A MODIFIED PROCESS WRITING PROCEDURE TO LOWER STUDENTS' WRITING ANXIETY[1]

By

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This study investigated the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure to lower students' writing anxiety and to foster students' writing achievement, and the causes of writing anxiety mostly felt by eleventh graders in State Senior High School 2 Pringsewu. This study employed mixed-method approach. The data were obtained from questionnaire, writing test and interview then analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired sample t-test. The interview data were transcribed to answer the third research question. The findings revealed that Modified Process Writing Procedure is effective to lower students' writing anxiety since the t_{obt} is higher than the t_{crit}. Regarding the second research question, it revealed that Modified Process Writing Procedure is effective to foster students' writing achievement since the t_{obt} is higher than the t_{crit}. It is also found that the causes mostly felt by the students are linguistic difficulties, low self-confidence in writing, and insufficient writing practice.

Keywords: process writing approach, writing anxiety, writing achievement, causes of writing anxiety

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MODIFIKASI PROSEDUR MENULIS BERPROSES UNTUK MENURUNKAN KETAKUTAN MENULIS SISWA[1]

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Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengukur efektifitas penggunaan Modifikasi Prosedur Menulis Berproses untuk menurukan ketakutan menulis siswa dan meningkatkan prestasi menulis siswa, serta mengetahui penyebab ketakutan menulis yang dirasakan oleh siswa kelas 11 di SMAN 2 Pringsewu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode campuran. Data yang diperoleh dari kuisioner, tes menulis, dan interviu dianalisis menggunakan deskripsi statitistik dan uji t dengan sampel berpasangan. Data interviu ditranskripsi untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian nomor tiga. Dari hasil penelitian terbukti bahwa Modifikasi Prosedur Menulis Berproses efektif digunakan untuk menurunkan ketakutan menulis siswa karena nilai t hasil lebih tinggi dari nilai t tabel. Modifikasi Prosedur Menulis Berproses terbukti pula dapat meningkatkan prestasi menulis siswa karena nilai t hasil lebih tinggi dari nilai t tabel. Ditemukan pula bahwa penyebab ketakutan menulis yang paling sering dirasakan siswa yaitu kesulitan linguistik, rendah diri dalam menulis dan kurangnya latihan menulis.

Kata kunci: ketakutan menulis, pendekatan menulis berproses, , prestasi menulis, penyebab ketakutan menulis

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INTRODUCTION

Writing has a unique position in language teaching since its acquisition involves a practice and knowledge of other three language skills, such as listening, reading and speaking (Klimova, 2014). Writing is also one of the important tools by which students actively change the passive knowledge and information in their minds into their own language (Hashemnezhad and Hashemnezhad, 2012). It seems to be important to master the skill although as stated by Nunan (1999: 271), producing a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing is possibly the most difficult thing to do in language. The students should think, compose and create ideas; check their connection to each other and to the main idea of the topic; memorize and recall lexical items thought to be more relevant than others; select and discard irrelevant ideas; and organize these ideas according to their importance in a way to develop the main idea (Shawish and Abdelraheem, 2010). If the students do not have the necessary knowledge and experience of language that writing demand, which is stated by Brown and Hood (1993: 3) as one of major barriers to student confidence, it will lead them to writing anxiety (Shawish and Abdelraheem, 2010).

Anxiety or apprehension is a feeling of nervousness, worry, and uneasiness, which is a reaction to a situation or an event that is happening or might happen in the future (Jang and Choi, 2014). Huwari and Al Shboul (2016) state that students feel anxious in writing when teachers ask them to compose a text. Anxiety in writing can lead the students to be demotivated in writing which then may cause them to have negative attitudes towards writing (Huwari and Aziz, 2011). Kostic-Bobanovic (2016) also states that the complexity of writing as a task tends to heighten students' anxiety levels. Thus, to minimize the students' anxiety in writing, teachers should modify their teaching instruction as suggested by Huwari and Al Shboul (2016).

