

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN DARMA AGUNG UNIVERSITY

Oleh:

**Desmalia Purba** <sup>1)</sup>

**Humiras Betty M. Sihombing** <sup>2)</sup>

**University of Darma Agung, Medan** <sup>1,2)</sup>

*E-mail:*

[minsontamsar@gmail.com](mailto:minsontamsar@gmail.com) <sup>1)</sup>

[bettyasihombing1807@gmail.com](mailto:bettyasihombing1807@gmail.com) <sup>2)</sup>

## ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas tentang peningkatan kemampuan mahasiswa semester lima Fakultas Sastra Universitas Darma Agung dalam menulis tulisan ilmiah dengan menggunakan media hening tanpa suara. Media hening diambil dari video berita Liputan 6 yang tayang pada sore hari dari saluran SCTV. Artikel ini diambil dari penelitian yang berbentuk tindakan kelas. Subjek penelitian adalah mahasiswa Fakultas Sastra Program Studi Sastra Inggris Universitas Darma Agung yang terletak di Jl. TD. Pardede No 21 Medan. Hasil yang ditemukan dilapangan menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media hening tanpa suara dapat meningkatkan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam menyusun tulisan ilmiah, khususnya proposal skripsi secara signifikan. Hal ini dapat dilihat bahwa hasil awal pada pre-test relative rendah 76.70, sementara hasil post-test setelah treatment pertama adalah 82.84 dan hasil post-test setelah treatment kedua adalah 90.30.

***Kata Kunci: Writing Ability, Academic Writing, Media, Silent Video, Teaching Method, CAR***

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

All the aspects of human's life are covered by English. In technology, it can be seen that all instructions of electronic tools are written in English. In health aspect, the prescriptions and the ingredients of medicines are written in this language. In economy aspect, when people do export-import activity, of course, English is the language that

must be used. English is also used in political aspect. It can be proved when there is a newest or up to date development about politics, it will be written in English also. In education aspect, many books used in Indonesia are written in English, even some of them are imported from other countries. Besides that, English is a compulsory subject at schools, it means that every student have to know English well.

Although English is studied at school for about six years, but it does not mean that every student can master four skills in English. The skills are *listening, speaking, reading* and *writing*. Listening and reading are receptive language in which someone just receives the skills without producing anything. Meanwhile, speaking and writing are productive skills in which someone needs to be creative to produce something.

Writing is difficult for some students because to master writing, there are many aspects to understand well first. It needs good grammar and rich vocabularies, the perseverance in arranging the ideas. It was proved based on the researchers' experience in teaching Academic Writing in Faculty of Letters, who arranged their thesis had many corrections from their supervisors. They were not able to use their punctuations well, to arrange their fresh ideas and to convey their intentions.

The researchers offer one solution to overcome the problems faced by the students in writing. It is the use of a teaching media, video use. Teaching's media is media that is used to support teaching and learning process, to help the goal of studying that has been written on the syllabus. It can be an electronic media or mass media. The video that the researchers' mean is short video from news in television but it is made silent and without any

voice/sound. If the teacher does it, the researchers are quite sure that the teaching – learning process will run well.

Based on the statements above, the writer is interested to conduct a research, entitled "IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN DARMA AGUNG UNIVERSITY".

### **The Problems of the Study**

There are two problems in this study; they are formulated as follows:

1. What are the difficulties faced by the students of Faculty of Letters, Darma Agung University in conducting a research proposal?
2. How does the use of Silent Video affect the students' ability in conducting a research proposal?

### **The Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the difficulties faced by the students of Faculty of Letter, Darma Agung University in conducting a research proposal
2. To find out whether the use of *Silent Video* affects significantly to the students' ability in conducting a research proposal

### **The Scope of the Study**

This study is limited on academic writing, especially in research proposal writing because it will be useful when the students face their seminar proposal before doing their thesis.

Video can be divided into two kinds; they are long and short video. In this research, the intended video is short video. It is about news which is broadcasted by television in SCTV channel, *Liputan 6* in the afternoon. The topic in the news is limited about *social life, crime, and nature* only because they are interesting to be analyzed.

### **The Significances of the Study**

This study is expected to be useful for:

1. *he English learners*: this study can give information and enrich their knowledge about academic writing, especially proposal
2. *he English teachers*: this study can enrich their source of information about academic writing, especially proposal
3. *he other researchers with related topic*: this study can give information relating to the topic

### **THEORETICAL BASIS**

#### **Academic Writing**

Bailey (2006:8) says that: "Academic Writing is for international students studying in

colleges and universities where courses are taught in English. Those students who are not native speakers of English often find the written demands of their courses very challenging. In addition to learning academic English they need to adopt new conventions of style, referencing and layout". Online media in learning has a favorable aspect to the achievements of their studies, Simamora P (2019).

