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Exploring the Impact of Field-Based Learning on Report Writing Skills in Management Classes: A Comprehensive Analysis

Abstract

This study investigates the efficacy of field studies as a pedagogical tool to enhance report writing skills in management students, who often encounter challenges such as idea generation, sentence construction, thought organization, and low motivation during the writing process. The research primarily aims to analyze the implementation and effectiveness of field studies in teaching report writing, proposing solutions to bolster writing skills and motivation among management students. A qualitative descriptive methodology was employed, involving 25 second-semester management students and an English Language lecturer as participants. The sample was selected through purposive sampling. Data collection comprised observations and interviews, analyzed using Miles and Huberman's qualitative analysis framework, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and a process for drawing conclusions and verification. The findings reveal that field studies in report writing, as implemented at Widyagama Lumajang, utilize a structured approach comprising pre-teaching, teaching, and post-teaching stages. Notable benefits include fostering idea development from real-world experiences, enhancing research and academic writing skills, and boosting critical thinking and student motivation. This approach provides a dynamic learning environment that is both relevant and engaging. Consequently, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the application and advantages of field studies in teaching report writing in Management. It offers insights into effective strategies to address the common challenges faced by students in developing their writing skills.

Keywords: Writing skills, report text, field study, motivation, management students

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1960s, English language proficiency has gained significant importance in the educational sector worldwide. This recognition has prompted educational institutions, including those in Indonesia, to continually innovate their teaching methodologies. Notably, the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia embraced a text-based approach, placing a strong emphasis on writing skills. This approach, underlined in studies by [Nanda et al. \(2019\)](#) focuses on processes such as pre-writing, drafting, evaluating, and revising. These skills are essential for expressing thoughts and emotions, developing logical thinking, and enhancing self-expression, as highlighted by [Byrd & Abrams \(2022\)](#) and [Mamad & Vigh \(2023\)](#).

In the context of the ESP Management Department at the Widyagama Institute of Technology and Business in Lumajang, there is a particular need to enhance writing skills. Observational data suggests that students struggle with aspects of business letter writing, such as idea development, sentence translation, and text structure organization. This situation underscores the necessity for a stronger emphasis on linguistic rule application and intensive training, as argued by [Mandasari & Wahyudin \(2021\)](#) and [Yang et al. \(2022\)](#). To address these challenges, field studies have been introduced as an innovative pedagogical method. Research by [Elfirdoussi et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Hernández-De-Menéndez et al. \(2019\)](#) demonstrates that field studies can significantly improve learning experiences by providing a practical context that positively influences student behavior and attitudes. This approach is particularly effective in teaching report text writing, where students derive text content from observations, as noted by [Andueza et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Park & Paulick \(2021\)](#). Report

texts, an essential genre in English, require conveying information objectively and concisely, as [Sutrisna \(2020\)](#) points out. Thus, for higher education, focusing on the quality of writing instruction is crucial to enable students to produce competent research work. English language instructors are encouraged to employ diverse techniques and strategies to bolster students' abilities in crafting complex report texts.

This study refers upon existing research focused on the development of students' writing skills. While [Addawiyah \(2020\)](#) implemented collaborative design thinking to improve students' writing abilities, this research specifically investigates how Management class students at Widyagama Lumajang develop report text writing skills through field studies. This approach is distinct from the self-learning and literature-based methods emphasized by [Nückles et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Rofi'i et al. \(2019\)](#). Utilizing a qualitative methodology, the current study delves into the content and process of student empowerment in report writing, offering a novel perspective on the role of field studies in enhancing management education's report writing skills. Furthermore, the study is guided by two primary research questions: 1) How is the teaching of report text writing through field studies implemented at Widyagama Lumajang? 2) What are the benefits of applying this teaching approach at Widyagama Lumajang? These questions frame the study's contribution to the field of education, particularly in the realm of teaching report text writing.