One of teaching writing approaches which is considered suitable to lower students' writing anxiety is process writing approach. By using process writing approach, the teacher has a space to help the students to produce a piece of writing by guiding them follow the steps of writing. As stated by Nunan (1999: 312) that process writing approach is an approach to writing pedagogy that focuses on the steps involved in drafting and redrafting a piece of work. Traditionally, many ESL/EFL teachers have emphasized the need for ESL/EFL writers to be as correct as possible while writing in English, fundamentally concerned with the final product of writing (Kang, 2006). The teacher marks their writing and gives it back to the students without asking them to revise it. This way of teaching is contradictory to what Abbas (2016) suggests that teachers should focus on teaching writing as a process not as a product. Moreover, Hedge (2005: 10) states that writing activities which have whole texts as the students' outcome relate appropriately to the ultimate goals of those students who need to write in their real life. Teachers, she adds, have a responsibility to build communicative potential by providing

them a context where they can produce whole pieces of communication, link and develop information, ideas or arguments for a particular reader or group of readers.

One of process writing procedures is developed by Hedge (2005). The Hedge's procedure in writing was developed from her experience and investigation towards her intermediate students in writing class. From the investigation, she got information about the different strategies students adopted and the problems that some poorer students experienced. Hedges (2005: 52) asserts that the process of writing is not that linear one. She adds that it will be more accurate to characterize writing as a recursive activity in which the students move backwards and forwards between drafting and revising. Moreover, the other merit of Hedge's writing stages is that she puts 'being motivated to write' as one of activities in pre-writing stage. This activity helps students realize that writing needs goals and audience. Hedge (2005: 52) emphasizes two questions before writing which she puts in her first step (being motivated to write): what the purpose of the writing is; and who the writer is writing for. The answers of these two questions, she adds, provide the writer with a sense of purpose and a sense of audience which will give the writer a writing context that influences the composition processes. Here, giving motivation means giving the students a context before writing.

However, based on pre-research interview, the students do not only need motivation to write English composition. They also need guidance in pre-writing activity to aid them generating and elaborating their ideas, which is not clearly explained by Hedge. It means that putting 'being guided to write' after 'being motivated to write' is deliberately needed by the students. Thus, the process writing procedure is begun by giving the students motivation and guidance in form of modeling writing and guided writing. This additional step is inspired by Seow's (2002) statement, which states that teachers should model the writing process at every stage and teach specific writing strategies to students through meaningful classroom activities.

Several previous studies have been conducted around the world dealing with process writing approach and its contribution in learning process. Bayat (2014) has investigated the effect of the process writing approach on writing success and anxiety. The participants in this study were first-year Turkish preschool teaching students. He employed a quasi-experimental design. As a result of the statistical analysis, the study finds that the process writing approach has a significant effect on writing success and anxiety. Based on this finding, he suggests that the use of process writing approach is recommended for written expression studies.

In the same year, Alodwan and Ibnian (2014) from Jordan has done a study aimed at investigating the effect of using the process approach to writing on developing university students' essay writing skills. The sample of the study consisted of 90 non-English major students classified into two classes, one served as an experimental group and the other one as control.

The results of the study show that the process approach to writing has positively affected the students' essay writing skills in EFL.

Furthermore, Faraj (2015) investigated the effect of teacher's scaffolding with teaching writing process on improving students' writing skills. For this investigation, he employed 30 students all native speakers of Kurdish language in the twenty-to-twenty-three-year age studying at English Language. They were only one experimental group. Pre-test and post-test were conducted for assessing how much students achieved from what had been taught. The result is that students' achievement in post-test compared to pre-test reveals significant improvement. Also, he concludes that scaffolding students' writings through writing process approach meets the students' needs in EFL writing, and then it has improved their writing skill.

The opposite result regarding process writing was revealed by Klimova (2014). She conducted a study which involved 14 distant students Management of Tourism in their third year of study at FIM. They were asked to write an abstract of their final Bachelor paper. At the beginning of the experiment students were divided into two groups, each comprised 7 students. One group (A) was then taught the writing of abstracts through the product approach by being provided model abstracts of British provenience and the other group (B) was taught through the process approach to writing. The result shows that neither of process approach and product approach is more appropriate for the learning and teaching of writing skills. The product approach to writing is slightly better for the teaching of writing skills.

Previously, Gomez et al (1996) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of free writing versus structured writing instruction with a group of 48 low-achieving limited English proficient (LEP) Hispanic students in an intensive 6-week summer program. Structured Writing samples show significant growth in five of nine scores and Free Writing only one. Tests between treatments show significant differences on just one score, in favor of Structured Writing. From this research, they suggest that structured writing is better than free writing.