### **Research Proposal**

Research proposal is document that is typically written by a scientist or academic which describes the ideas for an investigation on a certain topic. The research proposal outlines the process from beginning to end and may be used to request financing for the project, certification for performing certain parts of research of the experiment, or as a required task before beginning a college dissertation. (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/researchproposal.html>)

Research proposal consists of three sections; they are introduction, review of related literature and methodology of research. In introduction, there are background, problem, objective, scope and significance of the study. Meanwhile in section two, review of related literature, there will be some explanations about all the related literatures to make all the readers

**understand about the content of the** research. Lastly, in section three, methodology of research, it explains about the methods used to collect and analyze the data.

So, from the definitions above it can be concluded that research proposal is a preliminary writing we do before conducting our research.

### **Teaching Media**

In teaching and learning process, it is better when media is used to support the goal of the curriculum. According to Sabri (2010:107), media is a tool used as a mediator to convey the message and it can stimulate students' thought, feeling and progress so that the teaching – learning process can run well.

Having media in teaching – learning process, the students are easier to grasp the lesson because it can make students' mind fresh since it is not hard to analyze. Media also gives the students new experience relating to the topic. Classroom can be dynamic which makes the process of students' learning works smoothly.

### **Silent Video**

Based on Oxford Dictionary, video is the recording, reproducing, or broadcasting of moving visual images: *it's a great option for anyone looking to start using video to talk over the Net*

In this study, it is silent video that was used as the media in students' treatment. It is called silent media because the writer played the video by omitting both the sound and subtitles. It is done to make the students creative in imagining something related the topic. So, in other words it can be said that the students only watch a silent/mute video and without subtitles also.

### **News**

News, as quoted from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia, is packaged information about current events happening somewhere else; or, alternatively, news is that which the news industry sells.

The media of news can be in printed and electronic media. When it is talked about printed news, it can be in the form of newspaper, magazine, article etc. meanwhile in electronic news, it can be in the form of television news, radio news even etc. Nowadays, people prefer electronic news, such as television news and radio news for they do not need to spend time to read, but it is enough for listening and watching only. It is faster and easier to get the information from the news.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

According to Arikunto (2010:130), CAR is a scrutiny of the activities that are intentionally raised, and occurs in a classroom.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) figured out about the main steps of Action Research, they are: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in which the cycle is shown in the following figure:

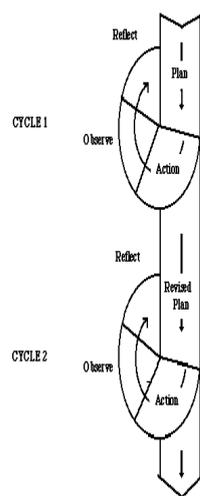


Figure 3.1 the Procedure of Classroom Action Research (Adapted from Kemmis and Mc Taggart's model)

### The Subject of the Study

The subject of this research is the students of Faculty of Letters, English Department, University of Darma Agung. This university is at JL. DR. TD. Pardede 21 Medan.

In this research, there were sample, too. Sample is some or the representative of population which is going to be observed. (Arikunto, 2006:131). Sample of this research is the students in the fifth semester of English Letter, Faculty of Letters, and Academic Year 2017/2018.

There are four semester students in Faculty of Letters; they are semester I, III, V, VII. The writer

chose the sample by using lottery techniques. It was by selecting the sample by writing each class's name on a slip of paper and placed all the slips in a container, the container was shaken and slip was selected from the container until the desired number of individuals was gained.

### The Instruments of Collecting Data

In this research, the data are in the forms of qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative data has been defined as a numerical method describing observations of materials or characteristics. Meanwhile, qualitative data are those in which the description of observations is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms (Best, 1981:154).

### Qualitative Data

The researchers used *interview*, *observation sheets*, and *documentation*. The following are the explanation of each method that is used in this class action research.

1. *An interview* is one condition in which there are two or more related people, they are interviewer (person who ask and gain information) and there is a/some interviewee (person who answer or give information). An interview will be done in the preliminary research to know the problem(s) faced by the students in writing and to make sure the researchers about the approach or

strategy to overcome their difficulties.

2. There are two *observation sheets*, one for the researchers and the other is for the students. The researchers noted the conditions include the problems the students may face in the research. In other words, everything happened in the process of the treatment was noted. The students noted everything they fill and find in the treatment.

