THE USE OF WEB-BLOG TO IMPROVE THE GRADE X STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS AT SMAN 3 MALANG

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this study is to improve the students’ motivation in writing recount texts using media web-blog. The study used Class Action Research (CAR) which consisted of four steps: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. From the result of the study, it demonstrated that the use of web-blog as media to write succeeded in improving the students’ motivation in writing recount texts. It could be evidenced from the students’ questionnaire given that matched the criteria of success.

Keywords: writing, web-blog, motivation in writing, recount texts

As one of the English four-skills, writing an important language skill that students need to master. Through writing, students can develop their capability in communicating with people in a written form. It is supported by Rozimela (2004) who states that learning to write is useful not only for the sake of developing students’ writing skill but also improving their English skills as a whole. In Indonesia, writing is considered the important skill taught in class. It can be evidenced in the According to the Standard of Content (2006), in the standard of competence, students are to carry out simple writing tasks in short functional texts like narrative, descriptive and recount text short essays in daily life context. In fact, writing is considered as the most important skills to learn compared to the other English four skills. In doing the writing activities, students need to pass some stages like finding ideas, organizing the ideas, and developing the ideas. Actually, the first need of the students to write is motivation. Motivation is a feeling of interest and enthusiasm in doing something. According to Weiner, 1990 as cited in Elliot et al. (200:332), motivation plays a significant role in several theories of human development and learning. He defines motivation as an internal state that arouses people to action, pushes them in particular directions, and keeps them engaged in certain activities. If the students are motivated and interested in writing, their writing skills will be improved because they have desire to learn. In fact, many students now lack of motivation to write. This problem can be caused by lacking of attractive media to write that makes students feel easily bored to write. To solve the students’ motivation in writing, the use of technology nowadays is important. Teachers may use the development of technology as media to teach writing their students in class. Regarding composing a writing product, internet has provided web-blog that allows people to write and then publish it to the worldwide readers. As Lamb and Johnson (2006) note in their preliminary studies, web-blog contains the activities of writing and posting short articles displayed in a reverse chronological order and the visitors can give comments on the author’s entries. The use of web-blog as media in writing can be the solution for the students in improving their motivation in writing. A “blog”
(Lamb and Johnson, 2006) can be defined as a user-generated website where entries are made in a journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order. There are many activities that can be done by using a web-blog. Students can share their writing composition to others. A web-blog is also functional to use as a students’ diary. Regarding to the students’ lack of motivation and the possibility in using web-blog as media in writing, the researcher is going to develop a strategy of using web-blog to improve the students’ motivation in writing a Recount text. The research will be a class action research (CAR). The study is going to be conducted by taking SMAN 3 Malang as the population and a class of grade X as the sample.

METHOD

The research design of this study is a Classroom Action Research (CAR). This design is applied because a classroom action research is a kind of research which is intended to develop a new strategy to overcome the problems found by teachers in their classroom. As defined by Burns (Burns, 1999:30), action research as the application of fact finding to practical problem solving in a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it. The writer will do the research in the SMAN 3 Malang class X.2, where he did his practice teaching. In this study, the research was carried out collaboratively with the classroom English teacher to improve students’ motivation in writing by using web-blog as the media. The writer will act as the teacher, while the real English teacher will act as an observer who gives the suggestions during the process of the research. The study will be done in two cycles. The Cycle 1 will be done in three meetings, while the Cycle 2 will be done in two meetings. But before doing the two cycles, the researcher will do the preliminary study to know the problems faced by the students in class.

