

# Implementing Unfinished Story to Build Students' Creative Writing

Sirvy Mega Melvita, Ganesha University of Education, Indonesia  
[sirvimega@gmail.com](mailto:sirvimega@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*This paper aims to explain the use of unfinished story and how it can help students to build their creative writing in the EFL context. This paper is descriptive library research. The data were collected by analyzing articles, journals, and papers. There are many ways or strategies that can be used by teachers to help students to build their creativity in writing. However, unfinished story is chosen by the teacher to create a different learning style. In addition, using unfinished story is considered a simple and effective teaching writing strategy in EFL classes. It is useful for students to build their creativity in writing where they are provided a chance to solve a problem through expressing their ideas and imagination without any fear of being judged. Additionally, in its implementation, the story given is unfamiliar to students so that they can end their own story.*

**Keywords:** *unfinished story, writing skill, creativity*

## Introduction

In education, language is considered as one of the most substantial elements. It deals with four skills that must be possessed by students, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English as a language that is learned by students at school, emphasizes students to master the four skills. One of the important basic skills in learning English is writing. Even though the writing is a skill that is placed last after the other skills, but it does not mean that it is not important. Writing plays an important role which is promoting the language products of a complex brain that involves words, sentences, and ideas (Niño & Páez, 2018). It is an activity where students have to express and convey their ideas, thought, and feelings then write it in a paper. It can be said that writing is a creative act because it explains and describes something such as experience, event, and story. However, writing is considered a complex skill because it does not only transfer the language into written form but it is a process of thinking that involves the effort and time of the writer (Salawazo et al., 2020)

Writing is considered as a crucial skill in language teaching and learning. However, it is the most difficult skill to be taught in the EFL class (Toba et al., 2019). In Indonesia, the implementation of the writing task is the most difficult for students whether it is writing for first, second, or foreign language. This is because the students find it difficult in organizing and generating ideas, producing coherent sentences or text, and translating ideas into readable text (Rahman, 2017). Besides that, according to Ariyanti (2016) EFL students in Indonesia have difficulty mastering writing skills, especially in English context because there are

differences in structural terms, grammatical, and style between their first language (Bahasa Indonesia) and English. Most of the students tend to write by translating their ideas from their first language to English, thus the word structure or grammar that they use is inappropriate and their writing became awkward.

In the learning language, writing activity needs to be implemented to assist students in developing their thinking. It can also help students get used to using their critical thinking, thus that they become more creative in writing (Masie et al., 2018). To make it happen, teachers should change the way of teaching their students. Besides, the teacher should realize that students today need new sets of skills that can help them to be successful participation in the society of the future. In the current field of education, it has introduced 21st-century skills where it is intended to help students to keep up with current modern developments. The implementation of the 21st-century skills focuses on four important skills, which are called 4C, namely communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity (Dislen Daggol, 2017). Those skills are considered to give an impact on English language teaching and learning. One of those skills that deals with writing is creativity skill. According to Rusdin (2018), creativity is a skill where people are able to create, develop, and express new ideas different from others. Through creativity, students will have opportunities to be creative in developing their ideas and write their works naturally. Furthermore, creativity gives a chance for students to think about the solution to a complex problem by using new and creative ways.

Furthermore, writing skill usually associated with the term of creative writing. Creative writing is a writing technique using creative ideas of the writer. According to Nasir et al., (2013), in creative writing, students are given space to make and create the content of writing. Besides, in order students write creatively, it is important that their ideas or thoughts should not be restricted. Through creative writing activities, it assists students to express their feelings and opinions anytime, anywhere, and to anyone freely, without any fear of being judged or criticized (Sasmita, 2022). Developing students' creative writing may use various methods and techniques in the class (Akkaya, 2014). It aims to create different learning styles. The teacher should think and choose an appropriate technique in teaching especially in writing context because it can affect students' motivation in learning. Creative writing can be done in the activity related to literature. It is because literature is not only about reading activity where students have read a story or text only, but they can try to do something through literature. This creative activity is also emphasized in 4C skill especially in Curriculum Merdeka and Curriculum 2013 implemented in Indonesia.