Considering the importance of Modified Process Writing Procedure, this study tried to answer the following research questions:
1. How is the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure in lowering students' writing anxiety?
2. How is the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure in fostering students' writing achievement?
3. What are the causes of writing anxiety mostly felt by the students?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed mixed-method approach in form of explanatory sequential design. A quantitative approach employed in this study is

pre-experimental design by means of one-group pretest-posttest design. The researcher only used one experimental class so that the notation is as follows:

$$T_1 \times T_2$$

Note:
T$_1$ = Pretest
T$_2$ = Posttest
X = Treatment (Modified Process Writing Procedure)

The population of this study was the eleventh-grade students of SMAN 02 Pringsewu. The samples of the study were thirty of eleventh-grade students of SMAN 02 Pringsewu. There are nine classes of the eleventh graders and the sample was chosen randomly based on their classroom. The names of the samples were coded into numbers. It was done in order to ensure the privacy of research data as Creswell (2012: 23) suggests that names of the participants should be removed from all data collection forms and assign a number or letter to each form. Meanwhile, the participants of the interview were chosen purposively as suggested by Creswell (2012: 206). The participants were chosen based on their writing anxiety level.

Furthermore, the instruments used to collect the data were interview guides, questionnaires and writing test. The guideline of interview is adapted from Demirel (2011) such as the students' writing anxiety before, during, and after the treatment; factors causing anxiety; factors which helped them cope with their writing anxiety; and their suggestion for improving their writing. The questionnaires used in this study were second language writing anxiety inventory (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004) and causes of second language writing anxiety inventory (CSLWAI) developed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). Those two questionnaires were employed to gain the data dealing with the students' writing anxiety. Those two instruments were translated into Bahasa Indonesia. SLWAI consists of 22 items, scored on a Five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The 22 items of the modified SLWAI are divided into three categories of anxiety, such as Cognitive Anxiety (1, 3, 7, 9, 14, 17, 20, 21), Somatic Anxiety (2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 19), and Avoidance Behavior (4, 5, 10, 12, 16, 18, 22). For each item, respondents were required to respond with an answer: strongly agree (5), agree (4), uncertain (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Yet, there were seven items which should be counted reversely (1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree). Those are the items number 1, 4, 7, 17, 18, 21, and 22. Thus, higher score shows higher level of writing anxiety.

Moreover, CSLWAI is 10-item questionnaire developed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014) on the basis of causes of writing anxiety (including fear of teacher's negative comment, fear of writing tests, insufficient writing practice, insufficient writing technique, problems with topic choice, linguistic difficulties, pressure for perfect work, high frequency of writing assignments, time pressure, and low self confidence in writing). One item was added (item number 2), which is about the fear of getting bad score, to complete the questionnaire.

The last instrument is writing test. Writing test was conducted before and after the treatment. This instrument was used to know the effectiveness of the modified process writing procedure. The topic was chosen based on the Curriculum of 2013, school syllabus, and teacher's suggestion, which is personal letter. The aspect of writing assessed are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

The gathered data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (mean, maximum, minimum, standard deviation and variance) and paired sample t-test. Paired sample t-test was used to measure the difference between students' writing anxiety and achievement before and after the treatment. This study only used one experimental class without control class. Thus, paired sample t-test was employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question regarding the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure to lower students' writing anxiety was answered by counting and analyzing the students' SLWAI scores before, during and after the treatment using SPSS 17.0. There are three pairs of the test: pretest score-while score; while score-posttest score; and pretest score-posttest score.

The first pair between pretest score of students' writing anxiety and while score of students' writing anxiety shows that the t_{obt} is 7.860 at significant level of 0.05. If it is compared to t_{crit} at df (29), which is 2.045, t_{obt} is larger than t_{crit}. Referring to the hypothesis of this study, this result shows that Modified Process Writing Procedure is effective to lower students' writing anxiety from the beginning of the treatment to the middle of the treatment. Then, null hypothesis is rejected.

The second pair is about the comparison between the students' writing anxiety scores during the treatment and the students' writing anxiety scores after the treatment (posttest). The table shows that t_{obt} is 5.527 at significant level of 0.05. If it is compared to t_{crit} at df (29), which is 2.045, t_{obt} is larger than t_{crit}. Thus, it can also be concluded that Modified Process Writing Procedure is effective to lower students' writing anxiety from the middle of the treatment to the end of the treatment and null hypothesis is rejected.

