THE PERCEPTION OF MTsN MA’RANG STUDENTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMANISTIC APPROACH IN TEACHING WRITING

(Persepsi Siswa MTsN Ma’rang terhadap Implementasi Pendekatan Humanistik dalam Pengajaran Menulis)

Syahira

**ABSTRACT**

In Indonesia, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) taught in all school levels. So, the effective teaching methods should be employed by the English teachers in achieving the successfulness of EFL teaching and learning process. In order to bring much more benefits for the teachers’ improvement, evaluating teachers’ teaching in the classroom should be conducted. Analyzing the students’ perception bocomes one of the ways to use. In hence, the researcher conducted a research that aimed to describe how is the students’ perception about learning activities through humanistic approach in learning writing especially CLL method. To describe how is the students’ perception about sharing knowledge and personal experience through humanistic approach in learning writing and how is the students’ perception about learning writing skills through humanistic approach. This research employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The purposive sampling technique was used to collect the subjects at MTsN Ma’rang. The data were collected by employing observation and interview. From the data collected, the research found three findings. The findings are based on the research objectives. (1) There are four learning activities perceived as positive learning activities. They are Group work, Translation, Free Conversation, and Analysis. There are two learning activities perceived as negative learning activities. They are recording and analysis. (2) Students perceived that sharing knowledge and personal experience was beneficial practice because the students shared their experience, they began to have understanding towards each other. (3) Based on the students’ perception that learning writing through humanistic approach by writing on a topic choosed by themselves, freely express their opinions and choose their own choice make them to be more effective in improving the writing ability.

Key words: students’ perceptions, humanistic approach, teaching writing

**Introduction**

Language is a communication tool used by human beings, whether oral or written. Therefore, learning English cannot be separated from the humanistic psychological aspects. Learning English should use the curriculum to suit the students. According to the law of the national education system (2007), curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the purpose, content, teaching materials and methods used to guide the organization of learning activities to achieve specific educational goals. Student as the object of education is to be placed as a human who has different talents, interests, and abilities. Therefore, the curriculum of learning writing should promote pedagogical dimension of humanity in order to overcome the problems. The devices curriculum of learning English can be as approaches, strategies, methods, techniques, media, and evaluation of learning. The linguistic problems can be handling by using syllabus according to the needs and abilities of students.

From the humanistic process perspective, Rogers (1961) cited in Zhang (2010) advocates a student-centered approach. He underlied relevance, participation, negotiation, self-assessment, the centrality of the self-actualizing potential, and the reach for personal manifestation and creativity in fulfilling individual learning needs.

In line with Rogers’ idea, Hamachek (1977) cited in Williams & Burden, (1997) pointed out the significance of humanistic approach in language teaching: “humanistic education starts with the idea that students are different, and it strives to help students to be more like themselves and less like each other”, while writing is a form to express themselves and their different ideas sothe humanistic approach was applied in learning writing for this research.

Based on the explanation above, there is an inseparable relationship between the humanistic approaches with the pedagogical tools of learning writing. Humanistic approach is one of approaches in learning that emphasizes the principles of humanity, whereas writing is a form of expression of human mind through written language. The humanistic approach is worthly considered since its main principle is bringing the learning process towards a more affective situation by combining the subject matter to be learned with the feeling, emotions, experiences, and lives of the students. If the two are combined and correlated variables, it is expected to give positively influence to each other in improving the learning ability of students in writing especially the students of MTsN Ma’rang.

**Research methodology**

This research employed a qualitative experiment. Thomas (2002) in Atmowardoyo (2010, p.76-77) states that two important research methods are qualitative and quantitative. A qualitative experiment seeks to produce a description, typically without the use of numbers. It can be subjective in that the results are based on the experimenters’ point of view. Several methods are used in a qualitative experiments; introspection, surveys and questionnaires, and direct observation. These methods mostly involved observation of the user from the researcher.

The technique of data analysis employed in this research was done based on descriptive analysis, in which the researcher analyzed the data collected through the instruments. Miles and Huberman (1984) in Emzir (2010: 129-136) assume that there are some steps in analyzing the data. They were: (1) data collection, (2) data reduction, (3) data display, and (4) conclusion (drawing/verifying).

