

English Teacher Strategies in Writing Activities at the Eighth Grade of Junior High Schools at Kembayan Sub-district

Hilda Megista, Yohanes Gatot Sutapa Yuliana, Sumarni, Rahayu Apriliawati, Yanti Sri Rezeki

Universitas Tanjungpura Pontianak

Correspondent Email: hildamegista@student.untan.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the English teachers' strategy in writing activities at the eighth grade of Junior High Schools at Kembayan sub-district and how the English teachers implement the strategy. This research used a descriptive qualitative design. The data were gathered from observation, interviews, and documentation. The result of this research showed that there were four teachers' strategies for writing activities in the eighth grade. The strategies were guided writing strategy, repeating strategy, cooperating with peers strategy, and translation strategy. In implementing the teaching strategy, the English teacher asked the students to write some expressions and dialogues depending on the strategy used. The teacher who used the repeating strategy asked students to copy the expressions or dialogues in the textbook into their workbooks. For the translation strategy, the teacher asked students to translate expressions or dialogues and then asked them to write the translation in the workbook. For the guided writing strategy, the teacher wrote a dialogue on the whiteboard and asked students to write a dialogue using the random words given by following the template on the whiteboard. For the cooperating with peers strategy, the teacher asked students to discuss in a group and then write a dialogue. These strategies could help teachers in teaching students and also encourage students to participate in the teaching and learning process actively.

Keywords: *English Teacher, Teacher Strategy, Writing Activities*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the essential skills in learning English as a Foreign Language. According to Kern (2014), writing is a process of organizing and expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas to make the readers understand the message in their written language. Thus, writing allows students to use language in ways beyond superficial communication, making it possible for them to imagine their worlds. Harmer (2015) stated that writing could be incorporated into a more significant activity focusing on something else, like language practice, acting out, or speaking. Students are frequently required to write brief dialogue, which they will perform. In this case, the focus of the writing activity is written expression. Based on the 2013 curriculum, the written expressions that should be taught in Junior High

Schools at Kembayan sub-district are Expressions of Asking and Giving Attention, Expressions of Checking for Understanding, Expressions of Appreciating Others, and Expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions. These expressions are learned in the first chapter of the first semester. However, writing is complex because it needs some aspects to be mastered, such as vocabulary, grammar, and structure. As stated by Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), writing activities are typically more structured and focused on developing specific writing skills such as vocabulary, mechanics, organization, content, and voice. Hence, English teachers play a crucial role in the development of writing skills among students, as writing is an important aspect of the English language.

The teachers in Junior High Schools in Kembayan Sub-district often used the conditions and backgrounds of the students as a basis for considering teachers choose the teaching strategy. Junior High School students are at an age where they are developing their writing skills, and the strategies used by their teachers can significantly impact their writing development. For this reason, teaching strategies are ways for the teacher to deliver subject matter with activities that provide experiences for students to make it easier to understand the lessons. Developing communicative competence requires realistic interaction among the students. Teaching strategies aim to create a positive and effective learning environment, engage students in meaningful learning experiences, and promote student growth and development. Thus, effective writing activities require a strategic approach considering students' needs, abilities, and learning styles (Crawford et al., 2005; Marzano et al., 2001; Tomlinson, 2014).

The teaching strategies used in writing activities should support students in developing their writing skills, promote engagement and motivation, and foster a positive writing environment. The teacher uses teaching strategies to present course material that keeps students engaged and allows them to practice various skill sets. According to Oxford (2017), teaching strategies are divided into two major classes, which are direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies consist of Memory strategy, cognitive strategy, and Compensation strategy. Meanwhile, indirect strategies consist of Metacognitive strategy, Affective strategy, and Social strategy. Therefore, the teachers should be able to find teaching strategies that support implementing the 2013 curriculum, depending on the unit's topic, the grade level, the number of students, and the materials available in the classroom.

There have been several previous studies related to this research. The research of Sinaga, Hutabarat, Panjaitan, and Saragih (2022) showed that the strategies used by teachers are group discussion, looking at dictionaries, and diary writing. These strategies make teaching and learning less boring, more active, and more enthusiastic. In addition, another research was conducted by Damanik, Hutasoit, Sitorus, and Saragih (2022); the research finding showed that the writing teaching strategy used by the English teacher were group discussion, mind mapping, and looking up the dictionary. These previous studies focused on the English teacher's teaching strategies in writing without any specific activities or topics. Meanwhile, this research focuses on teacher strategies in writing activities for several expressions: Expressions of Asking and Giving Attention, Expressions of Checking for

Understanding, Expressions of Appreciating Others, and Expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions.