Before implementing the study, the researcher first does the planning of the action. In the planning phase, the researcher prepares the research instruments, designs the lesson plans, prepares the materials and the media, and prepares the criteria of success. The researcher prepares the instruments or collecting the data before conducting the class action research. The instruments are the observation checklist, field notes, questionnaire, students’ writing, and interview guide. Besides, the lesson plans are prepared by the researcher. The researcher constructs the lesson plans referring to the current curriculum which is KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan). It consists of seven components which are standard of competencies, basic competence, indicators, instructional materials, activities, sources, and media used (Depdiknas, 2007). The researcher also prepares the materials that include the definition of recount text, the generic structure, and the other language features like the time connectives and conjunctions. The materials are already posted on the researcher’s web-blog. Finally, the researchers sets the criteria of success which include the students’ participation during the teaching and learning process and the students’ indicators of motivation to write.

After the planning, the implementation of the action is applied in the class. The Cycle 1 is done in the first three meetings. After that, the researcher observes the action. In this phase, the researcher observes and collects the data which include the students’ writing record and their score in writing, the students’ web-blog, the
observation checklists, the field notes, the questionnaire, and also the interview with the teacher. The data from the observation were studied and will be reported descriptively. Besides, the data gained from the questionnaire and the scoring rubrics were presented in the form of tables and description. Then, the last phase is the reflection on the observation. This final cycle consists of the evaluation of the effect from implementing the strategy of using web-blog to improve the students’ motivation in writing a recount text. The result of the reflection in Cycle 1 provides data for further revision and planning for the next cycle.

FINDINGS

During the implementation of the action, the students were asked to make and to design their own web-blog. The process of making and designing the web-blog was conducted in pairs or groups. Most of the pairs and groups finished making and designing the web-blog on the second meeting. On the final meeting of the Cycle 1, all of the pairs and groups finished making their web-blog, although the design of the web-blogs was still poor. They tried to do the writing activities using the web-blog. They could do the drafting, developing into paragraph, and revising on the posting page of the web-blog. Related to the students’ postings, there was no specific problem. The students had understood well the steps on how to post their writing on their own web-blog. Until this final meeting of Cycle I, the students had posted two until three postings in their blog. Actually, the students were expected to achieve more than that. Therefore, the students were still needed to be motivated to write more. One of the ways was by improving the students’ web-blog design and appearance, so that the students could feel more excited to write. Therefore, to improve the design of the students’ web-blog, it was needed to give a further demonstration on how to install the blog templates that were available and free to be downloaded from the internet. This action was done on Cycle II on the first meeting.

Related to the students’ motivation in writing, the questionnaire was used to analyze the students’ motivation in writing by using web-blog. The motivation being analyzed is the intrinsic motivation. As stated by Hammer 1983: 4-6), intrinsic motivation considers factors affecting intrinsic motivation are physical condition, method, the teacher, and success. In intrinsic motivation, there are some indicators that show whether the students get motivated in doing the tasks or not. Therefore, those indicators were included in the questionnaire and then it was used to analyze the students’ motivation. The indicators of motivation used were whether or not the students work with others in a group, feel challenged toward the task, tutor with each other, understand the importance to practice writing, use media to write, and enjoy writing. The result of the questionnaire related to the students’ indicators of motivation is presented as follows.

From the questionnaire number 26, about 92.3% students agree to the statement that web-blog can improve the students’ motivation in writing. The rest of them still disagree to the statement. As a conclusion, the percentage shows some improvement if it is compared between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

The improvement of the students’ motivation from Cycle 1 to Cycle is presented on the diagrams below.
The improvement is about 7-10% from the total number of the students. Overall, it shows that the use of web-blog as the media in writing has given some significant impacts to the students’ motivation in writing.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the research findings in the previous chapter, the researcher found that the use of web-blog can improve the students’ motivation in writing recount texts. It is evidenced in the criteria of success made by the researcher, which was about the indicators of motivation, the students showed some improvement in motivation during Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Besides, the success of implementing web-blog as the media to write for students could be seen from the teaching and learning process and the students’ web-blog.

