

Developing Pre-service English Teachers' Critical Thinking by Using Academic Journal Writing 4.0

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Abstract

Learning a foreign language is an integrated process of the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As non-native English speakers, students are expected too much with their English even with the resource-poor EFL settings. Pre-service English teachers in Asia context make teaching becomes a really impossible job. Moreover, the wide spread of technology and pop culture make a new shift of paradigm in language teaching. Today, teachers and learners live in a technology-enhanced learning environment 4.0, and honestly, teachers are really difficult to catch up. Therefore, creativity and innovation in fostering TEFL is really needed. As pre-service teachers, they should intellectually have the abilities to conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and/or evaluate information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action that is why academic journal writing in edmodo would be one of the solutions. This case study is about how to develop critical thinking by using academic journal writing for pre-service English teachers in TEFL class. They not only discuss about current issues in teaching and learning English but also combine technology, creativity and innovation.

Keywords: Pre-service Teacher, Critical Thinking, Academic Journal Writing 4.0

Introduction

Since English is widely used around the world for communication across national boundaries and in a wide range of professions, it makes English becomes more than important. In Asia context that see English as a foreign language, it really makes a big challenge for pre-service teachers. Effective teaching acknowledges that successful language learning depends upon active participation and involvement by learners in the classroom (Richards, 2015). As Non-Native English Speakers (NNES), students are expected too much with their English, especially when they must do their academic writing. Language components such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics are the basic



requirements in doing so. Learning writing in EFL context is really big challenge. The condition of writing class is like a graveyard, students do their writing in silent way. While the teacher monitors their activities and helps some students who ask about vocabularies. According to Urquhart and McIver (2005:23) "Writing is about expressing knowledge and the students have to express their knowledge as thoughtfully and clearly as they can". It indicates writing as a complex process, the students learn to write some types of text and it is not only consisting of one sentences, but more than one sentences. The students need to produce their idea and knowledge in written form by concerning the flow of ideas, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanic component. Brown (2004: 220) points out of five components of writing, they are content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanic. Porter and Hernacki (2002:67) view that the process of writing comprises a great deal of stage there are: (1) Pre- writing: The term 'pre- writing' has come to stand for all preparation which the writer makes before beginning to write or draft. This stage includes, but it is unlimited to perceive a subject, determining a point of view towards that subject defining the objective and audience gathering information and choosing the best form. (2) Drafting: drafting is instrumental in helping the researcher how to put words, sentences and paragraph on paper. The intention is to create a preliminary survey of the object territory of the mind. (3) Sharing: sharing is the most important thing to do out we always ignore it. As writers, students cannot see the essay objectively so they read somebody else to read and give feedback to it. Share what you write with your friend or people around you from that, you may know and understand what you need to make your writing almost perfect. If there is a mistake you can fix it before you writing. (4) Revising: revising means improving what you have already written. When you revise, you examine how tell you first draft make its point and achieves its purpose for its audience. That may require rearranging the ideas, developing ideas further, cut out ideas that do not support your point and changing the wording needs to change or not. (5) Editing: It is dealing with surface errors like grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Those have to be eliminated in writing. After you have revised your paragraph, you can edit your work check in carefully focus on grammar, word choice, verb form, punctuation and spelling. Copy it over or print our again with all your correction. This draft should be net and should represent your best effort. (6) Re-Writing: it is the writing project and includes the revising and editing result. (7) Evaluations: an evaluation is checking to make sure about the writing that writer has research the bet writing. Academic writing is the process of breaking down ideas and using deductive reasoning, formal voice and third person point-of-view. It is about what you think and what evidence has contributed to that thinking. (<http://study.com>) These rules and practices may be organized around a formal order or structure in which to present ideas, in addition to ensuring that ideas are supported by author citations in the literature. Academic writing is different because it deals with the theories and causes of a given topic, as well as exploring alternative explanations for these events. Academic writing follows a particular 'tone' and adheres to traditional conventions of punctuation, grammar, and spelling. One of the examples is journal.



Recently, the rapid growth of technology is really affecting the students' way of thinking. Instead of using their way of thinking, they would use their smart phone to search about anything, even their writing tasks. There are three ways to use technology based on Richard (2015). First, it may be incorporated into the classroom and form part of the lesson. Second, it may enable teachers to move part of the curriculum outside of classroom hours, to an off-site location, blended learning. Third, it may allow students to complete a course entirely off-site, distance learning. Furthermore, Levy (2010) says five levels at which technology can support language teaching: (1) the physical level with tools such as mobile phones, digital cameras, laptops and tablets; (2) the management level, which includes learning management systems (LMSs) that enable the administration, delivery, tracking, reporting, etc. of a language course; (3) the application level, including word processing software, email, chat clients, social-networking sites and blogs; (4) the resource level, which includes access to authentic materials such as online newspapers, magazines, language tutors and dedicated website for learners; and (5) the component technology level, such as spelling checkers, grammar checkers, electronic dictionaries and other support tools. Meanwhile, a pre-service teacher is a teacher education program graduate entering teaching (Storm, 1989). Pre-service English teachers are prepared to be teachers with pedagogical knowledge and basic skill in the subject area. One of the courses to prepare novice teachers to be teachers is TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). Its classroom is an area that prepares pre-service English teachers to develop pedagogical knowledge and the basic skill needed to teach English. He or she should be a facilitator of learning for all students. A facilitator is one who can either provide appropriate learning experiences and resources or find someone else to provide them. Because students have their variety of learning styles, prior experiences, cultural backgrounds, capabilities, etc. the novice teacher must recognize the students' need, assess their learning ability and use authentic resources.

