DEVELOPING ONLINE READING AND DISCUSSION BOARDS ON FACEBOOK AS PRE-WRITING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract: Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk mengetahui apakah *online reading* dan *discussion boards*pada facebook sebagai kegiatan *pre-writing* dapat meningkatkan kualitas *writing*lebih baik daripada kegiatan *pre-writing* melalui *printed text reading*, aspek *writing* apa yang meningkat secara signifikan dan persepsi siswa terhadap *ORDB*. Pada desain quantitatif, uji tes awal dan tes akhir kelompok kontrol dilakukan dan pada desain qualitatif, kuesioner dilaksankan.Pada pengumpulan data, tes*writing*, analisa dokumen, dan kuesioner digunakan. Subyek dibagi dua kelompok, eksperimen dan kontrol, masing-masing terdiri dari 17 siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukan nilai signifikan dua arah 0.000. Berdasarkan aspek *writing* yang meningkat secara signifikan, *ORDB* meningkatkan kualitas *writing* terutama pada *vocabulary*. Siswa meningkat pada *vocabulary* dengan penambahan 1.62 (8.1%) dengan *pre-writing* melalui *printed-text reading* dan 3.06 (15.3%) dengan *ORDB*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan perbedaan pada kedua kegiatan *pre-writing*. Berdasarkan kuesioner, diketahui bahwa metode ini dapat meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi dalam menulis.

This research was conducted to find out whether online reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities can improve writing quality better than pre-writing activity through printed text, what aspects of writing significantly improved, and the students' perception of ORDB. In quantitative design, control group pre-test and post-test design was conducted and in qualitative design, questionnaire was conducted. To collect the data, the writing test, document analysis, and questionnaire were used. The subjects were divided into two groups, the experimental and control, each consists of 17. The result showed the value of two-tailed significance was 0.000. Based on the aspects of writing which are significantly improved, ORDB promoted their writing performance mainly in vocabulary. Students improved vocabulary with gain 1.62 (8.1%) with pre-writing through printed text and 3.06 (15.3%) with ORDB. The result showed the difference of both pre-writing. Based on questionnaire, it was noted that it may increase motivation and participation in writing.

Keywords:*Pre-writing, Online Reading, Discussion Boards, Facebook.*

INTRODUCTION

As a productive skill, writing requires a multitude of skills like brainstorming, reflecting upon previous knowledge, organizing information, and communicating ideas. Adopting pre-writing activity to support and to improve writing skill is widely recognized by the language practitioners as a beneficial micro-skill. Thorne as cited in Mogahed (2013: 60) argues that prewriting is the most important skill to emphasize and practice extensively in basic writing classes. She describes basic writers as almost universally neglecting prewriting activities. She suggests some guidelines for teaching prewriting effectively.Pre-writing has been shown to facilitate the writing process for all types of writing(Brodney, Revves, and Kazelskis, First and MacMillan, Hart) as cited in Lin et al. (2004: 1). Good writers recognize the importance of the prewriting, view it as rehearsal, and spend a longer time inplanning during prewriting (Brodney et al.,Hillocks) as cited in

Lin et al. (2004: 1). A lack ofplanning may result in poor writing performance (Bourdin and Fayol as cited in Lin et al., 2004:1).

Online reading, in this study, refers to reading onthe Internet. Some writers use the term 'electronic reading' instead of 'online reading' and it means the same thing.Electronic Reading (e-reading) is used interchangeably with hypertext reading by many scholars (Esky as cited in Al-Rajhi, 2004: 16). The most important element in a hypertext structure is thehyperlink, which takes the reader back and forth from onepoint to another and thus makes e-reading more flexible andmore fluid.

Online discussion forums have been used extensively asadditional platforms for interaction among students, peers, and instructors. Researchers suggest that discussion forums are a perfectvenue for expressing academic opinions. By reading responses andadding input, participants increase their engagement in the discussion,foster

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critical thinking and reflection, and construct a shared reservoirof knowledge (Dehler and Porras-Hernandez, Warschaueras cited in Lee and Wu, 2012: 337). Nevertheless, learning outcomes are dependent upon individuals' differences in motivation to participate in the forums (Yang, Li, Tan, and Teo as cited in Lee and Wu, 2012: 337). To promote critical thinking in discussion forum, Garrison, Anderson, and Archer as cited in Lee and Wu (2012: 337)proposed the practical inquirymodel as an assessment framework for online asynchronous discussion.

