

“DEFENDS” as An Effective Writing Strategy to Create Students Creativity

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How to cite this paper: Fathoni, M. I., Sumardi, S., & Supriyadi, S. (2019). “DEFENDS” as An Effective Writing Strategy to Create Students Creativity. *International Journal of Language Teaching and Education*, 3(1), 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.22437/ijolte.v3i1.7146>

Accepted: July 24, 2019

Published: July 31, 2019

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Abstract

In the educational process, specifically in the classroom, students must be able to produce good writing in academic writing that is relevant to the topic that is given or determined by the teacher. Most students get difficulty in learning writing moreover producing good writing. Teachers need to help the students build their habits of writing creatively. DEFENDS, a strategy that was developed by Ellis (1989,1990,1993) can help students to defend a particular position in a written assignment, improve writing strategies, facilitate writing process, and strengthen learning to learn writing skill. DEFENDS strategy gives students the means to plan before they begin writing. This strategy guides students to be an independent writer through several stages (Decide, Estimate, Figure, Express, Note, Drive, and Search). Students are demanded to have not only language skill but also other factors such as creativity. Creativity gives a contribution in education field nowadays, the issue of creativity has brought to the forefront of educational policy and practice, including the importance of creativity in writing. Research dealing with creativity in writing is needed. This research was an experimental design called post-test design using 2x2 factorial arrangements. The sample was high school students. Two instruments used by the researcher; those were writing test and creativity test. The value of F_{table} at the level of significance is $\alpha = 0.05$ is 4.01, while the value of F_o between columns is 5.734141. F_o between rows (16.5821) is higher than F_t at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ (4.01), and F_o columns by rows (9.21) are higher than F_t at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ (4.01).

Subject Areas

Writing Skill

Keywords

Creative students, DEFENDS strategy, effective strategy, students creativity

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is an essential skill in English because it is not only an academic skill, but also an essential skill that can use in any career fields such as business, science, and technology. In academic writing,

students must be able to produce good writing that is relevant to the topic. However, many students still are not aware of the importance of writing, and most students get difficulty in learning writing. Huy (2015) said that teaching writing is a process of interaction between teacher and student, where the teacher explains the technicalities in writing (p. 53).

To create well-organized writing, a writer should master the aspects related to writing. Dorobat (2007) categorize some aspects of writing namely meaning, organization, content, vocabulary, discourse (sentence, grammar), syntax, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation) (p. 130). For a student, writing is exciting and vital. Writing is an excellent way to develop students ability to use languages such as vocabulary and grammar.

There are cases where students cannot produce good sentences and paragraphs, moreover having excellent skill in writing, the teacher needs to apply a method, technique, or strategy. Students' lack of writing skill may be caused by the inappropriate method, technique, and strategy of teaching used by the teacher. In the classroom, the teacher should be more creative in providing and applying appropriate and exciting method, technique, or strategy in teaching writing skill. Langan (2001) states that most problems in writing range from cognitive problems, (e.g., vocabulary knowledge, language structure, and organizational ideas) to psychological problems.

There is a strategy from many strategies that can be applied by the English teacher to teach writing in the classroom. One of those strategies is DEFENDS that stands for deciding, estimate, figure, express, note, drive, and search. Several purposes of DEFENDS strategy that explained by Catherine Collier (2016) in her book are to assist learners in defending a particular position in a written assignment, improving writing strategies, facilitate writing process, and strengthen learning to learn writing skill.

The improper methods and teaching strategies used by the teacher in the classroom can lead to a lack of student writing skills. A right and proper teaching strategy are what can maximize students' ability, and improve their interest to take part actively in the teaching and learning process. Teachers are required to be more creative in teaching students writing skills at school by providing and applying appropriate and exciting methods, techniques, or strategies. This is the essential thing that can affect students' writing skills. Teachers need to help students build habits of writing creatively so that they recognize writing as a regular part of classroom practice and they come to write assignments with enthusiasm (Harmer, 2007, p. 329).

