Improving Students’ Writing Skill through Project-Based Learning, Process Writing, and Instagram

Buyun Khulel
English Education, Universitas Islam Darul ‘Ulam Lamongan, Indonesia
buyunkhulel@unisda.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The goal of this joint classroom action research was to help students enhance their capacity to write hortatory exposition texts. It involved 33 high school students as research participants. The data collection device in this study was a writing test. According to the findings of the study, combining project-based learning with process writing and Instagram could help students improve their writing skills. Students can improve their average writing score if it is higher than the passing grade. All of the students were able to improve their writing score by at least ten points over their previous score on the first test. Furthermore, 81.8% of the students were able to get the minimum passing mark.

A. INTRODUCTION

Most Indonesian students find writing in English difficult because English is a foreign language in Indonesia and is rarely used by students on a daily basis. Despite having studied English since primary school, many Indonesian students struggle to write well in it. Because the majority of students find writing to be uninteresting, classroom writing has become an avoided learning activity. The students of XI IBB at MAN 1 Lamongan expressed their dissatisfaction with this tedious practice. According to the results of the preliminary study, which included an initial writing exam, classroom observation, and a questionnaire, the majority of students in XI IBB had writing challenges.

The majority of students in XI IBB did not acquire a good writing achievement, according to the results of the initial writing test, which was held on Thursday, October 5, 2017. The average writing score of the students was just 64.2, which is considered low in the context of MAN 1 Lamongan. When the students were asked to compose an analytical exposition text about global warming in the initial writing test, only four (12%) of the 33 students who took the test received a score higher than the minimum passing grade (75). As a result, it’s no surprise that the majority of the students (88%) received a grade below the passing mark. The results also revealed that six students (18%) received a very low writing score. This poor writing score revealed that writing in English is a challenge for XI IBB students.
Meanwhile, the results of the survey through questionnaire revealed that 24 out of 33 students in XI IBB (73%) found that writing is challenging. Furthermore, the majority of the students (70%) disliked writing. The students were rarely engaged in meaningful writing activities, as the majority of them (94%) stated that individual homework was the most common writing activity they had encountered thus far. Because the students did not receive support from the teacher in completing their writing homework, they relied heavily on Google Translate. It’s safe to assume that the children had never participated in an engaging writing assignment before.

The information gleaned from the initial test and questionnaire is bolstered by the classroom observation results. The students in XI IBB were unwilling and unmotivated to participate in an English writing assignment, according to the findings of the classroom observation. When the teacher requested students to write a paper in English, their reactions and facial expressions indicated that they were uncomfortable with the idea of doing so. He also noticed that the students took some time during the writing process to come up with ideas for what to write. Many of the students struggled to develop their concepts. In the paragraph of their writing, they just generated a few short sentences. They also committed several grammatical, spelling, and punctuation mistakes. In addition, many of them possessed a limited vocabulary. It’s no surprise that some of them rely heavily on Google Translate to complete their writing assignments.

The data gathered from the initial writing test, questionnaire, and classroom observation provided concrete evidence that students have difficulty in writing. There were various factors that contributed to the students’ writing challenges. For starters, writing was a challenge for the students due to a lack of grammar and vocabulary. This is due to their limited English exposure. The students are not accustomed to reading and conversing in English on a daily basis. Second, because writing takes time, students were rarely engaged in writing activities. The students’ previous writing experience had been in the form of solo homework, with no aid from the teachers. The final point is about motivation. The students were not motivated to participate in a writing activity because the writing strategy used was not engaging and the writing activity did not include any interesting media.

In order to address the writing problem that students in XI IBB at MAN 1 Lamongan were having, we recently conducted a classroom action research that included project-based learning, process writing, and Instagram. We suggested that implementing this method would be advantageous to students and would help them handle their writing challenges. The following are the reasons why we favoured project-based learning paired with process writing and Instagram.

The project-based learning is a teaching model that put emphasise on assigning tasks, particularly in the form of projects that can lead students to experience an inquiry process (Hamidah, 2020). Students benefit from project-based learning when it is implemented. According to (Aghayani & Hajmohammadi, 2019), the findings from the experimental group revealed that it could be argued that project-based learning approach does aid learners to enhance and promote their writing ability in a collaborative environment. Several stages must be completed in order to perform project-based learning. Project-based learning, according to (Hamidah, 2020), consists of eight steps: "start with choosing project topic," "pre communicative activities," "asking essential questions," "designing project plan," "creating project timeline," "finishing the project," "assessing the project results," and "evaluating the project." (Abbasian, 2017), (Harisma et al., 2019), (Hidayati & Widiati, 2019), (Argawati & Suryani, 2020) are only a
few of the researchers who have looked into the usefulness of project-based learning in improving students’ writing skills. Their findings show that introducing project-based learning can help students improve their writing skills. At the university level, (Abbasian, 2017) and (Argawati & Suryani, 2020) used project-based learning.

