

ASSIGNMENT DESIGN SHAPES STUDENT LEARNING**Retno Budi Wahyuni and Naniek Kuswardhani**

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ABSTRACT

Designing a good assignment will shape the student learning. Have we known the most important thing in designing and selecting assignments for our students. As stated by Maryellen Weimer (2015:2): "We can more effectively shape learning outcomes if we start with objectives that force us to get specific about what we want students to know and be able to."

Specific course objectives should be decided before designing a good assignment that can force the teacher to find specific assignment matched to what the students have to know and be able to do, so a teacher can have more effective learning outcomes. Every assignment influences the shape of learning outcomes.

In modern era technology a teacher has more options to design writing assignments. The research done is finding the learning outcomes from the students by giving the same writing design assignment. The data is taken from comparing their writing through blog or responses to posts that students know, will be read and commented on not only by their peers but also by public blog posts, and peer writing that will be read and commented on only by their partner. The result is the students could get a lot of comments that can make them more aware of their mistakes in writing through blog, while through peer writing the students get comments only from their partners. In other words, the students could get better outcomes through blog than peer writing.

Keywords: a good assignment, learning outcomes, objectives

INTRODUCTION

In learning English process, Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Bandung (STPB) students are expected to be good at English communication not only speaking skill but also writing skill. Therefore, the English teachers at STPB are trying to find assignments which are matched with the objectives in each semester. Based on the syllabus that we have at STPB. The hospitality students have English lesson every semester until their last semester. In the first, second and third semesters, the English lecturers at STPB focus on the students' speaking skill. They get more practice in speaking to make them get used to respond and communicate in English, at least in daily English communication.

Therefore, the English lecturers are able to explain the students' common mistakes in grammar. While, the fifth semester students get English Academic Writing and vocational English for managerial level. Consequently, the English lessons that the students get are related to be able to lead a formal meeting, decide the best solutions from the problems discussed in the formal meeting. And they are expected as well as to be able to write their final report in English. Due to that, there are some students who have written their final project paper in English and they have been examined in English as well. However, the fourth semester students have their job training in any chain hotels

or four or five star hotels in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

LITERATUR REVIEW

STPB students' capability is heterogeneous in the first semester. Consequently, the English lecturers teach and focus on their speaking skill through giving them more chances on speaking skill by creating assignments which are matched to the objectives of each semester. The English lecturers at STPB always create situations related to the students' major in order to make them speak up. Therefore, stimulating students to learn autonomously to be more active and independent in learning English language is really important.

Whenever English learners have acquired the learning strategies, the attitude and the knowledge about learning so that the learners are able to use their skills and knowledge confidently. As stated by Holec (1981) that autonomy can be described as the students' ability to take charge of their learning. Learners' autonomy is learners' ability to concern about his own learning and what he needs in learning. Autonomous students realize their mistakes and they have their self-confidence to overcome their problems. While Kavaliauskene (2006) stated that students who are responsible with their learning will make better achievement. Consequently, the English lecturers should be able to design the appropriate assignments which could shape the best results.

Here, teaching writing skill is not an easy way to find the appropriate assignments that can make the learners are curious to know and respond their feedback, so they could have an improvement in their writing skill. However, in modern technology era now the English teachers could mix the modern technology with the objectives of their writing skill by mixing them. Maryellen Weimer (2015) stated that: "Technology adds still more assignment options. Students can blog and respond to posts; they can

write collaboratively on wikis and google docs. The options are many, but the features of each writing assignment directly shape the learning that results." Therefore, we as the English lecturers at STPB implement the modern technology to the process of teaching writing skill to the fifth-semester students in Hospitality department. Most students who are learning writing skill consider that learning writing skill is difficult. As it is known that most young people like operating or playing with their gadget or mobile phone or I-phone or on line or media social. Consequently, making writing activities could be more attractive and effective, the English lecturers design writing assignments are mixed with modern technology. By asking the students to write their on blog that could be read and commented by public posts, and peer writing that will be read and commented on only by their partner.

FINDINGS

Designing assignments should be considered not only the feedback but also the students should read and know what their mistakes are and they know the correct ones and act on their mistakes. Consequently, assignments should be shaped appropriately to get the best results, and it is known that effective writing needs good and effective feedback. Judy Willis (2015) stated that: "The biggest factor that influences the effect of writing activities is the nature of the feedback students receive. At the extreme end of the spectrum, students may receive no feedback at all. Or perhaps only receive a grade with no comments about their specific performance. As a result, students get some writing practice but generally don't improve and don't learn the material better."

