

Research article

Featuring Content Writing in the Classroom

Nugrahaningtyas Fatma Anyassari

Politeknik Negeri Malang

ORCIDNugrahaningtyas Fatma Anyassari: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5300-8856>**Abstract.**

Content writing has been gaining much attention. As many emerging enterprises go online, job vacancies for content writers are ubiquitous. Consequently, classroom activities, at polytechnics to be specific, should adjust with the current shift. This study aimed to describe content writing as a project in a Writing 3 class. The class consisted of 20 second-year students from the D4 English for Business and Professional Communication program. During a 5-week project, each student created a dummy business website on either Google sites or Blogger and performed as the main writer, contributor and editor. The business foci relied on their own interests which varied from fashion to merchandise and creative media. The results revealed that students were able to create excellent content for their websites. Pedagogical implications of this study may be to encourage designing a syllabus and instructional materials to teach content writing. It is suggested that future researchers include teachings on how to employ keywords in articles, and conduct interviews or surveys with actual content writers or related industries to support the course design.

Corresponding Author:

Nugrahaningtyas Fatma

Anyassari; email:

nfanyassari@polinema.ac.id

Published 28 March 2022

Publishing services provided by
Knowledge E Nugrahaningtyas Fatma

Anyassari. This article is

distributed under the terms of
the [Creative Commons](#)[Attribution License](#), whichpermits unrestricted use and
redistribution provided that the
original author and source are
credited.Selection and Peer-review under
the responsibility of the iNETAL
Conference Committee.**Keywords:** content writing, English for business communication, ELT

1. Introduction

Content writing is tightly associated to business communication, and it has lately been gaining much attention. As more enterprises go online during the pandemic, contents play important role in providing information as well as business awareness to prospectus customers (e.g. Nugraha and Wahid [1], Silitonga and Alifahmi [2], Zharfaningrum et al. [3]). Plethora of content writer job vacancies as documented from LinkedIn and Jobstreet within first two weeks of August 2021 may indicate its high demand. From those vacancies, one common requirement is ability to write properly in English. In other words, this fact can be used as a prediction that there will be a shift of future jobs for students, especially those who are majoring either English in general or English for business and professional communication.

English for business and professional communication is not only taught at universities. Some polytechnics in Indonesia have also offered study program related to English for

OPEN ACCESS

business communication for a diploma degree. In relation to this, courses and classroom activities need designing to manifest the study program. Designing classroom activities in those courses are rooted from OBE (Outcome-based Education). By adopting OBE, classroom activities are adjusted to skills in the workplace. This becomes an attempt to fill the gap between education sectors and industries.

One of fundamental courses which can accommodate the shift is writing class. Teaching writing is better done contextually rather than discretely [4]. Students need to know why, what for, and to whom they write. It is not relevant anymore to just ask students to write and the writing teacher is the only audience they have. Moreover, writing is a social activity. Through writing people can communicate each other. Therefore, bringing writing class as closer as possible to real life activity is considered important to design.

Previous studies on writing at polytechnic have mainly focused on grammar, paragraph development. Handayani [5] studied errors that polytechnic students made in their compositions. Most of students did not employ word formation and tenses properly. The errors were affected by first language interference and style of translation. Simanjuntak [6] conducted a study on how to help polytechnic students order their ideas logically in an expository text. By teaching 56 students on paragraph development such as composing a topic sentence and supporting details, he found that the students writing skills had improved.

Since the nature of polytechnic education is closer to what happen in workplace situation, it is also suggested to seek further on writing skills requirement in the workplace. The notion has been overlooked despite recent study by Huda and Ghozali [7] who investigated polytechnic students' writing ability in their application letters. Good application letters obviously require good writing skills; however, it is only used at the beginning of work. In fact, writing skills are necessary during work, even important such as content writing. Therefore, in order to bridge the gap, this study describes content writing project in writing class.

