Using Facebook Comments in Teaching Writing Skill

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ABSTRAK

In learning a language, writing is considered as the most difficult skill to be mastered by the students. They should pay attention on the writing components to produce a good writing. This becomes a challenge for the teachers. The teachers should create a new atmosphere of teaching writing. In this case, the existence of media is needed. Facebook was found to be the most popular social media site used by students. There a lot of features provided by Facebook. One of the features is Facebook comments. In this research, the researcher will use Facebook comments in Facebook group as the media to teach writing skill.

Keywords : Media, Facebook, Facebook comments, Facebook group

Introduction

Writing as one of the language skills has an important role in mastering the language. Writing is also a proof to measure the students' ability. It is the tool to know the students feedback after learning process. Nonetheless, writing is considered as the most difficult language skill to be mastered by the students (Yahwang, 2010). Students usually face many difficulties in exploring the ideas or even finding the appropriate words to what they want to write about. Consequently, teachers are forced to overcome this problem. They have to find a way to motivate their students to write. Teachers should also know that the most important factor in writing is the involvement of the students. The students need to be personally involved to make the learning process experience fun and interesting. In order to achieve that, the existences of media are needed.

The role of media is important in teaching writing. Brinton (2005) stated that media help teacher to motivate students by bringing a slice of real life in the classroom and by presenting language in its more complete communicative context. The researcher sees that some internet technologies, like social media can be used as the media to teach English, especially writing skill. The use of social media can bring a new atmosphere for the students to learn. They do not only play with paper and pen, but they can also learn by using social media that they are already familiar to use. Smith and Hoyer (2010) stated that Facebook was found to be the most popular social media site used by students. Facebook as one of the social media can be used as useful and enjoyable media in teaching writing because it has features to support the teaching of writing, such as status, groups, notes, chats, page, and many more.

The researcher conducts this study by using one of the features of Facebook that is Facebook group. This decision is made because Facebook is currently the most popular online social media site among the students. Facebook group is a feature that is available on the social media site of Facebook. The users can join and participate in the existing one. Facebook group provides a featurewhere the members can share and discuss about something. It is called Facebook comments. Facebook commentsareusedto interact among the members of Facebook group. It is commonly experienced by the students.

Based on the situation above, it can be said that there is a great chance to use Facebook group, especially Facebook comments as media in teaching and learning process. Considering that Facebook comments can connect among people. This means that Facebook comments can also connect among the teacher and the students. Writing is considered as the appropriate skill to be learned by using Facebook group, especially Facebook comments. The students can give comments about certain topic which is discussed among them, so they can read the other opinions that are possible to enrich their opinions about certain topic discussed. Those activities can be very helpful for the students in order to improve their writing.

Facebook Group, Facebook Comments

Facebook group is a feature that is available on the social media site, Facebook. This feature allows for an unlimited number of members to participate, communicate and interact via post for a specific purpose (Aragon, 2007). A Facebook group was created specifically for the purpose of providing students with a space where they were in control of the content and the direction 'of their learning.

Facebook group provides a feature where the members can share and discuss about something. It is called Facebook comments. Facebook comments are used to interact among the members of Facebook group. This situation underlies the creativity of the teacher to create something new in the teaching and learning process. Teacher can bring the ability of Facebook comments as a media in teaching, specifically in teaching writing.

The Teaching of Writing

Writing is perhaps a difficult skill for some students to learn. Nunan (2003:125) stated that writing is considered a clearly complex activity process, and competent writer is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired. It can be understood since the students often have difficulty in getting and developing their ideas in writing. Harmer (2007:57) stated that teaching means to give someone knowledge or to instruct or to train someone.It creates ideas of something, which cannot be produced by spoken way. It also allows people to give information to others abroad about their intentions and permit them to express their feelings and emotions.

In teaching writing based on competence based curriculum, teacher has to act as a facilitator that also has assignment to organize an interesting and enjoyable class. Brown (2004) stated that the teacher as a facilitator offers guidance in helping students to engage in the thinking process of composing, respects student opinion, and is not an authoritative director and arbiter. In the process of writing, the teacher has the main part to facilitate the students in productive thinking through developing appropriate strategies to write. It

means that the role of the teacher in the classroom is very important. So, the teacher is not a mere mediator between the students and students' writing, but rather becomes an authoritative source of information who guides the productive thinking of the students.

Another teacher' role besides as a facilitator, motivator, and guide in teaching writing is to give comments to the students' writing. Reid (1993:217) stated that the teacher plays several different roles among them are coach, judge, facilitator, evaluator, interested reader and copy editor. Brown (2007:84) stated that the teacher needs to make positive comments to offer optimal feedback to student's writing. Nunan (1998:91) suggested that if teacher writes comments on students' papers, he should make sure that they understand the vocabulary or symbols that he uses. The same linguist also suggests that the teacher should take time to discuss written comments in class, be cautious about the tone of the comments, and soften his message in writing comments. Reid (1993:218) stated that comments or feedback can be defined as any input from reader to writer that provides information for revision.

