
THE USE OF POSTER PRESENTATION TO SOLVE STUDENTS' WRITING PROBLEMS IN A MULTILEVEL CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Students with different levels of language proficiency face different writing problems. The lower levels' problems are mainly on their lack of vocabulary and their lack of capability in operating the English grammar. While the upper levels customarily have difficulties in organizing their ideas (Wigati,2014). This research, therefore, was conducted to investigate the use of Poster Presentation in improving the students' ability in writing an exposition essay. The study was conducted at 3rd semester of English Education Program in one of universities in West Java, Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative research approach by embracing characteristics of a case study design. The data were gathered from several techniques, including classroom observations by the researcher and her colleague, writing assignments results, and interviews. The findings revealed that despite some limitations, the teaching program was successful to improve the students' ability writing an exposition essay. It is finally suggested that the teachers use the Poster Presentation in teaching writing.

Keywords: teaching writing, writing problems, poster presentation, exposition essay, multilevel class

1. BACKGROUND

Considering the students' ability and difficulties in the writing process is particularly important when teaching EFL students in a class with multi level language skills since it is often difficult to ensure that all the students learn in the same intensity of understanding (Wigati,2014). Lower level writers typically exhibit major difficulties, namely coping with grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Motivation and anxiety problems also often accompany their process of writing (Lindstrom, 2007 in Westwood, 2008:59). In the other side, the higher level writers typically demonstrate major difficulty in the content of their writing (Westwood, 2008).

Wigati (2014), in her study, found that the basic level students had more problems with the details of the content. The problem is mainly on their lack of vocabulary and their incompetent to use English grammar. The ideas were truncated due to the inadequate vocabulary. Problems in applying the correct grammar also became the big obstacle for the students in conveying their ideas. This lack of ability in vocabulary and grammar provoked the problems in writing the essay. These respondents also had problems in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. On the other side, the respondents who are at the upper-intermediate level of language proficiency tended to have more understanding in the writing aspects needed in writing the essay. Nevertheless, they still had problems with the identification stage. They also had problems with unclear message in making the complex sentences. They likely had higher self-esteem and strong motivation.

Therefore, we need a teaching method that is efficient and able to tackle the problems faced by students in writing. This study tried to apply poster presentation in

the teaching program. The students were asked to present their writing by using poster. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the use of poster presentation in an effort to improve students' writing skills in writing an exposition essay.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study investigated the values of poster presentation in helping to promote students' exposition writing skill. It also embraces the characteristic of a case study design since it was carried out in a small scale (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). The research subjects of this study were third semester students of English Education Program in one of state universities in West Java. The data were collected through 6 meetings of classroom observations, students' writing portfolio, and interviews. Then, the data interpretation and on-going data analysis were done from the classroom observations, students' writing

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

At the preliminary phase of the teaching program, the teacher gave the details of the teaching program to the students. After the students understood the objective and the course of the teaching program including the use of poster presentation, the teacher asked them to do the diagnostic writing test. Then, they chose a topic for their exposition essay writing followed by reading materials needed to support their writing. Next is the teaching program. The teaching program used in this study is modified from the teaching writing by Emilia (2010) and Trong (2011).

First, Teacher described and modeled an exposition text. The teacher explained the social function, generic structure, and the linguistic features of the text. Then, she provided 2 models of exposition texts to be analyzed and discussed.

Second, teacher described the steps in composing the exposition essay. To create collaboration, the teacher grouped the students into three people per group. Each group consists of 1 lower achiever, one middle achiever, and 1 higher achiever. They were asked to perform collaborative writing. Teacher also ensured that all group members contributed and cooperated. This was done through promising reward points for the best poster in the class.

Third, the teacher organized the students to follow the steps of writing: brainstorming, outlining, and drafting (Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

Fourth, teacher also engaged the students in learning through checking for the students understanding. In this case the teacher used consultation time to re-check the students understanding and evaluate the students' writing results.

Fifth, after the students completed their writing, they printed it in an A1 poster. They also prepared a scoring sheet consisted content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. In the scoring list, there is also listed scoring ratings for their success in answering questions from their friends from other groups.

Sixth, on the day of publishing, all the groups displayed their poster. The teacher invited other class to come as "the guest". They became the readers who should give the score and asked the group some questions related to the 5 elements of writing exposed in the text.: content, organization, grammar, vocab, and mechanics. The guest had the

right to select who would answer his questions. It was to avoid any dependency of a group member to other member.

Seventh, the guests then gave score to each group. The group who got the highest score won the competition.

Finally, the teacher gave point rewards to the winner.

3.2 Discussion

Dependency to other member always becomes the characteristic of lower achievers when they were asked to collaborate with others. They were unmotivated because of they are lack of skill in writing. Therefore, the teacher made the poster presentation as competition.

As a consequence, in the writing process, there were some evidences that the group collaborate well. The higher achievers always tried hard to make his friends understand. Whereas, the lower achievers also asked things they did not know passionately. The competition increased their motivation to share and to be autonomous learners. Finally, the effort to collaborate, to learn, and to win the competition increased their writing skill.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study found that despite some limitations, the teaching program was successful to improve the students' ability in writing. It is finally suggested that teachers use poster presentation in teaching writing

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