



## Improving Students' Writing Skill by Using Role, Audience, Format, Topic (R.A.F.T) Strategy

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Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: 2023-05-22 Revised: 2023-06-15 Published: 2023-07-01  <b>Keywords:</b> <i>Students' Writing Skills; RAFT Strategy.</i>	The writing skills of students in class VIII A of SMP N 2 Jujuhan Bungo are still low. Evaluation of student assessment is categorized as low because of a number of aspects, namely students have difficulty understanding ideas in writing, preparation in understanding ideas in writing, inadequate vocabulary, inadequate use of learning methods applied by teachers in class. For this reason, this research was conducted in developing student competencies in writing by applying the RAFT method. This study used class action research (PTK) with the subject of the study as many as 25 students of class VII A of SMPN 2 Jujuhan Bungo. The study went through two cycles that were divided into five meetings. This research was supported by informants collected in the form of writing assignments, writing tests, interviews, and field recordings. The results of the study based on field notes of cycle I and cycle II showed that the average value of students' writing ability increased from cycle I to 66.08 increased to 74.24 in cycle II. This research resulted in the improvement of students' writing skills through the RAFT method which was influenced by several aspects, namely material, media, learning activities, classroom management, teacher approaches and teacher strategies.
Artikel Info	Abstrak
<b>Sejarah Artikel</b> Diterima: 2023-05-22 Direvisi: 2023-06-15 Dipublikasi: 2023-07-01  <b>Kata kunci:</b> <i>Keterampilan Menulis Siswa; Strategi RAFT.</i>	Keterampilan menulis siswa pada kelas VIII A SMP N 2 Jujuhan Bungo masih rendah. Evaluasi penilaian siswa dikategorikan rendah karena sejumlah aspek, yakni siswa sukar memahami ide dalam penulisan, penyusunan dalam memahami ide dalam penulisan, kurang memadainya perbendaharaan kata, kurang memadainya penggunaan metode pembelajaran yang diterapkan guru dalam kelas. Untuk itu penelitian ini dilakukan dalam mengembangkan kompetensi siswa dalam penulisan dengan menerapkan metode RAFT. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK) dengan subjek penelitian sebanyak 25 orang siswa kelas VII A SMPN 2 Jujuhan Bungo. Penelitian ini melalui dua siklus yang cakupan terbagi ke dalam lima kali pertemuan. Penelitian ini didukung oleh informan yang dikumpulkan dalam bentuk penugasan menulis, tes menulis, wawancara, dan pencatatan di lapangan. Hasil penelitian berdasarkan dari catatan lapangan siklus I dan siklus II tampak bahwa rerata nilai kemampuan menulis siswa meningkat dari siklus I mencapai 66,08 meningkat menjadi 74,24 pada siklus II. Penelitian ini menghasilkan peningkatan kemampuan menulis siswa melalui metode RAFT yang dipengaruhi oleh beberapa aspek, yaitu materi, media, kegiatan pembelajaran, manajemen kelas, pendekatan guru dan strategi guru.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In learning English there are four skills that students must have. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is an important skill in learning English besides the other three skills. In writing, students are required to be able to convey ideas, perspectives, feelings and emotions correctly. The writing they produce must be understood by the reader. In writing class, the teacher should enable their students to express what they think into good and understandable written language. A good piece of writing that can easily be understood by the reader must fulfill some criteria such as it should have appropriate

word choices, good word and sentence arrangement.

Moreover, based on the preliminary data taken from the daily test on the students of grade eight A (25 students), it was found that: 19 students (70% students) get 50 to 64, 6 students (30% students) get 70 to 77. Most students' scores are fewer than 65 while the minimum standard of achievement is 70. It means that their achievement on writing was in unsatisfied condition. There were some problems faced by them that made their score was low. In writing the students are faced by some factors. The first factor is the students feel difficulties to develop their ideas on the topic given. It is caused that

they do not have background knowledge on the topic given. Thus, it makes them difficult develop their ideas. The second factor is in organizing their ideas to write. Some students still do not understand the characteristic of each text. Whereas, each text has its own generic structure and language feature.

The third factor that makes students difficult to write is the vocabulary mastery. They just have limited on vocabulary mastery, so that; they cannot use a lot of choice of words to expand their ideas. They also are not able to choose the appropriate diction. The other factor is about mechanical of writing such as spelling and punctuation. It can be found when students forget the spelling, they just write whatever they remember. Consequently, the researcher does not understand the meaning of words. Besides, they do not know when comma (,) or period (.) should be used. It causes error interferences with the ideas of text.