Meanwhile, the current research looked at how project-based learning could be employed in a high school setting. Furthermore, unlike (Susanti et al., 2020), who concentrated on writing descriptive text, the current research focused on writing analytical exposition literature regarding social, educational, environmental, and health issues in Indonesia. The current study’s final product was also distinct from those of previous studies. All of the previous research’s final products were printed or paper-based. Meanwhile, the current study’s final product came in the form of an Instagram caption.

The researcher integrated project-based learning with process writing in this study. Process writing, according to (Martínez et al., 2020), is an approach in which students writing as profoundly influenced by the environment in which it is developed and also proposes a strong connection between vocabulary retrieval and writing. Additionally, it focuses on the process as a means to create the expected product. Process writing allows students to understand their writing process, gives them ample time to write and edit, and allows them to communicate what’s on their minds as they write. The emphasis on expressing themselves at the drafting stage also helps them concentrate on the development of their ideas (Al-sawalha, 2014). There are various processes to process writing. Process writing, according to (Martínez et al., 2020), entails planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Previous research (e.g., (Dilidüzgün, 2013), (Abas & Abd Aziz, 2018), (Pratama, 2019)) has looked into the use of process writing. The application of process writing increased the students’ writing abilities, according to their findings. These past studies looked at process writing in a similar fashion, concentrating on tertiary education students, the researcher’s final product, and a general writing topic. Unlike the other research evaluated, the current study investigated the use of process writing in higher education by engaging real-life writing challenges and allowing students to choose the writing result. Furthermore, all of these earlier research were conducted outside of the United States. Meanwhile, because the current study was conducted in Indonesia, the results are likely to differ from those of earlier studies, enriching them. The current study also looked at the publishing stage in a unique way, because the students published their final writing product on Instagram, which none of the previous studies had done.

We believe that the students profited from the combination of project-based learning and process writing. Students were able to learn writing with a more meaningful and contextual topic in a more organized way by combining project-based learning and process writing. With the assistance of the teacher, the students were able to plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing. As they interacted with their peers and were watched by the researchers, the students felt more safe in the writing process as a result of the combination of project-based learning and process writing. It also gave students a sense of control over their learning by allowing them to construct their own learning and choose their own schedule.

In addition to project-based learning and process writing, Instagram was used in this research. We used Instagram as a platform for students to share their writing project results. Instagram was also picked since it is popular among today’s youth, which includes the students of XI IBB at MAN 1 Lamongan. They all (100%) have an Instagram account and use it frequently. Several studies (e.g., (Erarslan, 2019), (Manaroinsong, 2018), (Handayani, 2019), (Pujiati et al, 2019), (Wulandari, 2019)) looked at how Instagram could be used in the classroom. Their
findings showed that using Instagram in a writing activity helped students improve their writing skills. Unlike previous studies, this one looked at Instagram in a unique way because it was combined with project-based learning and process writing. None of this was provided by earlier research. In light of the background, this study looked into how project-based learning paired with process writing and Instagram can help students improve their capacity to write analytical exposition text.

