

# **The Teaching of Academic Writing (a Case Study at Kresna English Course Pare)**

**Urmila Arini**

**Agus Amroni**

## **Abstract**

The aim of this study to describe the teaching process of academic writing at Kresna English Course, the students' response toward the teaching of academic writing, and the tutor's solution for the problems faced by students. To collect data from the field the researcher used interview, observation, documentation, and questionnaire. The result of this study showed that the teaching process of academic writing program at Kresna English Course had been supported by handbook. The material was taken from Gramedia's book, the media used were whiteboard and marker, the method used was direct or natural method, the technique used was tutorial (one to one technique), and the evaluation was carried out on Friday the second week. The students had problem in constructing idea and developing writing in English. These problems increase their motivation to follow this program because it gives them a clear picture of how to define a key idea and then develop it. From student problems, tutors provide solutions by giving them tutorial (one-to-one teaching techniques) and discussions to improve their understanding of writing.

Key word: *academic writing, teaching writing, and writing.*

## **Introduction**

English was originally the language for people in England, but throughout the history, it has now become the International language. English is also the part of global era where the people are required to speak English both in spoken and in written because English is used

almost in all areas such as in education, science, business, and other areas. Therefore, English is very important to be learned especially in order for the students to be able to communicate with people from different countries. As a communication tool, language is not only done orally but also by writing.

Harefa (2003) stated that writing is synonymous with composing. Composing is a series of activities for an individual to express idea and to deliver it through written language in order to be understood by the reader. In writing people will naturally express what is in their mind then expressed in the form of ideas through written works. In essence, academic papers have different types depending on the author's purpose. The types of writing are among others Research Reports, Papers, Dissertations, Reviews, Scientific Articles, Reader Letters, Theses, Monographs, Review Reports, Case Reports, Criticisms, Essays, etc.

To construct an essay based on the correct grammar, proper sentence structure, idioms and vocabulary in English may at times cause difficulty. Generally, when writing someone prefers to plagiarize articles from the internet rather than express and developing ideas based on their knowledge and arguments. That plagiarism can be read from some blogs on the internet that has a lot of similarity in the contents, structure, and grammar used. In addition, the literacy culture of Indonesian society is still very low. Chairman of Literacy Culture Development Forum of Indonesia Satria Darma said, based on a survey of many international institutions, the culture of Indonesian society literacy is far behind with other countries in the world.

The need of someone to be able to write academically and structurally makes them want to learn academic writing. The increasing of the trigger exists of some institutes that offer a program to teaching the academic writing. This program usually exists in some English courses such as in Pare. Pare is one of the sections at Kediri city that famous with its English courses so that's why Pare is famous to call as "Kampoeng Inggris". Total of English

course in Pare based on the data from *kampunginggris*' site (<https://www.kampunginggris.com/>) is about 110 in year 2012. Top 10 of the best English courses in Pare according to that site are Basic English Course (BEC), Language Center (LC), Global English, Access, Elfast, Mahesa, Kresna, Mr. Bob English Club, Marveloues, and Webster. Some of those English course offers "Academic Writing" program agree with what people who want to be an author. Academic Writing program which is offered needs writing skill. The English courses teach writing skill in academic writing and also the tips and trick to be able to create an essay academically.

One of the courses that offers academic writing program is Kresna English Course, Pare. Kresna English Course will be the object of study about academic writing program which is dominated by high school graduate students. The uniqueness of Kresna English Course Pare is because this course has been recommended by some sites about Kampoeng Inggris Pare as the good English course. Besides, this course not only offers academic writing program in writing skill, but also offers the grammar and vocabulary material which is needed by the students.

The reason of choosing the title is to give the illustration to the reader about the teaching of academic writing that is running in Kresna English Course Pare and in order to help students to write an academic paper which uses certain rules that accepted in the academic community and is reinforced by the argument.

This study intends to answer the following questions:

1. How is the teaching process of academic writing at Kresna English Course Pare?
2. How is the response of the students towards the teaching of academic writing?
3. How is the tutor's solution of the problems faced by students?

