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Utilizing Social Network in Teaching Writing by Developing Genre-based Approach: EFL Students' Attitudes & Perceptions

Rija Dwiono

English Education Department, Universitas Sebelas Maret

E-mail: rijjadwiyono@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Social Network has changed beyond the boundaries from it was first perceived. Nowadays, it is not only used for recreation but also it means in teaching. However, addiction and privacy risk for students in using a social network are inevitable. Therefore, proper implementation is required to gain the maximum benefits of the social network. This study is aimed to examine the role of the social network by developing the Genre-based approach in teaching writing measured from students' attitudes and perceptions in EFL setting. Social network Facebook was focused to use regardless of other applications while the researcher served as a moderator. A survey was used to measure factors affected by developing the Genre-based approach in the social network in teaching writing. By employing the qualitative and quantitative method, the finding shows that social network is successfully implemented in teaching writing and it supported students' needs by developing the Genre-based approach to improve their pre-writing activity.

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INTRODUCTION

Since years, writing has been considered as a hard thing to do because it requires many times of learning, understanding, social factors, and necessity as habit in life (White and Arndt, 1991). Students doing a writing task are often faced with obstacles. They have difficulty in translating their thoughts into words as they do not know how to select the correct words that they have lack of knowledge of, and they make many grammatical mistakes in their writing. (Cimcoz, 1999; Silva, 1993; Warchauer, 2011; Kitchakarn, 2016). When the students get problem in writing means the students need more support in their learning writing. Technology and ICTs, online social network have taken the attention as an alternative tool for language teaching and learning.

(Melor and Salehi, 2012).

Social network has grown as a popular site for people to access. The massive impact of the technology advancement like smartphone has influenced the human lifestyle (Allen, 2015). Including how people use social network currently. It has changed beyond the boundaries from it was first perceived. Many literatures find that social network are possible to use not only for recreation but it is also for teaching tool. (Alnujaidi 2016; Bani-hani, Al-sobh and Abu-Melhim 2014; Ashaari, Ashikin, Manan, and Yusof, 2012).

Many researchers have explored the use of social network in teaching writing, but very few of them reveal the implementation of appropriate design or approach in social network. Moreover, there are fences faced by teacher in using social network as a tool in teaching. Utilizing social network in teaching is still being controversial issue. Addiction and privacy risk for students in using social network is inevitable. (Cam and Isbulan, 2012; Bugeja and Michael, 2006). Barreh and Abas (2013) further mention an appropriate design and proper implementation are required in order to gain the maximum benefits of social network. It can be seen, the importance for developing proper implementation in teaching by using social network to support students' learning writing and to gain the maximum benefits, appropriate approach in design is considerably needed.

Genre-based approach can be seen as an approach which requires communicative competence as involving the mastery of various Genres of texts. The text refers to structured sequences of language that are used in specific contexts in specific ways (Richards, 2006). This approach is examined to develop in social network. This is aimed to provide students with an access to various Genres of written texts as a powerful means for developing their writing with their peers and teacher in social network. As several researchers found that Genre-based approach has considerable value in approach in English teaching and learning writing (Elashri, 2013; Sawangsamutchai and Rattanavich, 2016). Many studies has revealed that Genre-based approach is effectively implemented in teaching writing in the classroom, but only few of them revealed how Genre-based approach is applied in different environment such as in social network. Hence, there needs more exploration about this issue.

In this study, popular social network such as Facebook group was focused to use regardless of other applications. The application was used as a supplementary in order to support teaching writing in the class. The researcher chose Facebook because it offers pedagogical affordances in teaching. (Hew and Cheung, 2012; Munoz and Towner, 2009; Aydin, 2012). Furthermore, Facebook is one of the most prominent network used by students, whereas Indonesia is the fourth highest Facebook users in the world. (www.socialbakers.com, 2017). This may show that the amount users and exposure of Facebook towards students in Indonesia is high, whereas it has potential to benefit them especially in learning (Mazman and Usluel, 2010). It can be seen that social network Facebook has benefit in teaching. In fact, as what the researcher had explained in advance, there only few studies revealed the appropriate approach and design developed in social network Facebook. Meanwhile the potential of Facebook as prominent social network cannot be ignored. By determining of the effectiveness Genre-based approach in teaching writing and the potential of Facebook as the prominent network used by students. Thus, the researcher proposed to explore the role of social network Facebook by developing Genre-based approach in teaching writing measured from students'

writing attitudes and perception for discussions, chats and exercise with the researcher served as a moderator.

