STUDENTS' STRATEGIS TO OVERCOME THEIR WRITING PROBLEMS IN IMPROVING BASIC WRITING SKILL



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by:

IRA WASTI BAINEO 8820320170140

ENGLISH EDUCATION PROGRAM
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SEKOLAH TINGGI KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN SOE

Jalan Badak Nomor 5A, Lokasi 2 SMK Negeri 1 Soe

Email: stkip.soe@gmail.com

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Hereby I declare that this journal entitled "Students' Strategies to Overcome Their Writing Problems in Improving Basic Writing Skill' is original and definitely the researcher own work. The researcher is completely responsible for all the contents. Other writers' opinions or findings included in this journal are quoted and cited in accordance with ethical standard.

SoE, 15th October 2021

Ira Wasti Baineo

NIM. 8820320170140

APPROVAL SHEET

The journal entitled "STUDENTS STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEIR WRITING PROBLEMS IN IMPROVING BASIC WRITING SKILL" written by:

Name

: Ira Wasti Baineo

Student Number

: 8820320170140

Study Program

: English Education Program

It has been examined, defended and approved by the examiner in the final examination on September 22nd, 2021.

Soe, 15th October 2021

Signatures

Approved by:

Examiners

1 Leader

Supervisor I

: Marthisa O. Billik, M.Pd NIDN. 0824108703

2. Leader

Supervisor II

: Lusiana J. Ch. Patty, M.Pd

NIDN. 0821068405

3 Member

Examiner

: Tri Buce J. Banu, M.Pd

NIDN. 0803078305

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Ira Wasti Baineo

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Ira Wasti Baineo

STKIP SOE, English Education Program

irabaineo@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aimed to find out students' problems in writing and their strategies used to overcome the problems in improving basic writing skill. The participants were 15 students of Basic writing class, English education Program. This is a qualitative research so the instruments used in this research were students' drafts and interview. Based on students' draft, researcher found students problems in writing and based on interview the researcher knew students' strategies that they use to overcome the problems in improving basic writing skill. The result of this study showed that, students' problems in writing consist of four elements problems such as: Grammar problems, vocabulary, organization and content. Besides that, students' strategies that they use to overcome the four elements problems in writing such as: find the form of tenses, read English text, practice to write in English, listen to English songs, watching English movie, memorize vocabulary, brainstorming, re-read the text and peer-editing. Therefore, after students implemented those strategies, their writing were improved. The improvement such as: Students can structure the sentences well based on grammatical pattern correctly, they can write in any paragraphs because they have a lot of vocabularies, they can organize their ideas into a good paragraph, they can explore their ideas well to be a good content of writing, their lecturer understands with their writing and they get good score from their lecturer.

Key words: *Improvement, Problems, Strategies, writing*

INTRODUCTION

English is important language in the world. It is important because English is used as an international language of communication around the world. In education, English is also important which is needed by the students when they learn at school or university level. English has four skills which consist of listening, speaking, reading and writing. All of them are useful and must be mastered by students when they learn English. One of the skills who has important role is writing. Writing is an important skill in learning process. In English, writing is known as a media of communication in written form. As stated by Maryanti (2014), writing is a way of communicating a message to a reader for a purpose. The purpose is to express ideas, opinion and provide information to the readers. It means that, writing is a way to express ideas or opinion trough paper. In writing, people apply everything that they

have got in the three stages, like listening, speaking and reading. They should construct and generate their own ideas well and put it into a piece of writing.

In writing, there are problems found by people. The problems consist of how to construct ideas and how structure the sentence to be a good writing. Here, writers have to pay more attention on aspects in writing like grammatical pattern and vocabulary and people have to think critically to create ideas and express in written form. It makes people difficult when doing it. Therefore, people claimed that writing is hard skill in a language. It is hard because a writer should write based on aspect of language to make his/her writing meaningful and interesting.

In the classroom, EFL learners should be able to write or produce a paragraph of English. As this study focuses on basic writing class, it is found that Basic writing students usually find some problems. Many students cannot get and generate their own ideas well and some students have ideas but cannot express it in their own sentences. Here, students have a lot of ideas but they cannot express it in written form of English. They also have difficulties in arranging sentences to be a good paragraph. Meaning that, students cannot connect one ideas and others in order to be a good sentence in a paragraph. Additionally, they also lack of vocabularies related to the ideas that they want to write. All of the points above cause some students cannot write in English well. That is why, they need to apply appropriate learning strategies to solve their writing problems.

