

The Implementation of Practice in the ‘English for Content Writing’ Course

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Abstract— Universitas Gadjah Mada is one of the universities in Indonesia conducting vocational education. Vocational education provides more practice compared to theory in its curriculum. Its curriculum is required to be conformed with industry current need or situation. One of study program in Vocational College is English. It has ‘English for Content Writing’ as one of its courses. This research aims to explain the curriculum of the course and the implementation of practice where the practical of creating YouTube and Instagram contents are applied. This research also aims to present the goal achievement of the class from the perspective of the students. The result shows that the curriculum was arranged based on current situation that requires internet to spread a content. Therefore, both YouTube and Instagram are chosen due to its recency. In Indonesia, YouTube is the most accessed platform by Indonesians. Meanwhile, Instagram in Indonesia includes in the top three of the most popular social networks after Facebook. The result also presents that the students gain knowledge as well as soft skills during the semester of taking the course.

Keywords— *Vocational education, practice, english for content writing, youtube, instagram*

1 Introduction

Universitas Gadjah Mada is one of the universities in Indonesia conducting vocational higher education at faculty level. As a faculty conducting vocational education, Vocational College (Sekolah Vokasi/SV) provides around 60-70% practice-based learning and 30-40% theory-based learning. The graduates are prepared to be professionals especially in the work field [1]. SV has eight departments and 20 study programs in the level of applied bachelor. One of its study program is English, a study program that studies the use of language as a means of communication in the world of work. With transdisciplinary approach, this study program graduates applied bachelor in English with public relations skills. **There are two main types of PR now; traditional and digital.** The biggest difference between these two types of public relations is the fact digital PR needs to be considered as part of a wider online marketing strategy [2]. Vocational education requires more practice compared to theory in its curriculum. In the principle of vocational education, the comparison between practical and theoretical

activities in general is 75%: 25% (Planning and Development of Academic Innovation at the Vocational College Universitas Gadjah Mada 2016 - 2040). In Western countries, such as the United Kingdom (UK), Germany and Australia, curriculum frameworks for vocational education remain premised on behavioural accounts of the goals and process of learning [3]. In Vocational College UGM, the process of practical learning should fulfil 60-70% credits or hours compared to theoretical learning.

One of the methods to conduct practical learning is by running a project-based curriculum. Project-based curriculum of vocational education is a task-centred curriculum model which chooses, organizes and learns working knowledge by task [4]. With this method, the students are enabled to achieve learning objectives through tasks. By doing the tasks, students not only focus on achieving goals but also learn to organize the process of achieving those goals so that other knowledge and soft skills are also obtained during the learning process.

On the other side, according to Dean of Vocational College Sakarinto (2018), vocational education also requires conformity with industry current need or situation. In this era of internet, social media becomes important and is needed by industry in term of spreading information or building relationship to its public. Social media has penetrated daily life, allowing users to access, create, and interact with a wide range of information [5]. Information now become commodity that needs to be planned. The content of information is not only text. It includes rich media content, such as videos, podcasts, user-generated content and interactive product selectors [6].

According to a report titled "The State of Influencer Marketing 2018 in Indonesia: Peel Completion of Endorse Marketing Trends" released by Sociabuzz.com regarding influencer use behaviour in marketing strategies, top two social media used in digital marketing & PR practitioners are Instagram (98.8%) and YouTube (41.0%). In fact, Instagram is gaining popularity as a mode of social interaction recently. Many people, especially young people, have used this application, not only for daily communication and sharing, but also for buying and selling products [7]. Meanwhile after Google purchased YouTube, the number of professional productions on YouTube significantly increased [8].

Considering the requirement to provide practice-based learning with the conformity with industry needs, this paper aims to explain the curriculum of one of the courses in English Study Program, 'English for Content Writing' and present the implementation of practice where the practical of creating YouTube and Instagram contents are applied. This research also aims to present the goal achievement of the class from the perspective of the students.

2 Methods

The methods used in this study are document review, observation, and interview. The research objects are students of English SV UGM batch 2019. English SV UGM batch 2019 consists of the graduates of D3 English program batch 2014-2016 that continue their study in order to get D4 (applied bachelor) degree. It consists of 32 students with the most participants (42%) come from batch 2016 (during D3 program). 43% have worked less than 1 year, 39% students never experience professional working, and the rest already worked for 1-3 years.

The document review and observation are used especially to explain the curriculum preparation and implementation. The author did document review especially on Planning and Development of Academic Innovation at the Vocational College Universitas Gadjah Mada 2016 – 2040 and proposal of applied bachelor in English SV UGM. In addition, the author did

observation on current needs and issues through some sources including internet. Meanwhile to obtain the answer to the last research question, the author did interview to the participants of this class.