METHODS

The researcher conducted the research at SMA N 1 Pardasuka – Lampung, Indonesia in February, 2017. The researcher employed qualitative and quantitative method by employing survey-question. The survey was specifically designed to investigate students' attitudes and perceptions towards utilizing social network by developing Genre-based approach as a method of enhancing writing skills. 32 senior high school students at the tenth grade in SMA 1 Pardasuka-Lampung were selected as subjects for this study.

First, the students were added to a Facebook group called 'ONLINE LEARNING SMANSAPAR'. Then, the students were asked to identify what type of the text and gave summary writing on each types of the text in the Facebook group. After that, students gave one another feedback. The steps were designed to create proper implementation in utilizing Facebook group as the supplementary method in teaching writing in the classroom. By the activity, the researcher aimed to illustrate what the role Facebook group played in developing students writing skill in the EFL setting.

The instructions included the following bellow is adapted from Bani-Hani, Al-Sobh and Abu-Melhim (2014):

- 1). Open the Facebook homepage on www.Facebook.com and sign in the Facebook by insert user name and password. After that, access the designated group.
- 2). Post the text creation on the assigned topic.
- 3). Discuss the post in the Facebook group enabling your teacher and peers to give comment and feedback.

Finally, the students were asked to complete a ten-question survey with a four-tier assessment value: 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. Percentages and frequencies were used to assess student writing in Facebook group evaluating students' attitudes and perceptions.

In addition, the teacher was required to do the activity as follows:

- 1). Consider the types of the text assigned to students.
- 1). Post the assignment of the specific topics in the Facebook group for the students for writing purposes.
- 3). Ask students to determine the type of the text you have posted. And ask to write a text relates to the selected topics and post their writing with peers in Facebook group. Then, ask students to give respond and comment on their peers' post one another.
- 4). Give feedback on the students' writing in the Facebook group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher employed questionnaire to the students. The questionnaire was designed in order to know the students' attitudes and perceptions in using social network Facebook developed by Genre-based approach in teaching writing. The first until the fourth questions were to know students' attitudes towards social network Facebook in improving writing. The fifth until the seventh question were to know students' perceptions toward social network Facebook in improving writing. At the last questions were to know students' attitudes and perceptions developing Genre-based approach in social network Facebook.

Questionnaire was given to the whole students in the tenth gradewhich consisted of

32 students. The researcher categorized the data into two parts: 'Cumulative Disagree' to indicate results of 'Strongly Disagree' and "Disagree" and 'Cumulative Agree' to indicate results of 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. Based on the questionnaire which was filled by the students. The researcher could describe students responses were varied and it were described in into three part discussion; social network Facebook impact on writing, social network Facebook affective domain and contribution of Genre-based approach to the quality of teaching writing. It can be seen as follows:

Social Network Facebook Impact on Writing

The researcher assessed participant attitudes towards utilizing Facebook groups as a method of language instruction. The table can be seen as follows:

Table 1 Student attitudes towards social network Facebook in improving writing

No.	The item	Cumulative Agree	Cumulative Disagree
1.	Brainstorming enables students to organize thought before writing	87,5%	12,5%
2.	Develop vocabulary mastery from the discussion and comments from the teacher and peers	100%	0%
3.	The spell-check feature helps to reduce spelling errors	62,5%	37,5%
4.	Getting a better construct before writing	78,1%	21,9%

Based on the total amount of the cumulative percentage in the table. It expresses briefly that students agreed utilizing social network Facebook could help them in writing. More than 60% students claimed that learning by using social network such as Facebook helped them not only in getting better idea or brainstorming to organize thought before writing. But also it helped them to check their spelling error. Even 100% students claimed it helped them to learn new vocabulary.

Referring to the finding, it might be indicated by the fact that students in utilizing social network like Facebook providing an easy access to learn and read the material anytime and anywhere. Whereas it could give them time in getting a better idea and brainstorming to organize thought before writing. Moreover, it gave them chances to develop their vocabulary mastery by reading the text and find new vocabulary from their teacher and peers. Technology such as social network Facebook enables students to check spelling error automatically while in their regular classroom they are not provided with that feature to check spelling error automatically.