In this case, strategy is a plan or series of activities designed to achieve a particular educational goal. It means that, to achieve a goal in teaching and learning process of writing there must be a strategy. Strategy is also the way to solve a lot of problems in teaching and learning process.

In the classroom, when write a paragraph in English and the students feel difficult to put their ideas in sentences, there are strategies used to overcome their problems. First strategy is memorized vocabulary. It can help them to finish their writing if they do not know about vocabulary that they want to write. Second, writing practice. If students practice to write more, their writing will be better. Therefore, it can help them to construct their ideas in written form easily. From the explanation, the researcher will analyze other students' problems when writing a text or paragraph in Basic writing class and their strategies used to overcome the problems in improving their basic writing skill.

In relation to explanation above, the writer would try to find the answer to the following questions:

- 1. What are the problems faced by the students of English Education Program when they write in Basic writing class?
- 2. What are the strategies used by Basic writing students of English Education Program to overcome their writing problems in improving their basic writing skill?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Writing Skill

According to Indrilla (2018), writing is expression in written form that includes ideas, opinion and feeling. In writing, students should always express their ideas, opinion and feelings in written form meaningfully. It means that, when students write, they should express everything that they feel, think and try to make it meaningful.

Waris (2014), says that there are five essential steps of writing process namely prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. First is pre-writing. Pre-writing is also called planning. In this step, learners are expected to be able to formulate the purpose, and then organize the message. Second is drafting. Drafting is procedure for determining whether the ideas which have been discovered during planning, can be shaped into a successful piece of writing. Third is revising. Revising is the process of seeing again, or discovering a new division for the writing, the students produce during planning and drafting. Fourth is editing. Editing is a stage of the writing process in which a writer or editor strives to improve a draft by correcting errors and making words and sentences clearer, more precise and as effective as possible. The last step in writing is publishing. Publishing is the last stage where writers submit their work to the publisher. Make sure your written document should be completed before giving to the publisher. Therefore, the researcher concludes that in process of writing there are five important point that should mastered by students to be good writer. They are planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Problems

According to Alfaki (2015), "problem is a situation or condition that will come and unexpected. In teaching and learning process, there must problems. To start learning at school or university, students are usually find a lot of problems. In this case, when starting to learn writing for the beginner, there are a lot of problems that they faced. Moreover, According to Wachyuni (2017), difficulties in teaching and learning process is the best way

to stimulate students brave in facing a challenge. Therefore, the researcher concludes that problem is a thing that should faced by students in teaching and learning process.

Students' Strategies

Lindawaty (2014) stated that, strategy is a plan or series of activities designed to achieve a particular educational goal. It means that, to achieve a goal in teaching and learning process, there must be strategy. Strategy in learning process is very important to help students become more creative to implement a variety of learning. Besides that, according to Nurvianti (2017), strategy is a tool to achieve the goal". It means that, in process of learning we need strategy to help us in achieving a goal. We have to prepare better strategy to overcome that problem. Therefore, the researcher conclude that strategy is suitable way used to fix a lot of problems in teaching and learning process.

Improvement

Iftanti (2016), states that improvement is ability of someone or a student to fix his/her mistakes in learning process. Here, students usually need to improve their skill. One of skill is writing., in writing there are many ways that students use to fix their mistakes. According to Neti (2020), improving is an achievement of someone to be better in a process of learning. In teaching and learning process, to get the best goal there must be improvement from own self. Therefore, the researcher conclude that improvement is the best way for students in achieving the best goal in teaching and learning process.

There is previous study was conducted by Novariana (2018) in SMP Negeri 2 Palembang about Junior High school students' problems in writing an English story. The problems here is the students low of grammatical pattern in writing an English story. The method used was Quantitative. The Instrument used in collecting the data was questionnaire. The result of this study showed students' internal problems and external problems in writing an English story. While, this researcher was conducted in university. Method was used descriptive qualitative method. Instrument used were students' draft and interview. The result of this study showed students prroblems in writing and their strategies used to overcome the problems in imroving basic writing skill.