B. METHODS

The researchers employed CAR design, as advocated by (Fraenkel, 2012), to conduct project-based learning mixed with process writing. Planning, acting, observing, and reflecting were the four processes of one cycle. Thirty three students from XI IBB at MAN 1 Lamongan in East Java, Indonesia, participated in the study. We prepared the necessary instruments (such as a lesson plan and a writing test) during the planning stage to complete the entire seven-meeting treatment. Aside from that, we also prepared the success criteria, as shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Criteria of Success</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>All of the students could improve their score at least 10 points better than the score which they gained in the initial test</td>
<td>Writing test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students' average score after the implementation of the strategy is equal to or more than 75</td>
<td>Writing test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>At least 50% of the students could pass the minimum passing grade (75)</td>
<td>Writing test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lead researcher took on the role of instructor and was assisted by a colleague in applying the strategy. The technique was implemented based on the following teaching scenario. Table 2 shows the teaching scenario for each meeting, as shown in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Project-Based Learning Syntax</th>
<th>Process Writing</th>
<th>Time Allocation</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Start with an Essential Question</td>
<td></td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>Thu, October 7, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Design a Plan for the Project</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>Thu, October 7, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Create a Schedule</td>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>Thu, October 7, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Project Monitoring</td>
<td>Revising</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>Tue, October 12, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Project Monitoring</td>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>Tue, October 14, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Project Monitoring</td>
<td>Publishing</td>
<td>30’</td>
<td>Thu, October 21, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assess the Outcome</td>
<td></td>
<td>40’</td>
<td>Tue, October 26, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate the Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>Tue, October 26, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Test</td>
<td></td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>Thu, October 28, 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data was collected on the observing stage. The data was gathered utilizing the writing test that was given at the previous meeting to assess the students' writing improvement following the implementation of the approach. In the reflecting stage, the acquired data was analysed. Reflecting is a type of data analysis in which one of the researchers (Rater 1) and a colleague (Rater 2) assess the students' writing test sheets. Rater 1 and Rater 2 double-checked the students' writing test sheets, evaluated the students' writing using five writing components (content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics), and agreed on a single final score. The results of the data analysis were used to determine whether the success criteria had been met. If all of the success criteria (Table 1) are met, the study is considered a success.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Students’ Individual Writing Test Result

The treatment could improve the students' writing achievement, according to the results of the individual writing exam given at the seventh meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2021. All of the students achieved the required minimum score improvement, which was 10 points higher than their initial score. Four students scored 95, three students scored 90, twelve students scored 85, four students scored 80, four students scored 75, three students scored 70, and three students scored 65 out of the thirty three students that took the writing test. All of these scores were equal to or greater than 10 points higher than the students' first test results. To be more exact, the students' score improvements ranged from ten points to twenty-five points. Nine students (27.3%) improved by ten points, thirteen students (39.4%) improved by fifteen points, five students (15.1%) improved by twenty points, and six students (18.2%) improved by twenty points. This confirmed that the pupils improved by 10 points or more from their baseline score, indicating that the first criterion of success had been met.

The study's second success criterion was also met, as the students received an average score that was higher than the minimum passing score (75). The student's average score raised by 17.5 points from 64.2 to 81.7 after the technique was implemented. Furthermore, the findings of the data analysis demonstrate that the students improved on all of the writing components tested (content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics).

2. The Students Who Passed Minimum Passing Score

The number of students who passed the minimum passing score was also used as a criterion of success in the study, in addition to the students' individual and average writing scores. As previously stated, the strategy's execution is deemed successful when at least half of the students achieve the minimum passing score. The data analysis revealed that twenty seven students (82%) of the thirty three students who took the writing test after the method was implemented were able to pass or same to the minimum passing mark (75). Meanwhile, six students (18%) received a grade that was below the passing grade. This was significant development, as only eight students (24%) were able to pass the initial test with a passing score of 75.

According to the conclusions of the study, all of the students could enhance their score by at least 10 points over what they got on the first test. When it came to the average writing score, the students were able to raise it to 81.7, which means that their average score was better or greater than the minimum passing level (75). Furthermore, the majority of the students (82%) were able to pass the minimum passing score. These findings suggested that all of the success criteria had been met. As a result, combining project-based learning with process writing and
Instagram to improve students’ capacity to write analytical exposition prose was successful. Project-based learning, process writing, and Instagram helped the students’ development.

In terms of project-based learning, its implementation allowed students to develop their critical thinking and it could be a meaningful project for them (Argawati & Suryani, 2020). In this study, we gave the students themes that were relevant to their daily lives. We offered the children with a variety of themes pertaining to social, health, educational, and environmental issues in Indonesia since they lived there. When students were given themes that were relevant to them, they became more engaged. This finding is consistent with a recent study by (Shin, 2018), (Sari, 2018), (Safaruddin et al., 2020), and (Darmawan, 2020), who discovered that when students are provided with topics that are relevant to them, they may maintain their interest in the learning activity.