## **Literature Review**

Hyland (2008) break the teaching writing process into the three main aspects of writing. The first approach concentrates on texts as the products of writing. This approach sees texts as objects, and writing is considered as the application of rules. The second focuses on the writer and the processes used to create texts and the third approach directs learners to the role that readers play in writing and how they need to think about an audience in creating texts.

The process of writing is illustrated in the chart below. Although the writing process appears to be a linear process, in factm, each step can occur at the some time and even there's a jumping between stages throughout the whole process of writing.



## Research Method

The research design which was used in this research was a descriptive qualitative study. This research was located at Kresna English course on Asparaga street Kampung Inggris, Pare, Kediri. Key of informant for this study was people who related to academic writing program, they were; the manager was named Mr. Mohammad Nafi' Udin Al-Irsyadi, the tutor was named Mr. Abdul Adzim, and the student was named Aldirsas.

To collect the data the researcher used instrument such as interview, observation, documentation, and questionnaire. Interview was used for collecting data about the program of academic writing at Kresna English Course. Observation was used to collect some

information about academic writing program. Documentation was used for collecting documents which is related to academic writing program, they are question's sheet for academic writing, list of question for academic writing program, the students' final score for academic writing, and the pictures of teaching learning process and the evaluation. Questionnaire was used to get students' perception in teaching learning process at academic writing program.

The data analysis was based on four concurrent flows of activities, they were: data reduction, data display, triangulation of data, and verification. Data reduction was used to classify, direct, and organize the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentations. Data display was used to present the data in the form of brief description, charts, relationship between categories, and so on. Triangulation is done by using more than one person in data collection and analysis. Verification was used to present preliminary conclusion which is still tentative and needed evidence to support strong data collection.

## **Findings and Discussion**

Finding and discussion consist of three aspects, they are teaching process of academic writing, students' response, and tutor's solution.

### **Teaching Process of Academic Writing**

The finding that found in teaching process of academic writing was divided into some parts; they were syllabus, lesson plan, method, technique, media, material, teaching learning speaking process, and evaluation model. Syllabus which was found in Kresna English course was different with the syllabus in formal education. The syllabus only a scheme on the owner and manager's head which was gotten from book, internet, and it was not written in structurally. Although this course still used a simple syllabus, they had been defended the pattern of the teaching. According to theory that is stated by Richards and Schmidt (2010),

language teaching syllabus can have their bases on such different criteria as grammatical items and vocabulary, the language required for different types of situations, the meanings that underlie different language behavior or the text types language learners need to master. In finding at Kresna English Course for academic writing program, there was a syllabus to help the tutor taught in the class but it was not written structurally. It means that the syllabus has not fulfill the standard yet where the syllabus should be designed as an instrument by which the teachers and consists of five aspects, they are; structure, function, situation, topic, and skill (White, 1988: 82).

At Kresna English course for academic writing program, the form of lesson plan was not in the formal form as in educational institution. It might cause of the tutor who did not have background from educational courses and it made the less knowledge about the lesson plan. The simple lesson plan had been made only in a notebook and it was used in every period with the same pattern. According to Borich, 2007, planning is the systematic process of deciding what and how students should learn. Planning is mostly the responsibility of teachers. Teachers decide about the form and content of their instruction, such as how much presenting, questioning, and discussing to do; how much material to cover in the allotted time; and how in depth to make their instruction.

From observation and interview which was done, the method which was applied in the class was collaborative between students and tutor. According Freeman (2000: 7), there are eight methods of mastering language: 1) Grammar Translation Method, 2) Direct Method, 3) Silent Way, 4) Communicative Method, and 5) Community Language Learning Method. From the observation in the class, it can be concluded that the tutor used direct or natural method in teaching. Littlewood (1981:94) in Freeman (2000: 128) states that communicative method helps students to integrate the foreign language with their own personality and thus to feel more emotionally secure with it.