There are differences between previous study and this research. First is about level. In previous study, the researcher was conducted in Junior High School, while in this study was conducted in University. Second is about method. In previous study, the researcher was used Quantitative method, while this research applied Descriptive Qualitative Method. Third is about instruments used in doing research. In previous study, the researcher used

Questionnaire, while this research the researcher will analysis students' draft and interview. Fourth is about scope. In previous study focus on students' internal and external problems in writing an English story, while this researcher focused on students' problems and their strategies to overcome writing problems in improving their basic writing skill.

METHOD

Method of the study

This study applied qualitative method. It is the way to establish and fulfill the purpose of this research in which dealing with word to describe everything by affording clear and deep information to answer the research questions and lead the investigation process goes deeply. According to Creswell (2014), Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem.

Context of the Study

This study was conducted in STKIP Soe. This research took place in Basic writing class of English education program. The reason that, Basic writing students are beginners there are a lot of problems of students when starting to write in English.

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 15 students of English Education program who took Basic writing class. The participants chosen trough purposive sampling. According to Tomy (2015), purposive sampling is a technique to choose the participants based on criteria. The researcher used this technique to choose participants based on their characteristic when learning writing in Basic writing class. The characteristic here refers to students' way in learning writing.

Instrument of the Study

Students' draft is an instrument that is focused to analyze students' work in learning process. According to Khansir (2011), error analysis is type of linguistic analysis that focuses on errors learners made. Another instrument that used in this research was interview. The interview was conducted to know deeply about students' experience and felling when they joined the Basic writing class. Semi-structured interview was used in this research. According to Hatry (2015), Semi-structured interview is interaction with the purpose of obtaining description of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of described phenomena.

Procedure of Data Collection

The procedures of collecting the data were done by some steps. First, the researcher was collected students' draft to do analysis on their weaknesses in writing. The researcher applies this instrument to find out students' problems when writing in Basic writing class. Second, the researcher was chosen for 15 students who took Basic writing class. Then, the researcher prepared questions based on the problems that researcher wants to find out in Basic writing class. Next, the researcher was consulted and arrange time and place with the participants to do the interview trough focused on discussion. Next, the participants were leaded by the researcher as moderator to keep the flow of discussion.

Data Analysis Technique

The researcher was analyzing students' draft to find out students' errors in writing. The researcher was identified errors on students' writing sentence by sentence. Second, the data was count to find out number of errors. Next, the researcher was coding the data to classify the errors of students' writing based on four elements in writing consist of grammar, vocabulary, organization and content Then, the researcher was interpreting all of the data and discussed by in the findings, discussion and conclusion.

Descriptive qualitative way was underline along the data analysis process. The researcher was transcribing the data from interview of each participant. Then, the researcher was coding the design to classify similar, different or even new information gathered from the participants, and the discussed by in the findings, discussion and conclusion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Students Problems in Writing

In teaching and learning process of writing, students always practice to write in English well. In fact, not all students can write in English well because there are problems that they faced in practicing writing. It is caused them difficult in writing. In order to write the text given by lecturer well, students have to overcome the problems with their own strategies. There are four elements of writing problems like grammar, vocabulary, organization and content.

Grammar Problems

Grammar is a way to organize the sentence and create the good language. It also shows the process of language and create the structural meaning. Based on students' draft, there are eight students' problems in grammar. Most of the students have problem in

subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, spelling, word choice, repetition, capitalization, Run-on sentence and punctuation. The personal cases experienced by students are as follows:

Subject-verb agreement

Most of students have problem here, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in grammar like subject-verb agreement. I difficult in differentiate the use of singular and plural "(P5,P7,P9,P10, July 05&06 2021)

Based on the statement above, some students in Basic writing class have problem in using plural and singular. The subject that they write is singular, but "to be" that they use is plural. Then, the subject that they write is plural, but "to be" that they use is singular. Pronoun Reference

Most students have problems in pronoun reference as mentioned below:

"I have problem in pronoun reference, I difficult in using pronoun. I cannot change subject pronoun into object pronoun" (P11, P12,P13, P15, July 2021)

Based on the sentence above, some students have problem in using pronoun. They use one of subject pronoun in the first of sentence, but in the next sentence they replace it with another subject pronoun. It is not connected with the first sentence.