Students were required to work in groups during the introduction of project-based learning. Working on the assignment in a group allowed the students to feel more secure and at ease in completing it, as well as collaborate with their group mates in sharing their ideas for the writing project, providing additional input, and receiving peer correction. Getting students to work in groups is useful because it enhances student participation and learning outcomes ((Hertiki & Juliati, 2019), (Munawar & Chaudhary, 2019), (Shammout, 2020), (Yıldız & Akdağ, 2021), for example, claim that involving students in group work makes them feel more safe in their learning and hence more capable of participating. They also recommended group work since it helps children acquire responsibility and autonomy. Furthermore, working in groups allows for more students to contribute ideas to a conversation (Amelia et al., 2018) and (Pham, 2021).

Meanwhile, one of the project-based learning stages, the ‘Create a Schedule’ stage, allowed students to select their own project deadlines or due dates for each writing phase. The schedule made it easier for the students to organize their time and track the progress of their projects. Students could complete the writing project in a more structured manner if they had a project timetable. The schedule was then placed into the form of a ‘project check-up,’ which the students filled out at the end of each meeting in this study. This project check-up allows the researcher to keep track of who was late for the meeting, who completed the writing work on time, and who was absent from the meeting. The project check-up described in this study was found to be useful in motivating students to complete each writing phase on time.

Furthermore, students were aided by researchers in the form of oral and written feedback or correction during the implementation of project-based learning, particularly during the ‘Project Monitoring’ stage. The feedback or correction we supplied the students with aided them in producing a solid writing end product in terms of content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. Feedback was found to be beneficial to the students. Feedback, according to (Wahyuni, 2017), encourages students to improve their writing skills. According to (Fithriani, 2019), the sort of feedback and how it is delivered can have varying degrees of effectiveness. In this study, the researcher provided both oral and written feedback in order to enhance the feedback effect. The importance of feedback in the learning process cannot be overstated. Meanwhile, (Fithriani, 2019), (Ramadhani, 2019), (Dewi Nopita, Satria Agust, 2021), (Tan & Pham, 2021), and (Abarca, 2021) discovered that feedback was beneficial and provided a platform for students to do self-revision.

In this study, project-based learning was found to be effective in increasing students’ writing skills. The findings of this study are comparable to those of (Abbasian, 2017), (Harisma et al., 2019), (Hidayati & Widiati, 2019), (Argawati & Suryani, 2020) and others who have focused on the application of project-based learning, (Hidayati & Widiati, 2019) discovered that
the implementation project based learning was an effective teaching learning model in teaching writing and it could significantly success in facilitating the students to improve their writing ability in writing descriptive text especially describing innovative design. Meanwhile, the findings of (Argawati & Suryani, 2020) show that project based learning was able to improve not only the students’ knowledge but also their creativity during writing activity on creating writing product. In addition, (Susanti et al., 2020) discovered that by implementing project based learning, students are not only can make a good descriptive text, but also can express their creativity to make a good project. All of these past research provide proof that this study's findings are correct.

In this study, process writing helped to support the implementation of project-based learning in order to improve students' ability to write hortatory exposition. Each of the processes in the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) benefited the students and assisted them in improving their writing skills. The students were able to use their background knowledge regarding the topics they chose throughout the planning stage. Having sufficient background knowledge enabled students to produce ideas more easily and resulted in superior writing material. It was demonstrated by the students’ progress in terms of material. The students improved their average content score from 2.8 in the first test to 3.3 in the writing test. Furthermore, the planning process aided the students in achieving the highest possible content score (4).

The students were encouraged not to worry about making mistakes in the drafting process because they were able to make a rough draft comfortably. The students used the revising stage to revise their rough draft after the drafting step was completed. The pupils were able to better organize their ideas as a result of these two writing phases. The statistics showed that students could improve their average score in the organizing part of the test from 2.7 in the original test to 3.3 in the writing test.

The editing stage provided an excellent opportunity for students to double-check their drafts for grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The students were given adequate time in this phase to examine whether they had committed any errors in grammar, diction, capitalization, spelling, or punctuation. This step was beneficial in boosting students' writing skills in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics since it caused them to become more aware of those three components of writing. The effectiveness of the editing process was demonstrated by the students’ improvements in grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The pupils' average grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics scores were better or higher than their first test results. In comparison to the first test, there were also more students who received the highest possible score (4).