3 Results And Discussion

3.1 Curriculum Preparation and Implementation

In communication, there is a model known as 'who, says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect. *Who* refers to the sender of the message, *says what* is the content or message delivered, *in which channel* refers to the media used, *to whom* is the recipient of the message, and *with what* effect refers to what effect is expected. Regarding content, content in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) is interpreted as information available through media or electronic products. In Wenxiu [9], it is stated that 'information is becoming massive and multimedia, text, image, audio, video, animation, etc., can be seen everywhere'. This emphasizes that the content can be in the form of text, images, audio, video, animation, and so on. As for media related to communication, Wenxiu [9] stated that media is becoming more interactive which is the most important characteristic of new media technology development. This emphasizes that at this time, the media is becoming more interactive and it is the main character of the development of new media technology. According to Jones [10], new media is understood as a term for an explanation of the actual state of digital technology and the internet, and its impact on the surrounding culture. The media that is considered to best represent new media is the internet.

When messages in content are delivered through internet media, they will have effects that tend to be fast, concurrent, and more detailed to be evaluated. Wenxiu [9] emphasizes that under new media environment, communication process and the research of such five elements will have greater opportunities and broader prospects for development.

The existence of the internet has also affected the world of public relations (PR). According to Robert Wynne as quoted by Forbes, Public Relations (PR) as the art of communication that is able to influence the masses through the media must be able to evolve. The objective is to make public relations survive in the digital era like now [11]. Wynne added that there are five things that must be owned by PR and one of them is to have contacts. In this digital age, having contact with reporters is not enough. Public relations requires influencers as their mouthpieces. This was confirmed by Advo Indonesia, the PR agency and content marketing in its website, that the main differentiator of traditional digital PR is the ability to build connections with bloggers and influencers, who are key players in the digital space [12].

In recent years, the popularity of social media has outperformed conventional channels such as television or other mass media [13]. This then led to a shift in the pattern of distribution of information and advertisements where the use of new media (social media) became more attractive than in conventional media. Promoting through influencers on social media allows marketers to advertise through someone they know and trust. With this, the audience will not be sceptical of social media advertising because consumers believe that their influencers like the product [14]. According to a report titled "The State of Influencer Marketing 2018 in Indonesia: Peel Completion of Endorse Marketing Trends" released by Sociabuzz.com regarding influencer use behaviour in marketing strategies, digital marketing & PR practitioners choose to use Instagram (98.8%), YouTube (41.0%), Blogs (28.9%), then Twitter (26.5%) and Facebook (19.3%).

On the other hand, based on the results of the Hootsuite Social Wear research released in January 2019, internet users in Indonesia reached 150 million or 56% of the total population. 150 million people are actively using social media. The most actively accessed social media platforms are YouTube, which is used by 88% of internet users in Indonesia, followed by Facebook by 81% and Instagram with 80% users [15]. YouTube's product is video. Digital video is popular, unavoidable, and long-term. A third of online activity is spent watching videos and the average internet user is exposed to 32.2 videos in one month. In the research, it was stated that a person's understanding of the product or service increased by 74% - a figure that has major implications for public relations and marketing practitioners [16].

Back to the discussion of this course; it was designed for students to act as actors that work in the world of public relations and digital marketing. Using the principle of vocational education, this course is designed to encourage students to produce videos and images to encourage students to become the player in PR and digital marketing. Based on the explanation above, Instagram and YouTube are the two most popular channels among the people of Indonesia. As the senders of messages, students have a role in creating content that contains the message. Wenxiu [9] said that 'communicator is becoming more diverse, organization or individual, anyone can be the sender of information'. Everyone can be the sender of the message, and the role of PR is not always attached to the position. The thing to note is that Public Relations does not always refer to companies. Public relations is not limited to representing large companies, but also for small institutions and for themselves. In targeting messages to the public, PR today must understand that audiences are now more personal, and show more participation and initiative [9]. Therefore, there is a demand for the sender of the message to create content that is interesting to the target. This is because the commodity that is 'sold' is a message, where in producing content, it is expected that there is a message delivered to the target audience.

The description above becomes the background on how the curriculum of this class was prepared. Implementing the principle of 60-70% practice based, the lecturer set the curriculum into project-based in order to provoke the students to do more practice. As for the scoring system, the lecturer scores the students by considering 4 things: 15% participation, 25% assignments, 30% midterm and 30% UAS. The output from this class are three YouTube videos and Instagram feed management. Below is the lesson plan for 14 meetings of English for Content Writing class.

Table 1 Weekly Plan of English for Content Writing

| Week | Topic | Week | Topic |
|------|------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Introduction | 8 | Content Development for YouTube |
| 2 | Conceptualizing Idea | 9 | Project 1 |
| 3 | Smartphone as Media for Promotions | 10 | Evaluation on Project 1 |
| 4 | Photo & Video Editing | 11 | Project 2 |
| 5 | Discussion on Project | 12 | Evaluation on Project 2 |
| 6 | Content Development for New Media | 13 | Project 3 |
| 7 | Content Development for Instagram | 14 | Evaluation on Project 3 |