According to Bartan (2017), through the literature, students can stimulate their imagination, develop their abilities and increase their emotional awareness. Thus, by literature, the teacher can give instructions such as writing a story. Students can write a story based on the literature. This activity is a form of the implementation literature based-instruction strategy. There is one technique that is appropriate to be implemented as the form of literature based-instruction strategy, namely unfinished story. It is a technique where students should continue a story by using their ideas. Through the use of unfinished story in writing activity, students would be provided the opportunity to write more effectively and more creatively because of they free to express their idea in the story (Wati, 2012)

Writing skill without practicing form directly become a big problem in learning English. It can cause a lack of writing habits thus it can make students hardly to express their ideas in writing. Therefore, it becomes a task for teachers to implement a new technique in

teaching in order to make students interested in writing. The teacher can implement an unfinished short story in teaching writing in which students are asked to end the story by using their own ideas. Thus, by implementing this technique, students are expected to have writing habits and help them to build their creative writing.

Based on the identified problem, this paper aims to explain the implementation of unfinished short-story and how it will be carried out to help students in building their creative writing in learning English as a Foreign Language. Moreover, by implementing this technique, it is expected that students can improve their writing ability, more creative in expressing their ideas through writing form and make writing as a habit. Furthermore, this technique can help the teacher to make fun of learning by challenging students' creativity. It is expected that students will be more interested in learning because they learn something in a different way. In normal activity, students usually tend to be asked to read and answer questions about a story but this technique offers a different way to invite students to learn.

## **Method**

This study is designed in the form of library research. Library research was carried out to gather the required data or information through the process of reading the literature sources. The data sources of this study were obtained from several sources, such as research article, electronic book (e-book), and any other relevant sources. The data obtained was then analyzed by using qualitative data analysis. The data analysis included four procedures, i.e., data collection, data reduction, presentation, and concluding/verification.

## **Findings & Discussions**

### **Unfinished Story in EFL Class**

An unfinished story is one technique that can be implemented in teaching writing. It is considered as a form of literature based-instruction. This technique implemented by using a story that is given to students. However, the activity that can be done by students is not only reading the story but they can make or write a story. This technique is different from others in which the implementation of the other technique more frequently focuses on giving instruction to students to make a story from the beginning until the end.

The unfinished story usually implemented by using a short story. The short story here has been known that it is a part of literature. In a short story, students usually are given instruction to read and then they are asked to answer some questions related to the story or they are asked to retell the story by their own word. This common activity is not challenging for students to learn something from the literature because they only focus on reading activity and understanding the content of the story. Thus, to make learning more challenging, it can be done by implementing an unfinished story technique. In this technique, students not only reading the text or the story, but they will make their own story. It can be a form of writing task. However, students are not asked to make a full story. They are given a story without the ending which means that it is not written completely.

An unfinished story is challenging and it is good to help students in building their creative writing. In this activity, students continue the incomplete story and they end the story by using their ideas. It such as an activity of solving a problem where students are challenged to continue the story in a different way. Besides, it helps students to solve their problems in

writing narrative because this technique is attractive for them, especially to use their imagination to create more sentences for their composition (Wahyuni, 2017). This activity will produce varied writing results. It is because every student has their own ideas, imagination, and a way to end the story. Thus, by this activity, students will be more trained to develop their ability to express ideas into written form.

### **The Implementation of Unfinished Story**

The teacher needs an interesting way or technique to make students have creativity in writing. Building students' creative writing becomes a difficult task because writing is considered as the most complex skill in teaching and learning English. The teacher has to change their way of teaching to make the learning process become more fun and easier even though it deals with writing. There are several types of techniques that can be used by the teacher to give instruction to students in writing the English context. Moreover, the teacher has to think about the appropriate technique to be implemented in teaching writing.

One technique that can be implemented to build students' creative writing is an unfinished story. As the explanation above, unfinished story is one technique of continuing or finishing the end of the incomplete story by using students' own ideas and imagination. This technique is easy to be implemented by the teacher in the classroom. Moreover, this technique emphasizes on students' critical thinking in solving the problem, where the problem is they are given the incomplete story and then they have to solve it by continuing the story.

