

PREWRITING ACTIVITIES IN TEACHING EFL WRITING

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Abstract

In this paper, the researchers would like to propose a teaching EFL writing course: News Story, which the researchers have used in an EFL classroom context. This effort is different from others in some occasions. Firstly, in the stages of developing ideas of a news story: a biography news, the researchers encourage students to seek for related information for their composition through pre writing activities such as, the activity of research that is by interviewing: preparing some questions and asking those questions to the (intended person) source. Secondly, at the phase of drafting, the researchers ask students to work cooperatively, to construct the main ideas and supporting ideas this activity ends with the results which are sentences then paragraphs. Furthermore, before the researchers provide a writing task: writing a biography news, students are given transitional words to make their composition coherently. Lastly, they upload their composition in their blog. In short, in the proposed teaching EFL writing: a biography news story, by interviewing, students can understand how to organize the writing material according to the necessities of the writing task; writing biography News. To sum up, prewriting activities; through interviewing can assist EFL students to generate the ideas which can inspire and aid them realize both what they want to write and how to write it on their writing task: A Biography News.

Keywords: Teaching EFL Writing, Prewriting activities, Interviewing

INTRODUCTION

As the students were novice writers, writing well is truly a big task even for native students moreover nonnative students. Generally, a big problem for the students, as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. They currently have very tiny interest in writing, yet it is so essential to fulfil the education necessities. This may be due to their disappointment to express themselves well in writing may conduct losing of inspiration (Muslim, 2014; Abderraouf, A., 2016). Subsequently, they needed writing strategy to start to write their news writing.

The important and great influences which impact on language is the process of writing. There are many variations on process approaches, and it is recognized some stages of writing, involving pre-writing, drafting, giving, and receiving feedback, and revising. Writing teachers need a variety of strategies to help students their initial anxiety, begin their planning out their ideas, and start writing (Weigle, 2014). This planning, or prewriting, provides the writer more opportunity to consider and reconsider not only the meaning of the message written but also the language used to convey that message. Writers get targets by beginning with a plan. These plans lead the writer from where they presently are in the writing process, to where the writer needs to be when the piece is completed. The plans, in order, aid student writers in developing a definite message which is able to be communicated within their writing (Servati, 2012).

The phases of writing process are prewriting, drafting, writing (first draft), response, revising, editing, post writing, and evaluating. Then, Weigle (2014) defined prewriting as structured activities to provide motivation, content, fluency, and language practice such as structured language practice, readings, films, discussions, brainstorming, webbing, outlining (p. 227). Any kind of approach is taken in writing proses, the teacher writing must consider what kind of activities which might be eloquent to students. And this is a key principle in arranging for writing (Whittaker, 2005). Furthermore, prewriting activities suggest students with something to write. It can produce ideas, encourage thought and help students to find out both what they want to write and how to write it on paper. Those activities can be done in pairs, groups or individuals work. Various examples of prewriting activities: brainstorming, debating, interviewing, use of pictures, outlining, lecturing or oral reading (Dwivedi & Chakravarthy, 2015).

Writing tasks connected to English as Second Language (ESL) or EFL may boost a process of cognitive transfer. They can serve as the replications that augment the progress of academic discourse and enable cognitive exercises to rearrange the obtained new experience for meaning building, topic invention (Liu, 2012). Thus, the researchers proposed an EFL writing instruction on students writing a biography/feature news task as a model to show the teaching procedure by interviewing as the prewriting process.

METHOD

This study is narrative inquiry research which is to proposed autobiography experience for teaching EFL Writing using prewriting strategy: interviewing before the students (novice writers) created their news story writing: a biography/feature news. The setting of this study is in private University in Indonesia, Banten, Tangerang city. Prewriting activities used which proposed Student Center Learning (SCL) such as technique of hunting news before EFL students start to write their news writing. These hunting news is prewriting activities based on content-related activities. The activities presented here give further experiences for the students as news gatherers. Each activity can be used to help students create portions of the

newspaper. The writing teacher may design the activities which meet your students' needs by considering the students level.

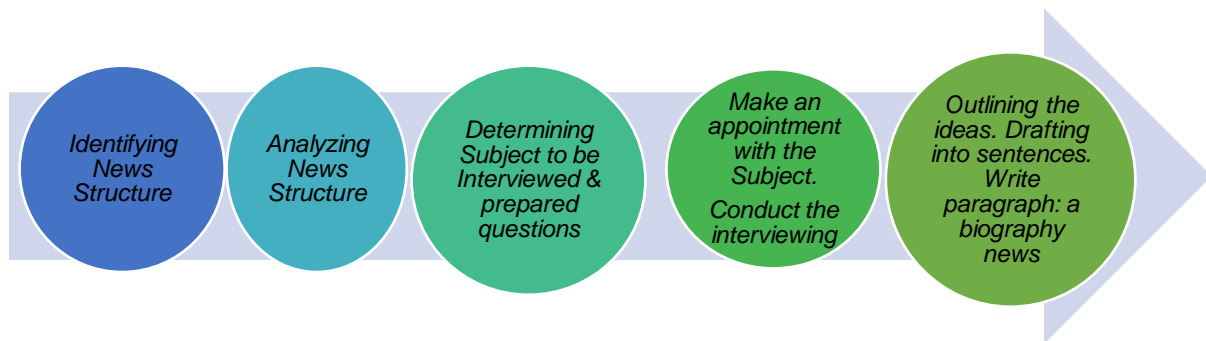


Figure 1. The Method of Study on Prewriting Activities in Teaching EFL Writing: a Biography/ Feature News

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This instruction combines the theory of writing. Practices were dominant in their learning activity in the lectures as the writer employed Student-Centered Learning (SCL) Approach in her teaching which students are responsible for certain activities as planning learning, interacting with teachers and other students, researching, and assessing their learning (Canon, 2000).

