

# CAKRAWALA PENDIDIKAN

## FORUM KOMUNIKASI ILMIAH DAN EKSPRESI KREATIF ILMU PENDIDIKAN

**Ringkasan Pengembangan Pendidikan Karakter Peserta Didik  
melalui Sekolah Konservasi**

**Raft : The Way in Improving the Quality of Students Writing Products**

**Think Talk Write Implementation in Writing Personal Experience**

**Enhancing Listening Ability Through TPT by Using Adobe Audition 1.5**

**Teaching Writing Of Descriptive Essay Using Think, Talk, Write  
(TTW)**

**The Correlation of Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Ability  
Toward the Students' English Achievement**

**Cohesive Devices in English Lecturers and Teachers' Concluding Texts**

**The Effectiveness of Directed Reading Thinking Activity Method with  
Picture Media in Teaching Reading for English Department Students**

**Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek Portofolio bagi Mahasiswa dalam  
Memahami Materi Karakteristik Peserta Didik**

**Upaya Meningkatkan Motivasi Berwirausaha melalui Pembelajaran  
Kewirausahaan Metode Investigasi Kelompok pada Mahasiswa  
Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris STKIP PGRI Blitar**

**Pola Pembelajaran dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat pada  
Produksi Kerajinan Batok Kelapa**

**Pola Pembelajaran dan Pemasaran Produk Bengkel Pandai Besi**

**The Effectiveness of Graphic Organizers in the Teaching of  
Narrative Text for Junior High School Students**

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Mahasiswa melalui Pendidikan Agama pada Mahasiswa**

**Eksperimentasi Pembelajaran Matematika Berbasis Teknologi  
dengan Pendekatan Investigasi dan Konvensional pada Pokok  
Bahasan Turunan ditinjau dari Aktivitas Siswa di dalam  
Pondok Pesantren**



# **CAKRAWALA PENDIDIKAN**

## **Forum Komunikasi Ilmiah dan Ekspresi Kreatif Ilmu Pendidikan**

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## RAFT : THE WAY IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS WRITING PRODUCTS

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**Abstrak :** Dalam menghasilkan kualitas yang bagus dalam esai deskripsi pendek, mahasiswa tidak hanya harus betul dalam format tetapi juga harus memahami peran mereka sebagai penulis dan juga pembaca dari esai mereka. Dengan demikian, mahasiswa dapat membuat esai mereka menjadi lebih baik. Untuk meningkatkan kualitas esai deskripsi pendek mahasiswa, penulis menerapkan strategi *RAFT*. *RAFT* singkatan dari *Role* (peran), *Audience* (pembaca), *Format* (format tulisan), dan *Topic* (topik). Artikel ini melaporkan penerapan *RAFT* dalam mengajar writing kepada mahasiswa. Penelitian ini berbentuk Penelitian Tindakan Kelas. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini, pengajaran *writing* dan kualitas esai mahasiswa meningkat. Sebagai kesimpulan, penerapan *RAFT* dalam mengajar *writing*, khususnya dalam esai deskripsi pendek berhasil.

**Kata Kunci:** esai deskripsi pendek, *RAFT*, pengajaran *writing*

**Abstract :** In producing good quality of short descriptive essay, the students of university not only have to be correct in the format but also have to understand their role as the writers and the audience of their essays. By doing so, the students can make their essay better. To improve the quality of the students' short descriptive essay, the writer implemented *RAFT* strategy. *RAFT* stands for *Role*, *Audience*, *Format*, and *Topic*. This article is the report of the implementation of *RAFT* in teaching writing to university students. The research is in the form of classroom action research. Based on the result of the research, the teaching of writing and the quality of the students' essay improved. To sum up, implementing *RAFT* in teaching writing, especially in the form of short descriptive essay, is successful.