2. Method

This study was descriptive in nature. It described five-week activities in writing class where content writing project was employed. The class consists of twenty second-year students of D4 English for Business and Professional Communication program at State Polytechnic of Malang. The project was administered remotely due to the pandemic. Each week consisted of two meetings, each of which lasted for 150 minutes. Classroom activities in those meetings were divided into synchronous and asynchronous activities.

Synchronous activities were mediated by Zoom; while, asynchronous ones were done through LMS, activity log on Google Form, and students' website. There was a schedule posted on LMS before the class began. Figure 1 shows one of the schedule posts.

Wednesday, February 17, 2021
 Today, you are learning one new type of essay. It is called classification.

No	Time Allotment	Activities	Mode	Medium
1.	13.35-13.40	Attendance checking	Self-paced	LMS
2.	13.40-14.00	Reading Week 2 - Classification Essay Handout	Self-paced	LMS
3.	14.00-16.00	Discussion	Guided	Zoom
4.	(Homework)	Drafting a classification essay for website	Self-paced	Personal blog/website (Project A)

Figure 1: Classroom Activity Schedule.

In this project each student was asked to create a business website. The students were allowed to decide their own business foci based on their interests. To accommodate this, they created dummy website by using either Google Sites or Blogger. However, there was one student who created the website on Wixsite. On the dummy websites, then, they posted contents in form of 300-to-500-word articles. They made sure that the niche of their articles fit their business focus. The articles conveyed five types of essay, namely cause-effect, comparison-contrast, classification, problem-solving, and process analysis. The students had learned the first two essay types in their previous writing class, so they directly wrote one article for each type. The remaining three were studied and practiced during the class. Students played three roles in writing articles: main writer, contributor, and editor. As a main writer, students wrote 5 articles for their own websites; as a contributor, students wrote 2 articles for editor's website; and, as an editor, students reviewed their contributor's articles. Table 1 shows activities during 5-week project administration.

Data were gained through observation, students' dummy websites, and peer assessment. The data then were analyzed descriptively.

TABLE 1: Detailed Activities and Student's Roles

Week	Activity	Student's Role
1	Reviewing materials learned in Writing 2 class: introductory paragraph, thesis statement, paragraph development, topic sentence, concluding paragraph. Studying definition of content writing and job descriptions of a content writer. Deciding a business focus for students' own dummy website.	-
2	Writing 300-to-500-word articles in the form of cause-effect and comparison-contrast essay with relevant niche for students' own websites. Studying classification essay. Writing 300-to-500 word articles in the form of classification essay with relevant niche for students' own websites.	Main writer
3	Studying problem-solving and process analysis essay. Writing 300-to-500-word articles in the form of problem-solving and process analysis essay with relevant niche for students' own websites.	Main writer
4	For contributor: Choosing two types of essay. Writing two 300-to-500-word articles in the form of chosen types of essay with relevant niche for their pair's website. Assessing editor's website. For editor: Setting contributor's article submission due. Reviewing and editing contributor's articles. Assessing contributor's articles.	Group A: Contributor Group B: Editor
5		Group A: Editor Group B: Contributor

3. Findings and Discussion

In week 1, students reviewed lessons from the previous writing class. The lessons included introductory paragraph, thesis statement, paragraph development, topic sentence, concluding paragraph. They also recalled types of essay that they had practiced. Two of them, cause-effect and comparison-contrast essay, were practiced again during the class. Students were also exposed to content writing in relation to their study program, English for Business and Professional Communication. Then, some examples were given to vividly delineate content writing. Synchronous classroom activities were done in order to develop the same background knowledge before students were oriented to content writing project. By the end of second meeting in this week, students were asked to decide a business focus and plan their websites along with two relevant articles

In week 2 and 3, students studied three new types of essay. They are classification, problem-solving, and process analysis essay. Activities in the classroom included building knowledge of text (BKoT), modeling of text (MoT), joint construction of text

(JCoT), and independent construction of text (ICoT). Synchronous classroom activities were done during BCoT and MoT. In BCoT students learned rhetorical structure of each type. The materials were taken from Davis and Liss [8]. Next, they were given a relevant text example and analyzed the structure in MoT. Then, discussion was extended to examples of articles on the Internet. They sought for how much the structure of those articles deviated from theory they had learned in BCoT and MoT and found possible reasons of attaching the articles to a particular type of essay. Asynchronous classroom activities were done during JCoT and ICoT. In JCoT, group discussion on WA was done independently by the students in order to seek for a niche to write their articles. After that, in ICoT, they started to write their own articles that suited their business foci. By the end of week 3, students were able to post 5 articles on their own websites. Table 2 and Figure 2 below show the result of content writing project.