Producing written works is also more complicated. Students are demanded to have not only language skill but also other factors such as creativity, interest, motivation, intelligence, and self-esteem. From those factors, creativity is assumed to be an essential human characteristic which influences students' writing skill. Creativity means to anything that originality what the creator does, and that is exact to the purpose or goal of the creator (Baer and Kaufman, 2012, p. 3). About the importance of creativity in writing, it believed that creative writing could develop students' language proficiency, and engage students in writing more complex syntactic structures.

1.1. DEFENDS as Strategy in Creative Writing

Talking about the use of English, writing is one of four skills that are studied by students in learning English. Through writing, students can share their feelings, ideas, thoughts, information, and experiences in written words. Dorobat (2007) defines writing as a means of recording, assimilating, and reformulating knowledge and of developing and working through his/her ideas (p. 122). The purpose of teaching writing is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to write effectively for a range of purposes and in various contexts. Many strategies can be used to teach how to make good paragraphs and essays in writing. There is a popular learning strategy used for writing named DEFENDS, a strategy that was developed by Ellis. DEFENDS A strategy for defending a position in writing (Ellis, 1989,1990,1993). DEFENDS is an acronym from Decide, Estimate, Figure, Express, Note, Drive, and Search. Several purposes of DEFENDS strategy that explained by Catherine Collier (2016) in her book are to help the student in defending a particular position in a written assignment, improve writing strategies, facilitate writing process, and strengthen learning to learn writing skill. The mnemonic of DEFENDS has symbolized that the strategy instructs seven steps.

The first step, students need to decide and also determine the writing goals and themes. This includes considering both the audience and what type of information will be communicated. Students are encouraged to record these goals on paper. Second, they should brainstorm at least two main ideas that support the entire theme of their writing essay. At least three supporting details should follow these main ideas. Third, Once the main ideas and details have noted, students should analyze what they have noted in order to determine the best order of these items within the paper. The items order should be logical and should enhance the entire flow of the paper. At this period, students are ready to move past prewriting to the actual writing of their essay or paper (Ellis, 1993). The next step encourages students to state their entire theme within the first sentence. Fifth, students continue their essay by moving into the main points and details that they listed during prewriting. These should be in complete sentences and should follow the logical order determined in planning. The sixth step instructs students to restate their entire theme in the last sentence of the essay. The wording should be different from the first sentence but should summarize the main point. Seventh, or the last step, students should search for errors through editing steps, including rereading the essay to see if it makes sense; checking for correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; and looking for clarity of the entire theme.

Every strategy must have advantages and disadvantages. Collier (2016) states that there are some advantages to DEFENDS. As follow: First advantage, assist student in defending a particular position in a written assignment; Second advantage, facilitate writing process and Improve writing strategies; Third advantage, build awareness of appropriate cognitive academic language; Fourth advantage, construct and strengthen awareness of the learning process; Fifth advantage, develop analytical skill; Sixth advantage, develop independent field skills.; Seventh advantage, develop problem-solving skill and develop thinking and planning skills; Eight advantage, construct academic transfer skill; Ninth advantage, improve retention of content, reinforce content lessons, and strengthen knowledge of academic content; Tenth advantage, improve student's ability to organize and prioritize information; Eleventh advantage, strengthen language development; Twelfth advantage, Expand and improve comprehension; Thirteenth advantage, reduce confusion in locus of control; Fourteenth advantage, strengthen the ability to discuss what is happening.

Besides advantages the teacher should be aware of the limitation of the DEFENDS strategy, Bisland (2004) warns that the use of DEFENDS may have some limitations as follows: The first advantage, At the first time, students may struggle to apply the stages of DEFENDS strategy, because there are seven stages that they should follow. The other advantage, the process of making the essay by using DEFENDS strategy may consume much time. The third possible disadvantage, DEFENDS strategy requires the students to be autonomous. Students should be involved in this process because it gives them the perception of control over their learning. The last disadvantage, teachers should consider the overall outcome desired. Many strategies are available, but the best strategy is the one that is most appropriate to the student's learning needs (p. 54).