Writing feedback is really important for the learners, so that they could learn better. It is not just about finding their

mistakes but the learners could get clear guidance for the learners' next step and could get clear idea of how to improve their learning process. Therefore, the learners need to get specific and clear feedback not only for strong students but also for weak students.

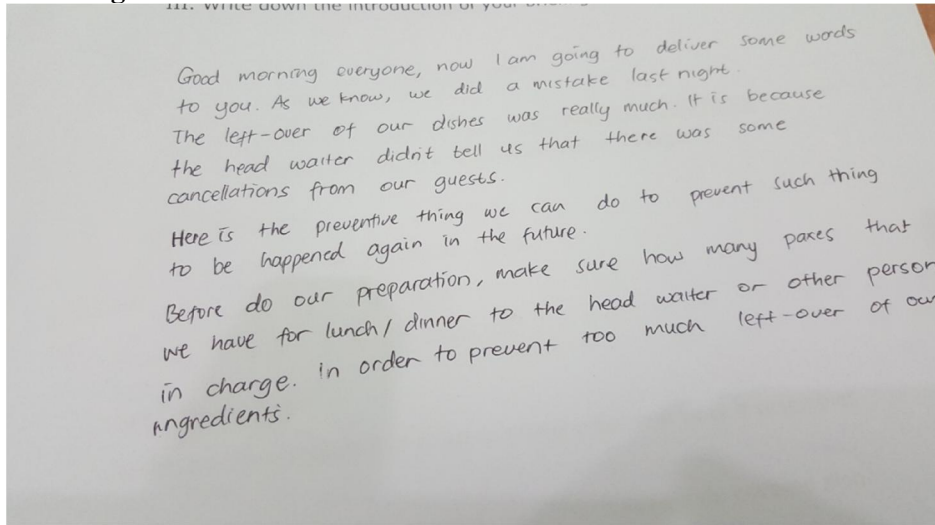
Judy Willis (2015) stated that: "Feedback is not helpful unless the

students responds to it." Consequently, the English lecturers are to find the appropriate and attractive feedback, so the learners are interested in responding the feedback and forced the students to address their comments.

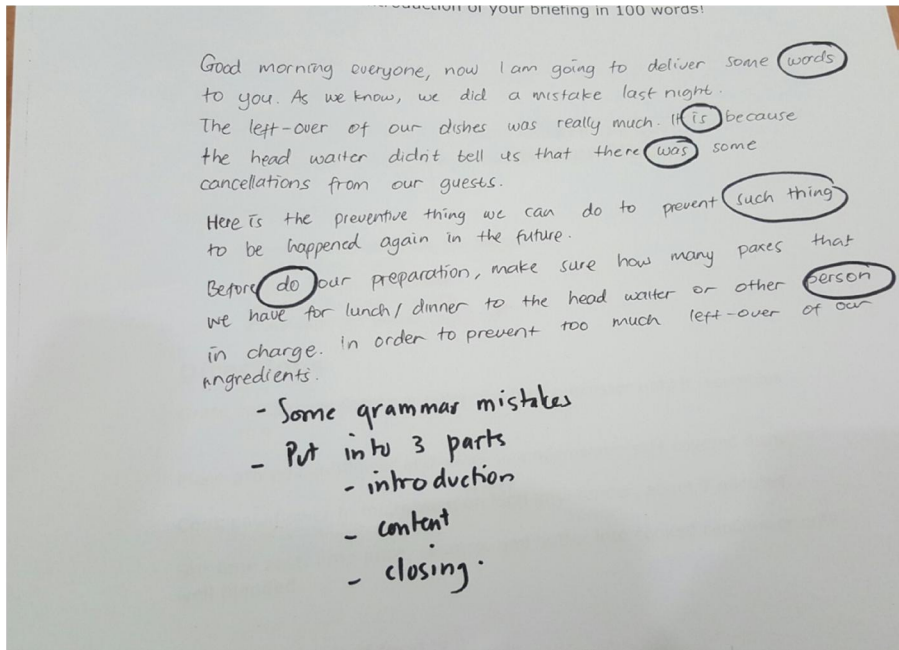
Here, we compare the peer writing and writing in blog.