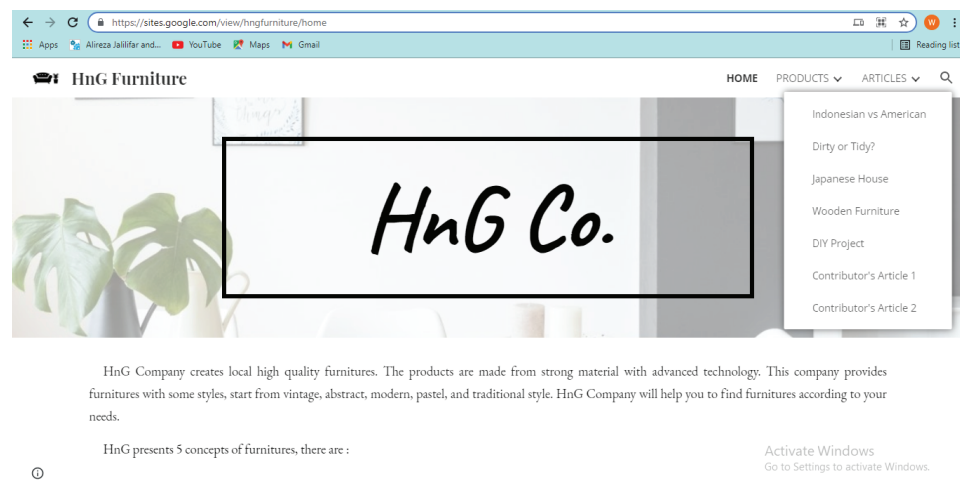


Figure 2: Student H's Dummy Website.

In week 4 and 5 students took turn to do a role play as a contributor and an editor. The class was divided into two big groups, A and B. Then, members from each group were paired up. Peer assessment was done during these weeks by using Google Form. As an editor, students assessed their contributor's articles based on several criteria. They were content, organization, mechanics, grammar, and creativity. Each criterion was represented by some indicators. On the other hand, as a contributor, students were asked to record their activities in activity log on Google Form. They also assessed their editor's developing websites based on five indicators. Each indicator had a scale from 1 to 5 to indicate the score; 1 for poor, 2 for ok, 3 for good, 4 for great, and 5 for excellent. Figure 3 depicts the results of peer assessment.

TABLE 2: Student's Business Focus and Website Address.

Student	Business Focus	Website Address
On Google Sites		
A	Fashion	https://sites.google.com/view/hecticapparel/articles?authuser=0
B	Fashion	https://sites.google.com/view/your-choice-fashion
C	Fashion	https://sites.google.com/view/byrafiunnisp/about-us
D	Beauty cosmetics	https://sites.google.com/view/emilycosmeticsmecc/home
E	Skincare	https://sites.google.com/view/yourprettyskinco/home?authuser=0
F	Home interior design	https://sites.google.com/view/kimpainter
G	Fitness	https://sites.google.com/view/smfit/exercise-program?authuser=0
H	Furniture	https://sites.google.com/view/hngfurniture/home
I	Food and beverages	https://sites.google.com/view/dehindiacafe/background?authuser=0
J	Merchandise	https://sites.google.com/view/footballaddicts-fnd/product?authuser=0
K	Merchandise	https://sites.google.com/view/anipageweeabocorner/home?authuser=0
L	Travel agent	https://sites.google.com/view/hangug-gaja/about-ha-ja
On Blogger		
M	Education	https://efclearningenglishpages.blogspot.com/?view=flipcard
N	Online bookstore	http://sindyadewantari.blogspot.com/
O	Creative media	https://indomounthiking.blogspot.com/
P	Creative media	https://happytummy18.blogspot.com/
Q	Creative media	https://zhrfalem511.blogspot.com/
R	Automotive spare parts	https://byngslngmtrcyclsp.blogspot.com/2021/02/buying-and-selling-motorcycle-spare.html
S	Footwear	https://shoespaceid.blogspot.com/
On Wixsite		
T	Photography	https://nikendarmastuti7.wixsite.com/npindustry/about

