

TEACHING RECOUNT TEXT TO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS VIA FB GROUP: WHAT'S ON THEIR MIND?

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to investigate the students' use of Facebook (FB) in teaching English writing recount text. The research method employed was an exploratory case study. The number of participants involved in this study was 15 students purposively taken from IPS (Study in Social Sciences/IlmU Pengetahuan Sosial) class, Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School. To explore their experiences on using FB in writing a recount text, Yunus and Salehi's (2012) Facebook questionnaire and interview were adopted. The findings elucidated that the majority of respondents believed that FB group helped them in the writing process, especially in using correct vocabulary, brainstorming and the necessity to write in Standard English and Grammar. Their affective domain was influenced through engaging in peers' feedback via FB group comment and like features. One of the formidable challenges is to write legibly in English formal language and grammar. Thus, teachers are advised to give their maximum attention on teaching writing recount text via FB group with specific instructions.

Keywords: Writing recount text, FB groups, Teaching writing

INTRODUCTION

The use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as Facebook in education sector especially in teaching English as Foreign language results tremendous learning outcome for students. Teachers have inevitably come across the use of FB in their teaching and learning process. The motivation of students to learn increases and their range of vocabulary gets significantly improved. The reason is that FB coming

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with enchanting features (e.g. like, comment, group discussion, posting and sharing) positively takes part in students' language learning as it allows providing students' opportunity to interact with their friends and teachers. The preferences of close group into the private use give students confidence to write (Bani-Hani, Al-Sobh & Abu-Mehlim, 2014; Promnitz-Hayashi, 2011; Yu, 2014).

The introduction of Facebook into classroom environment is to obviate students' learning inconvenient, helping them to strive for better opportunity to learn English language skills. The contradiction between teachers' teaching styles and students' preferred learning styles affects both entities in their part of the language teaching and learning processes. The E-learning activities where students could interact each other and with their teachers have been found to be an effective breakthrough in English language teaching and learning as their negative psychological domains such as boring, discouraging, inattentive learning and performing low testing test can be diminished (Henriques & Felder, 1995; Low & Warawudhi, 2016; Wallace & Oxford, 1992).

Facebook, the most globally used social networking site, is regarded as students' language learning motivation stimulant providing an access to better language learning environment in terms of the teaching of writing (Mork, 2009; Promnitz-Hayashi, 2011). The other scholars (e.g. Orem, 2001; Eksi, 2012, Larotta, 2008) state that the use of FB is important as the ICTs help students improve their learning skills, developing literacy skills, and establishing teachers-students and student-student relationship (Eksi, 2012; Bharati & Prajan, 2016).

The current grade XI students studying at senior high school Al-Manar boarding school are among the FB active users. This noticeable evidence was found during the preliminary study done through interview with these students. Most of them admitted that FB, one of the social networking sites, has not only been used to just update status (video uploading, messaging, etc.) but also to discuss and share, among their friends, a school lesson which has not been already solved in their classroom. Of particular importance, I found that there had been a lot number of students who possessed uneven mastery levels of English language ability in terms of English writing. As English has been listed as one of the compulsory subjects at schools, it is urgent to remove students' obstacle in writing and raise it up to be enquired in professional level. Thus, it is necessary to figure out how the FB helps students in teaching writing. Therefore, the following research questions need to be addressed:

1. How does FB group help second year students at Al-Manar high school in their process of writing a recount text?
2. What are challenges students might encounter in undertaking writing recount text via FB group?
3. How does FB group influence the affective domain of the students' writing recount text?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Current Indonesian English Curriculum

New competency based curriculum (Kurikulum K-13) has been devised to encourage students to communicate the target language in diverse settings. Students are required that learning language skills such as speaking, listening, writing and reading be learned meaningfully which can be gone through assigning communicative tasks. For example, studying writing skill can be undertaken by allowing the students to write certain topics representing real language uses such as writing invitation, announcement and the like (Curriculum 2013 Basic Frame and Standard Content No. 64/2013). This new scheme of teaching and learning English help students to build their affective domain as well as the cognitive process in all levels of schools. The learning paradigm has been shifted to learning by doing or experiential learning (Ahmad, 2014; Hapsari, 2013).