The researcher chose teacher strategies in writing activities to be discussed in this research because the strategies involve setting the learning objectives, determining actions to achieve the objectives, and mobilizing resources to execute the actions. The strategies used by English teachers play a crucial role in developing students' writing skills. By examining teachers' strategies, the researcher can gain insight into the best practices for writing activities and identify the strategies that impact students' writing development.

The high schools at Kembayan sub-district are SMPN 1 Kembayan, SMPN 2 Kembayan, SMPN 3 Kembayan, SMPN 4 Satu Atap Kembayan, and SMPN 5 Satu Atap Kembayan. The researcher chose the eighth-grade English teacher as the research subject because the researcher wanted to know how the teacher conveyed learning through teaching strategies that could motivate students to participate actively in the teaching and learning process. Moreover, another reason why the researcher conducted this research at those schools is that there has never been any research on Teacher Strategies in Writing Activities conducted at those schools. Thus, the researcher intended to know the strategies used by the English teacher in Junior High School, especially in the eighth grade, and how the teachers implement the strategies.

METHOD

In conducting this research, the researcher used a qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2017), qualitative research means exploring and understanding certain phenomena of individuals or groups. Qualitative research deals with data in words or pictures rather than numbers and statistics (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018). This research used a descriptive design, as stated by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017), that conditions, relationships, beliefs, points of view, or attitudes are the subjects of descriptive research. They stated that descriptive research investigates the relationship between "what is" or "what exists" and some prior event that has influenced or affected the current situation. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative design to focus on certain phenomena in the school environment. It was to determine the teacher's strategy in writing activities and how they implement it.

The subject of this research was five English teachers who teach the eighth grade at Junior High School at Kembayan sub-district. The Junior High Schools at Kembayan sub-district as shown on the table below:

Table 1: Research Subjects

No.	Schools
1.	SMPN 1 Kembayan
2.	SMPN 2 Kembayan
3.	SMPN 3 Kembayan
4.	SMPN 4 Satu Atap Kembayan
5.	SMPN 5 Satu Atap Kembayan

The techniques of data collection were observation, interview, and documentation. Thus, the research instruments used in this study include observation checklists, field notes, interview guidelines, and audio recordings. The observation checklists were used to collect data systematically during the observation, while field notes were used to record any information gained during and after the observation process. An interview guideline was used to guide the interviewer in asking questions during the interview, and an audio recording was made to allow for repeated analysis of the interview details. These instruments were chosen to collect data on the teaching strategies used by English teachers in writing activities.

The data analysis adopted the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019), which consists of three activities: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. (1) Data condensation was used to select, choose, focus, simplify, and transform the information in written-up field notes, interview transcripts, and documents. The researcher got the raw data from the observation, interview, and documentation in this step. The researcher focused on teaching strategies in writing activities. (2) Data display was organized information that allows conclusion drawing and action. In this step, the researcher makes up the data in words, sentences, and tables to get the conclusion drawing. (3) The conclusion was analyzed continuously and verified the validity to urge the proper conclusion and get the conclusion based on the teaching strategies in writing activities.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. *Teacher Strategies in Writing Activities at the Eighth Grade*

The use of teaching strategies must be addressed concerning the conditions of the students and whether the strategies are acceptable. The strategies will impact the execution of the learning objectives that have been established.

Table 2: Teacher Strategies in Writing Activities

SCHOOLS	WRITING ACTIVITIES	TEACHER ACTIONS	TEACHER STRATEGY DOMAINS
SMPN 1 Kembayan	Write a dialogue using the expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions.	The teacher asks the students to write a dialogue of Asking and Giving Opinions using the random words given.	Guided Writing Strategy
SMPN 2 Kembayan	Write some expressions of asking and giving Opinions.	The teacher asks the students to copy the expressions of the Asking and Giving Opinion textbook to their workbooks.	Repeating Strategy
	Write some expressions of giving Appreciation.	The teacher asks the students to copy the expressions of Giving	Repeating Strategy

		Appreciation from the textbook to their workbooks.	
SMPN 3 Kembayan	Write the expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions.	The teacher asks the students to copy and write two expressions of Asking for Opinion.	Repeating Strategy
	Write simple dialogues related to expressions of asking and giving opinions.	The teacher asks the students to work in groups to write a dialogue using the expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions.	Cooperating with Peers Strategy
SMPN 4 Satu Atap Kembayan	Write dialogues related to expressions of asking and giving Attention, checking for understanding, appreciating others, and asking and giving opinions.	The teacher asks the students to arrange and write the expressions of asking and giving Attention, checking for understanding, appreciating others, and asking and giving opinions by working in a group.	Cooperating with Peers Strategy
		The teacher asks the students to arrange and write the correct dialogue by working in a group.	Cooperating with Peers Strategy
SMPN 5 Satu Atap Kembayan	Write the expressions of Asking and Giving Attention	The teacher asks the students to copy the dialogue from the textbook to their workbooks.	Repeating Strategy
		The teacher asks the students to translate the dialogue into Indonesian and write the translation in their workbooks.	Translation Strategy

Based on the table above, the English teacher at SMPN 1 Kembayan used a guided writing strategy with random words. With this strategy, the teacher hoped the students would not find difficulties since the strategy that the teacher used was very understandable and applied step by step. Moreover, the task was done in a group so the students could help each other.