The factor also comes from the teacher. The teacher should creative and can encourage her students more motivated in writing. The teacher discussed a kind of text in the classroom then asked the students to note it. After that, she asked them to write their own text and if it is not finish yet, they can bring it to home as their homework. As the result, the students try to find the text from books and copy it or asked someone else to make it for them. In this situation, the student was not trained how to make their own writing. It was shown that the teacher should find a good strategy to make the successful teaching and learning process (Hindasah, 2018). Teacher always think how to solve the students' writing problem. They have been trying several strategiess such as; brainstorming, jigsaw, but it seemed that it could not solve the students' writing problem. To solve students problem in writing, teacher as facilitator have to take responsibility to be creative and innovative. It is important for the teacher to use the various strategies in teaching writing.

From the cases above, the researcher was interested in solving the problem using interesting learning models that make students active in the class. The strategy is RAFT. Navan (2000) states that RAFT is an instructional technique that asks students to integrate writing to demonstrate competency in various content areas (Navan, 2000). RAFT stands for Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. The RAFT strategy can be used across subject areas to help student understand and focus on four critical aspects of

writing: the writer's Role (Are you a journalist?), the Audience to whom the writer is speaking (Are you writing to a friend?), the varied Formats for writing (Is it a letter? A speech? A Blog?), and the Topic addressed in the writing (What's the subject or the point of this piece).

RAFT is a writing technique that help students think about four elements of good and correct writing. They are role (R), audience (A), format (F), and topic (T). In using Raft, the students are able to determine the elements for each category and make their writing accordingly. The teacher will provide opportunities for the students to express what they know about each category, and discuss how each relates to the writing they are doing. Therefore, a good improvement from student's writing is expected from the use of RAFT strategy in classes (Suprianto, 2015).

Based on the problem above this research consists of two research questions. The first one is "To what extent R.A.F.T strategy can improve students' writing skill at second grade of SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo?" And the second one is "What factors influence the change of the students 'writing skill by using R.A.F.T strategy at second grade of SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo?" This research has two purposes, they are; to explain whether R.A.F.T strategy can improve students' writing skill at second grade of SMPN 2 Jujuhan Bungo and To find out the factors that influence the improvement of second grade students' writing skills at SMPN 2 Jujuhan Bungo.

There are relevan theory use in this research. Raft strategy is one of strategy to solve students' problem in writing. According to Santa (1988), The RAFT strategy is a method for making students understand their role as a writers, the audience they are going to target, the various writing formats, and the content expected. The aim of RAFT is to give students a fresh way of thinking in their writing (Riswanti & Masrul, 2021). Saskatoon (2004:43) also says that R.A.F.T is a good method that combines reading and writing in a simply way. This helps the students to comprehend what they have read and make new products that reflect the depth of their understanding; it can be used with fiction or nonfiction text. The form of this method is very flexible and suitable for improve creativity of your students (Riswanti & Masrul, 2021).

Additionally, The RAFT method makes students understand the audience they are aiming for, various forms of writing formats, and the topics they are going to write about. By implementing this method, teachers enable students to

write creatively. Choosing a topic from various perspectives. And have the ability to write various audiences (Riswanti & Masrul, 2021). According to Navan (2000:25), there are six steps in R.A.F.T strategy. It will be discussed as follow (Navan, 2000):

1. Step one

The teacher explains to students how all writers must consider various aspects before each writing assignment including role, audience, format, and topic. Tell them they will structure their writing around these elements.

2. Step two

The teacher shows the finished RAFT example above, and discuss key elements as a class.

3. Step three

Then, the teacher demonstrates, models, and "thinks out loud" other RAFT examples with the help of the class. Brainstorm additional topic ideas, and write suggestions listing the role, audiences, format, and strong verbs related with each topic.

4. Step four

Then, teacher divided the students to small heterogeneous groups of four or five or pairs and let them "together" to write about the given topic with one RAFT assignment between them.

5. Step five

Then the teacher walks between the students to give the assistance needed. So, ask the selected students to give their completed work with the class

6. Step six

Once students become more adept at developing this writing style, the teacher asks them to create their own RAFT assignments based on current topics learned in class

## II. METHOD

This research was a Classroom Action Research (CAR). It was conducted because there were problems in teaching and learning process in the classroom. The problem found was that the students of SMP N 2 Jujuhan, Bungo had low ability in writing a text and it needs to be improved. The objects in this study were students of class VIII A at SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo. In every classroom, there are 25 students consisting of 10 male students and 15 female students. The object of this research is the use of the R.A.F.T strategy to improve students' writing skills in writing a text.

In conducting this study, the researcher was assisted by a collaborator. Her name is Mawwadah Hanny Fitri, S.Pd.I. She is an English teacher who taught at the grade VIII. She graduated from IAIN Imam Bonjol Padang. The researcher and collaborator worked together as a team to overcome the problem appears during the teaching and learning process. In collecting the data, the researcher used two kinds of instruments; there were two types of instruments; instrument of collecting quantitative data (writing task and writing test) and instruments of collecting qualitative data (observation, interview and field note) (Iskandar & Ibad, 2009).