About the students’ response toward the use of web-blog as the media in writing recount texts were shown on the observation checklists, field notes, questionnaire, and also the interview guide. Before the implementation of web-blog as the media in writing, the students never used an interesting media to write. That was why the researcher acted as a model in introducing and demonstrating on how to use and to design the web-blog. As stated by Brown (2001:187), model technique is
necessary especially when the technique is complicated. When the researcher introduced and demonstrated the use of web-blog in class, the students seemed enthusiastic and interested. Students in pairs and groups did well in making and designing their web-blog since it was not difficult to do it. Students did not have any significant problem in using web-blog. It was supported by Lamb and Johnson (2006), that blog or web-blog is easy to set up and use. Students can access their blog in anytime anyplace through the web. Moreover, web-blog as the media in writing allowed students to post their recount texts in chronological order.

From the questionnaire given to the students, it was known that web-blog was an appropriate media to use to improve the students’ motivation in writing. It was because the web-blog can challenge students to write texts and its use was not complicated for the students. This statement is in line with Carreira (2006) who points out that the challenging materials that suit to the learners’ capability are important for motivating students.

Related to the students’ motivation in writing recount texts using web-blog as the media, it shows from the questionnaire that the students’ motivation in writing improved from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. In Cycle 1, the students’ motivation in writing was still low. It was evidenced by the teaching and learning process happened in class. The students did not work in group well so that it was needed to be organized better by the researcher. Besides, the students needed more time to use the web-blog as the media in writing properly. While in Cycle 2, the students were more motivated to write. It was evidenced from the amount of the students that enjoyed writing using web-blog. The total of 77% of the students felt easier and got motivated in writing when they used web-blog as the media. The result of the study was in line with Lilia Efimova’s statement in the findings of her study about using web-blog to improve the students’ motivation to write. In her study, it is found that students discover that web-blog helps them improving their knowledge and skills (including technology skill, writing skill, and skill to organize).

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be drawn a conclusion that the implementation of web-blog as the media to write was effective to improve the students’ motivation in writing recount texts. The evidence was obtained from the students’ questionnaire to know their motivation in writing and their product of writing posted on their own web-blog. The students’ motivation was improved significantly from the preliminary study, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2. Besides, the students were able to produce and to operate the web-blog well. Moreover, the students’ attitude toward the teaching and learning process during Cycle 1 was better. They paid attention to the researcher’s explanation and they also asked some questions related to the recount text. The students followed the instructions given and they seemed serious in doing the tasks.

The grouping and pairing seemed work better for them. It was evidenced by the students’ focus in doing the tasks and they also got a better score in their writing tasks when they did the tasks in groups or in pairs. By using web-blog as the media in
writing, students could also share their product of writing online. Related to the students’ writing product, it was improved from the preliminary to Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. During the preliminary study, many students were still not motivated to write. As a result, their writing score was low. Many of the students could not achieve the scores required by the SKM.

However, there are several things to concern in order to achieve the criteria of success. First, the teacher should organize the class well during the teaching and learning process. Second, the students needed to be given a clearer explanation about how to make an outline and how to develop the outline. Next, the researcher should give more demonstration on how to design the web-blog. The students needed a clearer explanation on how to edit the postings, how to add some widgets, and how to install free web-blog templates available on the internet. Finally, in the term of doing the writing tasks, the researcher should set the time of doing the task accurately. It was important to avoid lateness in collecting and posting the writing tasks given.

Suggestions

Some suggestions are needed for the English teachers and also for the researcher(s) who want to follow up the findings of the present study. For the English teachers, it is suggested to implement the use of web-blog as the media in writing. The reason is that the use of web-blog as media in writing recount texts can improve their motivation to write. The teacher should guide the students on how to design and to operate the web-blog. For the other researchers, it is also important that the use of web-blog as the media to improve the students’ motivation in writing should be used and expanded to the other text types. The web-blog can also properly be used as the media to write news items texts, report texts, and narrative texts. In addition, it is also suggested for the other researchers to adjust the technique to different levels of education and different settings or places.

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