**Key Words :** short descriptive essay, *RAFT*, teaching writing

### INTRODUCTION

Brown (2007:391) stated that written product is the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedure that need special skills. The special skills include how to get the idea, how to manage the idea in the good order of thinking in the form of written text, how the revise the mistakes occurred in raw draft, and finally how to make the final product. By this explanation, producing good quality of written product is not easy for the students of university level. It needs a

process and habit in making the written product. The students need much more practices in order to make them used to compose good written product. Furthermore, in making the quality of the written product better, the students also have to understand their role as the writer, know their audience, learn the format of the written product, and also master the topic they want to discuss in their written product. It is similar to Lucantoni (2002:53) theory; a good writer will consider who their audiences are.



By doing so, the students, as the writers, will know whether they will use formal or informal language in their written product. Budiarso (2006:94) stated that knowing the audience will help the writer (students) reach his goal of communicating clearly and effectively. Moreover, learning the correct format of their written product is also important. It will make their written product understandable. Mastering the topic of their written product is also helpful for the students to compose their written product.

In English department of STKIP PGRI Blitar, writing subject is divided into 5 semesters; writing 1, writing 2, writing 3, writing 4, and advanced writing. Those subjects have graded materials. Writing 2 is the continuance of writing 1, writing 3 is the continuance of writing 2 and so on. In writing 3, the students are expected to be able to write complete compositions broader than paragraph deals with expository writing. Expository writing includes From those all material, the writer found that most of the students got trouble in the material of short descriptive essay. The quality of students' written products in this material was not satisfying enough. It was because most the students could not make correct form of short descriptive essay. In addition, the information in their short essay was not in detail. As the result, there were less than 85% of the students who could pass the minimum score of writing (75). There were only 13 students or only 59% of the students passed

the minimum score. When the writer asked the students why these problems occurred, the students said that actually they still confused about the correct form of descriptive short essay and they were lack of information about the topic they had to describe.

Knowing those problems, the writer, as the lecturer, tried to search suitable strategy to overcome the students' problems. It was done by the teacher in order to make the teaching and learning in Writing 3, especially in the material of descriptive short essay, effective. Moreover, the further goal was to make the quality of the students' written product better. Out of many strategies in teaching writing, RAFT was suitable to overcome the students' problems. RAFT stands for Role, Audience, Format and Topic. This strategy was firstly developed by Santa & Havens in 1995. Buelh (2014:173) stated that role, audience, format, and topic are the key elements in making good writing product. RAFT strategy asks the students to understand their role as the writer, recognize their audience, discover the format of the written product, and also know the topic they want to discuss in their written product in detail.

Considering the above problems, the writer decided to conduct a classroom action research. The research aims to describe the implementation of RAFT in teaching descriptive short essay. The subject of this research is the students of third semester in English Department of STKIP PGRI Blitar academic year 2015/2016.



## SHORT DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

One of the types in expository writing is description, descriptive essay. Descriptive essay is an essay that tells the reader how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels. Savage and Mayer (2006:28) add that descriptive writing uses words to build images for the readers. It means that more vivid the words used in the writing, easier for the reader to imagine the subject of description. A good descriptive essay is an essay that can engage the reader in the essay.

In short descriptive essay, it must consist of at least three paragraphs. The first is the introduction, the second is the body, and the last is the conclusion. In introduction, the paragraph includes the hook, the background, and, the most important one, the thesis statement. The thesis statement must mention the object that being described and why it is important to be described. The body paragraph is the place of most of the description of the object. The words use in each sentence must be vivid. It is because it will help the reader to imagine the subject as close as the real subject. The conclusion paragraph provides the final opinion about the subject being described. Below is the example of short descriptive essay based on Savage and Mayer (2006:33) with the title *The Best Pizza in Town and Maybe the world*.

I have suffered a great deal because of a terrible addiction to pizza.

Basically, I enjoy pizza too much. In fact, I enjoy it so much; I won't share it, not even with my mother. People in my hometown of Cabimas, Venezuela, laugh at me and call me the Pizza King of Cabimas, but it is a name that I am proud of. I have eaten pizza in many places, and none is as good as the pizza of Cabimas.