"Facebook groups" is a feature that is available on the social networking site Facebook (FB). Yunus and Salehi(2012: 87) examined the students' perceptions on the use of Facebook groups in teaching ESL writing. The students' perceptions were measured through a questionnaire comprising 10 close-ended items. The respondents were 43 students in TESL, in the Faculty of Education, UniversitiKebangsaan

Malaysia (UKM). The result showed that most respondents agree that they learn new vocabulary from reading the comments of others in the group, and the spell-check feature helps reduce their spelling errors.However, most studies have been conducted in Indonesia about technology and learning English are very limited. It has not been easy togain access to materials, however, the internet hasbecome as a potential solution for the lack of thesematerials. Online reading has been utilized by teachers and learners with discussion board on facebook to improve students' writing skill, but not as pre-writing activities. Therefore, the present study was designed to fill an important gap in research on the use ofonline reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities by EFL learners since pre-writing is the first stage of the writing process, typically followed by drafting, revision, editing and publishing.Therefore, the teacher needs to stimulate students' creativity, to think how to approach a writing topic.

The objectives of this research are as follow: 1) To examinewhether the students who are taught through online reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities would improve their writing quality better than pre-writing activity through printed reading, 2) To explore the aspects of writing can be significantly improved by using online reading and discussion boards on facebookas prewriting activities, and 3) To investigate students' perceptions of online reading and discussion boards on facebook as prewriting activities.

RESEARCH METHODS

The data were collected from the third semester college students in English education and pedagogy faculty of STKIP Muhammadiyah Kotabumi in academic year 2016-2017. There were 34 students and randomly divided into two groups, experimental group and control group.Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were conducted through writing tests, document analysis and questionnaire.

In this case, the qualitative data collection afterpre-writing with online reading and discussion boards on facebook is used to support the quantitative data of students' writing aspects development. In quantitative research, the researcher used a true-experimental design. The quantitative research is in *control-group pretest-posttest design.*

Writing test fulfilled the content validity since the materials of writing test chosen were adapted from the learning contract of Paragraph Writing subject, and questionnaire fulfilled the construct validity as construction of items in questionnare in Likert scale was used. The instrument wasalso considered as highly reliable.By using inter-rater in determining the writing skill, reliability coefficients were acceptable. The coefficients were 0.78 and 0.83 for printed reading pre-test and post test and 0.93 and 0.90 for ORDB pre-test and post-test. Questionaire was tested by using Cronbach's Alfa to see the reliability. It was reliable because α> r table (N = 17), rtable = 0.482. Since the

category of α = .915, itcan be concluded that $\alpha>$ r table.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Scoring the pre-test and post-test by separating 5 aspects of writing (content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics)is to answer Research Question 1"Do ORDB on Facebook as Pre-writing Activities improve students' writing performance better than pre-writing through printed text reading?" In testing the hypothesis, the researcher used independent-sample t-test. She was helped by SPSS 15 for windows to find out the result of hypothesis test. The significant level used by the researcher was 0.05. She used gain score to know the improvement of students' writing skill between pre test and post test in both pre-writing. The following table is the summary of hypothesis testing through t-test.

Independent Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				lower	upper			
Experiment	9.2647	1.96149	.47573	3.07796	6.09851	6.188	32	.000
Control	4.6765	2.34482	.56870	3.07611	6.10036	6.188	31.02	.000

Based on the result of Independent Sample Test, the value of two tailed significance of the tests was less than 0.05. In this case, the value of two-tailed significance was 0.000. It can be concluded that H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted in the hypothesis. In other words, online reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activitiescan improve students' writing performance better than pre-writing activity through printed reading.

In order to answer Research Question 2 "What aspects of writing are significantly imroverd after developing ORDB on Facebook as Pre-writing Activities?", the researcher chose to use analytic rubrics since they can provide separate categories for writing components, they can help to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses

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of writers.The researcher also corrected the result as rater 1 and assisted by her assistant as rater 2. The most notified improvement was found in vocabulary (38.38%), followed by language use (27.99%) and content (25.33%). The fourth place was for mechanics (4.51%). The least notified improvement was found in organization (3.76%).The result showed that students began to pay attention for every aspect of writing skill as all aspects improved gradually. If the result above is transformed into the figure, it would be as follows.