Producing written works is also more complicated. Students are demanded to have not only language skill but also other factors such as creativity, interest, motivation, intelligence, and self-esteem. From those factors, creativity is assumed to be an essential human characteristic which influences students' writing skill. Creativity refers to anything someone does in a way that is original to the creator, and that is appropriate to the purpose or goal of the creator (Baer and Kaufman, 2012, p. 3). Creativity is widely believed to be a 'good thing,' enriching the quality of life and learning. Creativity is a characteristic of human behavior that seems the most mysterious, and yet most critical to human advancement. Therefore, it can be assumed that students' creativity cannot be purchased, downloaded, or guaranteed, but it can foster the right environment or atmosphere of the teaching-learning process. Creativity gives a contribution to the education field because creativity enriching the quality of life and learning. Creativity is the production of an idea should be innovative and meaningful in the process of studying English as a foreign language.

DEFENDS strategy gives students to decide the theme before they begin writing. This strategy will guide students to be an independent writer through several stages, namely decide, estimate, figure, express, note, drive, and search that include writing process stages. DEFENDS strategy is a strategy that will help students to improve their writing skill and develop the analytical skill. Moreover, this strategy helps students reduce confusion in producing good text. Students with high creativity will be able to learn English quickly and also produce excellent writing task. It happens because they are more creative in finding out the solution when they find many difficulties in writing. High creativity students can organize and explore their ideas creatively and write better. They also tend to be active in the learning process. High creativity students can likely optimize their potential and find not any crucial problem to come up with their new ideas when DEFENDS strategy implemented in the classroom activity. DEFENDS strategy has advantages to develop problem-solving skill and to develop thinking and planning skills.

The combination of DEFENDS strategy and students who have high creativity will create an active learning process. So, the purpose of this study was to determine DEFENDS is an effective strategy to teach writing skill for students having high creativity.

2. METHOD

This research designed in an experimental design called post-test design using 2x2 factorial arrangements. Ari et al. (2010), experimental research is a research design in which its function is to identify verified functional relationship among the phenomena of interest to educators (p. 296).

This research was done at the eleventh-grade students of a high school in Purbalingga in academic year 2018/2019. In this research used 60 students from 2 classes as the sample. Those two classes were experimental class and control class.

Two instruments used by the researcher; those were writing test and creativity test. In evaluating students' creativity test, their level of creativity had been categorized into high and low creativity. Its median also helped this as the midpoint. Students having high creativity, their scores were higher than the median, while students having low creativity, their creativity scores were lower than the median. To investigate students' writing skill, the researcher used essay writing. It is a teacher's made test which was constructed to obtain objectives of writing skill. The researcher evaluated their writing through some aspects, such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

After the test given, the result analyzed by using ANOVA. The pre-requisite testing (Normality and Homogeneity) also used to test the normality and the homogeneity of the data. Normality test is used to determine whether the data are in the standard distribution or not, and Homogeneity test is used to know whether the sample has the same variance (homogeneous) or not.

The writing scores of both experimental and control groups are analyzed using the formula of ANOVA as follows: a) Total sum of squares ($\sum \chi_t^2$); b) Sum of squares between groups ($\sum \chi_t^2$); c) Sum of squares within groups ($\sum \chi_w^2$); d) Sum of squares between columns ($\sum \chi_{bc}^2$); e) Sum of squares between rows ($\sum \chi_{br}^2$); f) Sum of squares interaction ($\sum \chi_{int}^2$); f) The number of degrees of freedom associated with each source variation (df) (Ngadiso, 2015, p.18).

The result of data analysis is consulted to the F_{table} at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ to know whether the result is significant or not. If the result of $F_{computation}$ is higher than F_{table} , it means that the null hypothesis rejected and the degree of effectiveness is analyzed.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The data of this research distributed into eight groups. Based on Meliasari et al. (2018) distribute the data description into eight groups as follows: (1) the writing scores of the students taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1); (2) the writing scores of the students taught by using compared strategy (A_2); (3) the writing scores of the students having high level of creativity (B_1); (4) the writing scores of the students having low level of creativity (B_2); (5) the writing scores of the students having high level of creativity taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1B_1); (6) the writing scores of the students having low level of creativity taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1B_2); (7) the writing scores of the students having high level of creativity taught by using compared strategy (A_2B_1); and (8) the writing scores of the students having low level of creativity taught by using compared strategy (A_2B_2).