The significance of this research lies in its exploration of the practical and theoretical aspects of implementing writing instruction through field studies at Widyagama Lumajang. It provides valuable insights for lecturers and educators, elucidating how field study methods can not only enhance students' report writing skills but also enrich their overall learning experiences and foster greater engagement in the learning process. Additionally, the study sheds light on the broader advantages of this teaching approach. These include improved student comprehension of the subject matter, development of analytical and critical thinking skills, and the fostering of values such as teamwork and responsibility. Overall, the findings of this study are pertinent not only to the educational context at Widyagama Lumajang but also serve as a valuable resource for other educational institutions considering the implementation of similar teaching methods in their curricula.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method, focusing on description and explanation. Descriptive research is a scientific investigation that portrays social phenomena or events related to a specific area or population. Comprehensive narrative and visual data were gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in this qualitative research to elucidate a particular topic of interest ([Sutrisna, 2020](#)). The subjects of this study were 25 sophomore Management students and an English language lecturer. The sampling was based on purposive sampling technique, meaning the selection was made according to specific criteria relevant to the research objectives, namely Management students and the English lecturer were chosen due to their knowledge or experience relevant to the research topic.

Data in this study were collected through observation and interviews. The researcher followed a process to gather data. Observations were made of the process of teaching report writing. After the observation, ten students and a lecturer were selected for interviews. The interview questions related to the teaching process and the benefits of implementing field study techniques. Data analysis is a procedure for examining collected data to draw conclusions. Qualitative analysis involves "three concurrent streams of activity: data

reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" as noted by Miles and Huberman (2018). Qualitative research requires data validity. A qualitative approach was used to collect descriptive narrative and visual data; triangulation ensures the reliability of the data (Quintão et al., 2020). The researcher employed Theoretical Triangulation and Data Source Triangulation. Theoretical Triangulation was supported by using various theoretical perspectives to analyze and observe the data. Data triangulation is a form of triangulation where the researcher collects data by obtaining information from sources relevant to the desired data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The lecturer conducts writing instruction using report texts combined with field study techniques. The activities and materials are organized in a lesson plan to guide the teaching process. Writing instruction for report texts in this paper is implemented using three techniques: pre-teaching, during teaching, and post-teaching. The first meeting was held in June 2023. Based on observation and interview results, the following detailed explanation is provided:

Pre-Teaching Observation

During the pre-teaching phase, the lecturer prepared students for the learning process by initially stimulating them with a video. This video, which pertained to companies and factories, served as a basis for discussion. Each student was then asked to express their opinions about the video. To facilitate idea exchange and assess students' prior knowledge, several questions were posed, including: (1) 'After watching the video, what do you think we will learn today?' (2) 'Have you ever visited a factory in person?' and (3) 'What type of text forms the basis of this video?'

The lecturer's follow-up questions were aimed at understanding the students' background knowledge, specifically to prepare them for learning about report texts. Instruction was conducted in both Indonesian and English to ensure comprehensive understanding. During this phase, students actively developed their thoughts about the video and related images, engaging in questioning and discussion. Notably, most students expressed their ideas in Indonesian. Consequently, to facilitate English language learning, foreign vocabulary related to the topic was written on the blackboard. This approach was intended to familiarize students with the necessary English vocabulary they might require for effective communication during the course.

During Teaching

In this phase, the lecturer presented a Report Text focusing on companies and factories. Alongside this, vocabulary and terms commonly used in Management, such as 'Managing Director', 'Executive Secretary', 'Sales Representative', 'Production Manager', and 'R&D Manager', were introduced. The lecturer's approach during this session was to explain the material while teaching, with a particular emphasis on the generic structure and linguistic features of Report Texts. The teaching methodology employed was teacher-centered, where students were primarily focused on the lecturer's presentation. However, it was observed that some students did not pay full attention to the explanation provided by the lecturer. Despite this challenge, the lecturer continued to provide examples of Report Texts relevant to the Management context and comprehensively delivered the material. Following the explanation of the material, students were then instructed to read the text

individually. This activity aimed to reinforce their understanding of the content and structure of Report Texts in a management setting.