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Result

This classroom action research focused on improving students' writing skill by using RAFT strategy at second semester of SMPN 2 Jujuhan in academic 2016/2017 years. Based on research findings, the researcher know that the application of RAFT strategy can improve the students' writing skills. There were two purposes of the research as mentioned in the chapter one of this research. The first question was "To explain whether R.A.F.T strategy can improve second grade students' writing skill at SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo. The second research question was "To find out the factors that influence the improvement of second grade students' writing skill at SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo".

To find out the answers to the first research question, the researcher examined qualitative data which supported by quantitative data which included the average score of students' writing skill in writing assignments and tests in both cycle I and cycle II. The result of the research showed there was significant improvement on students' writing skill after using RAFT strategy. Based on the students' average score at the test I, it was 66.08 and at the test II, it was increased to 74.24. Among 25 students who followed test on cycle I, the students who got score above (KKM) slightly increased. There were 14 students (56%) who reached the standard minimum of achievement. And, there were 11 students (44%) who did not pass the standard minimum of achievement. Then, in cycle II, the result showed that there was significant improvement on students' writing skill. There were 19 students (76%) students who could reach the standard minimum of achievement.

Meanwhile, there were just 6 students (24%) who could not reach the standard minimum of achievement. It was meant that the target of the research of 70% who got under and within the standard minimum of achievement (KKM) had been achieved. So that, it could be concluded that RAFT strategy could improve the students' writing skill (Suciati, 2018).

## **B. Discussion**

To find out the answers to the second research question, about the factors that influence the improvement of students' writing skills. These factors are material, media, class activities, class management, teacher approach, and teaching strategies. These factors affect the improvement of students' writing skills because they are always play a role in the teaching and learning process. The first factor was the teaching materials. The teaching materials were given suitable with the urriculum and syllabus. Besides that, the selected material should be familiar with the students. Moreover, the material provided and given to the students were interesting and relevant with the real life condition. It was also consisted the standard competence, basic competence procedures, and exercises. To support that finding, according to Majid (2007 60-61), the materials consist al least: a) instruction for teaching and learning; b) competence to be achieved; c) supporting information; d) exercises and tasks; e) working procedures; and f) evaluation (Mewasari, 2021).

Moreover, to sustain the finding above, Depdiknas (2006) states that there are three principles need to be considered in choosing the good materials, those are: a) relevancy; the material relevant with standard of competence and basic competence b) consistency; the materials chosen by the teacher must bring to the achievement of goal of learning, and c) adequacy; the material should be sufficient with students' ability which means it is not very few or too many, or it is not too easy or very difficult to students. In short, the teaching material must help the students achieved the standard competence and basic competence as the outcome of learning, increase the students' interest, encourage the students to practice, and increasing the students' writing.

The second factor was media used by the teacher during teaching and learning process.

Media must make students active and interested in learning. Media is a tool that makes students understand the material. Based on the research findings, students were interested in the media used by the teacher. The researcher used LCD projector, laptop, power point, pictures, printed text, and students' handout papers. The interesting media was also useful by the students in understanding the new material, and facilitate them in learning process. Moreover, observation data mentioned that using LCD projector, laptop, power point, pictures, and printed text made the students not being bored during studying in the classroom.

To support the finding, according to Sanaky (2009:4), media is a tool ued in delivering learning information. Briggs in Sadiman (2005:41) defines media as all physical equipments which can present message and stimulate students to learn. In addition, Scanlan (2011) adds that media is used to make students interested, develop their interest, adjust the learning climate, and promote an idea. Those theories proved that media used by the researcher was interesting, help the students in understanding the new materials, and facilitate the students in understanding the new material, and facilitate the student in learning process (Ritonga, 2019).

The third factor was classroom activities. Classroom activities were the activities that occuring in teaching and learning process. The classroom activities concerned with student-centred learning in which the students actively applied RAFT strategy in writing a text (Navan, 2000). In this research, the teaching activities made by the researcher could encourage the students to interact each other in negotiating the meaning and keep the communication run well. Additionally, the activities were carried out to improve the students' writing skill (Fitriana, 2018).

It is relevant with the theory proposed by Richards (2002:13), the classroom activities divide into two activities. First is fluency activity. In this activity, the teacher support the students to interact each other in discussing the meaning, use communication strategies, try to correct misunderstanding and maintain the communication well established. The students encourage involving their language knowledge and their language competence without regarding their limitation

in communicative competence. The second is accuracy activity. In this activity, the students are asked to make examples of using the correct language. It means that the activity only focus on the usage of the language (Umaemah et al., 2016).