3.1. Pre-requisite testing (Normality and Homogeneity)

Before Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), 2 x 2 be analyzed, the normality and homogeneity of the data should be tested. These are a normality test. Normality test is used to determine whether the data are in the standard distribution or not. The data are average if L_o ($L_{obtained}$) is lower than L_t (L_{table}) at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The computation of the normality test is divided into eight groups of data summarized in table 1.

Table.1. Summary of Normality Test

No	Variables	L_o	N	L_t	Test Decision	Status
1	The writing scores of the students taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1)	0.097	30	0.161	H_o is accepted	Normal
2	The writing scores of the students taught by using the compared strategy (A_2)	0.119	30	0.161	H_o is accepted	Normal
3	The writing scores of the students having a high level of creativity (B_1)	0.117	30	0.161	H_o is accepted	Normal
4	The writing scores of the students having a low level of creativity (B_2)	0.103	30	0.161	H_o is accepted	Normal
5	The writing scores of the students having a high level of creativity taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1B_1)	0.094	15	0.22	H_o is accepted	Normal
6	The writing scores of the students having a low level of creativity taught by using DEFENDS strategy (A_1B_2)	0.073	15	0.22	H_o is accepted	Normal
7	The writing scores of the students having a high level of creativity taught by using compared strategy (A_2B_1)	0.119	15	0.22	H_o is accepted	Normal
8	The writing scores of the students having a low level of creativity taught by using compared strategy (A_2B_2)	0.15	15	0.22	H_o is accepted	Normal

According to data from table 1, the result of the normality test shows that all data are normal. As it can be seen by comparing the values gained (L_o) and L_{table} , where the values (L_o) are lower than L_t . Thus, it can be concluded that the populations on both teaching strategies and creativity levels normally distributed.

The next is the result of the homogeneity test. Homogeneity test is used to know the homogeneity of the data. It is used to know whether the sample has the same variance (homogeneous) or not. The data are homogeneous if χ_o^2 ($\chi_{obtained}$) is lower than χ_t^2 (χ_{table}) at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The result of the analysis is provided in the table 2.

Table 2. Table of Homogeneity Test

Sam- ple	df	1/df	s ²	log s ²	s _i ²	(df) log
1	14	0.07143	12.1381	1.08415		15.1781
2	14	0.07143	50.7667	1.70558		23.8781
3	14	0.07143	47.8452	1.67984		23.5177
4	14	0.07143	35.8095	1.554		21.756
Σ	56	0.28571				84.3299
χ _o	7.4868					

Because χ_o^2 (7.4868) is lower than χ_t^2 (7.81), it can be concluded that the data are homogeneous. It means the data obtained from the results for both variables derived from homogeneous populations.

3.2. ANOVA

This research used a Multifactor Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) 2 x 2. This test is used to find out the effect of the independent variable and attributive variable toward the dependent variable. Besides, ANOVA has the function to find out if there is an interaction among the variables. The hypothesis is rejected if F_o is higher than F_t ($F_o > F_t$). The result of the data is presented in the table 3.

Table 3. The Mean Scores

Creativity (B)	Teaching Strategy (A)		Total
	DEFENDS (A ₁)	Compared Strategy (A ₂)	
High Creativity (B ₁)	Σ = 1274 \bar{X} = 84.93	Σ = 1146,8 \bar{X} = 76.47	Σ _{r1} = 2421 \bar{X}_{r_1} = 80.7
Low Creativity (B ₂)	Σ = 1107.5 \bar{X} = 73.83	Σ = 1122.5 \bar{X} = 74.83	Σ _{r2} = 2230 \bar{X}_{r_2} = 74.33
Total	Σ _{c1} = 2381.5 \bar{X}_{c_1} = 79.38	Σ _{c2} = 2269.3 \bar{X}_{c_2} = 75.65	Σ _{x_1} = 4651 Σ _{x_2} = 77.52

Based on the table 4, the description of 2x2 Multifactor Analysis of Variance show that the value of F_{table} at the level of significance is $\alpha = 0.05$ is 4.01, while the value of F_o between columns is 5.705987 which means that H_o is rejected and the difference between columns is significant. Besides, it can be seen at the mean score of both classes. The mean score of the students taught by DEFENDS strategy is 79.38, and the mean score of the students taught by teacher strategy is 75.65. Thus, it can be

concluded that students who are taught by using DEFENDS strategy have better writing skill than those taught by teacher strategy.