The best place to eat pizza in Cabimas is at Papa's. Customers have to wait in line to get a table but the wait is worth it. Once they are seated, pizza-lovers can choose from many varieties of pizza, such as pizza with shrimp and smoked oysters or pizza with pine nuts and garlic, but my favorite is the sausage and pepperoni. First of all, it is big. When the waiter puts it down in front of me, I feel happy because I will get enough to eat. It smells of garlic, oil, and spices. And it looks delicious too. The sauce oozes out from under a layer of rich melted cheese. The best part is the first bite. I sink my teeth into a slightly crunchy crust, thick tomato sauce and gooey cheese, and I am in heaven. I can eat two of these pizzas in one night, even though I know I will have a stomachache afterwards.

Now that I am in the United States, I am trying different kinds of pizzas here. I have never seen so many different pizza restaurants! I want to try them one by one. So far, some of them are delicious, but I am convinced that the best pizza in the world is still at Papa's restaurant a couple of blocks from the house where I grew up.



## METHODS

The method used in this research is classroom action research (CAR). Latief (2010:81) states that classroom action research is special type of research to optimize the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. There are three advantages when a teacher or a lecturer conducts an action research (Darmadi, 2011, 244); (1) the teacher or the lecturer does not need to leave their class, (2) the teacher or the lecturer can get the result from the planned action, and (3) the subjects of the research also can get the result of the treatment. In CAR, there are four steps that must be followed; (1) identifying and planning, (2) implementing, (3) observing, and (4) reflecting (Latief, 2010:87). In identifying and planning step, the writer as the lecturer identified the problems face by the students in writing expository, especially in the form of short descriptive essay. Finding the problems, the writer planned the teaching and learning process using the chosen method to overcome the problems. Finishing making the teaching and learning plan, the writer implemented the plan in the teaching learning process. While implementing the plans, the writer also observed the process of the teaching learning. The results of the observation were used in reflecting step. In reflecting step, the writer analyzed the result of the observation. From this analysis, the writer determined whether the teaching and

learning process had reached the success criteria or not.

The subject of this research was the third semester students in English Department of STKIP PGRI Blitar academic year 2015/2016. There are 22 students; 7 males and 15 females. To collect the data of the implementation of RAFT in teaching short descriptive essay, the writer used lecturer activities observation sheet, students activities observation sheet, and the students' writing products. The lecturer's activities observation sheet was used to know whether the lecturer had already run the teaching learning process based on the plan or not. The students' activities observation sheet was used to know the activities of the students. Both of the observation sheets would be filled by the observer. The observer was the writer's colleague in the English department of STKIP PGRI Blitar. The students' writing products was used to measure whether there was an improvement in the quality or not. The results from all of the tools would be considered to decide whether the cycle was done or not.

The writer also set the criteria of success in her research. The criteria are (1) the scores of the students writing product is greater than or equal to 75, and (2) 85% of the students in classroom can get minimum scores.

The research lasted in September 2015. There were two cycles in this research, two meetings in each cycle.



## FINDINGS

### Cycle I

The research was started with the lecturer's finding about the quality of the students' writing product. The quality of the students' writing product in the material of short descriptive essay was not satisfying enough. The score was not good in the first exercise. Knowing these problems, the writer studied more detailed about the students' problem. She found that most the students could not make correct form of short descriptive essay. In addition, the information in their short essay was not in detail. It made the quality of their writing was low. When the writer asked the students why these problems occurred, the students said that actually they still confused about the correct form of descriptive short essay and they were lack of information about the topic they had to describe.

Finding the problems, the writer then made a plan to improve the quality of the students' writing product. She decided to use RAFT in the teaching learning process. She made a plan to implement the method in 2 meetings. She prepared the lesson plan and the observational sheets. She also prepared the writing assignment for the students.

Finishing making the lesson plan, the writer then implemented the lesson plan in the teaching learning process. In the first meeting, the writer explained the material of short descriptive essay in detail. In the end of the first meeting, she also explained a glance

about how to make writing product using RAFT. She explained the important point to make the quality of their writing product good. She emphasized the need to consider the role or position of the students in their writing product, the audience or the people who read their writing product, the usage of correct format, and the mastering of the topic being written in their writing product. The writer then gave the example of the roles, audiences, formats, and topics that were possible to be developed as the writing products. During the teaching and learning process, the observer filled the observation sheet for both of the lecturer's activities and the students' activities.

