

USING THE COPS STRATEGY IN TEACHING WRITING A NARRATIVE TEXT TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Yefi P Telaumbanua¹, Muhd.AI Hafizh, S.S,M.A.²

English Department

FBS State University of Padang

email: yefipatriatelaumbanua@rocketmail.com

Abstrak

Keterampilan menulis dirasakan sulit bagi sebagian siswa dikarenakan menulis menuntut siswa untuk mengeluarkan ide-ide terkait dengan topik yang akan mereka kembangkan. Selain itu, siswa dituntut untuk mengikuti aturan penulisan yang benar secara gramatikal dalam menuangkan ide-ide mereka ke dalam bahasa Inggris. Dan sebagai konsekuensinya siswa pun tidak termotivasi dalam menulis. Walaupun sebagian dari siswa mampu menulis, namun mereka kurang percaya diri terhadap tulisan mereka sendiri. Untuk itu ada satu strategi dalam meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis dan membuat siswa lebih termotivasi serta lebih percaya diri terhadap tulisan sendiri, yaitu melalui COPS Strategy. COPS Strategy adalah prosedur pengajaran yang dirancang untuk mengajarkan siswa dalam aturan penulisan yang benar yaitu fokus terhadap komponen mekanik yaitu C (Capitalization), O (Organization), P (Punctuation), and S (Spelling). COPS ini merupakan proses editing dan evaluating terhadap tulisan siswa. Strategi ini diharapkan dapat meningkatkan rasa percaya diri siswa terhadap tulisannya khususnya siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama. Dengan begitu siswa pun akan lebih menyenangi keterampilan menulis serta lebih termotivasi.

Kata kunci: keterampilan menulis, COPS strategy, siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama

A. INTRODUCTION

English has four language skills, one of them is writing. Writing is an important skill in English besides listening, speaking, and reading that should be learnt by language learners. As stated by Kirsner & Stephen (2011:3), writing is not just something people do in school; writing is a life skill. It means that writing

¹ Student of English Language Teaching Program of FBS UNP graduated on September 2013

² Advisor, Lecturer in Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Padang

is a skill that can influence someone's life. If he/she can write clearly, he/she can express his/her idea convincingly to others, in school, on the job, and in personal life in various forms such as in papers, books, poems, letters, essays, stories, novels or research reports. In addition Oshima and Hogue (1991:3) state that writing is a process, not a "product". It means that a piece of writing needs a process to make it understandable through prewriting, planning, writing and revising draft, and writing the final copy to hand in.

English is taught through the Genre Based Approach at Junior High School students based on School Based Curriculum 2006. In the Genre Based Approach all of language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and language competence (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and competition) are taught through text approach. There are several texts which are taught for junior high school students. One of them is Narrative text.

In reality, writing in an academic setting has been seen as a difficult, boring, and tiring work especially in writing a narrative text. Yolen in Feldman et al (2008: 56) states that narrative tells a story about series of events or actions. The difficulties on writing that become a problem not only to the students but also to the teacher. Based on the writer experience when she did teaching practice at Junior High School, it can be concluded that there are several problems that are faced in teaching writing a narrative text to Junior High School. The first problems come from the students themselves. They are lack of motivation because writing requires them to master the grammar through correct rule and also transfer their idea into English. It is quite difficult for them, then they always tend to write in simple past not in past form. They also less of confidence on their writing because they are afraid of making some mistakes. The second problem comes from the strategy which is used by the teachers. The teachers are not able to stimulate students' idea in the learning process. The teachers just ask the students to create a text and college it as an assignment without evaluating and giving any correction. Therefore, the students never know what are their mistakes and what is the correction. It will make them unmotivated in creating a writing later.

Dealing with the problems in writing skill, it can be carried out by implementing strategies in teaching writing. The strategy that can be applied by the teachers is using the COPS strategy (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, and Spelling). COPS is a mnemonic strategy that cues students through an editing process to edit written work for mechanical errors and clarity. Mnemonics can be very useful to help students remember the steps they need to focus on during the editing process. Editing makes the written product more legible and understandable to a reader. This mnemonic strategy should be posted in the room and taught to the students through a teaching, demonstrate and practice model as stated by Reid & Lienemann, (2006).

Nancy and Barbara (2009:146) states that COPS strategy helps students identify four basic error types. The mnemonic represent the following steps: **C** means Capitalization- check capitalization of first words in sentences and proper noun, **O** means overall appearance of work check for neatness, legibility, margins,

indentation of paragraphs, and complete sentences, **P** means punctuation- checks commas and end punctuation, and **S** means spelling - check to see if the words are spelled correctly.