Spelling

Some students have problem when spelling the word in writing, as shown below:

"I have problem in grammar like spelling, I difficult in spelling the words because some of words are similar, sometimes I spell the word based on the pronunciation". (P1,P7,P8,P10, July 05&06 2021)

The statement above, students still have problem in spelling the word. They should spell the word correctly. If they wrong to spell the word, it caused the meaning of the words will not meaningful.

Word choice

Almost students have problem here, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in grammar like word choice, I difficult to choose the suitable words related to my content of writing. I always choose the words who has the same meaning with my understanding without look at the use of the words" (P1, P4, P5, P7, July 05&06 2021)

Based on statement above, students in Basic writing class have problem in word choice. They wrong to choose suitable words when writing. They put words that are not suitable in their writing.

Repetition

Some students have problem here, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in grammar like repetition, I always write the same sentences in a paragraph. I always discusses about the same purpose in a paragraph" (P5,P7,P8, July 2021)

Based on the paragraph above, students still have problem in repetition. They talk about the same things in a paragraph without changing it with other ideas.

Capitalization

Some student has problem in capitalization, as shown below:

"I have problem in grammar like capitalization. I always forget to put the capital letter in person/s' name or place" P3,P11,P13,P15, July 05&06 2021)

Based on statement above, some students still have problem in capitalization. They do not use capital letter in the name of month. Besides that, they forget to put capital letter in the first letter of sentence.

Run-on Sentence

Some students have problem here, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in grammar like Run-on sentence, I usually write long sentence without put punctuation to separate one sentence and another" (P11,P12,P13,P14,P15, July 2021)

Based on the statement above, students have problem in writing sentences. They write the sentence is too long without put any conjunction or punctuation to separate between one sentence and other sentence.

Punctuation

. The students have problem in punctuation as shown below:

"I have problem in grammar like, punctuation. I always forget to put mechanics like, full stop or comma in the sentence that I write" (P3, P5, P6 July 13&14 2021)

From the statement above, students have problem in punctuation, they forget to put comma as separator between one sentence and other sentences. According to Mart (2013), grammar problems are one of difficult issues of language teaching. It is difficult for students when starting to learn writing in English. When starting to write in English, students are expected to write well, but they unable to achieve it because they faced a lot of element problems in grammar.

Vocabulary Problem

Vocabulary is the basic language aspect that must be mastered before mastering English skill. Based on students' draft, another problem that students find is vocabulary. Some students have problem in vocabulary, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in vocabulary, I cannot write until two or three paragraph because I lack of vocabulary. I have a lot of ideas in my mind but I cannot express it in long paragraph" (P1, P2, P3, P4, July 2021)

Based on the paragraph above, students still lack of vocabulary. They only write a short paragraph. They have a lot of ideas in their mind, but they cannot express it in long paragraph, because they lack of vocabularies. According to Barnhart (2011), Vocabulary is stock of words used by person, class of people and profession. Meaning that, vocabulary is words to help people in doing activities like in education and jobs when communicating with others and writing some letter related to the jobs.

Organization Problem

Organization is the way in which the writers lay out their arguments or ideas. Based on students' draft there is also problem that is find by students in writing such as organization. Almost students have problem in structuring the paragraph and supporting ideas, as shown below:

"I have problem in organization, I cannot structure my ideas well. My sentence that I write is not connected with other sentences. I difficult in structuring the paragraph" P2, P10, P11, P15, July 2021)

Based on the statement above, students still have problem in structuring their ideas. Their ideas are not connected with other ideas. They write the ideas without think about the meaning of sentences. According to Kharma (2012), learners have problems in structuring the paragraph and topic development of paragraph. In writing recount text, some students in Basic writing class are difficult in organizing their ideas to be a good paragraph. They are difficult in structuring the paragraph.