Publishing was the final step in the process of writing. The students shared their final literary product on Instagram, a social media platform. According to (Ahmed, 2020), social media, such as Instagram, has an interactive design that makes learning more fun when used in the classroom. The students in XI IBB were inspired to publish the final output on Instagram since they were already familiar with and interested in the platform. According to the researcher, incorporating Instagram into this study as a medium for publicizing the students' final literary product would make learning more engaging. According to (Yandi, 2021), one way teachers can increase students' motivation is to provide engaging classroom activities. Several previous studies (e.g., (Rakhmanina & Yuneva, 2018), (Gunantar & Transinata, 2019), (Mahzum et al., 2020), (Rahmawati et al., 2021) investigated Instagram and its effect on students' motivation,
and the results indicated that using Instagram in the classroom increased students' interest and motivation in the learning activity.

Peer correction, which was done at the end of the planning, drafting, revising, and editing, influenced the students' improvements in addition to the steps of process writing used in this study. Grammar and mechanics were the key areas of peer correction. It made the students' mistakes in terms of syntax and mechanics evident, allowing them to spot them, rectify them, and memorize the correct form. Although the students were hesitant and disliked being corrected by their peers during peer correction, peer correction is necessary for learning. Peer correction was found to be more successful than instructor correction in improving students' writing by (Kusumiati, 2017) and (Trisnadewi, 2021). Peer correction also helps students improve not only their writing skills, but also their motivation and confidence during the writing process (Ramírez Balderas & Guillén Cuamatzi, 2018) and (Najogi et al., 2019).

The findings of this study revealed that students' writing might be improved by adopting process writing. The findings of this study are consistent with those of other earlier studies on process writing (e.g., (Maysuroh et al., 2017), (Pratama, 2019), (Martínez et al., 2020)) all of which found that implementing process writing improved students' writing skills. Students' writing skills could be improved by employing process writing. According to (Dokchandra, 2018) and (Sukanaya, 2020) discovered that introducing process writing reduced students' anxiety and enhanced their confidence during the writing process, in addition to boosting their writing skills.

All of the preceding elaborations confirmed that combining project-based learning with process writing and Instagram might improve XI IBB students' capacity to write hortatory exposition prose. The data shows that after implementing the technique, all of the students were able to improve their writing average score as well as their overall score by at least ten points higher than their beginning score. Furthermore, more than half of the pupils achieved the minimum passing score. As a result, in this study, all of the success criteria were met in a single cycle.

**D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that combining project-based learning with process writing and Instagram increased students' writing abilities, particularly in creating hortatory exposition text. According to the findings, all of the students (100%) improved or increased their writing scores by at least 10 points over what they had acquired in the initial test. This improvement in individual writing scores leads to an improvement in the students' overall writing score. When compared to their initial average writing score, the students improved their average writing score after implementing the technique. The students' average writing score improved by 17.5 points from 64.2 in the original test to 81.7 in the writing test, which was more than the minimal passing level (75).

Furthermore, there was a large increase in the number of student who achieved the minimum passing grade (75). Only six students (18.2%) had a writing score of 75 or below. Twenty seven students (81.8 percent) were able to pass the minimum passing score when the technique was implemented (75). These data demonstrated that all three success criteria had been met. As a result, the researcher came to the conclusion that combining project-based learning with process writing and Instagram was a success.

There are various recommendations for using project-based learning in conjunction with process writing and Instagram to teach hortatory exposition writing. Both other English
teachers and future academics will benefit from the suggestions. It is advised that English teachers, particularly English teachers at MAN 1 Lamongan, consider implementing project-based learning mixed with process writing and Instagram as one of the solutions to the challenges that students have when creating hortatory exposition text. Meanwhile, English teachers in general who have pupils who are having similar writing difficulties might use this method to assist their students in developing their writing skills. Furthermore, English teachers can use this research as a resource when planning and developing their teaching-learning activities. Other English teachers may make changes to this method, such as using different text genres, combining it with other social media platforms, and so on.

Future scholars in the field are encouraged to consider this study as a source of inspiration while doing their own research. Future researchers can use this technique to conduct classroom action research at a different level of education, with a different text genre, or with a different language skill.

REFERENCES


Kusumiati. (2017). Using Peer Correction To Improve Students ‘Writing Skill At the Eighth Year of Smpn 2 Palopo English Study Program Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty the State Islamic Institute ( Iain ) of Palopo Using Peer Correction To Improve Students ‘Writing Sk.


49. https://doi.org/10.32663/edu-ling.v2i1.642
Wulandari, U. N. (2019). The Utilization of Instagram Account @gurukumrd as Online Media for Students in Learning English at Fifth Semester IAIN Ponorogo.