

Developing EFL Writing Materials Using Graphic Organizers At English

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Abstract

The study attempted to develop a syllabus and instructional materials that appropriate for the teaching of Essay Writing course Using Graphic Organizers. The Research and Development (R&D) procedure was employed in this study. The model used for designing the syllabus and developing instructional materials followed Yalden's model known as Language Program Development with modification. The subjects of the study were the 48 students, the coordinator of English Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya, and Essay Writing lecturer. The final product of this study is the instructional materials for nine meetings covering introduction to the essay (unit 1 meetings 1-4), illustration essay (unit 2 meeting 5), classification essay (unit 3 meeting 6), process essay (unit 4 meeting 7), comparison contrast essay (unit 5 meeting 8), and cause and effect (unit 6 meeting 9). Each unit consisted of learning objective, topic, sub-topic, description, relevancy, and keywords. The instructional material has been empirically tested in try-out stage. Based on the statistical calculation, it was shown that using proposed instructional materials gave facilitative effect on the students' essay writing performance. Here, the t value of 8.639 was greater than t theoretic at the 5% (1.648) and 1% (2.423) of significant level.

Keywords: *Developing, EFL Essay Writing, Graphic Organizer*

1. Introduction

Essay writing course is one of the obligatory courses which is provided by English Department of IAIN Palangka Raya for fourth semester students. Based on the result of preliminary observation, it showed that the syllabus was still far from perfect. The syllabus of learning essay-writing material still used the handbook entitled "Refining composition Skill Rhetoric and Grammar written by Regina L. Smalley and Mary K. Ruetten (2001). The teacher just followed the sequence of materials in that book. It was also found that the students got difficulties in understanding the book, which is written by the natives. They needed additional materials to comprehend the text and make easier to study. Therefore, there is inevitable need to develop and design a syllabus and instructional materials that appropriate for the teaching of Essay Writing course for fourth semester students at English Study

Program at IAIN Palangka Raya. Thus, the present study is aimed at developing a syllabus and instructional materials that appropriate for the teaching of Essay Writing course Using ICT Based Graphic Organizers.

The Research and Development (R&D) procedure is employed in this study to develop materials of essay writing course using graphic organizers. The model used for designing the syllabus and developing instructional materials follows Yalden's model known as Language Program Development (1987, p. 88) with modification. It covers nine stages, such as: (1) need survey, (2) description of the purpose, (3) selection of syllabus type, (4) production of proto-syllabus, (5) production of pedagogical syllabus and instructional materials for eleven meetings, (6) expert validation, (7) field testing, (8) revision, and (9) final product.

One of teaching components, which is very important in learning process, is syllabus. Syllabus is a specification of the content of a course of instruction and lists what will be taught and tested (Richard, 2001,

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p.2). The syllabus usually consists of basic competence, indicators, topics, strategy, assessment, and references. It also includes standard competence. At the top of the syllabus, there is course identity consisting of the name of the course, semester, credits, code, prerequisite, and course description. The syllabus is a description and plan for a course and, if well written, may be a tool that improves student learning, facilitates faculty teaching, improves communications between faculty members about their courses, and assists with monitoring program quality. The primary purpose of a syllabus is to communicate to one's students what the course is about, why the course is taught, where it is going, and what will be required of the students for them to complete the course with a passing grade (Johnson, 2012. P. 24).

The syllabus of the 2015 English curriculum consists of basic competence, indicators, topics, strategy, assessment, and references. It also includes competence standard. At the top of the syllabus, there is course identity consisting of the name of the course, semester, credits, code, prerequisite, and course description. Course description of Paragraph Writing, Essay Writing and Argumentative Writing can be seen in the 2015 English syllabus for the students of English Education Study Program of IAIN Palangka Raya. Essay Writing emphasizes on essay writing, introduction to the essay writing, the structure of an essay, and the development of expository essay such as: example, classification, illustration, comparison and contrast, process, and cause and effect essays. Essay Writing course is aimed at developing ability to write various essays.