Teaching and Learning English Writing and Students' Affective Domain

Generating thought and ideas, teachers need to provide themselves with stages of process. It has been acknowledged that process of writing is of paramount importance as strategies and motivation are derived from the phase. It is a complicated task requiring a number of activities and the integration with other skills (Davies, 1988; Joózsef, 2001). Three main stages of process are used by students to actualize the final form of writing. These are known as the product approach, the genre approach, and the process of approach to writing. The fundamental target of language forms consisting of grammar, clarity, punctuation and paragraph should be achieved in this stage. Moreover, such stage enables the learners to use the cohesive devices. Attempting the teaching of this writing tenets, teachers can provide several strategies which can be used to help students find a better chance to practice the basic writing devices. The strategies in teaching students the grammatical aspects of language

may include familiarized-writing, controlled-writing, guided-writing and free writing (Hyland, 2003; Matsuda, 2003; Badger & White, 2000; Pincas, 1982).

The genre approach relates the teaching of writing to the content of particular genre or topics (Hyland, 2003) or gaining the social purposes of writing by providing students certain texts to be completed (Badger & White, 2000). The texts used should be focused on the general essay or the specific one which normally takes the form of nursing note, personal and business letter and research publication (Hyland, 2003; Silva & Brice, 2004). Besides, the genre approach can even be used in diversity of writing and social content (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003).

Furthermore, the process approach of writing relies heavily on writing skill than on any grammatical competence, considering as today's teaching process. Students learning this process can be trained by several steps among other things: planning, drafting, revising and publishing good quality of the writing piece (Badger & White, 2000; Belinda, 2006; Nunan, 1989). In isolation, Kroll (1990) provides a series of stages which is important that a student should learn in their development of writing skill. In addition, Sing (1992, as cited in Kroll, 1990) states that writing in classroom should bear on three approaches of process which is suitable to any writing task and the individual needs. Kroll (1990) adds that teacher should take the approaches such as planning, drafting and revising which allow a writer to generate his/her ideas and select the appropriate important units of information. On daily basis, a teacher may perform several tasks to discuss and troubleshoot writing draft and gain some feedback.

Nevertheless, many language learners still encountered many difficulties in improving their writing skill. One of many underlining problems in mastering English writing is the differences of social and cognitive elements (Negari, 2012) and the motivation of students in learning (Myles, 2002). Other problems influencing students' mastery of writing are linguistics, psychology, cognitive and pedagogical contents (Haider, 2012; Hyland, 2003). Besides, students' first language interference fails themselves to communicate effectively in the target language (Mahboob & Talaat, 2008). A growing body of researches also shows that incapable English teachers also causes students' failure in writing (Mansoor, 2005; Siddiqui, 2007).

The affective factors are responsible for students' mastery of language learning, resulting in positive attitudes or orientation toward learning (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Karahan, 2007). Created by Bloom

(1956), the affective domain known as one of the psychological factors takes a part in the students' learning process (Rahman & Manaf, 2017). Teachers need to pay attention to this factor. Woodford (1979) states that the psychological factors such as feelings, values, motivation and attitudes play significant in the affective domain concerning with the way learners feel about their learning.

Writing Recount Text and its Grammar

Classifying three kinds of recount text (personal, factual and imaginative recount text), Anderson and Anderson (1997) and Derewianka (1990) define it as a composition consisting of paragraphs which show the events experienced by its writer, mostly past events or experiences. Recount text composes three parts; the first paragraph, series of paragraphs and concluding paragraph (Derewianka, 1990). Although writing has been one of the main goals in teaching students' language skill, in Indonesian context, according to Karani as cited in Marza and Hafizh (2013), students often faced the problem in choosing an appropriate vocabulary to write a recount text. They are unable locate specific words for the specific events. The spelling issue is another example of students' problem in writing recount text which relies on mechanism and punctuation (Marza & Hafizh, 2013).