During the interview stage, the researcher inquired about the students' learning process. The lecturer noted that the students required additional motivation to learn English. This observation was consistent with the results obtained from the interviews, where the following themes emerged:

The students require additional motivation to learn English. They seldom study English independently to enhance their English language skills. As a lecturer, I am accountable for facilitating and providing guidance so students can learn English effectively. Encouraging them to cultivate a habit of reading English texts or practicing writing during English lessons will aid in improving their skills. Any errors in writing are observed and corrected. (L-P1)

Based on interviews with a lecturer, it was revealed that students in the class had low motivation to learn English. This was reflected in their infrequent engagement in independent learning activities to improve their English skills. The lecturer recognized the need to facilitate and guide the students in effective English learning. The lecturer emphasized the importance of habituating students to read English texts and practice writing during English lessons to enhance motivation and engagement. Additionally, the lecturer observed and corrected students' writing errors as part of efforts to improve their writing skills. Therefore, the lecturer realized the necessity of providing extra support and creating a motivating learning environment to encourage students to be more active and participate in English learning. This is also supported by a statement from one of the students in an interview:

I sometimes find it hard to be motivated to learn English. The lecture's material is indeed informative, especially when discussing companies and management terms, but I often feel less involved. I believe learning English is more than just understanding texts or terms. I wish more interactions and direct practice could make us more interested. Sometimes, what we learn in class doesn't directly connect with our need to use English in the real world. So, even though the lecturer tries to teach well, I think there is room to make learning more engaging and interactive, which could help us feel more motivated to learn. (S1-P1)

Based on the interviews with the lecturer and the statement of a student, it was evident that the motivation to learn English in the class was relatively low. Students rarely engaged in independent learning activities, and the lecturer felt the need to facilitate and guide them more effectively. To increase student motivation and engagement, the lecturer emphasized the importance of familiarizing students with reading English texts and practicing writing during lessons. Observing and correcting writing errors was also part of the strategy to enhance the students' writing skills. Although the students acknowledged that the material taught was informative, they needed more involvement in the learning process. One student's statement reflected a desire for more interaction and direct practice, with the hope that English learning would be more exciting and relevant to the needs of using English in daily life. Therefore, the lecturer realized the need to provide extra support and create a more motivating learning environment for students to actively participate in English learning, including using field studies in writing report texts. Teaching writing report texts

through field studies could be engaging and interactive for students. This provides a practical and direct learning approach, allowing them to collect information and firsthand observations for inclusion in their reports.

Post-Teaching Observation

The lecturer assigned the final task to the students, which involved Writing Report Texts based on Field Studies. These field studies, or observations, were to be conducted in real-world settings such as companies or factories, with the Kertowono Tea Plantation in Lumajang serving as a potential site. For this purpose, the lecturer organized the students into several groups, each comprising 5 members.

This collaborative or group-based approach to field studies offers numerous benefits for learning. According to [Winarti & Cahyono \(2020\)](#), collaborative learning enhances the opportunity for students to use the target language (English, in this case) and collaboratively address language-related challenges, thereby fostering their skills in English. Furthermore, working in groups contributes to building a positive and engaging learning community. It encourages peer learning and teaching, which are key components of an effective collaborative learning environment.

Based on the outcomes of the interviews, the lecturer decided to ask the students to conduct field studies, emphasizing the numerous benefits this approach offers for enhancing their writing skills. In explaining this decision, the lecturer stated:

I want to implement teaching methods so they don't get bored. During field studies, students can observe directly and get ideas to develop and produce report texts. They can organize their ideas or opinions with group work based on the information they get during observations. I hope this can solve the problems faced by students. Additionally, students can learn about companies or factories that are beneficial for their career paths. (L-P2)

Interviews with professors revealed a clear intention to improve students' writing abilities by employing engaging teaching methods. These educators are focused on preventing student boredom and enhancing learning effectiveness by integrating field studies into their instructional strategies. According to the professors, direct experiences gained during field studies enable students to observe their surroundings firsthand, which is instrumental in generating ideas for report writing.

The professors highlighted the benefits of group work in these field studies. They believe that by working collaboratively, students can better organize their thoughts and opinions, drawing on the information gathered during their observations. This collaborative approach is seen as a way to bridge potential gaps in the writing process. Furthermore, professors emphasized that field studies offer students valuable insights into real-world business environments, such as companies and factories. These experiences are not only beneficial for their immediate learning objectives but also play a significant role in aiding students in planning their future career paths. This educational approach's effectiveness is exemplified by a statement from one of the students during the interview:

I am excited about this final project. The field study at Kertowono Tea Plantation has allowed us to learn directly from a real-world environment. During observations, we collected data and new ideas that we couldn't have gotten from classroom theory alone. Group work also adds value as we share perspectives and solve problems together. It's

not just about writing a report; it's also about developing our communication and collaborative skills. Through this task, I also gained insights into the tea industry, which are extremely useful for my future career. Our professor has truly provided us with a valuable learning experience. (S2-P2)

The interviews with professors and the response from a student demonstrate the professors' strong commitment to improving students' writing skills through innovative teaching methods, with a particular focus on field studies. The professors believe that direct experiences gained from field studies enable students to deeply observe their environment, discover new ideas, and gather practical data that cannot be obtained through classroom theory alone. Furthermore, field studies are chosen as a learning strategy to prevent student boredom and to bridge gaps in the writing process, especially through collaborative group work.

