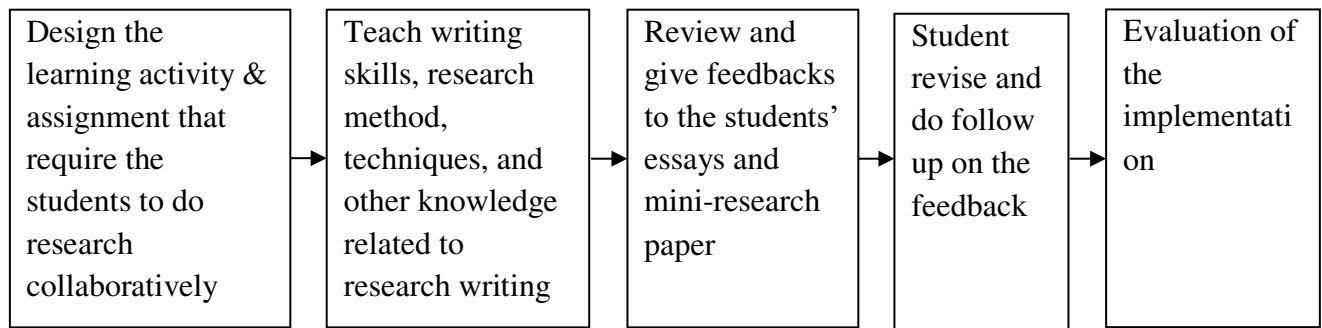
methodology, techniques, and skills explicitly within the subject, (5) establish a mini-research activity as students' assignment, (6) involve students in the departmental research activity, (7) encourage students to be the part in creating research-culture in the department, (8) infuse the values of researchers to the students, and (9) conduct a research on the students learning to create evidence-based decision about teaching.

Tremp (2010) stated that in the process of research-based teaching, the students did seven activities, such as formulating a general question; overview of research literature; defining the question; planning research activities, clarifying method/methodology; undertaking investigation, analyzing data; interpretation and consideration of result; and report and presentation of the result. This theory aligned with the academic research writing that explained by Hartley (2008) and Creswell (2012) that there were seven-main sections to be written, namely abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, findings and discussion, conclusion, and references. The paper also should be written systematically.

Murray (2009) noted that a research paper writing should be reviewed and received feedback in order to improve the paper quality. The feedback for the revision should be positive and encouraging. The study by Singh (2016) found that feedbacks from lecturers play important role to the quality of the students' academic writing paper production. Singh also noticed the urgency of the lecturers in understanding how to provide constructive written feedback to the students' work. Hattie and Timperley (2007) defined feedback as information of performance used to evaluate the performance. Price, Handley, Millar, and O'Donovan (2010) explained that feedback has 5 categories of purpose, they are for correction, reinforcement, forensic diagnosis, benchmarking, and longitudinal development. For academic writing in the higher education, the first two purposes, correction and reinforcement, were commonly used as the part of assessment process. Beside the constructive written feedback, Hatziapostolou & Paraskakis (2010) noted that discussion of the feedback also play crucial role so that the feedback can be effectively meaningful. Further, Hatziapostolou & Paraskakis explained that the development of technology nowadays can be used to facilitate the delivery of feedback. There were three ICT tools that can be used to facilitate the feedback delivery, such as word-processed feedback forms, e-mailing comments or feedback forms, Electronic annotations on students' work.

Finally, the conceptual framework of this research was gained based on the theories mentioned above and could be described as follow:

Chart 1: Conceptual Framework



As shown in the chart 1 above, there were five main activities done in this study in order to find out the implementation of the research-based teaching method in English for Academic Writing Course.

2. METHOD

Case study was used in this research in order to investigate the implementation of research-based teaching method in English for Academic Writing course. Case study method is a detailed analysis that enables the study to investigate the “how” and “why” a single event can be established (Yin, 2019; Zainal, 2007; Gerring, 2004). Based on the definition, case study was considered suitable to use in order to find out “how” the research-based teaching method was implemented in English for Academic Writing course. The course aimed to prepare the students to be able to write an academic paper based on the APA 6th edition writing style. In that course, the students learned how to write an abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology section, findings and discussion section, and conclusion. To accommodate the students and to achieve the learning outcome, research-based teaching method was applied. Thirty-seven (37) students who were in the third semester and majoring information technology (IT) were examined as the participants. An electronic questionnaire was spread to the participants. The e-questionnaire was developed by using Google Form. The questions consisted of nine close-ended questions and three open-ended questions.