Content Problem

Content is a compilation of information, ideas and messages that are translated into written form. Some students have problem in content, as mentioned below:

"I have problem in content, I cannot explore my ideas well to be an interesting content of writing. I so difficult in arranging the sentences well (P2, P6, P7, P8, July 2021)

Students in Basic writing class still low in arranging their ideas in a good content of writing. According to Webber (2011), learners have problems in exploring ideas and thought to communicate with others. In writing, students in Basic writing class are difficult to make their content of writing interesting. They are difficult to explore their ideas well to be a good content of writing for the readers.

Students' Strategies to Overcome Grammar Problems

In order to overcome their grammar problems, students mention some strategies that they use, their own strategies such as:

Find the form of tenses

Find the form of tenses is the most strategy applied by the students to overcome their grammar problems in writing, as mentioned below:

"I try to find the form of tenses that I have to use in writing the text. For example, I write about recount text, the tense that I use is past tense, I try to find the form of past tense. It help me can structure the sentences well" (P1, P3, P5, P10, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

Based on the statement above, it showed that to find the form of tenses is an effective strategy used to overcome grammar problems in writing. According to Najib (2014), Find the form of tenses is an action used by learners to solve their grammar problems. When students try to find the form of each tense, it can help them write a text easily. Therefore, find the form of tenses is basic strategy used to overcome grammar problem in writing.

Read English text

Read English text is the next strategy applied by students of Basic writing class in overcoming their grammar problems, as mentioned below:

"I usually read some English text and try to understand the text well. Besides that, I try to learn about the grammar in the text like how to structure the sentence, how to use conjunction, etc" (P2, P4, P6, P7, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

This strategy is also helps students in overcoming their grammar problems in writing. According to Grellet (2011), Read English text gives students responses of new information. In reading English text, some students in Basic writing class are getting a lot of information like how to write a good sentence and how to structure the sentences use grammatical pattern correctly.

Practice to write in English

Another strategy is practice to write in English, it help students overcome their grammar problems, as shown below:

"I try to practice write in English more use grammatical pattern that I have learned, it can help me to overcome my grammar problems" (P1, P4, P15, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

This strategy is useful because when students are practice to write in English more, their grammar is improving. According to Lidya (2010), Practice to write in English is an effort to share the writers' ideas in written form. Most students in Basic writing class use this strategy because it gives advantages for them.

Students Strategies to Overcome Vocabulary problem

In order to overcome their vocabulary problems, students mention some strategies that they use, their own strategies such as:

Listen to English songs

Listen English songs is one of strategy applied by students to overcome their vocabulary problem, as shown below:

"I always listen to English songs when I feel bored, it is help me get a lot of vocabulary. Besides that, I can write well because I have a lot vocabulary" (P1, P3, P5, P10, July, $13^{nd}\&14^{th}~2021$)

According to Griffe (2011), Songs are good introducing vocabulary, because songs provide a meaningful context for the vocabulary. Meaning that, songs can be integrated into language learning, singing and doing activities around the songs. Listening English songs help students increase their vocabulary.

Watching English movie

Watching English movie is other strategy that students use to overcome their vocabulary problem, as mentioned below:

"I usually watching English movie to help me get a lot of vocabulary. Then, I listen what they said and I read the sentences that appear on the bottom of television or laptop screen" (P1, P4, P15, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

According to Gorjian (2014), Watching subtitled movies, students not only watching to the audio-visual material, but also interacting with it as they translate the source text into the target language. By reading the subtitled of the movies that students watch, it can increase their vocabulary.

Memorize vocabularies

Memorize vocabulary is another strategy applied by students to overcome their vocabulary problem, as shown below:

"I always memorize vocabularies because I difficult to write long paragraph, I lack of vocabularies. After I memorize it, I try to remember, It can help me get a lot of vocabularies and I can write long paragraph" (P2, P4, P6, P7, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

According to Yang (2011), Most students are still using the method of memorizing words from some vocabulary books and dictionaries as the primary means of learning vocabulary. By memorizing vocabularies from English books and dictionaries, students are remembering it. Therefore, it helps them to write easily the text given by their lecturer.

Students' Strategies to Overcome Organization Problem

In order to overcome their organization problems, students mention one strategy that they use, their own strategy such as:

Using Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of strategy applied by students to overcome their organization problems, as shown below:

"I try to make a brainstorming in generating my ideas and I will follow step by step from the first step to the next step. It helps me can generate my ideas well" (P1, P4, P15, July, 13nd &14th 2021)

According to Jarwan (2012), Brainstorming is strategy to develop and train the students' creativity in sharing their ideas into written form. In writing, students are using brainstorming to stimulate their ideas well. All of students in Basic writing class use this strategy to overcome their organization problem in writing.