The last pair is about the comparison between the students' writing anxiety before the treatment (pretest) and after the treatment (posttest). The t_{obt} of this pair (10.597) is higher than the t_{crit} (2.045). It means that Modified Process Writing Procedure is significantly effective to lower students' writing anxiety. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure in lowering students' writing anxiety can also be seen from the students' level of writing anxiety before, during, and after the treatment. The levels of students' writing anxiety were lowered. It can be seen from the percentages of students' writing anxiety in pretest, during the treatment, and posttest. In the pretest,

77% of students was in high level of writing anxiety and the rest of them (23%) was in moderate level. During the treatment, the number of students who were in high level of writing anxiety was lowered to be 47% and the students who were in moderate level of writing anxiety were increased to be 53%. There was no student in low level of writing anxiety before and during the treatment. After the treatment, the percentage of high-level-anxiety students was lowered to be 13%. Yet, the number of students who were in moderate level and low level was increased to be 60% and 27% respectively.

In answering the second research question concerning the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure to foster students' writing achievement, the students' writing scores in pretest and posttest were analyzed by using SPSS 17.0. Paired sample t-test was utilized to investigate the significant difference between the pretest scores and the posttest score. t_{obt} of pair 1 (posttest score and pretest score) is 7.88 at significant level of 0.05. If it is compared to t_{crit} at df (29), which is 2.045, t_{obt} is higher than t_{crit}. Thus, statistically, the posttest score is significantly different from pretest score. The positive score of t_{obt} shows that the posttest score is higher than the pretest score.

In finding out the answer of the third research question regarding the causes of students' writing anxiety, CSLWAI questionnaire was utilized towards 30 students before the treatment. Interview transcriptions were also used to verify the results. The result shows that linguistics difficulties is the most cause of writing anxiety felt by the students (83%), followed by low self-confidence in writing (75%) and insufficient writing practice (71%). Of the six interviewed students, three students agreed that linguistic difficulties, especially vocabulary, were the most cause of writing anxiety. Regarding low self-confidence in writing, the students also felt unconfident and a bit confused to write. Dealing with insufficient writing practice, two students stated that they did not get used to write something in English.

As known that students' writing anxiety was examined three times, before, during, and after the treatment. Before the treatment, their writing anxiety was high (70.57). It turned down during the treatment to be 63.93, which is moderate. The decrease happened after the first and the second meeting, in which the students did prewriting activities and made a first draft. The students felt that their writing anxiety lowered a little because of the writing process applied in the classroom activity such as giving hints and making an outline, which are parts of prewriting activities. This result is in line with Schweiker-Marra and Marra's study (2000) which revealed that students' writing anxiety could be lowered through writing program that emphasized prewriting activities. They believed that the use of prewriting skills is important, especially in choosing a topic, gathering and organizing ideas, identifying the audience and purpose for writing, and selecting the appropriate format for the writing piece.

After the treatment, the students' writing anxiety lowered to be 55.17. Some of them were not afraid of writing English text anymore and the rest of them were still a bit afraid but it was lower than before. They said that they felt calmer and more relaxed in writing due to the hints in the prewriting and the revision stage. At the first revising activity (the 1st meeting), the students did peer correction. However, when they did it, they looked not comfortable with it. Based on the interview, they said that they preferred the teacher to revise or correct their writing. Some of them said they were shy if their writing was read by other students. It is fully understandable for some reasons as stated by Tsui and Ng (2000). They assert that the students have more confidence in teacher comments because the teacher is considered more experienced and more authoritative. Moreover, they add, the teacher comments are considered having better quality. They are more specific, are able to explain what the problems are, and are better able to make concrete suggestions for revision. This finding, however, is different from what Scullin and Baron's (2012) believe that writing needs to be heard as well as read so in their activity, the students read their writing to their writing partner that was established at the beginning of the school year.

In general, the finding has supported the previous studies. This study supports Bayat's (2014) study which revealed that process writing approach decreased students' writing anxiety to a statistically significant extent and Scullin and Barron's study which stated that the students felt more comfortable in writing and were not continuously critiqued on what they wrote after being treated using freewriting notebooks. Arici and Kaldirim (2015) also found that there is a great decrease in anxiety related to writing for Turkish pre-service teachers during the research process. They stated that the prewriting phase is very important for reducing writing anxiety, and it makes the process of writing more effective.