According to Wati (2012) there are some steps in the implementation of an unfinished story in teaching writing English context. The first step is dividing students into small groups consist of four-five students. The second is giving an unfinished story to each group and asking them to read and understand the story. The third is questioning students to ensure whether they have understood the story. The fourth is asking students to write the ending of the story individually and telling them that they have the right how to end the story by their ideas. The fifth is asking students to revise their content to ensure whether their writing has had appropriate grammar, spelling, and sentence order. The last is performing their writing by reading the story in front of the class.

Based on the explanation above, the teacher can implement the unfinished story in the classroom to teach the narrative text. It can be for the students in the eleventh grade. When the teacher wants to teach narrative text by using this technique, the teacher can do some steps during the activity:

#### ➤ Pre-activity

In pre-activity, the teacher has to prepare the material that will be given to students. Unfinished story use material about a short story or narrative text. However, the teacher has to give an unfamiliar story or the teacher can make a story by themselves. It aims to make students use their critical thinking and creativity in ending the story. If the teacher gives a story that already known or ever heard before, then it will make students unmotivated to using their own ideas because they will tend to write the story based on what they have known.

The teacher may divide students into small groups, and then give an unfinished story/incomplete story to students. Students are asked to read the story first. They can also discuss with their friends if there is something that they do not understand or asking the teacher. After

that, the teacher will ask students to ensure that students already understand about the story given.

➤ Main-activity

In the main-activity, after students understand about the story that they have read, then they will be asked to continue the unfinished story to make the story complete with the ending. The teacher tells students to write the story by their own ideas and imagination then finally they will produce the ending of the story in a different way. Here, students' creativity in writing will be seen because they make their writing based on their thought. Moreover, the teacher can tell students that they can write the story as creative as possible without worrying about grammar. It is because literature based-instruction is emphasized on how students can produce something through literature and if it emphasizes on the grammar use, it will inhibit students' creativity. This activity as the way of students to build their creative writing where here students are emphasized to express their ideas, thoughts, opinions, and imagination into writing.

➤ Post-activity

This is the end of students' writing activity. In the post-activity, after students finishing the story, they will be asked to perform their writing by reading aloud in front of the class. Here, every student will share their ideas about their story and it gives advantages for other students in which they will have more knowledge about the idea in finishing the story and get new vocabulary. Besides, students will also get feedback from the teacher and other students, thus it can help them to improve their writing. However, if this task cannot finish in the class, they may finish their writing at home because writing is a task that takes a long time.

### **The Implication of Using Unfinished Story**

An unfinished story is an alternative way to build students' creative writing. As known that writing is one of the most difficult skills in learning English, thus it needs a fun and interesting way to make it easy to do. By implementing an unfinished story, students will be trained to make their writing as good as possible through expressing their ideas and imagination. Even though it challenges students to write, but they are expected to be fun because they can feel and doing different activities in the learning process. In addition, students will try their best to solve the problem where they have to continue the story. It is good to be implemented because students are expected to practice writing forms directly.

The use of this technique is also expected to help students to develop their critical thinking and creativity in writing. They are given the right to write whatever they want and think. In addition, the teacher does not set limits on how students will organize their writing. Thus, it is expected to motivate students to express their ideas and make students confident with themselves. Besides, by using an unfinished story, the teacher expects that students will be engaged in the learning process because they will practice and try to do their task.

### **Conclusion**

From the discussion above, it explains that using an unfinished story in teaching writing for EFL students is very useful. It is effective to be implemented in the classroom especially in writing English because both the teacher and students feel fun during the learning process. The unfinished story becomes a challenging technique for students where they should

use their critical thinking and creativity in writing. This is considered a challenging technique because students doing an activity like solve the problem in which the problem that is given is an incomplete story. However, the story that should be given by the teacher is an unfamiliar story. It aims to make students use their creativity to finish the story by their own thought and imagination. Like the example mentioned above, it is a kind of narrative text that is unfamiliar to students. By giving the example, students will think critically and use their creativity to solve this kind of problem. The students will try to continue the story and make it connect from the beginning until the end. Moreover, every student has opportunities and the right to end the story based on their wants. From this activity, every student will have a different result of the story.

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