In order to give the reader a taste of how students were writing about using social network Facebook groups by developing Genre-based approach in pre-writing activity. The researcher give an example provided as a screen shoot by two of the students in this study. The identities of the samples were hidden to avoid privacy risk. The screen shoot example can be seen bellow:



After student A posted his writing to the group, the students B gave the comment and correction to the student A writing. Collaborative learning in Facebook happened among of the students. After that, the teacher corrected the students' writing and she gave feedback of what they had written. By this activity, the student A and B get benefits from the correction of the teacher. It also shows that the students conducted collaborative learning and they helped one another to correct and improve their writing during pre-writing activity.

Affective Domain

Three question of the questionnaire were employed to measure how social network Facebook influence the affective domain of students involved in writing.

Table 2 Students' perceptions toward social network Facebook in improving writing

No.	The item	Cumulative Agree	Cumulative Disagree
5.	Feel comfortable to post writing	56.3%	43.7%
6.	'like' feature encourages to be more confidence in posting text creation	100%	0%
7.	Prefer discussing on FB group instead of classroom	40.6%	59.4%

The students mostly chose learning writing in the classroom instead of Facebook group. It might happen because sometimes whether the teacher and the students could not immediately respond or give the feedback to the post in the Facebook group one another. Whereas in the classroom can they get the respond or feedback immediately without any time lag. Despite the students firmly preferred to learn in the classroom rather than learn in Facebook group. Based on the data number three five and six, there were more than 55% students feel comfortable in using social network Facebook to post ideas or opinions. Even they would be more encouraged when their posts or comments got 'like' from their peers. It can be seen by the percentage of students who claimed agree at the question number 6. So, it can be assumed that students get comfortable and get encouragement to learn writing in social network Facebook group.

Contribution of Genre-Based Approach to the quality of teaching writing

Table 3 Students' attitudes and perceptions developing Genre-based approach in social network Facebook

No.	The item	Cumulative Agree	Cumulative Disagree
8.	Genre-based approach contributes positively in developing writing skill	68.8%	31.2%
9.	Genre-based approach provides a wider opportunity to express ideas or opinions through texts creation	56.3%	43.7%
10.	Learn by developing Genre-based approach in social network instead in the classroom	41.5%	58.5%

The question number 8, 9 and 10 were designed to assess the contribution of Genre-based approach in social network Facebook teaching writing. The finding showed, most of the students agreed that Genre-based approach contributed to the quality of teaching and learning writing. It gave them wider opportunity to express idea or opinion through texts creation. Eventually, that contribution influenced students' writing development. Furthermore, based on findings above, it can be seen that how Genre-based approach contributed to the implementation of social network Facebook as the method in teaching writing. But 58.5% of the students preferred to learn writing by developing Genre-based approach in the class room rather than in social network. The time lag and slow responses in the process in learning by using Facebook perhaps a reason why students chose classroom setting in learning writing. In the classroom got students responses immediately from their teacher and their peers without any time lag.

From the findings of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that developing Genre-based approach in social network was successfully implemented in teaching writing. How social network affected teaching writing were; social network had benefit to support students' in organizing their though into their writing. Students got better construct in pre-writing activity. They got comfortable and encouragement to learn writing in social network. Moreover, by developing Genre-based approach, students were provided a wider opportunity to express ideas or opinions through texts creation developing their writing skill. In addition, there were still some weaknesses during utilizing social network by developing Genre-based approach in teaching writing. The weaknesses identified in this study can be seen as follows:

- 1). Students could be slow responses one another writing post or comments.
- 2). Student could be false in correcting their peers writing.
- 3). Teacher could not immediately give feedback or comment to the students' writing.

CONCLUSION

Regarding the findings of the study, it can be concluded that developing Genre-based approach in social network was successfully implemented to improve students writing. This study aligned for English teachers to implement the use of popular social network as a supplementary method to support teaching writing in the classroom. Proper implementation in designing social network influenced to the student' learning outcomes. Genre-based approach can be an appropriate approach in design the

implementation of social network. Students claimed that utilizing social network by developing Genre-based approach helped them to develop their writing including collaborative learning. It provided experiences to organize thought before writing, construct their idea in pre-writing activity, learn new vocabulary and check errors spelling by spelling-check feature. Furthermore, Genre based approach gave them a wider opportunity to express their idea and opinion through text creation. This activity enabled students to comment and like one another encouraging them to write and send it into the group. In addition, related to the weaknesses identified in this study. It is suggested for further researcher to explore Genre base approach in social network to improve student writing ability for different social network application and different level education in EFL setting

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