In the second meeting of cycle I, the writer began the meeting with clearer instruction about the writing assignment that must be done by the students using RAFT. The lecturer limited the role, audience, format, and topic that must be followed by the students. She gave the prompt to the students. She asked the students to be the travel agent (role). The students' assignment was to make the short descriptive essay about the tourism object in Blitar area for the foreign tourists visiting Blitar (audience, format, and topic). Each student might not choose the same tourism object. To avoid this problem, the writer then listed the students' choice about their tourism object in front of the class. The students were asked to fulfill the assignment in 60 minutes. They might browse the information about their tourism



object to get more detail. Then, the students were asked to submit their work to the writer in the end of the meeting. During the teaching learning process, the observer also filled the observation sheet for both of the lecturer's activities and the students' activities.

After doing the implementation step in two meetings, the writer then did reflection with her observer. She collected all of the observation sheets from the first and the second meeting. Based on the observation sheets of the lecturer's activities, out of 15 activities must be done by the lecturer, she was able to complete all activities with note. The note was the lecturer was too fast in explaining the way to fulfill the assignment using RAFT. As the result, the students seemed to be still a bit confused. Moreover, the result of the observation sheets of the students' activities was good. The students felt enthusiastic although they seemed a bit confused in making the writing product. There was a note from the observer in the observation sheet. The note was the students had to obey about the time to accomplish their assignment in making the short descriptive essay. This note occurred because the students accomplished their assignment in making the short descriptive essay in more than 60 minutes. When the observer asked the students why they did so, they said that they needed more time in searching the detail information about the tourism object. It meant that the students needed different time in preparing the

information for their writing. Besides studying the result of the observation sheets, the writer also checked the students' writing product quality. She then examined the students' assignment. Out of 22 students, there were 17 students got the score more than or equal to 75. It meant that 77% of the students passed the minimum score. Based on the result of the observation sheets and the students' writing product, the writer, as the lecturer, and her observer decided to continue the cycle to cycle II.

## **Cycle II**

The second cycle was started with making the lesson plan. The writer made the second lesson plan with the observer by revising the first one. To avoid the students' confusion, the writer planned to explain more details about RAFT in the first meeting. She gave the example how the writing product changed when one or more parts of RAFT changed. For example, if they wrote a short descriptive essay about one object as the students themselves to their close friend was different from if they wrote it for other people. The style of their language would be different also. If they wrote it for their close friends, the style of their writing would be really informal. But if they, as the travel agent, wanted to write the descriptive for tourists, they had to use attractive sentences in order to make the tourist wanted to visit the object they had described. The writer also added example in making short descriptive essay using RAFT. For the second cycle,



the writer as the lecturer changed the topic for the assignment. The role, audience, and format were the same with the previous assignment. The students were asked to make a short descriptive essay about tourism objects in Indonesia (outside Blitar). They could choose the place, but the place might not be the same with their friends. To avoid the same place, the students were asked to write down their chosen tourism object in front of the class one-by-one. To add more details about the object, the students were also asked to search more information in Google. The information would be used in making the short essay in the following meeting. During the first meeting, the observer observed the process of teaching and learning.

The 30 minutes in the second meeting was used to make sure about the students' understanding in making short descriptive essay using RAFT. The writer as lecturer also checked the students' preparation in making the essay. After that, the students were asked to make the short descriptive essay in 60 minutes. In this chance, the students could finish writing the short descriptive essay on time. During this meeting, the observer also observed whether the process of teaching and learning run well or not. Both of the observations from the first and the second meeting would be used in the reflection step.