In the academic writing class, nature and discussion technique were used to teach the students. The tutor was consistent to use this technique during the period. According to Crookes and Chaudron (1991) as cited in Brown (2001: 134-135), there are three broad categories of techniques in language teaching classes used: controlled, semi-controlled, and free. Such a goal is to be a help for teachers as an aid to increase teachers' awareness of the various techniques available, as well as an indicator of how the technique differs according to a series from being controlled to free.

From the findings, the media which was used in writing class was the book which was used by the tutor for delivering material. Lehman, Russell (2000: 100) state that media can serve or facilitate student learning process. Furthermore, they state that media can provide a stimulus-rich environment because they can provide vicarious experiences for students. Based on the statements, it can be stated that media are everything that can transmit learning materials from the sources based on a certain plan in order to create a helpful learning process so that the receivers can learn effectively and efficiently.

Material in teaching can help teacher in teaching and learning process. Material is an organized body of knowledge structured and arranged around a key concept. It means that materials are collection of knowledge, which is arranged based on the objectives, the relevant and the needs as stated as in the curriculum and syllabus (Dubin & Olshtain, 1992:29). Teaching material can be presented in the form of textbooks, handout, or power point. This theory had correlation with the finding which was found in that course and the explanation that the material which was presented by this course is in the form of textbook.

The teaching learning process which was found in academic writing program at Kresna English course was the tutor guided the students to improve their ability in writing activity. After each session, the tutor gave evaluation and discussion in order to be increased students' comprehension of the material. The evaluation was consisted of writing aspect whether the

students had been written well or not. The theory explains that teaching is guiding and facilitating of learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the condition for learning (Brown, 1980:8). In teaching writing, a tutor should care about four aspects, they are; grammar, vocabulary, topic, and material. From the tutor who always said about vocabulary as the weakness of their students, it means that the tutor really cares about the students' comprehension in class. It also showed that the tutor is serious in teaching writing.

In general, there are several processes in writing:

1. Prewriting. People's brainstorm is to generate ideas for writing. They use charts, story webs, and graphic organizers to help develop a word list for writing, decide the type of writing, and audience, and determine the purpose for writing.
2. Rough Draft. People put their ideas on paper. At this time, they write without major attention to punctuation, grammar, or neatness. Some teachers may refer to this as a sloppy copy or rough draft. The purpose of the rough draft is for the student to focus on his/her ideas and get them on paper without the distraction or fear of making mistakes in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, or paragraph structure.
3. Peer Editing. Classmates share their rough drafts and make suggestions to each other for improvement. They help each other understand the story by asking who, what, when, where, why, and how questions. They look for better words to express ideas and discuss among themselves how to make the writing clearer.
4. Revising. People use the suggestions from classmates to make additions or clarify details. Children try to improve their writing on their own. The teacher steps in at this stage and gives feedback.
5. Editing. People work with the teacher and/or peers to correct all mistakes in grammar and spelling.



6. Final Draft. The peoples produce a copy of their writing with all corrections made from the editing stage and then discuss this final draft with the teacher. The teacher offers the last suggestions for improvement at this point.
7. Publishing. The writing process is finally at its end. The peoples publish their writing by making a copy in their neatest handwriting or using a word processor. This is a time for students to celebrate. They may share their pieces with the class during story time, make a class book or a personal portfolio, or send their work to local newspapers or children's magazines for publication.

Evaluation model for academic writing is written test. In academic writing program at Kresna English Course, the aspects that had been scored are the grammatical, content, and organization of writing. It related with the theory of Glass (2005) that state there are five components that must be assessed in an essay. The five components are 1) ideas or contents, 2) organization, 3) word choice, 4) sentence fluency, and 5) conventions. In academic writing program, students helped to be an author. The tutor has stated that aspects suitable with the material have been delivered in the class.

### **Students' Response**

Students' response consist of three aspects, they are students' difficulties, students' perception on teaching learning process, and the advantages.

### **Students' Perception in the Teaching Learning Process**

Students had their own perception about the teaching learning process, whether it was a good perception or bad perception. The students' perception in teaching learning process was gotten from interview with one of the student and from the questionnaire. From the data was

gotten that they were very interesting with this program and they were helped with this program where the tutor gave the best teaching in academic writing program. The students said that tutor guided them to understand the material well patiently and softly. The tutor could deliver the material well and make the students understand. Sometimes the students who had done to study at Kresna English Course revealed their perception at the last meeting after the final exam.