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Classroom Setting

Ahmad (2011) and Shih (2011) state that there are many kinds of technology used in classroom including online social networking, which (Barlett-Brag, 2006) allows users to interact with their members, share the information and having social connection. The use of Information Technologies in classroom gives students venue for increasing their motivation with pleasurable moment (Graham & Perin, 2007). Although there are several ICTs known in cyber such as Tweeter, Tumblr, MySpace, and Friendsters, Facebook has been widely used by majority of people in the world especially young learners (Yunus & Salehi, 2012). One of the important features of FB is chat group which allows member of the group to participate in discussing a particular issue. The FB group offers unrestricted number of word writers can post as regard to their reply on particular topic. The FB group members could see the questions posted to them. They are also offered with meaningful verbal response such as "Like" or "Unlike", using emoticon to express emotions other than a direct written one. Boonmohn (2013) notes that FB group is one

of the famous FB features bridging people to communicate with each other. White (2009) indicates that the amount of mistake happening from online discussion can be reduced by the comments from other people of the same group, which can be used as tools for improving learning. As there are always two sides of a coin, the negative aspect of the use of technology in EFL classroom has brought particular drawbacks. The use of the ICT has come up with preventing students from peer (actual social relationship), affecting students' well-being and influence students' academic achievement and plagiarism (Kamnoetsin, 2014).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study mainly aims at exploring the students' experiences in using FB to learn writing skill. To get this aim, a case study was used as it directs a researcher to a close exploration into people's experiences. Thus, to gain some insights into students' experience of using FB and suggestion, an exploratory case study was used as it is "an investigation into a specific instance or phenomenon in its real-life context" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 170).

Participants

Fifteen students involved in this study were chosen as respondents by means of the purposive sampling procedure. It means that those fifteen students were selected based on several reasons. Yin (2011, p. 88) state "the samples are likely to be chosen in a deliberate manner known as purposive sampling". Moreover, their names were coded respectively; Respondent 1 and 2 are coded as R1 and R2 and so are the rest of 15 respondents.

Research Instrument (Writing Test, Questionnaire, Interview)

To get a close insight into the use of FB group in teaching writing, the students were instructed to write a recount text on the topic of "My unforgettable Experience". The research's instrument pertaining to the students' writing process, challenges in writing and the influence of FB writing on their affective domain was adopted from Yunus and Salehi (2012).

Technique of Data Collection

The data were gathered by instructing the respondents to join an FB close group. Moreover, the data were collected through writing test, questionnaire, and interview with the respondents.

Technique of Data Analysis

Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDA) Miner Lite was used to analyze the questionnaire. This stage has been based on the classification of the number of cumulative responses. The analysis of interview result was done through the thematic analysis procedure in which similar emerging themes were grouped on their similar entity. This has been reduced from respondents' interview, previously analyzed from their transcription.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1 Findings on students' writing Process

The result of questionnaire shows that the majority of respondents took the positive side in the use of FB group in the process of writing recount text. At this first part of questionnaire, eight questions addressing the challenges as regards with the use of FB were asked. The question items focus on the brainstorming process, spelling error, spell checker and the use of grammar in the FB group writing. The overall view suggests that the majority of respondents felt that writing recount text via FB group were done through particular stages. They viewed that undertaking brainstorming via FB group helped them find ideas prior to performing an actual writing. They have stridden toward writing recount text as they were helped by spellchecker. By using it, they were able to minimize the spelling error and use correct grammatical rules. This has benefited them to finish their composition.

However, when specifically asked in what way FB group significantly helps the respondents in the writing process and how, they believed that there were several means of FB group which had assisted them in writing recount text. The most helpful feature of FB group is spelling checker, generic software built to inspect the writing of those who use English in conveying particular messages. This spelling checker or word inspector has enabled students to get an appropriate or the correct clusters of word in paragraphs. It has been admitted that the spelling checker gives the positive impact in writing recount text via FB group. It was also indicated that students' writing process of recount text

through the FB closed group has been influenced by comment and like by other group members. For example, one of the respondents indicated that *“Friends’ feedback registered in the writing group. If I haven’t understood yet, I would have asked my friends to give their ideas”*.

Besides, Peers’ correction also played important role in helping writing recount text via FB group. As they were connected and registered in one closed-writing FB group, students used chat feature to help their friends to go over the essay. It was shown by respondent 2 who noted that *“My friends would correct and point out to me that this word for example is wrong. Relying on this, I recheck the word on the spelling checker”*.