In short, four mechanic components in writing: capitalization, overall appearance/organization, punctuation, and spelling are influence writing as a product. They have strong power in produce a writing to be a good one. Even though sometimes the writer ignores them and thinks that they are too easy. Using this strategy, students can check their writing independently before submitting their work. In this case teacher also has a rule to help his/ her students as a guide when the students find difficulties.

B. DISCUSSION

This subtitle will explain the implementation of teaching narrative text by using COPS strategy. The implementation is divided into two parts, preparation and the classroom procedure. Both of them will be discussed as follows:

1. Preparation

Preparation is one thing that should be considered before teaching in the class. Good preparation will determine the success of teaching and learning process. Therefore, before coming to the class, a teacher should have some preparations in order to promote and active viewing and facilitate successful language acquisition.

First, one of the most important things that should be prepared by teacher is a lesson plan. It is a guidance for the teacher in order to make teaching and learning process run systematically. In making a lesson plan, teacher should pay attention to several points: first is objective. Objective is a skill which students will be expected at the end of the lesson. Teacher should tell students the objectives that are expected from them at the end of the course. The second point is time allotment. In this point a teacher must consider the time of the lesson in a meeting. Therefore, the objective can be achieved in one meeting. Next is about the materials. In choosing materials, especially in teaching a narrative text, teacher should choose an interesting and familiar story that appropriate for students at Junior High School. For the example: Story of Rabbit and Bear, Cinderella, The Old Man and the Sparrow, Snow White. By choosing an interesting and familiar story, it is expected that students will be more interested or attracted. The next point is related to the activity in the classroom. The activity is what students and teacher do in the classroom. In teaching and learning process, teacher should invite the students to be active in learning process. Teacher can do discussion in the class to make students active in the classroom after they do individual's work. In discussion process, students will evaluate their writing through an editing or revising process. The teacher will help them during discussion. An evaluation is a way to measure whether the lesson can be understood by students.

The second important thing, teacher should prepare laptop, a poster of outlining COPS strategy and the last is infocus. Teacher uses laptop and infocus in order to show a narrative text. It will help teacher in order to activate students' background knowledge. The students will read the narrative text first and then

teacher will ask several questions related to the text such as: the place, time, situation, and the character of the story. Then, a poster of COPS outlining strategy is used as a media to remind the students several important components on their writing. They are: **C** means that have students capitalized the first word and proper names? **O** means that how is the overall appearance/organization? **P** means that have students put in commas and end punctuation? **S** means that have students spelled all the words right?

The third point of preparation, teacher should prepare two board markers: blue and red. It helps students to write the correction of the text on the whiteboard during discussion. It is used to revise the mechanic component of writing (capitalization, overall appearance, punctuation, and spelling). They will use red board marker to correct of capitalization and spelling, and then blue one is for correction of punctuation.

2. Teaching Procedures in the Classroom

There are three stages done by the teacher in teaching writing a narrative text to Junior High School. They are pre teaching activities, whilst teaching activity and the last is post teaching activity.

a. Pre Teaching Activity

The activities that can be done in this stage are a kind of warming up activities. Here the students are introduced to the lesson to be taught. The aim is to prepare the students. In this activity the teacher is trying to attract students' attention and interest, so that they are motivated to study.

In addition, this stage also to activate students' prior knowledge about the lesson that is going to be taught. It is a kind of activity in which the students can activate their existing knowledge about the lesson. The activities can be done in pre teaching activity as a follow: at the beginning of teaching, teacher prepares the students to be involved in the teaching and learning process physically and mentally by taking a pray first. It means that teacher makes sure that the students are really ready to follow the lesson, will focus, and be serious during the learning process. Then teacher checks the attendance lists, and prepares tools and media that will be needed such as in focus to show a narrative text, a poster of COPS outlining strategy, and two board marker: red and blue. In addition, teacher also asks several question related to the material.

In short, it can be concluded that in pre-teaching activity, teacher prepares the students to the lesson, then activate students' background knowledge by asking some question and also introduces COPS strategy itself by showing a poster outlining of COPS strategy in front of the class. **C** means Capitalization-check capitalization of first words in sentences and proper noun, **O** means overall appearance of work check for neatness, legibility, margins, indentation of paragraphs, and complete sentences, **P** means punctuation- checks commas and end punctuation, and **S** means spelling - check to see if the words are spelled correctly.

b. Whilst Teaching Activity

In this stage, first, teacher attracts students' attention by showing the model of narrative text. Teacher shows a story "Snow White" with several

mistakes in front of the class through infocus so that all of students can read the story clearly. The teacher gives several mistakes in the story in order to ask students to evaluate or revise. Evaluating and revise is done through discussion.

Then, after showing a story and asks several question through discussion, teacher requires students to pay attention on mechanic component of writing and explain it more detail. They should pay attention to a poster of COPS outlining strategy that show in front of the class. They are: Capitalization, Overall appearance/organization, Punctuation, and Spelling.