Figure 4.2 Gain of Writing Aspects Improved
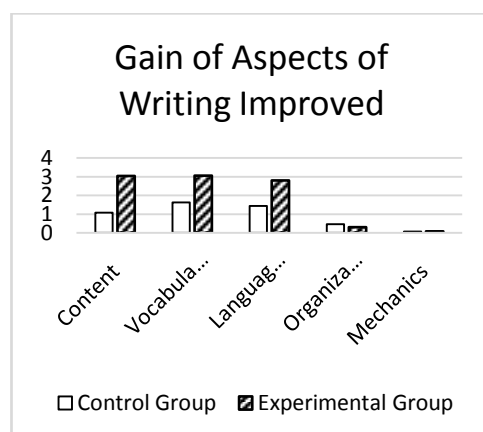
With regards to the result of pre-test and post-test with both pre-writing activity through printed reading and pre-writing activities through online reading and discussion boards on facebook, the researcher would explain further for vocabulary, language use, and content as those three aspects were notified to have significant improvement and also show that the aspects with online reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities were improved better than the aspects improved with pre-writing activity through printed reading.It can be seen that vocabulary improved withonline reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities better than with pre-writing activity through printed reading.. Students improved their vocabulary with gain 1.62 (8.1%) with pre-writing through printed reading and 3.06 (15.3%) with ORDB. The result showed the difference of both pre-writing.

The questionnaire was conducted to find out the answer of Research Question 3 "What are students' perceptions of online reading and discussion boards on facebook as pre-writing activities in their writing

class?" In order to answer this question, the researcher employed Likert Scale. The questionaire consisted of 13items, divided into two, 8 items for advantages and 5 items for problems. The questionnaire items construction reflected *advantages* in this research were adapted from Yunus and Salehi (2012: 88), and questionnaire items of *problem* were modified by combining five previous studies (Combining five previous studies as cited in Kamnoetsin, 2014: 155).

Table 4.12 Students' Perception of ORDB as Pre-writing Activities

No.	Questionnaire Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Brainstorming on FB group helps organize my thoughts before the actual writing.	17	3.0000	.61237
2	I learn new vocabulary from reading the comments of others on the FB group.	17	2.8824	.60025
3	The spell-check feature helps me reduce spelling errors.	17	3.0000	.50000
4	Ideas or opinions posted by my peers on FB group help me in getting a better idea before writing.	17	3.0588	.42875
5	I find it easier to complete my essays after participating in FB group discussion.	17	3.1176	.48507
6	I feel comfortable posting my ideas or opinion on FB group	17	3.1765	.63593
7	I feel encouraged by my friends "liking" my ideas and comments	17	3.2353	.75245
8	I prefer discussing issues or topics on FB group instead of in a classroom session.	17	3.1765	.63593
9	Facebook is inappropriate for formal teaching and learning activities (not a suitable environment to learn English)	17	3.0588	.42875
10	Facebook creates bad habits of relying on the online correction tools (vocab and spelling)	17	3.1765	.72761
11	It makes my motivation to write lower	17	3.0000	.50000
12	Some other features on Facebook create my distraction	17	2.7059	.77174
13	It creates habit of using too many short forms in writing (students use informal English leads to grammar mistake)	17	3.1765	.52859

From the descriptive statistics showed on table 4.12above, it could be seen that students found it most enjoyment on improving their writing by feeling encouraged by friends "liking" the ideas and comments, with the mean score of 3.2353. Besides that, for the problems, students initially found it the highest mean score of 3.1765 for the problem that facebook creates bad habits of relying on the online correction tools (vocab and spelling) and it creates habit of using too many short forms in writing (students use informal English leads to grammar mistake).

DISCUSSION

Pre-writing throughonline reading and discussion boards on facebook can improve the students' writing achievement better than pre-writing activity through printed reading.It appears to be an effective medium in teaching writing and build positive attitude pre-writing activities, leading to the improvement of the students' writing achievement since the combination of analytic score of the

students' writing is improved.Online reading and discussion boards on facebookas pre writing activities began with 'reading'and 'posting.' Reading is an activity which the students were assigned to read online articles and put the link on facebook, the more the students read, the more they get vocabularies. Posting is an activity to display and publish the students' writing before making an essay. In contrast to pre-writing through printed reading, publishing their writing through 'posting'and reading online articles are faster and more efficient than the manual writing in pre-writing through printed reading.

The case for an input-based, acquisition-oriented reading program based on extensive reading as an effective means of fostering improvements in students' writing was was supported by Stotsky and Krashen as cited in Al-Rajhi (2004: 48) which reviewed a number of LI studies that appear to show the positive effects of reading on subjects writing skills, indicating that students who are prolific readers in their pre-college years become better writers when they enter college. L2 studies by Hafiz and Tudor in the UK and Pakistan, and Robb and Susser in Japan as cited in Al-Rajhi (2004: 48) revealed more significant improvement in subjects' written work than in other language skills. These results again support the case for an input-based, acquisition-oriented reading program based on extensive reading as an effective means of fostering improvements in students' writing.