### 3. Documentations

Documentations means that everything related to the process is documented. They are students' attendance list, the list of students' score both in pre-test and post-test because they support the research well.

### Quantitative Data

Quantitative data deals with numerical data. In this research, the intended data is the score of the students both pre-test and post-test that were analyzed.

### The Procedure of Collecting the Data

In this research, the procedures of collecting the data were based on the two cycles which consist of four steps as written before; they are planning, action, observation and reflection.

### Scoring System

According to Heaton (1988: 31), there are five scoring scales

namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

### 1. Content

The scoring of the content depends on the students' capability to write their ideas and information in the form of logical sentences. The criteria of giving the score are as the following:

**Table 1**  
**Scoring scale of content of a paragraph**

Scoring scale	Alternative of Competence of Paragraph Content
10 – 8	Excellent to very good: knowledge, substantive.
7 – 6	Good to average: some knowledge of subject, adequate range.
5 – 4	Fair to poor: limited knowledge of subject, little substance
2 – 3	Very poor: does not show knowledge of subject, non substantive

### 2. Organization

The organization refers to the students' capability to write their ideas and information such a good logical order to topic and supporting sentences are clearly stated. The criteria of giving the score as the following:

**Table 2**  
**Scoring scale of organization of a paragraph**

Scoring	Alternative
---------	-------------

scale	Competence of Paragraph Content
60 – 55	Excellent to very good: Fluent expression, ideas clearly stated.
54 – 50	Good to average: somewhat choppy, loosely organized, but the main ideas stand out.
49 – 45	Fair to poor: non-fluent, ideas confused, and disconnected.
44 – 40	Very poor: doesn't communicate, no organization or not enough to evaluate,

### 3.Vocabulary

The scoring of vocabulary depends on the students' capability to use words or idioms to express idea logically. The criteria of scoring vocabulary are given bellow:

**Table 3**  
**Scoring Scale of Vocabulary of Paragraph**

Scoring Scale	Alternative Competence of Paragraph Content
13 – 11	Excellent to very good: sophisticated, effective word choice and usage
10– 8	Good to average: adequate range, occasional error of words/idiom choice, usage but meaning not obscured.

7 – 5	Fair to poor: limited range, frequent errors of words/idioms form, choice, and usage.
4 – 2	Very poor: essential translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary

### 4.Language Use

Language use refers to competence in writing down the sentence either in simple. Complex or compound sentence correctly or logically. It also refers to the ability if using the arrangement in the sentences and some other words such as: nouns, adjectives and time signals. The criteria for scoring the language use are given bellow:

**Table 4**  
**Scoring Scale of Language Use of a Paragraph**

Scoring Scale	Alternative Competence of Paragraph Content
13 – 11	Excellent to very good: effective complex construction, little mistake in appropriate word function word, article pronoun, preposition.
10 – 8	Good to average: effective but simple instruction, a little mistake in appropriate word.
7 – 5	Fair to poor: major problem in

	simple/complex constructions, a little mistake in appropriate word, article, and preposition confused.
4 – 2	Very poor: virtually not mastery of sentence construction rules, so many mistakes in sentences that is not communicatively, not enough to evaluate.

### 5. Mechanics

The score for mechanic depends on the students' competence to write spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, and hand writing whether or not can be read. The criteria of scoring the mechanic are given below:

**Table 6**  
**Scoring scale of mechanics of a paragraph**

Scoring Scale	Alternative Competence of Paragraph Content
4	Excellent to very good: demonstrative mastery of convention, little mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization.
3	Good to average: occasionally error of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, but meaning not obscured.
2	Fair to poor: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and

	meaning not obscured.
1	Very poor: no mastery of convention, dominated by errors of punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, and writing not enough to evaluate.

### The Procedure for Analyzing the Data

After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed the data by using this formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$ : The Mean of the Students' score

$\sum x$ : The Total Score of the Students

N : The Total Number of the Students

### DATA, DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### Data

This study was conducted by organizing the qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were taken from observation sheet and diary notes. The quantitative data were taken from the mean of writing test and the questionnaire. This research was conducted in one class with 30 students. It was accomplished in two cycles, every cycle consisted of the four steps of action research (planning, acting, observing, and reflecting). The first cycle was

treatment conducted in ten meetings both cycle I and II. Here is the result

of pre-test and post-test.