In addition, there have been a number of problems faced by the teacher in the teaching of essay writing class. One of them deals with learning material. Based on the preliminary study conducted by the researcher, it was found that the syllabus of learning essay-writing material still used the handbook entitled *"Refining composition Skill Rhetoric and Grammar"* (Fifth edition) written by Regina L. Smalley and Mary K. Ruetten. It was based on the 2015 curriculum of English Department at IAIN Palangka Raya. Based on the preliminary observation, it was also found that the students got difficulties in understanding and organizing the book, since the book was written by the native speakers. They also got difficulties in understanding the material of each chapter of the book. The other problem is that the writing materials do not meet the students' needs. Teachers have difficulties to provide writing materials, which are suitable with their students' needs and interest. They also have to find the materials and tasks, which are authentic and possible because authentic writing materials and tasks are

needed by students to improve their writing skill. As stated by Hyland (2003, p. 57) students cannot acquire everything they need to improve their writing skill at once, nor can they learn effectively from a random collection of exercises and assignments. Moreover, writing ability is a learnt skill. It is different from spoken language, which can be acquired intuitively by most people. Written form is in most cases deliberately taught and learned (Ur, 2006, p.161). Hence the teachers hold the important roles on how to choose the appropriate handbook, how to make the writing class run well, what to teach, and how to assist learners to write. Hyland (2003, p.59) emphasizes that teachers have to develop a systematic plan of what need to be learned, selected and sequenced the contents and the tasks that will lead to desired learning outcome. It can be said that the class cannot go on successfully without precise guidelines. A good material and syllabus will serve as a clear guidance for the teacher to make the teaching plan, which specifies the work to be accomplished by the students based on explicit objectives. Therefore, a precise material and syllabus is needed to help both the teacher and the students. In this case, in teaching writing, the writing lecturers are demanded to provide the interesting materials for the students with a good writing foundation in order to make them have adequate proficiency in writing. To achieve this aim, the teachers need to provide learning materials that are suitable with students' need and interest. Tomlinson (2014, p.32) states that materials refer to anything which is used by the teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials consist of the knowledge, skills, and attitude that must be learned by the students.

Some researches on developing Writing syllabus and instructional materials in the area of English teaching and learning for higher education have been conducted. This part presents four studies, which focus on developing syllabus and instructional materials for writing skill. First, Polly (2009) developed writing materials for the students of the English Language Study Program of STKIP Santa Paulus, Ruteng. The material for the teaching of Writing III is in line with the fact that the existing syllabus is not available. She modified the steps of research and development design proposed by Borg and Gall. The developed materials, which consist of seven units contained the explanation of basic concept, a model text, exercises, and writing practice by using process approach. Second, Monalisa (2010) found that the developed syllabus which is designed to have skills in writing through process writing is categorized as *skills and process* syllabus because this type of syllabus emphasizes on organizing writing course

around skills and process such as generating ideas, organizing ideas, and revising. The skills to master in Writing I are the abilities to create sentences, and composing narrative and descriptive paragraphs. The topics to cover are the types of sentences and the organization of paragraphs, and narrative and descriptive paragraphs. The grammar to follow is the differences between phrases, clauses, and sentences, and the mechanics involved are on the punctuation and capitalization. The developed syllabus then was validated and tried-out to see its effectiveness. Later, the syllabus was used as the basis to develop instructional materials for five meetings. The materials were also validated by the expert and tried-out. Based on the suggestions from the expert and the result of tried-out, the materials were revised. Therefore, the final product of this study are a Writing I syllabus and instructional materials for five meetings. The syllabus also provides five models of lesson plan. Both syllabus and instructional materials have been empirically tested in try-out stage. Therefore, it will be easy for the users to make the other lesson plans and instructional materials by referring to those models.