Finishing implementing the lesson

plan, the writer as the lecturer discussed the results with the observer. Based on the result of the lecturer activities observation sheet, out of 15 activities, the lecturer could do all of them well. The lecturer had also solved the problem occurred in the previous cycle. In addition, the result of the observation sheet of the students was also good. The students could follow the teaching and learning process well. They understood their role in the writing product well. As the result, they could make the short descriptive essay better. They also could obey the time given by the lecturer. The result of the students' score was also good. Out of 22 students, there were 21 students who got score more than or equal to 75. It meant that 96% of the students had passed the minimum score. The only student who got score under 75 was the student who was absent in the first meeting. It was because he was sick at that day. Because of his absence, he did not get enough understanding how to make short descriptive essay using the prompt given by the lecturer.

## DISCUSSION

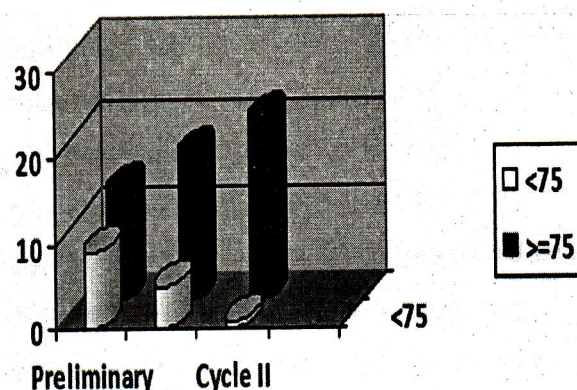
Based on the result of the reflection steps in both of the cycle, it could be concluded that the students were enthusiastic in making writing product based on the RAFT elements. Although they were a bit confused in the cycle I, the students got more understanding in cycle II. They said that making the writing product using the prompt given by the writer as the lecturer



made them feel enthusiastic. They could be other people, not only as students, and their audience was not only the lecturer, but it could be other people also. It was a new view in their writing habit because so far they only wrote as the students to the lecturer. Using RAFT strategy also allowed them to imagine their role and audience so that they could make the quality of their writing product better. This is the same with the advantages of RAFT that are stated by Sejnost & Thiese (2007:78). They stated that RAFT could make the students aware of being a good writer by understanding their role and thinking about what can the topic and format affect to the audience. By doing so, the students will feel enjoy in writing.

RAFT strategy also could improve the quality of the students writing product, especially in the material of short descriptive essay. It could be concluded from the result of the students score. Although in cycle I there were 5 students who could not pass the minimum score, but in cycle II almost all of the students could pass the minimum score. Only one student who could not pass the minimum score in cycle II because he was absent in the first meeting of cycle II. It made him did not have enough understanding how to make short descriptive essay using the prompt given by the lecturer. The figure below gives a clear view about the students' achievement that had relation with the quality of the students' work.

**Figure 1. Progress of Students' Achievement**



The figure above explains that there was progress in the students' achievement. In the preliminary, the students who got under minimum score were still high. There were 9 students who did not pass the minimum score and there were 13 students who passed the minimum score. It meant that only 59% of the students passing the minimum score. In the first cycle, the number of students who pass minimum score increased. There were 17 students who got minimum score. There were only 5 students who did not pass the minimum score. Although there was increase, the number of students who passed the minimum score was still less than 85%; it was 77%. Furthermore, the students' achievement was getting better. In cycle II, almost all of the students or 96% passed the minimum score, only one student who did not pass it. In line with the increasing of the students score, it meant that the quality of the students' short descriptive essay also improved; the higher score, the better quality of the students' writing.



## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the usage of RAFT strategy is successful in improving the quality of the students writing product, especially in the material of short descriptive essay. It can be proved by the number of students who passed the minimum score. In the preliminary, there was 41% of the students did not pass the minimum score. It decreased in cycle I and cycle II. In cycle I, there was 33% and in cycle II, there was 4% of the students did not pass the minimum score.

The implementation of RAFT strategy also gives a new way for the students to enjoy their writing time. It is because RAFT strategy allows the students to explore their ability in writing more. They not only can be the students who write for the lecturer but also can be anyone who write for any kind of audience. There are various prompt that can be used to sharpen their ability in writing; the more ability they get, the more qualified their writing product.

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