It is also said by Wena (2009:17-19), in the classroom there are several activities that can be done. There was opening the lesson, such as: greeting, praying with the students, checking the attendance list, explaining the purpose of teaching, and linking the previous topic to the new topic. Then, teacher's activities in delivering the materials, such as: teachers can apply the strategy in teaching and learning process. Moreover, Nation (2009:123) said that the teacher needs to pay attention to the writing process which would improve student writing by helping students at various levels of the process, not just focusing on the finished product. The activities done during teaching in the classroom could reach the goal of learning, develop students' competence, and help them in improving their writing skill (Riyanti, 2015).

The fourth factor was classroom management. The method of teacher in arranging the class should affect the students' on their writing. The role of teacher was not only given teaching instruction to the students but also paid attention to the students' behaviour during learning process. In classroom management, the teacher is required to arrange time and classroom equipment, provide any sources needed for learning process, and response to student behaviour. Based on the observation done by researcher and collaborator, the teachers could manage her classroom. She also paid attention with the activities conducting in the classroom and reacting with the problem arises during the learning process (Anggraini & Usman, 2017).

In agreement with the statement above, Kelly (2012) states that teacher must have a good organizational plan, keeps the class comfortable, throws in a little humour, obeys the rules, makes the students comply with the rules, and have fun everyday to make the class effective. In this research, it was found that the way of teacher organized the class can improve the students' writing result.

In addition, Kizlik (2012) states that in making the classroom management proficiently, the teacher should organize the classroom, develop rules, routines and procedures, align

and manage work, prepare instruction, and manage behaviour.

The fifth factor was teacher's method. Teacher's method assists the student build their self confidence in learning. The teachers should value and appreciate the students as individuals. Teacher's approach would help the students in improving their writing result. Based on the finding of the research, teacher's method was supported and interested by the students. In addition, teacher also always pay attention and had high self confidence in teaching the students. This would motivate the students to study and write in English (Sadirman et al., 2005). To support that finding, Harmer (2007:21) states that teachers must make students must feel that the teachers really care about them. If the students can feel that they are supported and valued, then they would feel more eager to learn. It could be concluded that the teacher should care to the students. The students would be more motivated and interested to learn if the teacher cares and support them (Richards & Theodore S. Rodgers, 2002).

Teaching strategy was the last factor that influenced the improvement of students' writing skill. Teaching strategy determined the success of teaching and learning process. Based on the observation and field notes in each cycle, the researcher found that teaching strategy had improved the students' writing skill. Teaching strategy was an important factor to make students reached the goal of study. Interview result also showed that RAFT strategy helped the student in writing a text. The students became more challenged and interested in the class (Richards & Theodore S. Rodgers, 2002).

From all those factors, the material, the media, and the teacher's strategy were the most dominated in improving the students' writing skill. First, the material could influence the students writing skill. It was confirmed by the qualitative data obtained from the observation, field notes, and interview. Based on the qualitative data, it could be concluded that one of the factors that makes an increase in students' writing skills is the use of appropriate and suitable material. It means students are easier to organize when researchers provide topics that are interesting and related to students, and students can expand, develop and produce their ideas in writing.

The second factor that most influenced was media. It could be inferred from the result of qualitative data that media could make the students felt enjoyable and interesting while teaching and learning process. The interesting media could deliver the point of lesson to the students. The media also could support the teacher to handle the material during teaching and learning process. The last factor was the teacher's strategy. RAFT strategy could help and bring the students to understand the material and help the students in organizing their writing. The students could improve their writing skill by using this strategy.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

##### A. Conclusion

This research was purposed to know to what extent RAFT strategy can improve the students' writing skill and the factors influence the improvement of students' writing skill at grade VIII A at SMPN 2 Jujuhan, Bungo. Moreover, detail conclusion could be seen as follows:

1. RAFT method can improve students' writing skill. It was evidenced by the quantitative data of the students' assignments at each meeting and the students' test result at the end of cycle. There was a significant increase of students who achieved the standard minimum of achievement in every cycle. In cycle 1 from 25 total numbers of students there are 56 % or 14 students who reached the standard minimum of achievement. In cycle II, the students who reached the standard minimum of achievement increased up to 76% or 19 students reach KKM. So that, the researcher ended the research in order the target of research has been achieved at 70% students could obtain the standard minimum of achievement.
2. There are six factors that can improve students' writing skill according to qualitative data by using observation and interview. The factors are material, media, classroom activities, classroom management, teacher's approach, and teaching strategy. From all the factors, based on discussion, it can be said that material, media, and teaching strategy were the most influencing factors in improving writing skill.

##### B. Suggestion

The discussion related to this research is still very limited and requires a lot of input,

the suggestion for the next writer is to study more deeply and comprehensively about the Improving Students' Writing Skill by Using Role, Audience, Format, Topic (R.A.F.T) Strategy.

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