Next, the English teacher at SMPN 2 Kembayan used the Repeating strategy. This strategy allows the students to revise and review their writing to familiarize them with writing English correctly. It is easier for students to learn and follow the instructions, especially in writing.

The English teacher at SMPN 3 Kembayan was using a repeating strategy and cooperating with peers strategy. The teacher used these strategies to familiarize the

students with writing English words correctly and let them exchange ideas when they found difficulties while working in a group.

The English teacher at SMPN 4 was Satu Atap Kembayan Cooperating with Peers strategy. This strategy teaches the students to work together to combine their strengths and eliminate language weaknesses. The students become interested in learning and feel happy working in groups.

The English teacher at SMPN 5 Satu Atap Kembayan used repeating and translation strategies. This strategy allows the students to become familiar with the English words and use their language as the basis for understanding to produce the new language in writing.

Thus, based on the data from the table above, the English teacher strategies in writing activities at the eighth grade of junior high schools at Kembayan sub-district were the Guided Writing strategy, Repeating strategy, Cooperating with Peers strategy, and Translation strategy.

B. Applying The Strategies

The implementations of the teachers' strategy in the classes from each school, as shown in the table below:

Table 3: The Implementation of Teacher Strategies in Writing Activities

SCHOOLS	STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION
SMPN 1 Kembayan	<i>Guided Writing Strategy</i>	First, the teacher copied the expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions in the form of dialogue from LKS onto the whiteboard. After presenting the expressions and giving the example of the dialogue, the teacher distributed a piece of paper containing a random word. The students have to write a dialogue using the random word they got. After the students finished making one dialogue, they submitted it.
SMPN 2 Kembayan	<i>Repeating Strategy</i>	First, the English teacher copied the dialogue from the textbook to the whiteboard. Then, the teacher explained the material and asked whether the students understood. Then, the teacher asked the students to copy the dialogue of the expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions and Giving Appreciation from the textbook to their workbooks. After a few minutes, the students submitted their tasks. Then, the teacher straightforwardly checked and scored the student's work.
SMPN 3 Kembayan	<i>Repeating Strategy and Cooperating with Peers Strategy</i>	First, the teacher asked the students to copy and write two expressions of Asking for Opinion and then submit them. After that, the teacher asked the students to work in groups of four to five students. The teacher gave an envelope to each group. The envelope consisted of jumble words that formed a conversation. The students were asked to arrange

			the words into sentences and write the sentences into complete conversations of the worksheets' expressions of Asking and Giving Opinions. After a few minutes, the students submitted the worksheets.
SMPN Satu Kembayan	4	<i>Cooperating with Peers Strategy</i>	First, the students were asked to form a group of four. After that, the teacher distributed some envelopes that consisted of jumble words. The jumble words were expressions of Asking for Attention, Checking for Understanding, Appreciating Others, Asking, and Giving Opinions. The students were asked to arrange the words into correct expressions and write the correct expressions in the worksheets. Then, the class continued to the second task, arranging the dialogue. The teacher distributed the worksheets to each group. The students were asked to arrange the words into the dialogue and write the correct dialogue in the worksheets. After that, the students submitted the work.
SMPN Satu Kembayan	5	<i>Repeating Strategy and Translation Strategy</i>	First, the students were tasked to copy the dialogues from the LKS book to their workbooks. Afterward, the teacher asked the students to translate the dialogue into Indonesian and write the translation to their book. After 30 minutes, the teacher asked the students to submit the work.

The table above shows that when putting the teaching strategy into practice, the English teacher required the students to write expressions and dialogues based on the strategy. If the teacher employs the repeating strategy, students will be asked to copy expressions or dialogues from the textbook into their exercise books. When a teacher employs the translation strategy, students are tasked with translating expressions or dialogue, and the students then record their translations in the student exercise book. The teacher will then use the guided writing strategy to write a dialogue on the whiteboard, then give students random words and ask them to write a dialogue using those words following the dialogue template written on the whiteboard. The teacher will ask students to discuss in groups and then write a dialogue as part of the cooperating with peers strategy.