Capitalization means that each sentence starts with a capital letter, proper nouns start with capital letters (Names for people, places, holidays, months, and days of the week), the title is written correctly (The first, last and all important words begins with capital letters). Organization means thatthe story has a title and a line. The first sentence of my story is indented. The main idea sentence is the first sentence of my story. The sentences are in order – first, next, then and last, used strong, colorful verbs, nouns and describing words, and used the right forms of words like to/too, your/you're, for/four, and so forth.Punctuation means that each sentence ends with the correct punctuation mark, uses commas in a list or series, and uses quotation marks around each speaker's words. The last is spelling. In this point students need to do their best to spell words correctly. With more difficult words, they need to represent most of the sounds heard in the word.

Perhaps, sometimes students ignore these components, thus it will make their writing is not correct overall. To make students more understand of those mechanic components of writing, teacher will ask some students to come in front of the class and give correction to the mistake of the narrative text by using blue and red board marker based on COPS outlining strategy's poster as a guidance. After they give correction, they also should spell each word correctly.

Next, teacher and students will evaluate and revise the story together through discussion. Which one of the sentence or the words should be given correction?. Based on the story that has revised and evaluate, teacher explains the generic structure and language features of narrative text. Teacher explains more detail three point of generic structure. First, orientation, the second, and the third is resolution. After teacher explains and students get the point, teacher asks students to write a narrative text by themselves as an individual work. Teacher will provide two simple stories and the students will choose one of them. First story is about "The Story and the Rabbit" and the second story is "The Old Man and the sparrow." Teacher will provide first paragraph for the each story and describe the story. Thus, it is really helpful for the students to explore their idea in writing if they get the point of the description.

When every student finishes their writing, they should collect their writing and then the teacher will change students' writing to different writer. In this stage, teacher pointed one of the students to write down his/her friend writing on the white board. Then others students will comment, or criticize about that writing. They will come in front of the class then make the correction by using red and blue board marker based on the COPS poster outlining.

By doing this strategy, students will know what are their mistakes and how to revise it into the correct one. They will revise their writing correctly then

collect it as an assignment. Besides, they will more confidence in creating their writing especially in a narrative text because they know the several steps and remember the guidance in their mind.

c. Post Teaching Activity

Before closing the class, there are some activities that the teacher does: the teacher asks the students' difficulties about the lesson. If there are some students still confuse or does not understand about the lesson, the teacher will explain once more. After that the teacher concludes the lesson together with the students. It focuses on mechanic component in writing then the content also. The teacher provides feedback on process and learning outcomes. Teacher also asks students to make a homework about narrative text "Cinderella". This story is really familiar for them. So, students are expected to explore their thinking and idea in making a short story. It will be collected on the next meeting.

3. The Advantages of COPS strategy in Teaching Writing to Junior High School

There are some advantages of using COPS strategy in teaching writing a narrative text:

- a. Students can use COPS to self correction as they write using the COPS strategy as a checklist
- b. Students can use COPS as a final editing checklist of a written piece of work before the final draft is written.
- c. Students will be more confident to create their writing and collect it as a assignment without ignoring mechanics components in writing.
- d. Student also will be more careful to write without ignoring mechanics component in writing.

C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the discussion in the previous chapters, it can be concluded that the writer chooses COPS strategy to overcome the problem in writing skill. *COPS* strategy is a mnemonic strategy that cues students through an editing process to edit written work for mechanical errors and clarity. The mnemonic represent the following steps: **C** means Capitalization- check capitalization of first words in sentences and proper noun, **O** means overall appearance of work check for neatness, legibility, margins, indentation of paragraphs, and complete sentences, **P** means punctuation- checks commas and end punctuation, and **S** means spelling - check to see if the words are spelled correctly.

In the teaching learning process, the teacher should introduce four mechanic component and also the rule of the writing first. Then teacher asks students to create their writing individually after that revise their writing through discussion. Teacher help students by giving first paragraph of the story then the students will continue and finish story by their own idea.

The teacher has to know that by using COPS strategy, it can increase the students' confidence to create their writing independently and also improve students' motivation during classroom writing activities. Besides, the students will more carefully in writing their writing as an assignment. They will more focus on

the mechanic component first such as; Capitalization, Overall appearance (organization), Punctuation and Spelling, besides focus on the content also. After that, the teachers have the opportunity to give feedback to make the students more comprehend on what they write latter.

Based on the conclusion above, it is suggested to the English teachers especially at Junior High School to apply this strategy in order to build students' confidence in writing a narrative text through editing process. Besides, COPS strategy also expected to motivate students and make students enjoy in making their writing without worry that their writing correct or not.

Catatan: artikel ini disusun berdasarkan makalah penulis dengan Pembimbing Muhd. Al Hafizh, S.S., M.A

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