Besides, observation and document analysis were also done to strengthen the findings. The observation and document analysis were done for six months, from September 2016 to February 2017. The analyzed documents were the participants writing assignment results. The participants were given assignments to write essays and a research paper related to their field of study. As noted by Hartley (2008) that, in academic writing, collaborative writing can increase the productivity among the writers. Hartley noted that collaborative writing produced better academic writing papers that were more efficient and had a better quality. Besides, Hartley explained a survey that found a strong relationship between collaborative writing and research productivity. Thus, the participants were asked to write a research paper in a team collaboratively. The essays and paper-writing results were observed and analyzed thoroughly based on the APA 6th edition writing style-guideline. The APA 6th edition writing style

guideline was chosen as one of assessment criteria since BINUS University required this writing style for the *Skripsi* writing. The participants were also received feedbacks periodically. The feedbacks were both written and oral. The written feedbacks were given to the participants' essays and papers by utilizing the 'commenting' tool in Microsoft Word that was available in the Menu Bar: 'Review'. After reviewed, the papers were sent to the students through email. On the other hand, the oral feedbacks were given every meeting in the classroom.

To assess the participant's essays and research paper, this research used the Guideline for Academic Writing by Hartley (2008) as listed in the table below:

Table 1. Guideline for Academic Writing (Hartley, 2008)

No	Guideline	No	Guideline
1	Determine the readers/audiences	11	Use short paragraphs
2	Use the first rather than the third person	12	Use numbers or bullets
3	Use short, simple words	13	Setting for lists
4	Use active tense	14	Use subheadings
5	Sequencing in sentences	15	Print out and revise/edit draft copies
6	Place sequences in order	16	When in difficult, take time and practice
7	Avoid negatives	17	Read the text out loud
8	Avoid abbreviations	18	Proof reading
9	Avoid overloading the text with the references	19	Read & listen to the other authors
10	Vary sentence length	20	Revise continuously

As the fundamental and basic theory in observing the implementation of research-based method, the theoretical framework was applied.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the English for Academic Writing Course, the students were divided into eleven (11) groups and were asked to write essays and a mini-research paper.

The following table listed the title of the students' research paper:

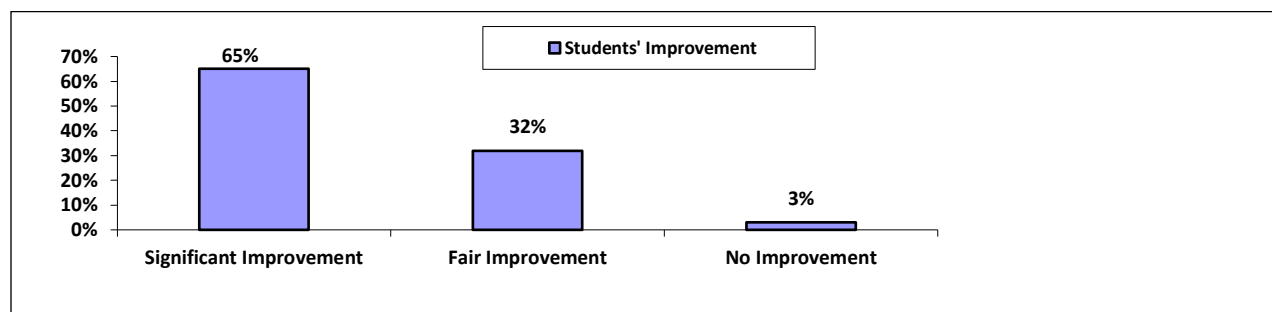
Table 2. Research title of the students' paper assignment

Group	Research Title
1	Comparison on Instagram Story and Snapchat
2	Comparison on WhatsApp and LINE Application
3	The Usage of Desktop Computer and Laptop
4	Analyzing the iOS and Android platform in the Smartphone
5	Comparing Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox as the most used browser
6	Comparison on Gojek and Grab as new way of transportation
7	Comparing the Most Popular Search Engine: Google and Bing
8	Gaming on PC or Console, which one is better?

