

Creative Writing Style Integrated with Flipped Book Maker in Writing English Short Story: An Illustrative Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This research focused and aimed to describe the activities conducted by the students to practice creative writing style integrated with flipped book maker application in writing English short story. Students of English Education Study Program from a private university in Medan was selected purposively as the research participant. There were thirteen students involved as the participants. Illustrative case study which primarily a descriptive study of qualitative approach was designed to conduct this research. Observation was used as the research instrument. The whole activities were observed and noted thoroughly during the classroom interaction and the home assignment. The result of this research showed that the students succeeded to write creatively the English short story. They described and narrated the development of characters, events, and situations in the story. Students also provide and illustrate the story with pictures. As the final result, they converted their short story text into a digital flipped book. By combining digital tools with creative writing style, it can enhance students' engagement, creativity, and overall writing proficiency.

Keywords: creative writing style, flipped book maker, short story

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini berfokus dan bertujuan untuk menggambarkan aktivitas yang dilakukan oleh siswa untuk mempraktikkan gaya menulis kreatif yang terintegrasi dengan aplikasi pembuat flipped book dalam menulis cerita pendek Bahasa Inggris. Siswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dari sebuah universitas swasta di Medan dipilih secara purposif sebagai partisipan penelitian. Ada tiga belas siswa yang terlibat sebagai partisipan. Studi kasus ilustratif yang pada dasarnya merupakan studi deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif dirancang untuk melakukan penelitian ini. Observasi digunakan sebagai instrument penelitian. Seluruh aktivitas diobservasi dan dicatat secara menyeluruh selama interaksi di dalam kelas dan tugas rumah. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa berhasil menulis cerita pendek Bahasa Inggris dengan kreatif. Mereka menggambarkan dan menceritakan pengembangan karakter, peristiwa, dan situasi dalam cerita. Siswa juga memberikan ilustrasi cerita dengan gambar. Hasil akhirnya, mereka mengonversi teks cerita pendeknya dalam bentuk flipped book digital. Dengan menggabungkan alat digital dengan gaya menulis kreatif, hal ini dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan, kreativitas, dan kemahiran menulis siswa secara keseluruhan.

Kata kunci: gaya menulis kreatif, flipped book maker, cerita pendek

A. Introduction

Many previous researches have written that writing skill is difficult for students for various reasons. Writing is considered by students as the most demanding competence out of the four main

language competences: reading, speaking, listening, and writing (Demneri, 2024). Meanwhile, students find writing is difficult because they do not have much idea what to write and how to start writing; in fact, they waste too much time thinking about what they are going to write

(Pratiwi et al. 2024). In addition, the problem in writing faced by students mostly is the confusing to start writing (Rahmawati W. T., 2022). This statement can be interpreted that “how to start writing” is the “start” of the problem or difficulty for students to write. Students might take much time to write down their ideas (Rahmawati et al. 2021). This line can be referred to the taking time to think of what to write first, even though the topic or title has been determined, and thus, it also becomes the other problem to “start” writing. Moreover, stuck at the start of writing is also found in one out of 15 list most common ESL writing problems (Case, 2024). Therefore, the starting point to write is very important, particularly for students who are still learning to write a good paragraph or text in English. Writing well is not simply writing correctly but since it conveys a message to the reader, it means communicating effectively (Demneri, 2024).

In writing, students need to pay attention to the essential elements of good writing such as the content, the structure, and the style of writing (cited from “Written Communication Skill”). This article briefly discussed that structure is way content is presented, style is way content is written, and content is what you are writing about. These three elements relate each other to produce good writing. The paragraph or the text written should be logically presented following the acceptable structure. For example, a writer may use different sequences to present the content of the story from present time to past time or reverse them or even combine them. The style used may be technical style or creative style, depends on what the story is about, i.e. the content. Of course there should be differences whenever using technical or creative style in writing. Probably writer uses a variety of writing structures without giving them much thought and writer can combine them despite differences in the content type (Vidakovic, 2023).