The aim of 21st century teaching is the development of knowledge, higher-order skills (such as the 6Cs of creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, character education and citizenship), as well as the establishment of lifelong learning habits and an ability to learn how-to-learn with technology as the central roles in the new picture of teacher effectiveness. Miller first introduced the concept of 6 C's of education are: (1) Critical Thinking is the process of filtering, analyzing and questioning information/content found in various media, and then synthesizing it in a form that has a value to an individual. It allows students to make sense of the presented content and apply it to their daily lives. (2) Collaboration is a skill of utilizing various personalities, talents, and knowledge in a way to create a maximum outcome. The outcome must provide a benefit to the entire community or a group. Due to synergy, the common outcome has a greater value than a sum of values of each individual outcome. (3) Communication is a skill of presenting information in a clear, concise and meaningful way. It also designates careful listening and articulating thoughts. Communication has various purposes: informing, instructing, motivating, and persuading. (4) Creativity: in the 21st century, an individual must be able to create something new or create



something in a new way, utilizing the knowledge he has already acquired. It does not just signify art, but also various solutions to a problem in real life situations. (5) Citizenship/ Culture: this is a part where various authors point out different skills. Miller states the culture as one of the pieces of 6 C's, while Fullan (2001) features citizenship. When we look closer, they are not so different, and actually, they go hand in hand with one another. It is important for an individual to be in touch with everything that surrounds him – both culture and community. (6) Character Education/ Connectivity: understanding the importance of human connectivity in the world filled with technology is a necessary skill to teach children. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) state that critical thinking skills refer to an individual's ability to do some or all of the following: identify central issues and assumptions in an argument, recognize important relationships, make correct inferences from data, deduce conclusions from information or data provided, interpret whether conclusions are warranted based on given data, evaluate evidence or authority, make self-corrections, and solve problems.

Method

The design for this study is a case study research. The subject of research is the fourth semester students in English Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Universitas Tidar. This study is held in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) class for 1 semester (6 months). The data is taken from observation and also documentation.

Findings and discussion

This study is discussed about how to develop pre-service English teachers' critical thinking by using academic journal writing 4.0. Based on the observation, the pre-service English teachers' follow the process of writing to produce an academic journal by the following steps based on Porter and Hernacki (2002:67):

(1) Pre- writing: In pre-writing activity they try to get the topic by brainstorming idea with their friends and the lecturer by using edmodo. This activity was done in two meetings, because some students had not get the idea at the first meeting. The students who had got the idea can continue find specific journals that relate with their topics. They read the journals and tried to sum up the content. Besides that, they also share their points a view with friends and also lecturer.



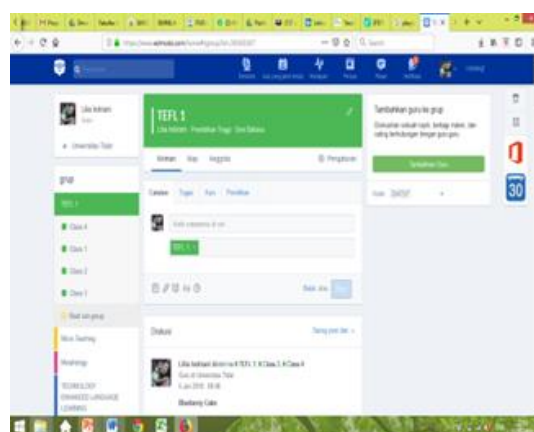


Figure 1. Edmodo as LMS

(2) Drafting: This stage was done in three meetings. They made outline and shared it in edomodo. Then they tried to develop their ideas became cohesive composition and following journal template.

(3) Sharing: At this stage they shared their composition with their friends and lecturer by using gmail. Their friends and lecturer gave feedback on content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanic.

(4) Revising: At this stage, the students revised their journals based on the input from their peer and lecturer. The revision might require rearranging the ideas, developing ideas further, cut out ideas that did not support the point and changing the wording.

(5) Editing: The students corrected the surface errors like grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Some of them also used applications to help them corrected the errors.

(6) Re-Writing: The students rewrote their composition and submitted by using gmail.

(7) Evaluations: The lecturer helped the students to check the final composition by using plagiarism checker. If the result is not satisfactory yet, the students had to do the whole process again and again.



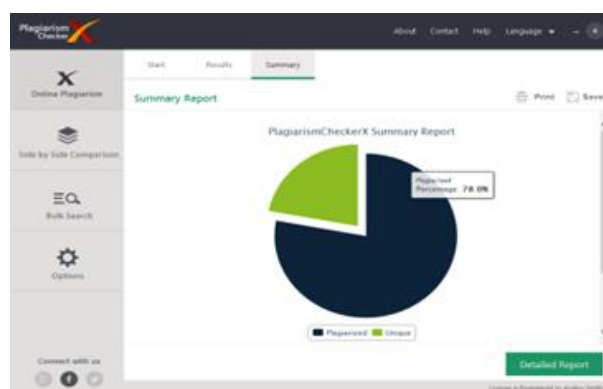


Figure 2. Plagiarism Checker

Conclusion

Developing critical thinking is not that easy. It needs a lot of efforts and time both the students and the lecturer. The students and the lecturer must be committed to produce good academic journal. Pre-service English teacher would be ready to teach because they have their critical thinking as skill to face the millennial generation or 21st century learners.

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