9	Students Attitude toward Online and Offline Game
10	The Race of Mobile Assistance: Google Assistance vs. Siri
11	Comparing the Most Used Operating System: Windows and Macintosh

Answering the first research question, the result showed that 91.9% participants agreed that research-based method helped the participants to study the academic writing. The result also showed that 86.5% of the participants agreed that research-based teaching might help the participants acquired new knowledge related to their field of study – in this case was Information Technology. The result from students’ self-assessment through electronic questionnaire showed that 65% of the participants had significant improvement in their academic writing, 32% of the participants have fair improvement, and only 3% of the participants have no improvement from the research-based teaching method implementation.

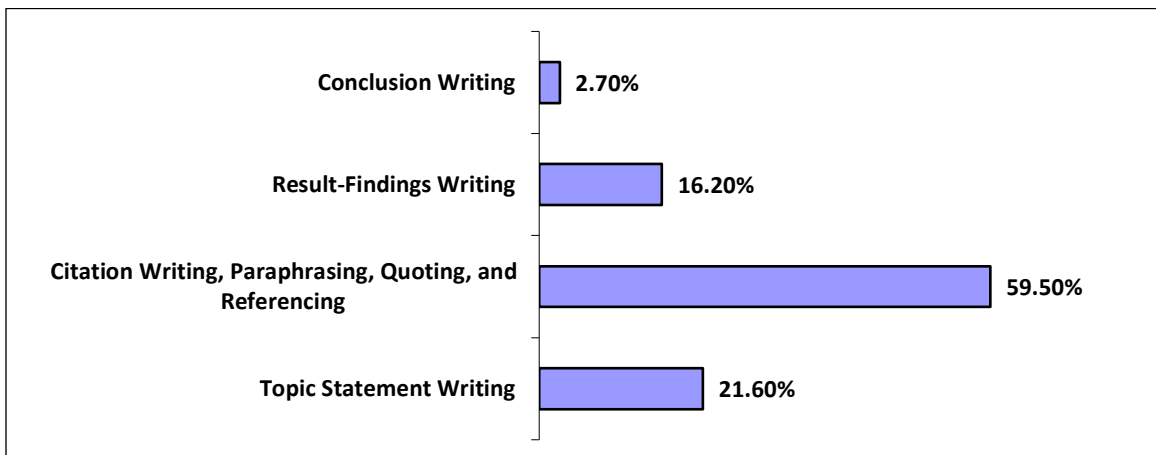
Chart 2. Student’s Improvement in the Academic Writing Skills



The result of the electronic questionnaire was supported with the result of document analysis and observation that showed the students’ score improvement in doing the writing assignment. The number of grammar mistakes decreased as well as the writing styles and coherency were getting better in every week. The result revealed that the implementation of the research-based method might help the participants in improving their academic writing abilities.

Answering the second research question, the e-questioner result showed the participants agreed that their awareness of plagiarism improved as well. This finding showed that the abilities in academic writing have positive impact toward the plagiarism awareness. Nevertheless, the result also showed the students agreed that citation writing, paraphrasing, quoting, and referencing were the most difficult aspects in writing academic paper as showed in the following chart:

Chart 3. The most difficult aspect in writing academic paper



Though those aspects regarded as the most difficult aspects, the document analysis result showed that the participants had significant improvement in citation writing, paraphrasing, quoting, and referencing.

Hence, the result also showed that research-based teaching method was very useful since the participants can apply the knowledge and skills of academic writing when they write a thesis to graduate in the future, as mentioned by participants in the open-ended questions on the electronic questionnaire below:

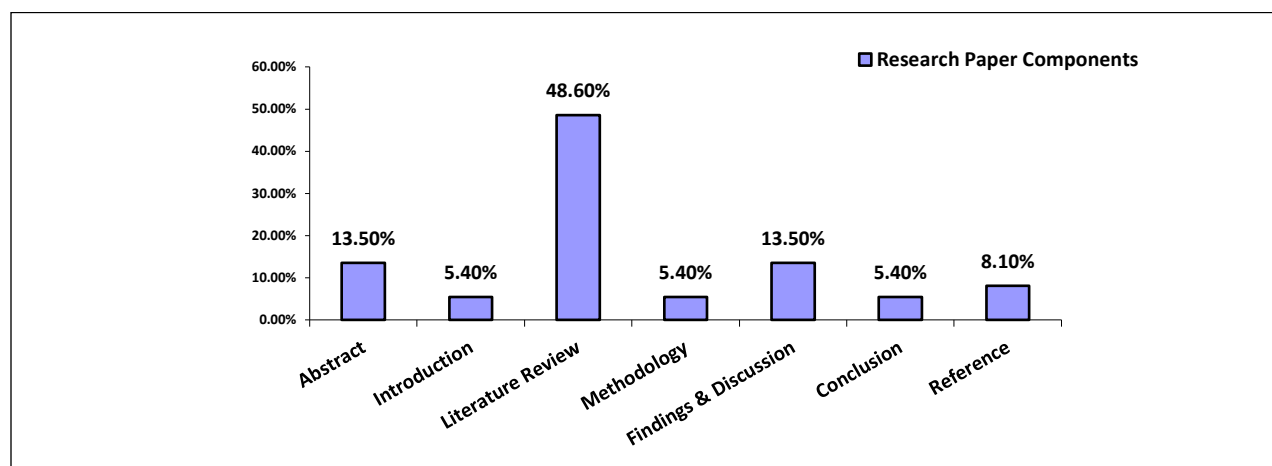
*“The research paper writing will be useful for the thesis writing in the future.”
(Participant 2)*

“The most useful aspect of this course is Paraphrasing, Citation and Quoting. By learning those three subjects, I can avoid things that can potentially consider as plagiarism which is very important when we're writing our final project (skripsi) or something else in the future.”(Participant 17)

“All of the aspects of the course are equally useful and valuable. It helps us to further develop our writing skills which would be crucial for our thesis and many more writing assignments to come.” (Participant 20)

Related to research paper components, the result showed that introduction section, methodology section, and conclusion section were regarded as the easiest components to write and literature review section as the most difficult component to write, as shown in the chart below:

Chart 4. The most difficult component in research writing



The result on the chart above aligned with the result that stated citation writing, paraphrasing, quoting, and referencing as the most difficult components to write since literature review was all about those components.

Answering the last research question, the result showed that lecturer's feedback played crucial role in the successful of the method implementation. About 94.6% of the participants agreed that the result was affected by the feedback from lecturers that were given periodically to the participants. The feedbacks were given both written and oral. The written feedbacks were given to every piece of the students' work. While the oral feedbacks were given and discussed in the classroom so that the students know what really matters and did follow up toward it.

The result from the questionnaire, document analysis and observation consistently found that the research-based method might encourage the development of the 21st skills in higher education, namely the analytical thinking and critical thinking, collaboration and teamwork, innovation and creativity. The analytic thinking and critical thinking were established since this method required the students to deal with research problems and questions and to see things from many perspectives. The critical thinking and analytical thinking skills developed every meeting proved by the questions posted by the students in their research questions and how they analyze the research findings in their research assignment. This result was correspondingly with the research finding written by AlKhouday (2015) that emphasized the implementation of various writing process that involved the activities such as criticizing, analyzing, and persuading.

The collaboration and teamwork were developed among the students since they were required to do the research in a team. Although there was one student who did not get a team

because she was so shy and quiet, finally she could attach with her friends in the team and did a positive contribution for the team. In the same way, Wang (2015) also found that collaborative writing could gain collaboration skills and teamwork needed in the workplace. While the creativities and innovations were developed at the end of the course period. Since the researches were related to IT development, the findings of the research did by the students might facilitate them to do innovation and creatively do follow up toward it. Reacting to the research findings, the students proposed suggestion for follow up toward their findings that might lead to the innovation in their field.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Research-based teaching method was successfully implemented in English for Academic Writing course. The method could facilitate the students to improve their ability in writing skills that related to research writing, such as in abstract writing, paraphrasing, quoting, citing, referencing, and so forth. Besides, the method also improved the students' awareness about plagiarism. The students also agreed that the research-based method might improve the 21st skills needed in the higher education life, namely critical thinking, analytical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and teamwork, innovation and creativity.

Based on the results and findings of the research, it was suggested for the further researches to conduct the research-based teaching method in other field of studies in order to see the effectiveness of this method in other field of studies and whether this method can be used to help the students in acquiring new knowledge and skills in other field of studies. Besides, it was also suggested that the further research might also be more focus on the impact of feedbacks in the future learning. The results also recommend the students to have intensive writing practice.

The result also implied that the lecturer should have time for giving feedback periodically to the students' work. The lecturer also should have the ability to do a research so that the lecturer could facilitate the students well.

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