In line with the theory from Oxford, Repeating and Translation strategies were part of a direct and sub-strategy of cognitive strategy. A repeating strategy is used to familiarize students with writing English correctly. The strategy involves repeating words, phrases, sentences, or even entire texts to memorize and internalize them. By repeating words and phrases, students can become more familiar with and recall them more easily. The students could write with correct punctuation, letters, and sentence structures. Thus, the repeating strategy helped the students learn how to revise their writing and develop their vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Translation strategy involves transforming written language from one language into another. One of the benefits of using translation as a learning strategy is that it can help students to understand the meaning and context of words, phrases, and sentences. By translating text from their native language into the target language, students can gain a deeper understanding of it and develop their comprehension skills. Translation can also help students to learn grammar and sentence structure in the target language. By translating sentences, students can see how different grammar structures are used in context and learn to apply them in their writing. This help students develop their writing skills as they learn to translate their thoughts into written language.

Next, the Guided Writing strategy and Cooperating with Peers strategy were parts of an indirect strategy. The Guided Writing strategy was part of a metacognitive strategy, and Cooperating with Peers strategy was part of a social strategy. This follows Oxford's theory regarding teaching strategies. The guided writing strategy is a strategy that English teachers can use to help students develop their writing skills. Using this strategy, students can improve their writing skills and develop confidence in their writing ability. One of the critical components of the guided writing strategy is the teacher's role as a facilitator. The teacher provides students with a clear structure and guidelines while encouraging them to be creative and independent in their writing. This can include providing students with writing prompts, helping them to brainstorm and organize their ideas, and guiding them through the revision process. As students become more confident in their writing abilities, they will be better equipped to tackle more challenging writing tasks.

English teachers can also encourage student collaboration and peer feedback as part of their writing activities through Cooperating with Peers Strategy. The English teacher at SMPN 3 Kembayan and SMPN 4 Satu Atap Kembayan used group work learning techniques with cooperative learning models. This learning technique and learning model indicates that the strategy used by the teacher in writing activities was Cooperating with peers strategy. This strategy involves working with others to achieve a common goal. It allows students to practice their language skills in a supportive and safe environment. Working with other students makes them feel less self-conscious and more confident in language use. This can lead to improved language skills, as students are given a chance to practice speaking, listening, and writing in real-life situations. This allows students to receive feedback from their classmates, which can help to improve their writing and encourage them to be more reflective about their work. In line with Hardan's Opinion regarding social strategy, this helps students improve their writing skills but also helps to build a supportive learning environment. Hence, teachers can help ensure that cooperation with peers is adequate by providing clear goals and expectations and allowing students to work in small groups with similar language proficiency levels. Using cooperation with peers as a language learning strategy, students can develop their language skills, interpersonal skills, and sense of community, which can be crucial for successful language acquisition.

The result showed that English teachers play a vital role in helping students to develop their writing skills in the eighth grade of junior high school. By implementing effective teaching strategies, such as guided writing strategy, repeating strategy,

cooperating with peers strategy, and translation strategy, English teachers can help students to grow as writers and develop their writing skills. However, selecting the strategies depends on the material being taught. Therefore, the guidance with syllabus and lesson plans was a way teachers applied before determining the strategies in writing activities. Besides, the consideration of the student's background, situation, and condition becomes the basis for determining the strategies that have been selected. The quality of the teaching strategy depends on choosing the right strategy to develop student's creativity and innovative attitude. Thus, whether the strategies influenced teaching strategies can be seen when the students actively participate in the teaching-learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the English teacher strategies in writing activities at the eighth-grade of Junior High Schools at Kembayan sub-district, the researcher found four strategies used by the English teacher. The strategies are Guided Writing strategy, Repeating strategy, Cooperating with Peers strategy, and Translation strategy. Each strategy had a unique implementation method, such as copying expressions or dialogues for the repeating strategy, translating expressions or dialogues for the translation strategy, and writing dialogues using random words and templates for the guided writing strategy. The cooperating with peers strategy involved group discussions followed by writing dialogue.

Refer to the conclusions, it can be suggested to the teacher of Junior High School to utilize technology, such as online resources, to support writing activities and assessments. The teacher also should encourage students to revise and edit their writing and provide constructive feedback to help them improve. Besides, for the students, it is suggested that students should be able to help the teacher implement their teaching strategies by following all teacher instructions. The students can improve their writing ability by regularly practicing writing in and out of the classroom and memorizing vocabulary frequently. Furthermore, another researcher suggested studying the effects of different teaching strategies on student writing outcomes, such as writing quality, motivation, and engagement.

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