### **The Advantages**

The purpose of the students to follow this program was to prepare them to be an author. By following this program, they hope their chance to be an author would be bigger because they had the background knowledge of academic writing from this program. Academic writing program also helped the students to construct the idea when they would make an essay and improve their grammar knowledge. From practice in every meeting, could make them be habitual about the form of the written test.

### **Tutor's Solution**

Tutor's solution consist of two aspects, they are students' difficulties, problem identification and solution.

### **Students' Difficulties**

From the observation, there are some students who confused while they are writing because they do not have idea what they will write. According to the tutor, it is because they are less to construct the idea. It is better if they have constructed the main idea before writing. Another problem that find is the students' low of grammar knowledge and vocabulary. Students' difficulty that happened to students at academic writing program of Kresna English

Course is related to the theories of Robert Todd Carroll (1990) that state many peoples were never required to learn proper spelling or grammar. These poor students come to think that “English” and “writing” are nothing but spelling and grammar. To them, writing means inevitable failure. Good writing is sometimes they believe they will never be able to achieve, because they not only identify good writing with proper spelling and grammar etc.

### **Problem Identification**

The problems which happen would be identified by the tutor whether this is the big problems or not. If the problem was about the students who did not understand about the material or the tutor’s explanation, the tutor could solve it by himself such as the problems from students were that they had a less practice of speaking so they could speak English fluently and they could not construct the ideas to answer questions at interview well yet. If there is a big problem, it needs to discuss formally in the meetings with all staffs of Global English such as the problem about the time because it includes of the teaching schedule at Global English.

### **Solution**

Solution was given after the problem has been identified. The solution might give advantage for the students without giving the disadvantages to the course. From the students’ problem about the teaching learning in the class where they did not understand the material, they still had less skill to construct the idea; all of these problems are the duty of the tutor to solve it. From the problems of grammatical, the tutor used direct and natural method. The used of this method had the purpose to make students habitual to write in English, so they would be able to write in English better by practice more. To solve the problems about confidence, the tutor gave the motivation that could increase their spirit every day. These

motivations were working to increase students' spirit in learning. It is proved by the result of the questionnaire that most of students chose always to statement about the tutor who gave motivation before/after teaching and statement that whether the students have spirit to follow academic writing program or not. For problems which come from the tutor, it depended on the tutor itself whether they want changed to be better or not. If the tutor is rigid person, maybe he could use warming up technique or brainstorming before the students start to the core of study. The technique can help students to relax and create the good atmosphere in the class. It can also fade the impression of students' thing that the tutor was a stolid personality.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

### **Conclusion**

The teaching process of academic writing had been supported by sets of equipment in learning such as syllabus, lesson plan, method, media, and material. Although syllabus and lesson plan were available in that course, but they were not written structurally yet in this course. Material was taken from book and internet which is rewritten by the tutor. The application of method and technique which was used in the class had been suitable with the theory. This program used direct or natural method and discussion technique in the class. Handbook was really used in this program because it really help students in study, but sometimes the tutor also used whiteboard as the media in writing the important words. The teaching learning process had been run well start from 6.00 am to 7.30 am and 2.00 am to 3.30 am that was suitable with the application of the method and technique. The evaluation of this program was taken on Friday at the second week by giving a written test. The response of students toward the teaching of writing process were consist of three terms, they are students' difficulties, students' perception on teaching learning process, and the advantages which can be taken by following this program. The solution of tutor that given to students in

overcoming the problems of academic writing learning is by identifying the problem first, then giving the solution.