Table 4. Summary of a 2x2 Multifactor Analysis of Variance

Source of variance	SS	df	MS	F _o	F _{t(0.05)}
Between columns	209.06667	1	209.0666667	5.705987	4.01
Between rows	608.01667	1	608.0166667	16.5944	
Columns by rows	336.06667	1	336.0666667	9.172155	
Between groups	1153.15	3	384.3833333		
Within group	2051.8333	56	36.63988095		
Total	3204.9833	59			

The result of the ANOVA test shows that F_o between rows (16.5944) is higher than F_t at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ (4.01). It means that H_o is rejected and the difference between rows is significant. In other words, the writing skill of the students who have high creativity and those who have low creativity are significantly different. Then, the mean score of students that have high creativity (80.7) is higher than students that have low creativity (74.33), it can be concluded that the students having high creativity have better writing skill than those having low creativity.

The result of the ANOVA test shows that F_o columns by rows (9.17) are higher than F_t at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ (4.01). It means that H_o is rejected and there is an interaction between teaching strategies (DEFENDS) and students' creativity levels to teach writing.

The research findings showed that students having high creativity have better writing skill than those having low creativity. It is proven by the mean score of the students having high creativity, which is higher than that of those having low creativity. Creative students can adapt themselves to attain their goal. They can explore their ability easily because they think beyond what they see, read, and listen in doing something so they can produce good writing. The use of effective strategies of teaching writing could influence the students' skill, especially in writing English text. High creativity students can organize and explore their ideas creatively and write better. They also tend to be active in the learning process. High creativity students can likely optimize their potential and find no problem to come up with their new ideas when DEFENDS strategy implemented in the classroom activity. On the contrary, students who have low creativity write what they see, read, and listen without being able to think what is beyond? They lack ideas and vocabulary to express them into the written text because they have monotonous concept, idea, and creation. DEFENDS strategy has advantages to develop problem-solving skill and to develop thinking and planning skills. Briefly, it can be concluded that students' creativity levels influence the effectiveness of DEFENDS.

Based on the finding in this study, DEFENDS is an effective strategy to teach writing. This strategy encourages the students to produce good writing by exploring and reinforcing their ideas through the stages of the organized and systematic writing process. DEFENDS strategy provides time

for the students to expand and organize their ideas without any modeling. The students can stimulate their ideas and concentrate on producing their authentic writing through instruction. This strategy is beneficial to gain students' writing skill. Collier (2016) states that DEFENDS can help the student to defend a particular position in a written assignment, improve writing strategies, facilitate the writing process, and strengthen learning to learn writing skill.

This strategy is also helpful for the students to remember the steps of the writing process by providing a letter to cue each step of writing process namely *Decide Estimate, Figure out, Express, Note, Drive home, and Search*. Nevertheless, to implement this strategy run well, it is necessary for the students to understand and follow every instruction before they began to the DEFENDS steps. The teacher would give help if it needed during the process so that this strategy requires many students' attentions to do all the process well. DEFENDS strategy gives a chance for the students to express their ideas freely since the process focuses on students' activity. It can be concluded that using DEFENDS can foster the students to engage actively in teaching-learning process and be an independent learner.

However, students will not produce a creative story or other writing work if creative thinking is lacking. By the goal of teaching writing using DEFENDS strategy, the implementation of this strategy requires high creativity students in order to obtain the optimum result. They have to think out of the box and apply their experience so that they can create creative and meaningful writing. Through the steps of writing in this strategy, the students also need more concentration and knowledge because this strategy encourages them to follow an organized and systematic process. Using DEFENDS can help the students link their science ideas, discussion, and expository writing for building independent thinking and self-sufficiency for the students having high creativity.