4. Conclusions

This study has described content writing project in the classroom. The project was an attempt to bridge the gap between industries and polytechnic education. As many vacancies on content writing are ubiquitous recently, it is important to adjust classroom activities especially in English for Business and Professional Communication. By the end of 5-week project administration, students were able to create dummy business websites along with relevant articles for the content. Business foci were also various, from fashion to creative media. Peer assessment revealed that both websites and articles

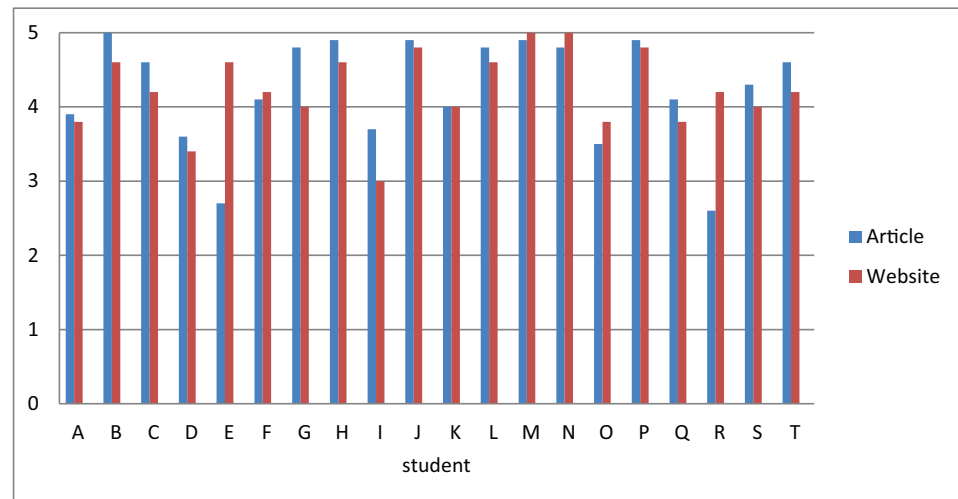


Figure 3: Peer Assessment Results.

were excellent. Pedagogical implications of this study can be directed to designing a fine syllabus and instructional materials to teach content writing. However, this study was rooted from essay types which may share narrow area with content writing. Therefore, further researchers are suggested to also include features of content writing such as finding and applying keywords in an article. This study was also based on the writer's personal observation on the current shift. It needs support from actual content writers or industries to revisit classroom activities. Interviewing or surveying those content writers are necessary for needs analysis in order to accommodate outcome-based education.

References

- [1] Nugraha YA, Wahid U. New wave marketing dalam membangun brand equity di era digital. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*. 2018;16(2):158-171.
- [2] Silitonga MFR, Alifahmi H. The implementation of narrative content marketing communications strategy for community-based e-commerce products. *Interact*. 2016;6(1):14-29.
- [3] Zharfaningrum D, Hidayatullah S, Khourouh U, Windhyastiti I, Waris A. Determinan keputusan pembelian online di instagram: Perspektif promosi, kemudahan, kualitas informasi, dan kepercayaan. *Jurnal Studi Manajemen dan Bisnis*. 2020;7(2):169-178.
- [4] Graham S. Changing how writing is taught. *Review of Research in Education*. 2019;43(1):277-303.
- [5] Handayani M. Analysis on polytechnic of tonggak equator students' errors in writing. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*. 2018;7(2):392-405. <https://doi.org/10.31571/bahasa.v7i2.1019>