### **Recommendation**

The suggestions based on the research which had been done are stated as follow:

- For the manager, it is better to complete the syllabus and lesson plan by written it structurally by because it can help the tutor in teaching academic writing program and it can be used continually.
- For the tutor, it will be better for the tutor to give brainstorming or warming up before the lesson to make the students fresh and also insert humor during teaching to create enjoy atmosphere in the class. It can also eliminate the impression that the tutor is a stolid person.
- For students, they have to keep their spirits while participating in academic writing programs, although sometimes run out of writing ideas. In addition, students are also encouraged to continue practicing writing, improving grammar knowledge, and enriching the vocabulary.
- Finally, for future researchers are recommended to explore further about teaching academic writing in other course. Beside this study also can be used as a reference for the future researchers who want to explore the teaching of academic writing program

## References

- Al-Khasawneh, F., & Maher, S. (2010). Writing for Academic Purposes: Problems Faced by Arab Postgraduate Students of the College of Business, UUM. *ESP World*. 9, 1-2
- Bailey, Stephen. 2003. *Academic Writing: A Practical Guide for Student*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- BBC English Teachers' Supplement. (1995). The challenges of teaching academic writing. [Online] Available: <http://www.uefap.com/articles/furieux.pdf>
- Brown, G., Bull, J. and Pendlebury, M. (1997) *Assessing Student Learning in Higher Education*, London: Routledge. Brown, S. (1999) 'Assessing practice', in S. Brown and A. Glasner (eds) *Assessment Matters in Higher Education: Choosing and Using Diverse Approaches*, Buckingham: The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press. Brown, S. and Glasner, A. (eds) (1999) *Assessment Matters in Higher Education: Choosing and Using Diverse Approaches*, Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- Caroll, R. T (1990) *Students Success Guide – Writing Skills* [Accessed 18th March 2015] Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.skeptdic.com/refuge/writingskills.pdf>
- Fulwiler, Toby. (2002). *A personal approach to academic writing. College writing: Third Edition*. Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc. Heinemann.
- Gilliver-Brown, K. E., & Johnson, E. M. 2009. Academic literacy development: A multiple perspectives approach to blended learning. In *Same places, different spaces*. Proceedings ascilite Auckland 2009. Concise paper: Gilliver-Brown and Johnson. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/auckland09/procs/gilliverbrown.pdf>
- Hyland, K. (2008). Writing theories and writing pedagogies. *Indonesian JELT*, 4(2), 1-20.

- Krashen, S.D. 1981. *Writing: Research, Theory, and Applications*. Oxford: Pergamon Institute of English.
- Leki, I. (1998). *Academic writing: Exploring processes and strategies*. (2nd ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Lester, J. D. (1999). *Writing research papers: A complete guide* (9th ed.). New York, NY: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers.
- MacDonald, S.P. (1994) *Professional Academic Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Markham, R., Markham, P., & Waddell, M. (2001). *10 steps in writing the research paper* (6th ed.). Happaug, NY: Barron's.
- Mukminatien, N. 1997. *The Differences of Students' Writing Achievement Across Different Course Levels*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Malang: IKIP MALANG.
- Oshima, A. and Houge, A. 1991. *Writing Academic English: A Writing and Sentence Structure Handbook*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Ramage, J. D., Bean, J. C., & Johnson, J. (2003). *The Allyn & Bacon guide to writing: Concise edition*. New York, NY: Longman Publishers.
- Solikhah, Imroatus. 2013. *English for Academic Purposes Voices: A Survey on Practices and Challenges in the State Universities of Central Java, Indonesia*. *International Journal of Academic Rerearch*, 5(4):121-125.
- Swales, J.M. and Feak, C.B. (1994) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Swales, J.M. and Feak, C.B. (2000) *English in Today's Research World: A Writing Guide*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Swales, John, dan Christian Feak. 2009. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. 2 edition. Michigan: the University of Michigan.

- Tardy, C. M. (2010). Writing for the World: Wikipedia as an Introduction to Academic Writing. *English Teaching Forum*, 1, 12-27
- Wardani, I.G.A.K. dkk. (2007). *Teknik Menulis Karya Ilmiah*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.
- Yugianingrum. (2010). Producing an English Academic Paper: Process, Problems, and Solutions. *US-China Foreign Language*, 8, 39-49
- Zuengler, J. (1999) *Formality in Academic Writing*, course handout, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Madison.