The teacher' comment has to be either formative or summative. However teacher' comment must help students to improve their writing by communicating feedback to allow students to act, commit, and change in their writing. Finally, comment is important in teaching writing. In this study, the comments are not only from the teacher, but also from the other students by using the media that is Facebook comments. It is mainly because the role of comments is important to improve the students' writing.

The Process of Writing

As the teachers, they must be able to encourage the students to improve their ability in writing. Teachers are also a facilitator in developing and discovering the students' writing process. By adopting the process approach, the teacher creates a certain atmosphere which helps the students to make a final product of writing. In addition, the

process approach allows the students to focus on content and message more than on the form and accuracy (Seow, 2002:234).

There are many conceptions stated by researchers dealing with stages in the process writing approach. O'Malley & Pierce (1996:254) said that the writing process comprises of three stages, i.e. pre-writing, drafting and post-writing. Some others explained that it consists of four stages, they are pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing (Gebhaard, 2000:37). In this study, the concept of process writing approach proposed by Gebhaard is used. It is suitable for the students to apply this process of writing in learning writing by using Facebook comments.

1. Pre-writing

This stage can be said as generative activities that lead a first draft. This stage can stimulate students' idea for getting started. Seow (2002:317) argued that pre-writing activities can lead students in generating indefinite ideas and collecting information for writing. In this stage, the students' motivation will increase if they are provided with a variety of means for gathering information.

2. Drafting

In drafting stage, some ideas are gathered. After gathering the ideas, the students scrawl down the ideas that they have got in the previous stage. In this stage, the students do not need to secure about the grammar of their writing. They are just motivated in gathering the ideas into the draft. They are also not thinking about the neatness of their writing. They just need to scrawl down their ideas. It will be a rough draft of their writing. Smalley (2001:8) added that in drafting stage, the writer may not exceedingly concern with the grammatical form, but the writer should focus more in finding the ideas to be put on the paper.

3. Revising

This stage can be said a rethinking stage. The students will rethink about the rough draft that has been written in the first draft. The students are asked to check the rough draft, whether there are some ideas to be omitted or not. Then the students are also able to add the ideas if it is necessary. In this stage, the students can check the content, vocabulary,grammar, and so on.

4. Editing

Editing is considered to be the final step of revising, with special attention to implement all those three stages. The writers have to think about all of the parts of their writing in order to achieve a good writing.

The Use of Facebook Comments in Teaching Writing

The use of Facebook comments in teaching writing should include the process of writing; they are pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing (Gebhaard, 2000:37). These are the explanation how the process of writing is conducted in this study.

1. Pre-writing

This stage can stimulate the students to get idea for getting started. In this activity, the teacher asks the students to write recount text. The students have to collect the information in order to make them easy to write. Then they write the ideas that related to the topic which is given by the teacher. The topic should be interesting for the students. For instance the teacher gives a topic about holiday experience, embarrassing moment, and many more.

2. Drafting

The students are scrawling down the ideas that they have got in the previous stage. The students may not concern in the grammatical form, but they should focus more in finding the ideas to write (Smalley, 2001). In this stage, they just write rough draft that can be developed in the next stage.

3. Revising

The students are asked to check the rough draft. They have to fix their writing before they submit on the Facebook group. After they submit on the Facebook group, the students have the opportunity to give comments to their friends' writing. In this stage, the students are supposed to experiencewith Facebook commentsThe Facebook comments

should include the ESL Composition Profile. They are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.The students also can give score to their friends' writing based on the ESL Composition Profile. Then the score is submitted to the teacher. This aimed to make the students give more attention to their friends' writing. Here, each student can give comments to their friends before continuing to the last stage.

4. Editing.

In this stage, the students can edit their writing depend on their friends suggestions and corrections placed in the column of Facebook comments about the content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics in their writing. After doing all of those stages, the students can submit their final writing on the Facebook group.

According to the explanation above, the use of Facebook comments in teaching writing have some activities to do for certain time. They are:

1. The teacher explains the nature of recount text, generic structure, and language features to the students. The teacher also asks some questions to the students related to the recount material in order to make the students easy to understand the teacher's material.

2. The teacher gives a topic to write a recount text. The topic is about embarrassing moment.

3. The teacher asks the students to write recount text. Before that, the teacher tries to stimulate the students' ideas about the topic in order to make the students easy to expand their ideas related to the topic.

4. The students are asked to fix their writing before they submit on the Facebook group.

5. Each studentisgiven the opportunity to give comments to their friends' writing. The comments are supposed to include the ESL composition profile. They cover content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic. The students also can give score to their friends' writing based on the ESL Composition Profile. Then the score is submitted to the teacher. Before that, the teacher explains about the ESL composition profile in detail. They are :

ESL Composition Profile

Holly Jacobs, Stephen Zingraf, Deanna Warmuth, V. Faye Harfiel, and John Hughey ESL composition profile based on recount text.