Discussing about style in writing, there are many articles posted online talk about style in writing and we can search and find them easily and freely. For example, an online article (“Style, Diction, Tone, and Voice”, 2009) elaborated that style is the way

something is written; style influences the reader’s impression of the information itself; style includes diction and tone. The goal of using style in writing is to present the information in an appropriate manner for the audience and the purpose of the writing. Diction is word choice which relates closely with vocabulary used to express the content. Tone should be appropriate to the audience and purpose which can be objective or subjective, logical or emotional, intimate or distant, serious or humorous; tone can consist mostly of long, intricate sentences, of short, simple ones, or of something in between; tone can be achieved by imagining the situation of the content to be written. Meanwhile, voice is the feeling of the writing that is the uniquely of the writer; it is the essential, individual thoughts and expression of the writer’s own. Thus, in general summary, writing style refers to the unique way the authors express their ideas. It encompasses the choice of words, sentence structure, tone, and overall voice in order to communicate with words in their text. Writing style is about how something is written, not what is written.

Creative writing style is one of many styles that can assist students to develop their writing skill. Creative writing is one of the most imaginative and expressive writing style which explores the realms of fiction, poetry, and personal expression (Ortiz, 2024). This writing style may drive students to expedite their creativity from imagining into a unique, clear, and evocative written text. Definitely, creative writing deals with some literary works such as short story or novels as the closest example in our daily life. Of course this creative writing style relates with the development of the story, character, and emotional as the most common characteristics of short story or novel. Thus, creative writing style gives chance to the writers to experience different genres, voices, tones, even their own perspectives. In addition, Harmer (2004) wrote writing is a process that is often heavily influenced by the constraints of genres, then these elements have to be presented in learning activities (Sihite et al. 2021). Thus, in this term, creative writing is not separated from the genres of writing.

This research was triggered by the result obtained from preliminary writing test conducted by the students on the early teaching learning process by the lecturer of Writing for General Communication subject. This test was aimed to find out their background in English writing. The instruction given by the lecturer was to write freely anything related with the problems or difficulties or challenges in writing English text or paragraph that they have faced so far. They were required to elaborate, describe, or narrate upon each of those matters they encountered.

Concluded from the writing test, mostly the students' writings failed to fulfill the content, structure, and style as the elements of good writing. The most noted part was the way students presented the information in their writing was not clear and details, very little supporting data, poor organization and sentence order. The lecturer also noticed that the students seemed difficult to elaborate in detail for each problems or difficulties or challenges they wrote. Those matters are related with content and structure. The style that should present the tone, inconsistencies, and clarity were also failed. Mostly their writing used casual tone and sudden changes in point of view. Upon those matters, thus, this research was conducted and mainly aimed to describe the activities conducted by the students to practice creative writing style integrated with flipped book maker to write English short story freely and creatively. Creative writing style was determined to use in order to push the students to be more creative in using as many words as they can and felt free to write anything came to their minds or desires. Flipped book maker was also planned to be integrated as media or tool for their writing.

B. Research Method

Research method was designed using qualitative descriptive research with illustrative case study method. Illustrative case studies are primarily descriptive studies; utilize one or two instances of an event to show what a situation is like (cited from WAC Clearinghouse Writing Guide). This method is considerate relevant with the aim

of this research that is to describe the activities conducted by the students to practice creative writing style integrated with flipped book maker to write English short story freely and creatively.

The participant in this research was selected on the bases of purposive sampling technique. The students enrolled English Education Study Program in a private university in Medan. They were registered as 2023 students' registration number. There were thirteen students involved in total as the participant during this research.

The research was conducted during early months of year 2024. Direct observation was administered as the instrument to collect data during the research. Other than that, the students' preliminary writing, writing activities, and final writing products were used as document sources. In direct observation, the researcher gathered field notes thoroughly by spending more time as an observer, recorded all students' activities, engagement, interaction, and behavior occurred in the classroom. Students' writing were used to examine their writing progress.

C. Result and Discussion

The description below shall depict the whole activities conducted by the thirteen students during the practice of writing English short story by applying creative writing style integrated with flipped book maker as the media. The final product of the activities was digital flipped book containing English short story designed by the students.