- [6] Simanjuntak P. Constructing paragraphs prior to expository writing skill on business administration study program students Medan State Polytechnic. Paper presented at: Seminar Nasional Riset Linguistik dan Pengajaran Bahasa III (SENARILIP III); 2019, 30-31 August; Bali, Indonesia. Available at: <http://ojs.pnb.ac.id/index.php/Proceedings/article/view/1523>
- [7] Huda M, Ghozali G. Implementing of polytechnic students' ability of writing application letters. *ELITE: English and Literature Journal*. 2020;7(2):160-171. <https://doi.org/10.24252/10.24252/elite.v7i2a5>
- [8] Davis JA, Liss R. *Effective academic writing 3: The short essay*. Oxford: Oxford University; 2006.

5. APPENDIX

5.1. Criteria and Indicators for Peer Assessment

TABLE 3

Item to Assess	Criteria	Indicators
Article	Content	(A1) Introductory paragraph was well developed. (A2) There is a thesis statement. (A3) Each of body paragraphs has a topic sentence. (A4) Supporting details go along with the topic sentence.
	Organization	(A5) The writer developed his/her essay logically. (A6) The ideas are well structured.
	Mechanics	(A7) The writer employs punctuations (e.g. period, comma, semi colon) correctly. (A8) The writer spells word correctly. (A9) The writer employs uppercase and lowercase appropriately.
	Grammar	(A10) Grammar is used correctly in sentences. (A11) Subject and verb can be distinguished vividly. (A12) Plural nouns are employed correctly.
	Creativity	(A13) The writer uses different point of view to write his/her essay. (A14) The idea is unique; people rarely touch the idea.
Website	-	(W1) Contents suit business focus. (W2) Contents have consistent writing style. (W3) Punctuations (e.g. period, comma, semi colon) are employed in the articles correctly. (W4) The articles have spelling-error free. (W5) The article's layout is engaging for readers.

5.2. Results of Peer Assessment

TABLE 4

Student	Article		Website	
	Total	Average	Total	Average
A	55	3.9	19	3.8
B	70	5	23	4.6
C	65	4.6	21	4.2
D	50	3.6	17	3.4
E	38	2.7	23	4.6
F	58	4.1	21	4.2
G	67	4.8	20	4
H	68	4.9	23	4.6
I	52	3.7	15	3
J	69	4.9	24	4.8
K	56	4	20	4
L	67	4.8	23	4.6
M	68	4.9	25	5
N	67	4.8	25	5
O	49	3.5	19	3.8
P	69	4.9	24	4.8
Q	57	4.1	19	3.8
R	36	2.6	21	4.2
S	60	4.3	20	4
T	65	4.6	21	4.2

5.3. An Example of Student L's Article

Business focus : Travel Agent

Type of essay : Problem-solving

5.4. Running Out of Money While Travelling

One of the worse possibilities you can face is running out of money while you are travelling to some places. Here's what to do if you go to the ATM and find a \$0 balance, whether it's because you mismanaged your budget or because your checking account had a problem when you were gone. We hope this never happens to you, but if it does, here's what you can do.

5.5. Use your credit card

If you run out of cash or funds in your bank account, you can use an emergency credit card to fund your travel or get home earlier than planned. Of course, you're taking out a loan, and if you don't pay it back in full per month, you'll be paying interest. You may be able to get a cash advance using your credit card at an ATM or a branch.

5.6. Wired your money

Get yourself to a Western Union office or use their software if you have friends or relatives who will help you out in a financial emergency. You'll need to head to a Western Union office in person with a digital ID, such as a passport, if you need real cash in hand (not just money electronically debited from your account). Of course, the greater the amount of money you give or collect, the higher the payments. Another option is to use Venmo. Venmo is a free software that allows you to move money to your bank account in only a few safe clicks (immediate transactions with a small fee). Before you travel everywhere, we suggest you to install Venmo, just bear in mind that it won't help if your checking account has been frozen due to illegal behavior.

All in all, you have to prepare everything well before you go traveling. Make sure you budget properly so you don't have to worry about running out of money while traveling. However, if this problem occurs to you, you can use a credit card or transfer your money.