Component	Score	Criteria
Content	30-27	**Very good**: knowledgeable, focus on the specific participants, and relevant to related topic.
	26-22	**Good**: limited development of story, and mostly relevant to topic but lacks detail of specific participants.
	21-17	**Fair**: limited knowledge of specific participants and inadequate development topic.
	16-13	**Poor**: does not show knowledge of specific participants and topic of the story.
Organization	20-18	**Very good**: fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/supported, well-organized in clear stage of recount (orientation, events, and reorientation).
	17-14	**Good**: inaccurately organized among orientation, events, and reorientation but main ideas stand out, limited supported sentences.
	13-10	**Fair**: non-fluent organization among orientation, events, and reorientation, ideas confused or disconnected.
	9-7	**Poor**: does not communicate with the other sentences, no organization among orientation, events, and reorientation.
Vocabulary	20-18	**Very good**: effective word choice and usage, use of

	17-14	temporal conjunction and temporal circumstances, material (or action) processes, and relational (or mental) processes.
	13-10	**Good**: occasional errors of word/idiom choice and usage, use of temporal conjunctions and temporal circumstances, material (or action) processes, and relation (or mental) processes but meaning not obscured.
	9-7	**Fair**: frequent errors of word choice and usage, use of temporal conjunctions and temporal circumstances, material (or action) processes, and relation (or mental) processes meaning confused or obscured.
		Poor: essentially translation, no use of temporal conjunctions and temporal circumstances, material (or action) processes, and relation (or mental) processes.
Language Use	25-22	**Very good**: few errors use of past tense, word order/function, pronouns, and prepositions.
	21-18	**Good**: several errors use of past tense, word order/function, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured.
	17-11	**Fair**: frequent errors use of past tense, word order/function, pronouns, prepositions, meaning confused or obscured.
	10-5	**Poor:** virtually no mastery of using past tense, dominated by errors, does not communicate, or not enough to evaluate.
Mechanics	5	**Very good**: few errors of spelling, punctuation,

		capitalization, paragraphing.
	4	**Good**: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured.
	3	**Fair**: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, poor handwriting, meaning confused or obscured.
	2	**Poor**: dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible, or not enough to evaluate.

6. After the students experience Facebook comments in their friends' writing, then each student can edit their narrative text based on their friend comments.

7. Finally, the students can submit their recount text result as the final writingon the Facebook group. Then the teacher can also evaluate the students' writing result using ESL Composition Profile.

The Advantages of Facebook Commentsin Teaching Writing

Yancey (2009) stated that the use of Facebook groupcan help the students easy to write. The researcher then also believes that Facebook group, and specifically Facebook comments, has the potential to improve students' writing skills by being the link between academic "writing" and outside "communication", providing learners with an authentic and personalized context in which to aid their writing (Boyd, 2008). Facebook group provides the opportunities for students to practice and improve their writing skills through Facebook comments. Ramadhani (2013) shows that the students areinterested to response their friends' comments posted on Facebook group. They take every opportunity to practice their writing skills. Students also discover new sentence or writing structures by

reading the comments from their friends. These show that Facebook comments have a high potential of enhancing and improving students' writing skills.

The researcher sees that it is possible to use Facebook to teach writing skill. In writing a text, some students wrote an unclear main idea and some of them do not elaborate the organization of text well. By using Facebook group, students can ease these problems because they can experience with Facebook comments from the other students about their writing.

Conclusion

This article is an effort to explore the possibility of using Facebook comments in teaching writing skill. The explanation of how the use of Facebook comments to teach writing has been presented as foundation before heading to the real activity.

The use of Facebook comments to teach writing is divided into several steps. They are pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing. In pre-writing, the students get idea for getting started. Then they write ideas that are related to the topic of a text which is given by the teacher. Then in drafting, the students are scrawling down the ideas that they have got in the previous stage. In this stage, they just write rough draft that can be developed in the next stage. The third stage is revising. The students are asked to check the rough draft. They have to fix their writing before they submit on the Facebook group. After they submit on the Facebook group, the students have opportunity to give comments to their friends' writing. This means that the students experience with Facebook comments. Here, each student can give comments to their friends before continuing to the last stage. The fourth stage is editing. In this stage, the students can edit their writing depends on their friends comments in their writing narrative text. After doing all of those stages, the students can submit their final writing on the Facebook group.

The previous study shows that the students areinterested to response their friends' comments posted on Facebook group. They take every opportunity to practice their writing skills. Students also discover new sentence or writing structures by reading the comments

from their friends. These show that Facebook comments have a high potential of enhancing and improving students' writing skills.

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