The preliminary writing test was conducted first as described previously in introduction part. Upon getting the result and concluding students' writing test, the lecturer came up with new concept of teaching writing for students to be more creative and free in selecting and arranging words into good paragraph or text. The lecturer designed an activity of writing which focus on using creative writing style for the students. The following paragraphs described completely the activities of learning process and practicing during observation.

First Observation

Explanation of material regarding the writing concept was given first during the initial meeting by the lecturer to give more understanding about “style” in writing. Other than that, the “genre” and “text” were also explained. Examples and drilling were also given in order to push more the students’ understanding of these material. The steps or stages of writing were also explained by the lecturer by giving examples to practice which involved the whole students. In this meeting, the students were instructed to:

- prepare a topic or title and make the mapping words or phrases from the topic or title (discussed in classroom),
- decide genre and text type (discussed in classroom),
- start writing the initial draft of the story using the mapping words or phrases (home assignment),
- upload the Ms. Word in Google drive link provided by the lecturer (home assignment).

Students’ engagement during this meeting such as asked questions how to decide the title or topic, gave comments, helped each other to choose the mapping words or phrases. In deciding the choice of genre and text type, fiction was selected by all students, while for the text type, they chose to combine narrative and descriptive because creative writing style deals with writing fictional and imaginative story. During this meeting, students were seemed to be attracted. Even though at the beginning when practicing to make mapping words or phrases they still need time to think what words came first, but after the third times trial they already started to freely mention the words came up on their mind. They also came up with various title for their short story. Mostly the subgenre was horror or mystery and romance.

Note that the students’ tasks were home assignment and classroom discussion. It was considered as time efficiency. All assignments instructed in every meeting were uploaded in Google drive by students individually. This technique was administered to make easier in accessing and presenting students’ works in classroom to be discussed collaboratively.

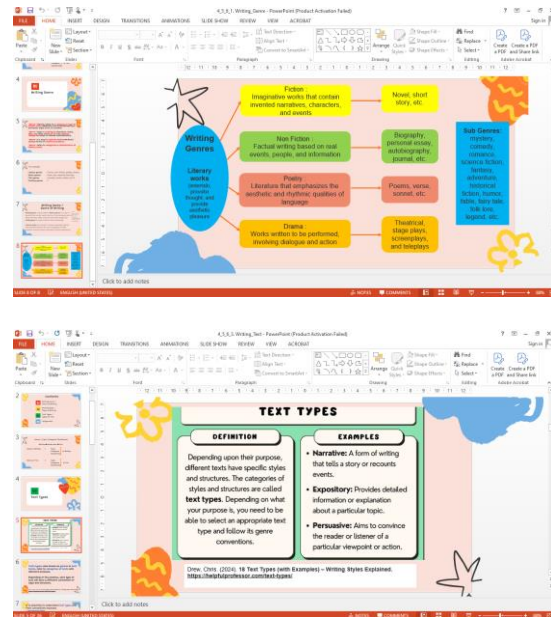


Figure 1. Material provided by the lecturer using PPT

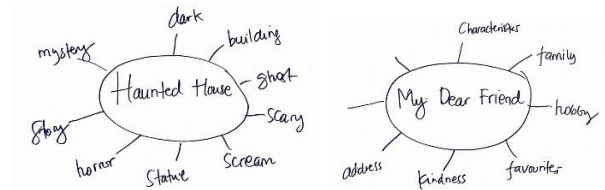


Figure 2. Example of mapping words

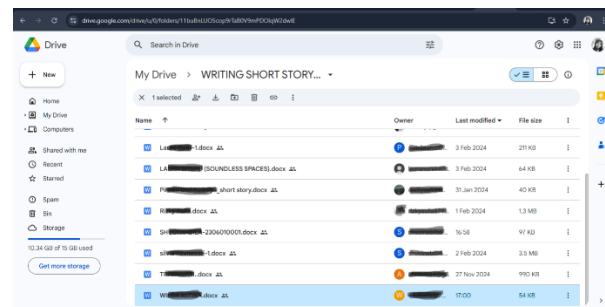


Figure 3. Google drive link

Second Observation

Introducing flipped book maker was given on the next meeting. The lecturer showed some free online flipped book maker which can be accessed freely in Google such as the followings:

1. Heyzine (<https://heyzine.com>) is a free online PDF to flipbook converter with no ads, no watermarks and highly customizable with different page flip effects.