Utilizing these prewriting activities, the students get sources of ideas as their news gathering, which starts from several activities such as Interviewing. After they got content, ideas, of what news that they wanted to write, then they wrote their first draft by developing the ideas into main sentence and its supporting sentences, then they wrote them as paragraphs: a biography/feature news.

Designing Teaching EFL Writing: News Story Using Prewriting Activities by Interviewing

The writing teacher taught basic news writing techniques, how the format of news writing structure: those are headline, byline, lead, quote, and conclusion of the writing, by using the news articles (The Jakarta Post, 2018) as models. Then, they were asked to identify the lead, headline, byline, quote, and the types of news writing such as news story: a biography/feature news with a writing caption. And finally, they could produce their own news writing used those format of news writing initiated by prewriting activities based on content-related activities.

1. Sample of Identifying News Structure Students' work



Figure 2. A Sample of Newspaper from The Jakarta Post to Analyzing the Structure of the News Writing

A. Lead

Indonesian Soft Tennis team relies on the experienced athlete to win gold medal, silver, and bronze in next 18th upcoming at home Asian Games.

B. Headline:

Old guard powers RI tennis to gold

C. Byline:

Ramadani Saputra

Sport Journalist (2016 – at present)

Jabodetabek Indonesia

D. Quote

"Tennis requires players to have power which does not really suit (most of) RI athlete. On the other hands, Soft tennis is perfect for them." (Lestari, 2018)

2. The Instruction of Writing News Story: A Feature News/ A Biography News Objective

Students will get familiar with the interviewee, test their interview skills and write a personality feature.

Specific Objective/Rationale

To overwhelmed the clumsiness of a person whose students want to get to know well. They will learn that he/she is the possible subject of a feature story. By interviewing and writing about one of their inspiring person students will get experience of the journalistic trip they are about to get on, and as a bonus, they will get to know their intended person.

Activities and Procedures

Activity 1

- Writing Teacher will pick randomly the name of a student to be interviewed. Then, they are asked to meet the subject later. Before that, students will observe the interview and take notes about the questions asked during the interview. The teacher will ask the students to personality feature on the subject to be conference the next day.
- Students draw names to determine their interview subject.
- Students are given a “false fact” that they will tell about themselves during the interview
- Students will conduct their interviews
- Allow 5-10 minutes for each interview
- Students will try to determine the “false fact” by verifying the facts of the interview. (They can do this by checking with interviewee family or his/her relatives)
- Hand out examples of personality features * see appendix 1
- Discuss “what is a feature?”
- Students will begin writing their feature

Activity 2

- The teacher will read his/her student feature story
- Students present their features
- Determine if students found “false facts”
- Discuss the good points about the features read

Continuing Assignment

Students will interview a staff member (lecturer, administrator, counselor, etc.) and write a brief personality feature.

(Adapted from Akerley, Patrick (2018). Getting to Know You. SchoolJournalism.org)

Students' Work:

STAGES OF INTERVIEW WITH BAYU (COFFEEHOOD'S BARISTA)

1. Pre-interview

- The interviewer chose Bayu who is a Barista at the coffee shop called Coffeehood, because according to the interviewer, Barista is a unique job because need special skills.
- The interviewer arranged bayu profession related questions, namely, Barista.
- The interviewer came to the Coffeehood and made an appointment with the interviewee on Wednesday, March 21st, 2018 at 3.00 p.m.

2. During the interview

- The interviewer introduced herself and asks about interviewee's profile.
- The interviewer asked the questions systematically to interviewee.
- The interviewer recorded during the process of interview with hand phone.
- The interviewer ended the interview with good impression.


3. Post-interview

- The interviewer made descriptive text about the result of interview.
- The interviewer shared the result of interview on form descriptive text to upload on blog.

NEWS STORY

The Uniqueness of Coffee by Bayu, Coffeehood's Barista

Dias Bayu is the Coffeehood's barista. He was born on July 23rd, 1991 in Jakarta. Now, he lives in Ciledug. In family, he is first child of three siblings. He has married and he has one son. He graduated from Bachelor's degree of Computer System program in Budi Luhur of University, South Jakarta. His hobbies are of playing ball, drawing, playing music and swimming.