**Table 7**  
**Students' Proposal Writing**  
**on Pre-test and Post-test**

29	RS	66	80	85
30	DC	60	79	84
<b>Total (Σ)</b>		<b>1918</b>	<b>2164</b>	<b>2348</b>
<b>Mean (X)</b>		<b>63.9333333</b>	<b>72.1333333</b>	<b>78.2666667</b>

No	Students' Initial	Pre-test	Post-test	
			Cycle I	Cycle II
1	AM	65	68	80
2	BA	70	70	75
3	DS	66	70	75
4	ES	50	65	70
5	EKS	47	60	75
6	EM	60	70	78
7	IPP	73	75	78
8	KG	65	70	80
9	LS	70	78	80
10	LM	60	67	84
11	MS	65	65	67
12	NH	65	70	73
13	NJM	65	70	78
14	OS	60	72	78
15	RG	65	77	80
16	RS	60	76	89
17	RHS	70	72	76
18	RB	60	70	78
19	SK	58	82	90
20	SWD	60	75	80
21	SKF	67	78	83
22	SRM	65	66	70
23	SS	60	70	72
24	SYL	60	70	75
25	TEZ	70	75	80
26	VS	60	65	70
27	DS	80	81	85
28	AD	76	78	80

### Data Analysis

The data above was analyzed based on the tests and the questionnaire given to the students in two cycles. Since there are two kinds of data here; qualitative and quantitative data, the way how they collected are different. Qualitative data are in the form of observation sheets and diary notes meanwhile quantitative data are in the form of the score of writing test and questionnaire to have the means of the students.

### Research Finding and Discussion

Based on the analysis above, it was that there are many difficulties faced by fifth semester students in doing their research proposal, they are: difficult to develop their ideas, to connect ideas, and to manage the available time.

It was found that teaching by using media silent video gives significant improvement to the students in writing a research proposal. It can be seen from both scores the students got and also from diary notes and observations. In the initial meeting, the students were given pre-test and mean score they

got is 76.70 and the result in post-test I is 82.84 and post-test II is 90.30.

It means that the use of silent video significantly affect the students' ability in writing research proposal. The interesting video without voice has forced the students to improve their imagination and to link information from one slide to other slide of each video. It enriches their knowledge to see the background of the videos. It is a rare thing in which the students are eager to know how to arrange the writing later on after having the video. They paid attention more in the treatment so that they can do the writing. The trainers were also obeyed by them in doing the given instructions. All of them made the students learn the material well.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings stated previously, it can be concluded that the use of media in the form of silent video is effective to improve students' ability in writing research proposal. Their improvement is good in cycle one and better in the second one. Most of the students were interested in learning English, especially in Writing because of the silent video.

### **Suggestion**

Writing is relatively bored to be learned by the student that is why

the way how to teach this lesson must be interesting. One of the ways that can be done is by using the interesting media, such as silent video. It is known that almost students are interested to watch video, so it can be used as one of the ways to get the students' attention and participation in teaching and learning process to achieve the goals of education itself.

## **REFERENCES**

- Arikunto, Suharsimi, Suhardjono & Supardi. 2006. *Prosedur Penelitian*. Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta.
- 
2010. *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- Bailey, Stephen. 2006. *Academic Writing*. London: Routledge
- Best, John. 1981. *Research in Education (Fourth Edition)*. New Jersey: Prentice – Hall.
- Glenda, Nugent. 2012:12. *A Practical Guide to Action Research for Literacy Educators*. Washington DC: Global Operations Unit
- Heaton, JB. 1988. *Writing English Language Test*. London: Longman.
- Purba, Desmalia, 2011. *The Effect of Questioning Strategy on Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement*. A Thesis (Unpublished).

English Department Faculty of  
Teacher Training and  
Education. University of HKBP  
Nommensen.

Sabri, Ahmad. 2010. *Strategi Belajar  
Mengajar Micro Teaching*.  
Jakarta: Ciputat Press

Kemmis and Mc. Taggart. 1998. *The  
Action Research Planner*.  
Victoria: Deakin University.

**Internet Sources:**

<http://www.ef.co.id/englishfirst/englishstudy/bahasa-inggris/negara-berbahasa-inggris.aspx>.

<http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/word-definitions/definition-of-academic-writing.html>

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/research-proposal.html>

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/research-proposal.html>

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/media>

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/video>

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/researchproposal.html>

Simamora, P. (2019). PENGARUH MEDIA INTERNET TERHADAP PRESTASI SISWA-SISWI DI SMA NEGERI 17 MEDAN. *Jurnal Darma Agung*, 27(1), 894 – 900. Retrieved from <https://jurnal.darmaagung.ac.id/index.php/jurnaluda/article/view/145>