Students' Strategies to Overcome Content Problem

In order to overcome their content problems, students mention some strategies that they use, their own strategies such as:

Re-read the text

Re-read the text is one of strategy applied by students to overcome their content problem in writing, as shown below:

"I usually re-read the text that I have write from the beginning until the end. When I find the mistakes, I will try to fix it" (P2, P4, P6, P7, July, 13nd&14th 2021)

According to Harmer (2007), Re-read the text is constant process of guessing what the writers are written. Students in Basic writing class use this strategy in overcoming their content problem. Re-read the text that written by students, it gives advantages for students.

After they re-read the text, they know about their mistakes and they try to fix it. After they fix the mistakes, their content of writing i

Peer-Editing

Peer editing is another strategy applied by students of Basic writing class to overcome their content problem, as mentioned below:

"I usually do peer-editing with my friend, I always ask my friend to check my draft after I finish write. My friend will check my content of writing" (P1, P3, P5, P10, July, 13nd&14th 2021)/

According to Barkley (2010), Peer-editing is a process which students re-review and give feedback to other students writing. Peer-editing helps students in Basic writing class to identify and evaluate their content of writing to be better. By using peer-editing, they are not only got feedback from their friends, but they are also giving feedback for their friends' content of writing.

From those strategies, the best strategies that mostly students in Basic writing class use are practice to write in English, listening English songs and peer-editing. These strategies help students in improving their writing skill.

Improvement in Basic Writing Skill

The students use their own strategies to overcome their writing problems in improving their basic writing skill. All of the strategies applied by students in basic writing class are improving students' basic writing skill, as stated below:

"After I implement the strategies to overcome my writing problems, my writing is improved. I can write well, I can use the tenses correctly in my writing. Then, my writing become better than before" (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, July 2021)

According to Neti (2020), Improving is an achievement of someone to be better in a process of learning. Based on findings and discussion, the implementation of students' strategies to overcome their writing problems is improving students' basic writing skill. Students' writing become better than before. They can structure the sentences well based on grammatical pattern correctly, they can write in any paragraphs because they have a lot of vocabularies, they can organize their ideas into a good paragraph, they can explore their ideas well to be a good content of writing, their lecturer understands with their writing and they get good score from their lecturer.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Writing is an expression to share ideas and feeling in written form. In writing, students think critically to put their ideas in some paragraphs of writing. However, Basic writing students have some problems in writing. The problems are classified into four elements of problems like grammar problem, vocabulary problem, organization problem and content problem. In facing the problem, students prepare their own strategies to overcome the problems. The strategies that students applied like find the form of tenses, read English text, practice to write in English, listen to English songs, watching English movie, memorize vocabulary, using brain-storming, re-read the text is written and peer editing. Therefore, by applying the strategies, student's basic writing skill is improved. They can structure the sentences well based on grammatical pattern correctly, they can write in any paragraphs because they have a lot of vocabularies, they can organize their ideas into a good paragraph, they can explore their ideas well to be a good content of writing, their lecturer understands with their writing and they get good score from their lecturer.

Recommendation

Based on the finding and discussion about students' problems in writing and their strategies used to overcome the problems in improving Basic writing skill, the researcher wants to give some recommendation for lecturers, students and further researchers.

The first is for lecturer. Lecturer is a motivator for students when learning writing. In writing, the students usually find difficulties in structuring the sentences and organize their ideas, lecturer should explain what they have to do like give example or ask them to use their own strategies in overcoming the difficulties.

Then, the second is for students. In teaching and learning writing, practice to write more and listen to English songs or read English books is a must. It can increase students' comprehension about English. By listening English songs and watching English movie, students will get a lot of vocabularies. reading English books students will know about a lot of things that related to English.

The third is for further researchers, the result of students' problems in writing and their strategies used to overcome the problems in improving Basic writing skill can be use as reference. Hopefully, further researchers' result also bring improvement and useful in teaching and learning process.

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