Third, Supriyadi (2013) found the result of development research was teaching material of writing scientific paper with constructivism approach. Teaching material development product has specific characteristic that different with conventional teaching material. Uniqueness was reflected in using of constructivism approach in learning with four activities, namely (a) orientation, (b) exploration of concept, (c) interpretation/concept inquiry, and (d) concept application. Result of effectiveness test of product showed that learning process with teaching material of development product improves learning outcomes in writing scientific paper. The increase can be seen from difference significant between pre-test score and post test score on learning scientific paper with constructivism approach. Fourth, the study was done by Purwaningtyas (2007). She developed Writing I syllabus and instructional materials at English Literature Program of Brawijaya University due to unavailability of syllabus and instructional materials for facilitating the teaching learning process of Writing I. The developed syllabus was used as the basis to develop instructional materials. The syllabus and the instructional materials are a set of products from the study, which are ready to be applied in the classroom.

Those studies above developed syllabus and the instructional materials in various level. For example, Purwaningtyas' thesis developed Writing I syllabus and instructional materials at English Literature Program of Brawijaya University. Then, Supriyadi developed teaching material of writing scientific paper

with constructivism approach. Next, Monalisa developed EFL writing syllabus, which is designed to have skills in writing through process writing. Last, Polly (2009) developed EFL writing III materials for the students of the English Language Study Program of STKIP Santa Paulus, Ruteng.

In addition, some researches on graphic organizer in the area of English teaching and learning for higher education have been conducted. This part presents seven studies which focus on ICT based graphic organizer in writing class. First, Sharrock (2008, p.3) found that the students using the graphic organizer showed an improvement in their creative writing. Second, Tayib (2015, p.11) found that the graphic organizer model had significantly improved the students' writing ability and had positively impacted their attitudes towards this skill. These results suggest that graphic organizer can be an effective support in teaching writing of learners of English as a foreign language. Third, Delrose (2011) investigated the use of graphic organizer for writing. She concluded that graphic organizer could be an effective tool used in the writing process to generate sentences and narratives containing more complex structure of syntax and discourse. Fourth, Marjori (2011) conducted a research on the effectiveness of using technology and graphic organizers to teach the pre-writing process. He found that technology and graphic organizers give facilitative effect to teach the pre-writing process. The pre-writing process is the most important stage of writing; stage students with learning disabilities struggle with the most, and routinely spend the least amount of time on. Fifth, Irawati et.al. (2014) found that the strengths of using sandwich graphic organizer were: (a) students were active in process of teaching and learning, (b) sandwich graphic organizer helped students in making outlining, (c) by using sandwich graphic organizer can support students to read many articles. In contrast, the weaknesses of using Sandwich Graphic Organizer were; (a) need much time, (b) some students difficult to fill sandwich pattern. Sixth, Herdi, et.al., (2014) found that graphic organizer strategy had brought a lot of improvement toward the students' writing skill at second year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training Lancang Kuning University. The improvement was in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. In addition, there are positive responses from the students when graphic organizer strategy is implemented. Graphic organizer strategy can improve the students' interest, self-confidence, self-motivation, and optimism which are categorized into personal competence. Students' interest to the writing increases when they are guided to write the topic by using

graphic organizer strategy through the writing process. The students feel happy and easy to understand to write the topic by implementing the graphic organizer strategy. In addition, the students have self – confidence to increase their writing skill. Self-confidence is a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities. Seventh, Saffura (2016) found that ICT Based GO gave very significant effect on the students' writing score. She also concluded that most students had high positive response on the implementation of using graphic organizer (95.24%). The students also felt excited with graphic organizer (85.71%). In addition, about 57.14% students felt fun when they wrote using graphic organizer. It could be stated that the area of GO helped the students in generating ideas (47.62%), visualizing ideas (28.57%), building sentences and maintaining grammar.

Those studies above investigated the ICT based Graphic Organizers in improving creative writing (Sharrlock's); the students' writing ability and their attitudes towards this skill (Tayib's); the use of graphic organizer for writing (Delrose's); the effectiveness of using technology and graphic organizers to teach the pre-writing process (Marjori's); the strengths of using sandwich graphic organizer (Irawati's); graphic organizer strategy and the improvement toward the students' writing skill (Herdi's); and ICT based Graphic Organizers toward the students' writing ability (Saffura's).

Different with the studies above, the latest study focuses on developing the syllabus and materials of essay writing course using graphic organizers. The study uses nine steps, as proposed by Yalden. The study was conducted at Palangka Raya State Islamic Institute of the fourth semester students of the students of the English Department of 2018/2019 academic years. The number of the subjects were 48 students.