Examples:

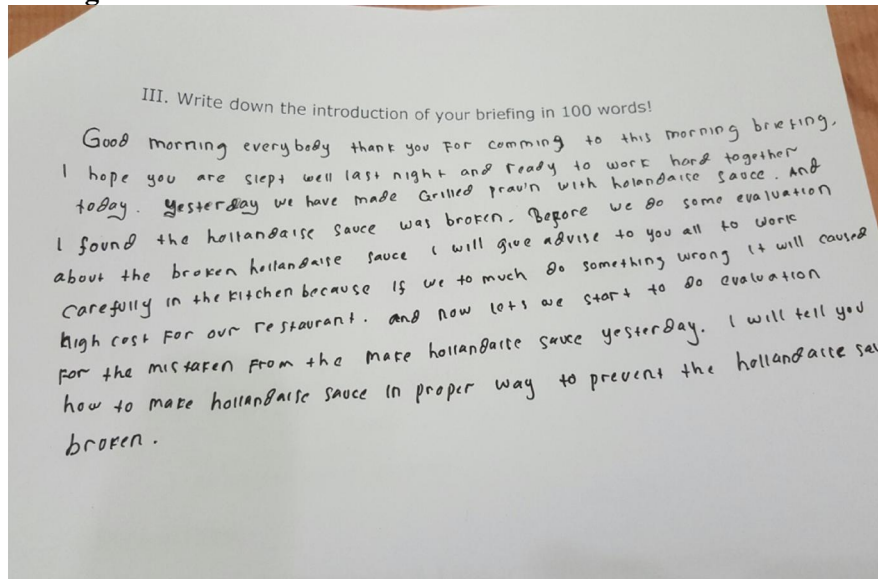
Original Writing



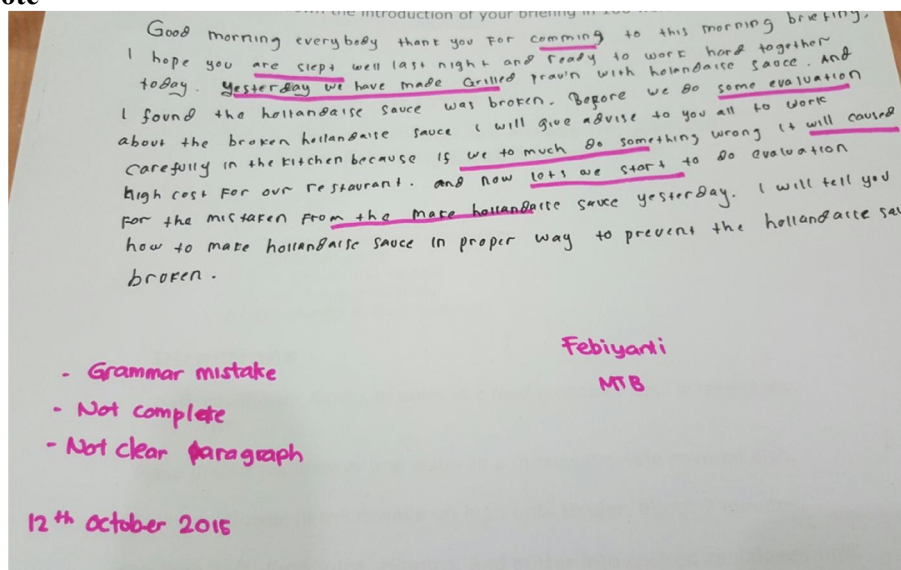
Teacher's Note



Original Writing



Peer's Note



From peer writing, the learners could get comments and corrections from their partner only. While from writing in blog, the learners could get some and more comments and corrections from their writing blog in posts or their teacher

Student's Responses

- Peer-writing : we get very limited comments or corrections or guidance. It also depends on their partner's knowledge and skill towards writing

skill which is related to their knowledge of vocabularies, grammar, understanding and punctuations.

- Writing on blog: the learners are really excited to read and find out what comments and corrections, guidance and clear idea they get from their friends in their blog. They are really enthusiastic to respond their comments and mistakes by finding out why they are wrong and what the correct ones are, and the guidance and ideas are

acceptable are not, then they have a long discussion. Consequently, the learners are forced to minimize their writing blog's comments, mistakes and corrections.

CONCLUSIONS

Teaching writing skill is not an easy way to find the appropriate assignments that can make the learners are curious to know and respond their feedback, so they could have an improvement in their writing skill. However, in modern technology era now the English teachers could mix the modern technology with the objectives of their writing skill by mixing them. Making writing activities could be more attractive and effective, the English lecturers design writing assignments are mixed with modern technology. The students could get a lot of comments that can make them more aware of their mistakes in writing through blog, while through peer writing the students get comments only from their

partners. In other words, the students could get better outcomes through blog than peer writing.

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