2. FlipHTML5 (<https://fliphtml5.com>) is a free online tool to create eye-catching flipbooks in minutes by picking a template and customize it to get started, no design skills needed, can create, polish and publish flipbooks right on it, no need to download and pay extra fees.
3. Publuu (<https://publuu.com>) is an online flipbook maker to convert PDF into powerful online flipbook with a realistic page-flip effect and easy access from any device.
4. FlipBook PDF (<https://www.flipbookpdf.net>) is a free online PDF to flipbook conversion by only loading PDF files and clicking on CONVERT NOW, can create and link Flipbook PDF magazines with your own logo, background, text and without ads.

The lecturer picked out one flipped book maker and showed the students the steps to utilize the features in the flipped book maker application. For information, to fully use the flipped book maker, users are required to sign up an account first. The students were also recommended to watch YouTube videos to obtain more practical understanding when using one of flipped book makers. In this meeting, students were instructed to:

- choose and sign up one easiest flipped book maker to be used later as converting tool for their writing product,
- prepare the concept of illustrating their short story.

Students' engagement during this meeting such as asked questions regarding flipped book maker, practiced to upload their existing PDF to one of the flipped book maker which no need to sign up as free sample trial. When they tried this themselves, they find it easy to try one flipped book maker and felt happy when they saw and clicked their trial flipped book. Smiling and happiness expression and even astonishment were showed on their face. They kept uploading several times to see the different result.

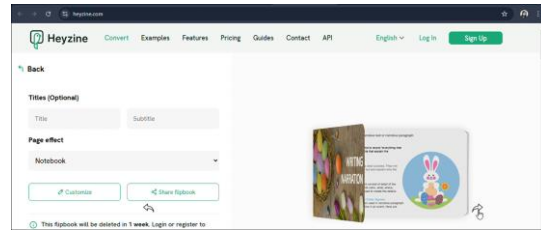


Figure 4. Example of flipped book

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Observation

During this observation time, the students were already engaged in the writing activities started from the topic or title they decided, the mapping they listed, the initial draft of writing, and the concept of illustrating the story. Some activities conducted during this meeting were described below.

Presented topic or title of each students

Students were instructed to present and elaborate the drafted topic or title and the content of the short story. They also showed the mapping words or phrases of the topic or title. The lecturer gave review for the title and the mapping students made. Other students were given opportunity to give comments for their classmates' works. Some of the students revised their title and mapping words. After revising based on the review, students confirmed and finalized the title and the mapping words. The lecturer listed each students' short story title on Google docs in Google drive link so that students can access it freely.

Practiced and revised the drafted text

Students were instructed to present the draft they previously prepared as home assignment. This was aimed as the example to collaboratively discuss the student's writing using Google docs. The presentation used projector in the classroom. All students were encouraged to take part in discussion. They gave each other suggestion to make the short story writing better. During this collaborative discussion, they shared various

ideas each other. They also noticed many writing aspects such as the punctuation mark, capital letters, tenses, sentence structure, words choice, conjunction, and even the order of the paragraph. They directly revised the content as suggested by the lecturer and other classmates. In this meetings, the students were instructed to do the followings as home assignment:

- re-read the reviewed text for finalization of the story,
- design the illustration or drawing in accordance with the content of short story,
- combine the design with the text in one file of Ms. Word or PPT and saved them as PDF file,
- upload their file (Ms. Word or PPT or PDF) in Google drive,
- convert the file using flipped book maker,
- share the flipped book link or the barcode.

Some students had already described the characters and the occasion in the story very well. Some details and supporting information were presented in good order. Of course, there also students who were still struggling with the choice of words and sentence structure. There were still found words written in Bahasa because they could not find the suitable English words. Some students even rewrote the order of paragraphs.