3.2 Goal Achievement

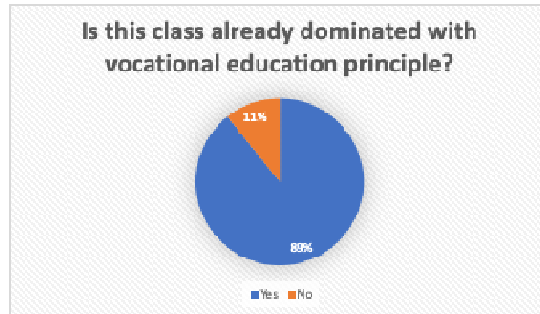


Fig. 1. Domination of Practical-based Learning

Based on the interview conducted to the students, 89% agreed that this class is dominated with vocation education principle to have practice more than theory. The author also gathered the info on what knowledge and soft-skills they achieved from the class. There are more than 6 items of knowledge that were mentioned including editing skills, technique on shooting, making storyboard, developing content idea, being director and talent, etc. Meanwhile for the soft-skills, there are more than 6 items including negotiation skills, public speaking, teamwork, bureaucracy, creative thinking, and time management. Then, when were asked on how this knowledge will benefit the students in the future, more than 4 items are mentioned including in making media advertisement, creating content, being an editor, and making company profile. The results are stated below.

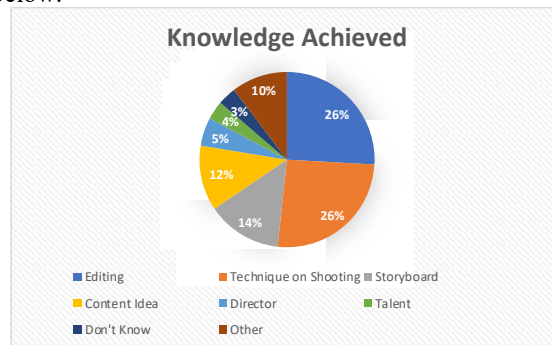


Fig. 2. Knowledge Achieved

26% students think that they get editing knowledge from this class. The editing process includes how to edit the video by software. Meanwhile, the other 26% answered technique of shooting including taking pictures/videos properly. 14% get the knowledge about making storyboards, 12% achieve the knowledge of developing content idea, which means they learned to find and develop ideas for video content. The rest learned how to a director, talent, etc and 3% cannot find yet the knowledge they achieve.

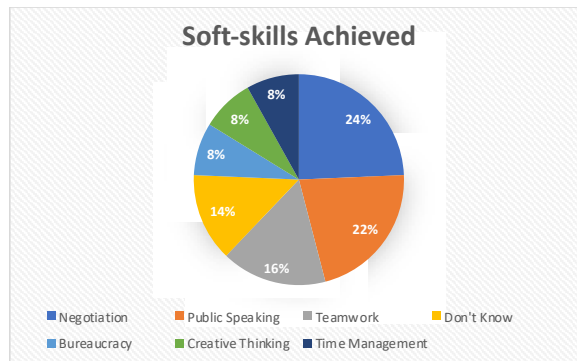


Fig. 3. Soft Skills Achieved

24% students believe that they negotiation skill is tested through various conditions like negotiations with groups and informants. 22% think their public speaking skill is achieved, 16% believes that teamwork skill is improved, and each 8% gain soft sills in bureaucracy, creative thinking, and time management. Meanwhile, 14% cannot explain yet on what soft skills they get from this class.

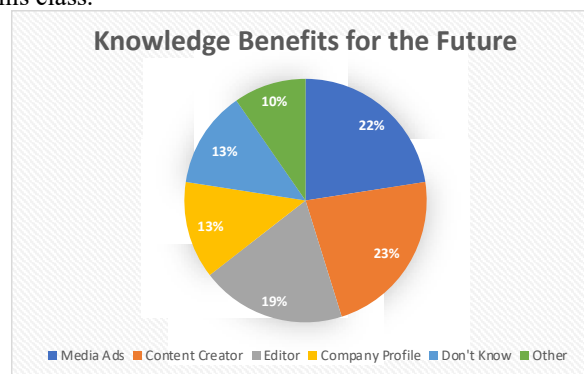


Fig. 4. Benefits of Knowledge for the Future

Then about the benefits of the knowledge they get for the future, 23% believes this project will help in creating creative content. Meanwhile, 22% think that they can use it for media advertisement (to create an interesting advertisement that can attract the consumers). 19% believes the editing skills will be useful, and 13% believes they can make company profiles from the material they get from this class. For this point, 13% cannot explain yet on how this class will help them in the future, and 10% mention other benefits like being a camera person, content writer, etc.

4 Conclusion

As a course conducted in vocational college, English for Content Writing conducts more practice than theory and the curriculum was arranged according to current need and situation especially in this digital and internet era. Based on the interview done to the students taking this course, the knowledge they achieve from taking the class are: editing skills, technique on shooting, making storyboard, developing content idea, being director and talent, etc.

Meanwhile, the soft skills they achieve are negotiation skills, public speaking, teamwork, bureaucracy, creative thinking, and time management. Then, to answer on how this knowledge will benefit the students in the future, these items were collected: making media advertisement, creating content, being an editor, and making company profile.

Since it is the first innovation for this class to the students, there are some evaluations regarding the lesson plan, material choice, project, and scoring system. The author has gathered some information on the expectation about this class and will continue to work on the data in order to create better curriculum for the next year this course offered.

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