Siti Julianawati, Tangerang

TANGERANG, JOURNALISM C. — Physically, Bayu has brown skin. He is currently 170 cm with black eyes and black short hair. He has pointed nose and sweet smile. His body is skinny. He also wears apron when he works to make coffee. In 2012, he worked in industry of Hospitality, Food and Beverage (F&B) Department as a kitchen crew. Then, in 2017 he joined with Coffeehood as barista since establishing Coffeehood. He works in Coffeehood full time with shift work.

He chooses the profession to be a barista because he wants to know more about coffee passion and the pleasure of making coffee that makes people happy. For the sorrow to be a barista is a lot of complaints from customers.

He becomes a barista because he wants to follow his passion of coffee. So, he jumps down into the world of coffee to learn it directly. According to Bayu, the coffee is limitless, wide, and interesting. Coffee also has special something that unique that does not exist in the other. Learn the coffee can take many years. Moreover, now, the coffee develops there are latte art and manual brew.

His favorite barista is Joshua Tayu and for brewer favorite is Ryan Wibawa. He likes single origin from Malang, which is Sidikalang. For his favorite coffee is cappuccino. "Because cappuccino has basic coffee espresso machine and it is a little bit difficult to be made because it must have balance comparison between coffee and milk," said Bayu, Coffeehood's barista.

The most customers' favored coffees from Bayu is Coffeehood Latte and Manja Coffee Ice. Coffeehood Latte is made from espresso cubes blended with fresh milk. While Manja Coffee Ice is a blend spoiled coffee made from Arabica coffee, mixed with java sugar and cream.

From this story, we can take the moral value from Bayu that he prefers his passion about coffee than his education background. But, whatever the choices, either passion or anything, if you enjoy with your job, you can do it well. So, do what makes you happy.

Figure 3. A Sample of Biography News: Bayu Coffeehood's Barista (Juliana, 2018)

WRITING CAPTION

Four UMT students joined in a cheerful interview with a Coffeehood's barista

Doing an interview could be an awkward moment for some people, moreover if the interviewee is a someone we have not met before. But, it is possible if the interview could be interesting for any reason such as, if the interviewee is an easygoing person. It also happened to four students of Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang, namely, Alvio Arisia Safitri, Intan Permata Karindri, Nur Heti Aryani, and Siti Lulianawati which interviewed a barista in Coffeehood Caffe. Dias Bayu (26) on Wednesday (21/03).

Alvio Arisia Safitri, Tangerang



Alvio, Intan, Heti, and Luli participate in an interview with Dias Bayu in Coffeehood Caffe, on Wednesday. The interview was about Dias Bayu's job which is a barista, started from his personal life to his profession. "Everyone can make a coffee, but not all of it can be special one", said Dias Bayu.



Alvio takes the role in the interview with Dias Bayu. She wrote the interview questions. "Writing the interview questions is important before doing the interview", Alvio said.

TANGERANG, JOURNALISM C. — The interview has some steps, starts from beginning of the interview, during the interview, and after the interview. For the beginning of the interview, the four students of UMT chose the interviewee

which has to be an inspirational person. They chose Dias Bayu as a barista in Coffeehood Caffe because they assumed that barista is a unique profession and not everyone has the 'special skill'. After that, they prepared some questions that will be asked to the interviewee and came to the Coffeehood Caffe to meet the interviewee. During the interview, Intan as the interviewer asked the questions to Dias Bayu related to his profession and his personal life. After the interview, they did not forget to say thank you because of the interviewee's contribution. They also tried the coffees made by Dias Bayu.



Intan choose to interview Dias Bayu. She asked some questions related to his job as a barista. "By doing interview, we can build the communication with new people", Intan said.

In the interview, they divided roles each other. Alvio and Luli arranged the interview questions. Intan as the interviewer, interviewed the barista, Dias Bayu. Last but not least, Heti had a role to record the conversation between Intan and Dias Bayu. They felt lucky because actually their interviewee is an easygoing and humourous person. Therefore, they did not feel too nervous or awkward while doing the interview.



Intan, Luli, Heti, and Alvio as the interviewee team close the interview session with Dias Bayu. They took some pictures for documentations. "Thank

you for your kindness and joining with us", said Alvio to Dias Bayu.

Dias Bayu, was answering the interview questions while sharing his experience to be a barista. He prefers his passion or hobby in coffee world than his education background which should be a computer programmer. "Coffee is interesting and limitless, it also has unique and special things that does not exist in others", he said.

Interview is not always as awkward as we usually think. It could be interesting when we are able to 'place' ourselves in front of the interviewee. But, we also have to remember to respect the interviewee by keeping his or her honor and privacy. The most important point is, we should know about the attitude in interview session to avoid the unwanted incidents.

Figure 4. A Sample of Writing Caption: Interviewing Bayu Coffeehood's Barista (Safitri, 2018)

CONCLUSION

The instruction of the writing task on a Biography/Feature News, through interviewing as prewriting activities, the researchers sum up the necessary stages of the English prewriting activities instruction for:

- Stimulating students' ideas to write a biography of inspiring person
- Supporting students to draft the ideas into paragraphs; from main sentences, supporting sentences, up to a paragraph
- Ultimately, aiding students to write an essay, a Biography News, creatively and favorably

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