**Findings**

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about learning activities through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**
2. Positive perception

There are some positive perception in regarding to the learning activities through humanistic approach in learning writing. The following learning activities would be positively the MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception:

1. Group work

After getting the data from the observation, the researcher did interview about their opinion.Of the twenty students, there were ten students who perceived that group work was the most interesting classroom activities.

1. Translation

In this part, the students whispered a message or meaning he or she wanted to express, the teacher translated it into (and may interpret it in) the target language, and the student repeated the teacher’s translation.The students particularly stated that they could understand and knew more vocabulary when their teacher translated into the target language.

1. Free conversation

Students engaged in free conversation with the teacher or with the other students. This included discussion of what they learned as well as what they felt. The students felt free to express their opinion and what they felt after learning process.

1. Analysis

Students analyzed and studied transcriptions of target-language sentences in order to focus on particular lexical usage or on the application of particular grammar rules.

As a student, she realized that a method in teaching writing in English should consider grammar rules in order to achieve English language teaching goal.

1. Negative perception

On the contrary, the students also have their own perception about what the negative or ineffective learning activities. From their perception, some learning activities would be negatively perception the MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception:

1. Recording

The students faced some difficulties when they recorded conversations in the target language. Some students felt uncomfortable to record their conversation and felt restricted.

1. Analysis

In this term, the student assigned that they felt not really understand when they were tought too much grammar or structure. It made them bored.

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about sharing knowledge and personal experience through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**

In this term, the researcher used group-work to ecourage the students to be more active. There were two reasons proposed by the researcher for choosing this learning activity of teaching writing. Firstly, each student attempted and seemed to be more willing to contribute equally in group-work. Secondly, working together could be made more purposive to students by allowing them to share their knowledge and personal experience. Majority of the students shared their knowledge and personal experience in the group-work. It was a beneficial practice and must have helped students to write freely.

As a student, she realized that sharing knowledge and personal experince engaged in trying to make themselves understood and in understanding others.

Another student assumed that sharing knowledge and personal experience make him got knowledge from the other student.

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about learning writing skill through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**

The effect of this approach on students were significant. This approach lead the students to be successful in learning writing English since they were able to express themselves in the target language more easily because the researcher gave them trust and respect to express what they felt and thought and share it with their friends in the target language..

**Discussions**

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about learning activities through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**
2. **Positive Learning Activities Perceived by Students**

Based on the students’ perception emerged, there were four learning activities found. They were:

1. Group Work

Group work are essential features of a student centered classroom. In the group work, students interact with one another. How the students experience the learning process is influenced by their relationship with their classmates, as it was pointed out by Schmuk in Josefa J. Mardijono (2001, p.95) that “the nature of the interpersonal relationships in the classroom is a major influence on the teaching learning process.”

From the statement above, most of the students believed that group work led to the understanding that each student played an important role to create a conducive learning athmosphere. Thus, they need to co-operate, sharing and support one another to develop their writing skill.

Moreover, student felt more secure about sharing ideas and opinions in small group (Garret & Shortall, 2002). Student with one another tended not to feel anxious or afraid to make mistake as they were all at the same level and working toward the same goal.

This learning activities also assigns the student center. It was also found in the students’ perception. They stated that working with the other friends could give them more benefit such as they can share their knowledge. They also can solve the problem found together. In this learning activities, it called student-student interaction.

The effectiveness of this learning activities showed by the students in their perception also found in an experimental research conducted by Pei Long (2011), she found that it should be implemented intensively and extensively in ELT classes because the employment of such strategies proved to be more effective in improving the students’ language proficiency.

1. Translation

In translation, the students whispers a message or meaning he or she wants to express, the teacher translates it into (and may interpret it in) the target language, and the student repeat the teacher’s translation.

The student role in CLL are well define. The students freely provide meanings they wish to express, to repeat target utterances without hesitation.

From the student role, as shown above, the students particularly stated that they could understand and knew more vocabulary when their teacher translate into the target language. They stated so because they could use the vocabulary when writing in English.

1. Free Conversation

One of the characteristics of humanistic approach is students are encouraged to freely express their opinions, choose their own choice, do what they want, and take reponsibility for his choice.

In this term, the students engage in free conversation with the teacher or with other students. This might include discussion of what they learned as well as feeling they had about how they learned.

This findings of this research about free conversation in line with Rivers (1983, p.23) states that humanistic approach, students are encouraged to talk about themselves, to be open with others, and to express their feelings.