2. Research Method

The Research and Development (R & D) design employed, since the study was intended to develop EFL Essay Writing material for fourth semester students of English Education Study Program of IAIN Palangka Raya. The model of development carried out in the study was similar to Yalden's model known as Language Program Development (2005, p.88). It was chosen for at least three important reasons. First, the Yalden's model was specially set out for language department, so it could be used to develop course material. Second, it offered gradual procedures which are simple to follow. Third, the model utilized need survey to gain information of students' need and interest. The study adopted the stages of Yalden's model with some modification. First, need survey was

carried out to describe the students' needs, interest, shortages as well as the coordinator of English Education Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya and Essay Writing teacher's expectation to Essay Writing course. Second, description of the purpose was the stage of where the data gathered in the need survey were specified and analyzed. In this stage, need analysis data were the basis to formulate goals and objectives. Third, the selection of material for essay writing course was based on the result of teacher's successful effort to match all indicators of effective writing material and the objective of writing course. The decision was influenced by what the teacher considered as important to the course and to good writing. Fourth, a proto-material included the activities of listing and describing the content specification of the syllabus, such as preparation of instructional materials, sources, and evaluation devices.

The next, the stage involved the writing of material contents covering the objectives of the course, the strategies implemented to instruct materials, the evaluation method to be applied to know whether or not the objective have been achieved, and, the time framework of the course. The result was the tentative material that was ready for verification to ensure its quality. Sixth, the developed material was given to the expert for feedback and comments to know whether the material could be categorized as a good material in terms of its compatibility with any relevant materials, methodologies, and evaluation with the course objectives. Seventh, the try out stage was conducted for the Class 4B and Class 4D of the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya who take Essay-Writing course in the even semester. The numbers of the subjects of both classes were 48 students. Eighth, the revision of the product was based on the feedback and comments suggested by the collaborative teacher in the field-testing stage. Thus, it was able to achieve its optimal effort in teaching Essay Writing to the real subject of the study. The last, the final product of the study was in the form of material to teach Essay Writing for fourth semester students of English Education Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya. It mainly consisted of course outline, objectives, topics and subtopics selection, methodology, material developed, and evaluation system. To support the material, the instructional materials for eleven meetings were developed.

The subject of the study consisted of the subjects involved during the need survey process and the subjects in the stage of production of pedagogical material. The students, the coordinator of English Education Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya, and Essay Writing teacher were the subjects engaged in

the process of need survey. The data gathered from the students who were taking Essay Writing course were their wants, needs, interests, and expectations related with Essay Writing course. The number of the subjects was 48 students of class 4B and class 4D.

The data of need survey gained from the study were collected through three models of instruments such as questionnaire, written interview, and field note. The questionnaire was distributed to gain the data about needs, interests, shortages, and expectations of both the candidate students who were taking Essay Writing course. The questionnaire for the study was divided into ten parts: (1) Part one covered the objective of students in taking Essay Writing. (2) Part two dealt with students' attitude and interest in writing skill. (3) Part three devoted respondents' choices on the contents/coverage of the topics of Essay Writing. (4) Part four revealed the topics of students' prefer. (5) Part five described students' preferences in teaching and learning activities. (6) Part six offered types of explanation which was the most helpful to be understood. (7) Part seven was time allocation. (8) Part eight was assessment system that wished by respondents. (9) Part nine dealt with problems encountered in essay writing course. (10) Last part invited general comments or suggestions that respondents may have concerning any aspects of Essay Writing instruction.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to give their responses by ticking (✓) a box representing their choice. Five different responses were offered to them; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Uncertain (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). It was used to describe the respondents' judgment about the statement. In order to understand the collected data, they were going to be analyzed on the basis of their characteristics and purposes. The subjects' responses on the questionnaire were calculated in the form of percentages. Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A) belonged to positive responses, while Uncertain (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) were considered negative responses.