The text drafted by students did not use many conversation because the focus of the writing text was descriptive and narrative. Thus, they were required to describe and narrate the characters and situation in the story to create the imaginative feeling of the readers. Some of the students already integrated the illustrations for the story, though they were still only small part.

Students kept communicating with the lecturer through group chat throughout this finalization process. Some students kept asking for suggestion for their writing or illustration of the short story. The lecturer checked students' work in Google drive and left comments on each students' file. They also asked about the utilization of the flipped book maker such as the size, the form, the arrangement of the text and the illustration, etc.

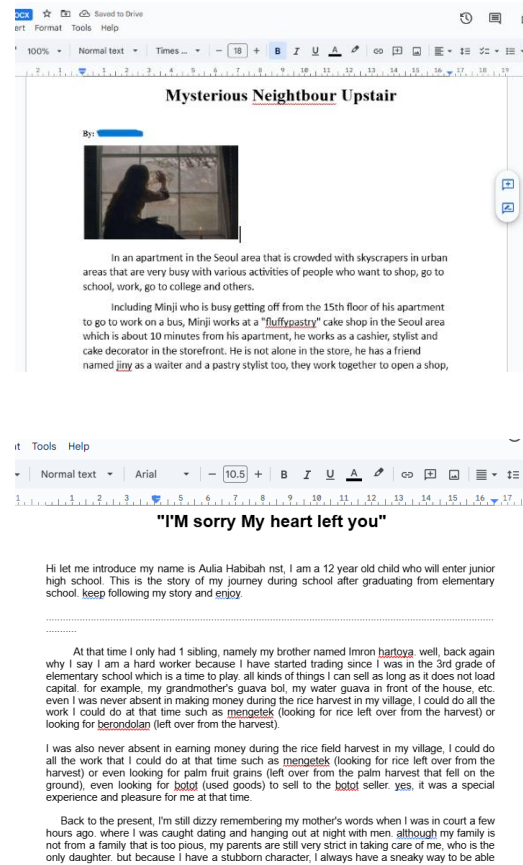


Figure 5. Example of students' short story

Sixth Observation

In this meeting, almost all students had revised completely the content of short story. They also had combined their text with the illustration and converted it into flipped book using the flipped book maker. They were instructed to present their final product of flipped book short story.



Figure 6. Example of flipped book short story by student using FlipHTML5



Figure 7. Example of flipped book short story by student using FlipHTML5

Notes from observation

The focus of the whole activities was the writing process using creative writing style from start to finish (prewriting – drafting – revising/editing – finalizing). Students were guided by the lecturer during their writing process. The lecturer assisted them through all the process. They also received comments and suggestions from classmates during the presenting session collaboratively. Students can directly revised their writing content at the same time.

Problem noted mostly regarding the writing process was the starting to write the first sentence for each paragraph. Even though students already mapped the words to help them organizing the content, they still struggled to write it. It is important to understand the fact that students require more time to think and come up with idea what they want to write. That is the reason students' sentence structure and organization need to be checked and corrected wisely. Another noted problem was the shifting of tenses such as present and past. Obviously, narrative texts use past form and some students still confused to organize the timeline when to use present, past, or future time. Punctuation mark, particularly the use of capital letter, also became obstacle. There was like a habit of some students to use small case instead of capital letter at the beginning of sentence.

Problem during practice and integrating with flipped book maker mostly related with the concept of illustration and

finding the suitable illustration for the story. Students needed to search from online and put those pics or illustration obtained into the text. Therefore, it required more time to do this part. Some students in the end only put small portion for the illustration of the story due to this reason.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, integrating creative writing style with flipped book maker has demonstrated significant improvements on students' writing, in this case practice writing English short stories. This illustrative case study describes and highlights how combining digital tools with creative writing style technique can enhance students' engagement, creativity, and overall writing proficiency. The whole activities show that giving students' freedom to write whatever their desire can bring good result. The utilization of flipped book maker not only provides an interactive and visually appealing platform but also fosters a deeper understanding of descriptive and narrative structure and character development. Thus, it is suggested to keep incorporating and continuing to evolve with technological advancements in the classroom in order to offer enriching learning experiences for students.

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