Students having high creativity are easily able to solve their learning problem, create something with their new ideas, and apply them better. They tend to have high motivation such as following teaching and learning activities well, doing teacher's instruction and finishing the task well. Also, high creative students like challenges and enjoy every step of activities in exploring ideas. It is in line with Munandar (2014), who mentions that the characteristics of highly creative persons are those having imagination, interest, confidence, independent thinking, and high motivation (p. 37). This is also supported by the characteristics of creative persons mentioned by Kaufman and Stenberg (2006) that their higher sensitivity and imagination characterize creative persons, showing absolute self-sufficiency, openness to experience, independent thinking, and sense of humor (p. 88). Therefore, students having high creativity can think beyond and use their creativity in exploring their ideas to finish their task.

Using DEFENDS strategy for students having high creativity will demand them to think more creatively, so they can develop their ideas and create a more effective learning experience. Because this strategy is students-centered, DEFENDS also allows students to exchange collective and individual feedback. As a result, they can produce good writing, especially an English text. Therefore, it requires students having high creativity in doing so, because high creativity students can organize and explore their ideas creatively and write better. Thus, students having high creativity suitably taught by using DEFENDS strategy because the implementation of this strategy emphasizes on students critical and analytical thinking.

Different from high creativity, students having low creativity tend to be passive, less motivation, un-serious, and dependent learner. During the learning process, they are different from those having high creativity. Students having low creativity are dependent. They need more help and support from the teacher during the teaching and learning process. It happens because they are lazy to do complex activities, need creative and analytical thinking. They like something simple and easy to do. Therefore, they find many difficulties in writing, such as: how to get the information, how to develop their ideas, and how to arrange the sentences.

Based on the research finding the combination of DEFENDS strategy and students who have high creativity create an active learning process. It proves that DEFENDS is an effective strategy to teach writing skill for students having high creativity. A student not only recording, assimilating, and reformulating their writing with their ideas (Dorobat, 2007) but beyond. DEFENDS is help the student of having high creativity in defending a particular position in a written assignment, it also improves new various writing strategies, moreover facilitate writing process of the student who has high creativity, and also strengthen learning process of writing skill.

4. CONCLUSION

The result of this study implies that DEFENDS is an effective teaching strategy to teach writing for high school students. It is proven by the result of this study shows that students who are taught by using DEFENDS strategy have better writing than those who taught by using ordinary teaching strategy. By writing skill, students need not only an effective strategy to produce good writing but also their creativity. The research findings reveal that students having high creativity have good writing skill. Students having high creativity can solve their learning problem, create something with their new ideas, and apply them better. Besides, creative students can adapt themselves to attain their goal. They can explore their ability easily because they think beyond what they see, read, and listen in doing something so they can produce good work. Also, high creative students like challenges and enjoy every step of activities in exploring ideas.

The result of this research expected to become a reference to other researchers concerning with teaching writing and testing creativity. Furthermore, this research can stimulate in conducting similar research at the same strategy, but in different level and objects. Some recommendations are dealing with DEFENDS strategy. First, this research has revealed that applying DEFENDS strategy gives a remarkable impact on students' writing skill. The teacher should carefully use teaching strategies to teach writing based on students' needs so that they can achieve excellent writing skill. In this case, the use of DEFENDS strategy to teach writing is expected to promote a practical teaching writing skill. Second, It is necessary that students can learn how to write through appropriate and systematics writing steps (D-E-F-E-N-D-S) until they produce better writing.

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Acknowledgment

The pre-research and the try out data of this research was presented at 2nd English Language and Literature International Conference (ELLiC) in Muhammadiyah University Semarang on May 5th, 2018. Moreover, also I would like to thank Mrs. Siti Khoeriyah, the high school English teacher who helps me in holding this study, I would like to thank Lina Yekti Oktiningtyas who support me in making the paper, and I would like to thank Drs. Naslam AP for giving the sponsorship.