3. Result and Discussion

From the need assessment, the results is concerning the objectives in taking Essay Writing class, both groups of respondents chose to be able to write different types of essays, and to be able to write a good essay covering the parts of the essay such as introduction, body, and conclusion. Therefore, majority of them chose to write various types of essay: illustration, classification, process, comparison and contrast, and cause and effect essays as the contents to be learned in Essay Writing course. The other point in

the questionnaire was the students' attitude and interest in writing skill. The model of writing from any sources was preferred mostly by the respondents (94.1%). The other students' attitude and interest were as follows: writing ability was important in this global era (88.3%); writing skill was important for them to get a job after graduated from English Education Study Program at IAIN Palangka Raya (100%); writing articles for publication (e.g. published on wall magazines, newspapers, etc.) (82.3%); and writing skill as important as speaking, reading, and listening skills (88.2%). Besides, the content of topics that must be taught in Essay Writing course was the type of essay development such as illustration, classification, process, comparison and contrast, and cause and effect essays about 70.6 %. The other contents of the topics of Essay Writing were various types of essay such as: narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative about 64.7%, and the structure of an essay, the elements of essay: unity and coherence about 52.9 %. The next point in the questionnaire was the topics to be included in Essay Writing course. Most respondents chose education for the topics of students' prefer. The other respondents chose news, sports, entertainment, and social. Dealing with the kinds of teaching and learning activities in the classroom, majority of the respondents thought that writing project was appropriately in teaching writing. The other activities were process of writing (brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing), keeping diary journal, and focusing on grammar).

Furthermore, the respondents maintained that the brief explanation and short tips were the most helpful way in comprehending a writing theory. The other point in the questionnaire was that the sources to be included as instructional materials for Essay Writing course was variety of handouts. Related to this, story or fiction is the most interesting model text to stimulate writing. Both groups of respondents showed that the suitable writing exercises were the elements/organizations of the materials for Essay Writing course. Others were from the type of exercise for Writing. Mostly respondents chose practice writing as the type of exercise for essay writing class.

The other point in the questionnaire was the time allocation. Majority of respondents stated that 150 minutes allocated time per week for Essay Writing course was too long. Others stated 100 minutes allocated time per week was appropriate. The kinds of assessment that appropriate in assessing students' writing ability were product assessment and conducting middle and final test. The last, the problems encounter in Essay Writing course were problems dealing with grammar, vocabulary mechanics, and punctuation.

The instructional materials were tried-out on May 26th, and 3rd June, 2018 in class B at 09.00-11.40 which consisted of 18 students. They were fourth semester students who were taking Essay Writing course. The instructional materials were used in the classroom as a handout for the students, as a guide for the theories, explanation, examples, graphic organizer, and also assessment for the students. The students in class B who participated in try-out stage for fourth meetings were given a questionnaire to assess their opinions on the instructional materials. The questionnaires were modified from Purwaningtyas' questionnaires (2007). They were asked to give a checklist on the provided column for Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree that represented their choices and attitude.

In addition, based on the statistical result of try out for the instructional materials, it was shown that before the instructional materials were implemented, the mean of the students' writing score was 5.98. Then, after the instructional materials were implemented, the mean of the students' writing score was 6.96. Based on the statistical calculation, it was found that the t value was 8.639. It was also found that the df (Degree of freedom) of the distribution observed was $48-1=47$. Based on the Table of t value, if df was 47, the 5% of significant level of t value was at 1.648 and the 1% of significant level of t value was at 2.423. It could be seen that the empiric t value at 8.639 was greater than the t value theoretic. Therefore, t table (5%=1.648) < t value (8.639) > t table (1%=2.423). It meant that the t value empiric at 8.639 was greater than t theoretic at the 5% and 1% of significant level. Based on the results, it could be concluded that at the 5% and 1% of significant level, there was a very significant difference on students' writing score between before the implementation of instructional materials (Mean=5.98) and after the implementation of instructional materials (Mean=6.96).