The comparison of the pre-test and post-test with ORDB showed that the students' writing aspects were improved better than with pre-writing activity through printed reading. It was found that all aspects improved. The most notified improvement was found in vocabulary with gain 1,62 (8.1%) with pre-writing through printed reading and 3.06 (15.3%) with ORDB.In 1925, Whipple as cited in Ghanbaria (2013) described the central role of vocabulary thus: "Growth in reading power means, therefore, continuous enriching and

enlarging of the reading vocabulary and increasing clarity of discrimination in appreciation of word values". Words represent complex and, often, multiple meanings. Furthermore, these complex, multiple meanings of words need to be understood in the context of other words in the sentences and paragraphs of texts. Not only are students expected to understand words in texts, but also texts can be expected to introduce them to many new words. This finding supports Krashen's, Lao andKrashen's, and Nunan's argument as cited in Al-rajhi (2004: 119) that extensive reading increases vocabulary size.

According to Hanson-Smith as cited in Al-Rajhi (2004: 56), one of the motives for learners to read extensively from the Internet is that learners acquire most of their new vocabulary through reading. He adds that teachers should realize that the Internet is a marvelous source of free multimedia reading materials from which their students can easily check and read. Yunus found that the

students can learn new vocabularies from reading the comments of others in the group, and the spell-check feature helps reduce their spelling errors.What they were working for additional vocabulary was to add their knowledge about what it was about, and the context about where, when, why and how. They seemed to work on their extra-linguistic knowledge in term of topic and cultural knowledge, knowledge of context, and familiarity with the others in term of socio-cultural knowledge.

Beside picturizing the positive perceptions from the students in terms of the feelings of enjoyment in improving writing, problems students faced were also discussed. Extensive reading helps to build confidence through the use of extended texts. Students' perception is feeling encouraged by friends "liking" the ideas and comments. This finding is in relevance to previous studies showing that Facebook is an effective medium for language teaching and learning (Solomon &Schrum, Schwartz, Mills, and

Razak as cited in Putra, 2016: 83). Madge et al (2009) stated that clear picture is emerging whereby the students thought the use of Facebook was most importantly for social reasons, not for formal teaching purposes.

Therefore, considering the beneficial use of publishing activity on pre writing throughonline reading and discussion boards on facebook, it is considered as a new step before revising, in stages of writing proposed by Crimmonas cited in Putra (2016: 78), namely planning, drafting, and revising. Furthermore, through publishing step, it reflects that the students were confident to express their idea in writing. It also reflects that they were eager to have their writing be praised and acknowledged. Yunus and Salehi (2009: 95) inferred that a high number of respondents agree that after participating in the FB group, they are more motivated and confident to write. When their comments are 'liked' by friends, this will boost their confidence and further encourage them to participate

actively in the group because their comments and presence are being appreciated.This way of social interaction may also lead the students to be more comfortable in providing comments and increase their motivation and participation in writing activities.

In 1925, Whipple as cited in Ghanbaria (2013: 7)described the central role of vocabulary thus: "Growth in reading power means, therefore, continuous enriching and enlarging of the reading vocabulary and increasing clarity of discrimination in appreciation of word values". Words represent complex and, often, multiple meanings. Not only are students expected to understand words in texts, but also texts can be expected to introduce them to many new words. This finding supports Krashen's, Lao andKrashen's, and Nunan's argument as cited in Al-rajhi (2004: 119) that extensive reading increases vocabulary.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Pre-writing throughonline reading and discussion boards on facebook can improve the students' writing achievement better than pre-writing activity through printed reading. It can be cocluded that interactive writingcan emerge when EFLlearners find and read electronic texts, incorporate materialfrom the text into their writing, and manipulate computerfacilities that ease the writing process, such as spelling andgrammar checkers. It is assumed that students may have a lot of practice in pre-writing activities to spend a lot of time in reading which may help them develop their critical thinking.Itis seemingly beneficial to prewriting activities since vocabulary was the aspects of writing improved with the most significant improvement.

However, considering Facebook requires adequate internet connection, it is also suggested that the suitable context and setting to apply pre-writing activities through online reading and discussion boards on facebook to be carefully taken into account, and the English teacher should also prepare the students well for employing new technology into pre-writing activities.The decision, whether and howto use the Internet, must be based on a clear pedagogical rationale, while technological and developmental issuesneed to be carefully considered.

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