1. Analysis

In this term, students analyze and study transcriptions of target-language sentences in order to focus on particular lexical usage or on the application of particular grammar rules.

Based on the students’ perception, they perceived that vocabulary and grammar be taught in meaningful context. As they stated in finding, they learning its grammar more fun doing in the group work. This activity, also assign the student teacher. It was also found in the students’ perception.

1. **Negative Learning Activities Perceived by Students**
2. Recording

Recording was mostly emerged as negative learning activity by student. In this activity, students record conversations in the target language. The students feel uncomfortable record their conversation and feel restricted.

1. Analysis

Analysis is an activity studied a language through detailed analysis of its grammar rules. Based on the students’ perception, this activity was found as negative learning activity. The student not really understand about the grammatical rule and she felt bored.

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about sharing knowledge and personal experience through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**

Rooted in constructivist social perspective, humanistic approach tries to engange students in interactional practices. In this regard, as Arnold (1999) remarks the educator should be able to create social relations together with a positive atmosphere in the classroom and organize cooperative language work. Finding a motivating force in students which can influence the personal development of each participant in the classroom. Finally, the researcher applied one session about sharing knowledge and personal experience.

Based on the students’ perceptions, it was beneficial practice. When the students shared their experience, they began to have understanding towards each other.

The students’ perception about sharing knowledge and personal experience through humanistc approach was also found in a research conducted by Ghaith and Diab (2008) reveal that language acquisition is determined by interaction among a number of student-related and contextual factors, and the using of humanistic method of teaching can increase students’ motivation and class sociability.

1. **MTsN Ma’rang students’ perception about learning writing skill through Humanistic Approach in learning writing.**

Ability to write well is as important as oral proficiency for the students. Based on the students’ perception that majority of students felt fun in learning writing by writing on a topic choosed by themselves.

Based on Lei (2007) that humanistic approach emphasizes the importance of the inner world of the learner and places the individual’s thought, emotion and feelings at the forefront of all human development.

Based on the statement above, most of student belived that learning writing by writing on a topic choosen by themselves, freely express their opinions and choose their own choice make them more effective in improving the writing ability. Therefore, they perceived that writing as more interesting, easier, they learned more about themselves, they felt more joyful and generally better.

We may say that humanistic approach in teaching writing, in these conditions, improved academic achievement related to the lesson. What is important too, this approach brought about more positive attitudes and feelings related to the lesson making it more interesting and generally easier to learn.

The students’ perception above was also found in a paper conducted by Soviyah (2007). She thought that humanistic approach was worth considering since its main principle was bringing the learning process towards a more affective situation by combining the subject matter to be learned with the feeling, emotions, experiences, and lives of the students. In this paper, the discussion of what humanistic approach was and why it was worth considering especially in a writing class were elaborated in details.

**Conclusions**

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher states to the following conclusions:

1. Applying humanistic approach in teaching and learning process in the class was very important and needed by the students. Humanistic approach has created a cooperative and supportive group athmosphere and given positive attitude and feeling towards the lesson.
2. Sharing knowledge and personal experience was beneficial practice because the students shared their experience, they began to have understanding towards each other.
3. Learning writing by writing on a topic choosen by the students, freely express their opinions and make them to be more effective in improving the writing ability. Therefore, they perceived that writing as more interesting, easier, they learned more about themselves, they felt more joyful and generally better.

**References**

Atmowardoyo, Haryanto. 2010. *Research Methods for Language and Literature Studies.* Makassar: Badan Penerbit UNM.

Emzir. 2010. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Analisis Data.* Jakarta: Rajawali Press.

Lei, Q. 2007. *EFL Teachers’ Factors and Students’ Affect. US-China Education Review, 4*(3), 60-67. doi:10.2307/1170741

Mardijono, Josefa J. 2001. *Humanistic Strategies in the EFL Speaking Class.* A journal retrieved on february 25th 2014 from http: //puslit.petra.ac.id/journals/letters.

Soviyah. 2007. *Humanistic Approach in Action: EFL Writing Class.* TEFLIN Journal: Volume 18, No.2.

Williams, Marion and Burden, Robert L. (1997). *Psychology for Language Teachers, a Social Construcivist Approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zhang, Ling. 2010. *Conceptualizing Humanistic Competence in the Language Classroom by TJP- A Chinese Case.* International Education Studies Journal: Volume 3, No. 4.