RQ2 Findings on Challenges of Writing via FB Group

There were several challenges faced by respondents during their writing process via FB group. The result of questionnaire consisting of two question items revealed that most respondents regard reading their essay before posting and distracting by other’s FB features while writing a recount text challenged their process of writing. When asked, as found in the interview session, the majority of respondents stated that writing based on standard English has mainly become a problem during the writing process. The composition must be written in accordance with correct language grammar. Respondents also mentioned that they had to concentrate on their writing via FB group more frequently than he did in classroom writing. Furthermore, they believed that posting without correcting the essay, their friends would comment something that they don’t like to read as stated by respondent 15, *“I have to read over my essay for many times before I decide to post it into the FB group”* and respondent 13 *“The challenging moment was when I have to repeat and go over my writing several times before I shared it to my group”*.

RQ3. Students’ Affective Domain

To explore how FB influenced students’ affective domain, a number of four questions were employed in this stage. They are related to students’ writing comfort, encouragement as result of liking feature, FB group topic discussions and the use of technology. It implies that most respondents viewed that they demonstrated a positive attitude toward the use of FB. They were comfortable in sharing their ideas, encouraged by their friends’ use of the “Like” features, and keen to discuss certain topics in the FB group. In addition, they believed that using technology in writing is of paramount importance. When asked to elaborate on how

FB could have increased their motivation and confidence, the respondents under this study believed that it was because of the availability of FB liking and comment feature given by their friends. respondent 5 for example noted that *"I am interested in and confidence of writing recount text in the FB group as it would be able to be commented and read by my friends"*. Furthermore, respondent 6 has another reason why writing recount text via FB was comfortable. As the group of writing was set only for registered members, the posted writings were only able to be assessed by them. As contended by respondent 6, *"Yes. The FB group is set only for a number of people which have been registered in the group"*. The others believed that the comfortable effect was drawn from the fact that writing recount text via FB is easier to accomplish than that of classroom writing as most of them stated *"Writing in FB is a bit faster. I am more motivated to write in the FB group than in the actual classroom writing"*. It can be noted that the comfort for writing recount text via FB group was mainly triggered by FB's private setting that enables its users to configure the FB group which can only be accessed by the registered members.

Discussion

Unlike traditional classroom learning, students solely depend on their own ability to write. Using FB in teaching writing recount however shows that several facilities help students during the practice. FB is a social network community introduced with certain built generic software which is automatically installed in FB group. When the respondents started writing their essay, they found that the misuse and inappropriate words would be alarmed by the spelling checker. The majority of respondents believed that the spelling checker helped them in correcting the number of misused words in paragraphs while the other were comfortable in posting their ideas in the FB group. FB is designed not only for public use and private affairs, but also for strengthening students' confidence in undertaking the writing activity in the group. It is widely known that FB can be configured its setting for certain private use. With the closed group setting, the majority of respondents believed that they felt free in discussing, writing, and posting their ideas and composition in the FB group. Comment and liking features are the other FB additional tool which can be used to give responses on the things being posted and give the "Like" to appreciate peoples' post. The respondents' motivation were extended as they believed that comment and liking made them feel positive and encouraged. It can be concluded

that although FB group assisted students in brainstorming processes and the vocabulary use as well as in increasing the motivation, it also tested and shifted students' writing paradigm in undertaking the writing recount text via its closed group. The students' believed that they did the mistake quite often in the classroom writing setting than in the FB group. Because FB will keep prompting the mistake before the writer corrected it, the majority of respondents found themselves challenging with the use of FB in fulfilling recount text construction.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The use of FB in teaching writing recount text has helped students in their writing process in terms of brainstorming process, getting the right word use and finishing their essay writing. The majority of respondents were encouraged to write in FB. The respondents, however, saw the writing based on standard language is a very challenging problem constantly encountered when writing the recount text via FB group. Teachers are therefore recommended that they improve their students' vocabulary range and grammatical aspect of writing. When teaching recount text via FB group, the teacher should advise his or her students to appreciate their friends' writing with FB like feature and comment. Students should be initially informed not to get themselves disturbed by FB features such as the notification, ads, and messages. These are the distractors that influence students' concentration in finishing their writing task via FB Group.

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