Dealing the second research question about the effectiveness of Modified Process Writing Procedure in fostering students' writing achievement, it was found that Modified Process Writing Procedure was significantly effective to foster students' writing achievement. The students' scores of writing achievement fostered since their writing posttest scores were significantly higher than their writing pretest scores.

This finding is consistent with Silin and Chand (2015) who have revealed that the four-stage writing process has improved and developed 73 post-secondary students' writing abilities in Singapore. It is also in line with Ho (2006); Diliduzgun (2013); Bayat (2014); Alodwan and Ibnian (2014); and Faraj (2015) who agree that process approach has positively effect on students' writing achievement. However, this finding rejects Klimova's study (2014) which revealed that neither of process approach and product approach is more appropriate for the learning and teaching of writing skills.

As seen from the example of the student's writing in pretest, during the treatment, and in posttest, the students seemed to be successful in generating and elaborating the ideas better than in the pretest although they did some mistakes in language features. They were very helpful with the outline and the revising stage so they got used to plan what they wanted to write and revised it to have better writing. The mistakes they still made about vocabulary use, grammar, punctuation etc. are considered tolerable since it needs time and process for the students to make their ability in using the grammar better.

Regarding the research question number three, the causes which were mostly felt by the students are linguistic difficulties, low self-confidence in writing, and insufficient writing practice. It is in line with Zhang (2011) who has revealed that 83% of the students thought their English writing anxiety stemmed from linguistic difficulties, such as inadequate mastery of vocabulary, simple sentence structures, and grammatical errors. She also found that 80% of the students thought they were lack of writing practice inside and outside the classroom and 63% of the students were lack of confidence in L2 writing achievement.

Younas et al (2014) also found that 82% of the respondents of their study had linguistic difficulties while writing in English. Moreover, 60% of the respondents felt insufficient writing practice. Then, 50% of the respondents were less-confidence while writing in English.

The result was not surprising since as found in the interview that the students felt difficult in using vocabulary when they had to write something in English. Most of them also said that they didn't get used to write something in English. They rarely practice their writing in their daily life such as updating social media status in Facebook, Twitter, Line etc. One of the causes of this anxiety is the students' low self-confidence. They were lack of confidence in writing so they rarely wrote something in English then it made them difficult to use proper vocabulary in English writing.

Those three causes were not only felt by Indonesian students, but also by the students in Asia, such as Taiwan (Zhang, 2011) and India (Younas et al, 2014). The percentages were nearly similar to each other. The position of English (as foreign or second language) in the countries seems not to affect the causes of writing anxiety felt by the students.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results and previous studies, process writing approach is effective to lower students' writing anxiety, especially for Asian students who learn English as foreign language. The writing proses can also be modified by adding one useful step needed by the students. The additional step, which is 'being guided to write', can be implemented in the classroom activity to lower students' writing anxiety. It is because their knowledge about writing increased along the treatment.

Moreover, the process writing approach is also effective to foster students' writing achievement in some countries in Asia. Modified Process Writing Procedure implemented in the classroom can help students generate and elaborate the ideas of writing better than before. The additional step gives a space for the teacher to motivate and guide the students to start writing. By knowing what to write and who they write for, the students are easier to write down their ideas in outline and elaborate them in the first draft.

Then, the first three causes mostly felt by the students (linguistic difficulties, low self-confident and insufficient writing practice) in Indonesia are also felt by the students who learn English as second and foreign language in Asia. The students lacked self-confidence in writing because they rarely wrote something in English. They did not get used to practicing it. Hence, it made them have difficulties in linguistics such as inadequate mastery of vocabulary, simple sentence structures, and grammatical errors. Here, the teacher's roles as learning guide and facilitator are very crucial. Therefore, it is suggested to implement Modified Process Writing Procedure along with the teaching of grammar and mechanics in order that the students can produce better writing.

For the researchers, it is recommended for them to conduct further research dealing with the modification of process writing approach in other countries whose the students learn English either as second or foreign language. A training combination between Modified Process Writing Procedure and a particular learning strategy is possible to do considering that those two methods are needed by the students.

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