This meant that H_a stating that there was a significant difference on students' writing score between before the implementation of instructional materials and after the implementation of instructional materials was accepted. On the contrary, H_o stating that there was no significant difference on students' writing score between before the implementation of instructional materials and after the implementation of instructional materials was rejected. It meant that instructional materials gave facilitative effect on the students' essay writing performance. To sum up, the means differed significantly at 1% and 5% significant level.

The final product of this study is the instructional materials for nine meetings covering introduction to

the essay (unit 1 meetings 1-4), the illustration essay (unit 2 meeting 5), the classification essay (unit 3 meeting 6), the process essay (unit 4 meeting 7), the comparison contrast essay (unit 5 meeting 8), and the cause and effect (unit 6 meeting 9). Each unit consisted of learning objective, topic, sub-topic, description, relevancy, and keywords. The instructional materials have been empirically tested in try-out stage. Therefore, it will be easy for the users to make the other instructional materials by referring to those models. The developed syllabus which is designed to have skills in essay writing through process writing is categorized as skills and process syllabus since this type of syllabus emphasizes on organizing writing course around skills and process such as generating ideas, organizing ideas, and revising. The skills to master in Essay Writing are the abilities to write an expository essay. The developed syllabus then was validated and tried-out to see its effectiveness. Later, the syllabus was used as the basis to develop instructional materials for nine meetings. The materials were also validated by the expert and tried-out.

To see the effectiveness of the product, the study is also aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using graphic organizers. The study belongs to pre-experimental design. Based on the statistical calculation, it could be seen that at the 5% and 1% of significant level, there was a very significant difference on students' writing score between before the implementation of instructional materials (Mean=5.98) and after the implementation of instructional materials (Mean=6.96). Based on the statistical calculation, it was found that the t value was 8.639 p (<.000). The final version of the product consists of Essay Writing instructional materials for eleven meetings. The materials serve for appropriate topics, clear models, stimulating learning, relevant activities, clear example, graphic organizers, and providing strategies.

The results of this study confirmed with Saffura (2016) who found that ICT Based GO gave very significant effect on the students' writing score. She also concluded that most students had high positive response on the implementation of using graphic organizer. The students also felt excited with graphic organizer. She also found that the area of GO helped the students in generating ideas (47.62%), visualizing ideas (28.57%), building sentences and maintaining grammar. The result of this study is also congruent with Herdi, et.al., (2014). They found that graphic organizer strategy had brought a lot of improvement toward the students' writing skill. The improvement was in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. In addition, there are positive

responses from the students when graphic organizer strategy is implemented. Graphic organizer strategy can improve the students' interest, self-confidence, self-motivation, and optimism which are categorized into personal competence. Students' interest to the writing increases when they are guided to write the topic by using graphic organizer strategy through the writing process. The students feel happy and easy to understand to write the topic by implementing the graphic organizer strategy. In addition, the students have self – confidence to increase their writing skill. Self-confidence is a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities. Also, graphic organizer have roots in Ausubel's meaningful reception learning (Ausubel, 1963, 1968). According to Ausubel (1963), reception learning can be meaningful when: (a) the learner relates new information to individual prior knowledge. Clearly, prior knowledge plays a central role in Ausubel's meaningful learning. Finally, the results of the study are also in tune with Ellis (2004) who noted that information is more easily learned and comprehended with visual organizers.

4. Conclusion

The final version of the product consists of Essay Writing as the instructional materials for nine meetings. The syllabus mainly consists of objectives, materials/topics, learning materials, assessment, and sources. The materials serve for appropriate topics, clear models, stimulating learning, relevant activities, clear example, graphic organizers, and providing strategies. The strengths of the syllabus are that it is completed with six units that the users may use them directly in Essay Writing class. Those units can be models of handouts for the users as additional materials. The instructional materials for nine meetings can directly be applied in Writing class since the activities have arranged orderly to achieve their objectives. The material for each meeting is also completed with some exercises that can be accomplished outside class to enhance the students' skills in essay writing. The limitation of the instructional materials covered the materials only on the topic of essay development on expository essay. The instructional materials did not cover all argumentative essays. Therefore, it is recommended that curriculum designers and other researchers conduct the similar research to elaborate all materials to cover a complete argumentative essay materials.

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