An interviewed student expressed enthusiasm for the final project, emphasizing the added value of group work in organizing thoughts and jointly addressing challenges. The student also noted that the field study provided insightful exposure to the tea industry, which was beneficial for future career planning. Overall, this learning strategy aims to develop writing skills while simultaneously enhancing communication and collaborative abilities, offering a comprehensive learning experience for students in preparation for their future careers. The second meeting was conducted on June 26, 2023. This meeting was dedicated to student presentations regarding their tasks and involved evaluations of their work.

The lecturer facilitated a session where each group was given the opportunity to present their report texts to the class through oral presentations. These presentations were prepared in advance, with the text submissions being uploaded a day before the scheduled presentation date. To enhance the impact of their presentations, students also provided visual displays alongside their oral explanations. During these presentations, the lecturer encouraged students to actively engage by asking questions and discussing the findings of each group. Despite this encouragement, participation was limited as only a few students took the initiative to pose their questions. This aspect of the session highlighted the need for more active involvement from all students in future discussions.

Following the presentations, the lecturer undertook the task of evaluating the report texts. The evaluation criteria focused on several key aspects: the clarity of the information provided, the organization of the text, the appropriateness and accuracy of language use, and the overall effectiveness of the presentation. To ensure a fair and comprehensive assessment, the lecturer employed a grading rubric specifically designed for evaluating these student tasks. Therefore, by incorporating field studies into teaching report text writing, students can develop their observation skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the lesson material. This direct approach encourages active learning and helps students connect theoretical concepts with real-world applications

Advantages of Teaching Writing Report Texts Through Field Studies

The research findings concerning the efficacy of teaching report writing through field studies have underscored the positive perceptions held by the respondents. A majority of the students emphasized the multifaceted benefits of this teaching approach. They particularly highlighted how field studies aid in developing ideas, providing direct experiences, enhancing research skills, applying academic writing skills, fostering critical

thinking, and boosting motivation. These aspects are crucial for comprehensive learning in report writing. An interview result, which further substantiates these findings, revealed that:

"From my perspective, the approach really simplifies and streamlines the process of idea generation. It's not just about getting ideas but developing them in a way that's more structured and effective." (S1-P1)

"What stands out to me about field studies is how they bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Specifically, they help us to directly apply our academic writing skills in a way that's closely aligned with the specific requirements of our majors. It's like bringing the real-world context directly into our learning process." (S2-P2)

"In my opinion, field studies are a game-changer, especially when it comes to research skills. They provide us with a hands-on approach to learning how to observe and collect data, which is a crucial part of our research methodology for the next semester. It's one thing to learn about research in a classroom, but it's entirely different to actually practice these skills in a real-world setting," (S3-P2)

Student 1 (S1-P1) reflects on the effectiveness of field studies in idea development. They emphasize that field studies not only aid in generating ideas but also in structuring and refining them. This student values how field studies simplify the creative process, making it more structured and effective, which is crucial for their academic growth. Meanwhile, Student 2 (S2-P2) highlights the practical application of academic writing skills through field studies. They appreciate how these studies bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. By linking academic writing to the specific requirements of their majors, field studies provide a context-rich learning environment. This enables students to apply their classroom learning in real-world scenarios, thus enhancing their understanding and skills.

Besides, Student 3 (S3-P2) discusses the enhancement of research skills through field studies. They point out the unique opportunity these studies provide for hands-on learning in observation and data collection. This approach is seen as invaluable for their upcoming semester's research methodology. The student stresses the difference between theoretical learning and practical application, noting how field studies offer a more tangible and engaging way to learn and practice research skills. In essence, these responses collectively underscore the multifaceted benefits of field studies, ranging from idea development to the practical application of academic skills and enhancement of research methodologies. Each student's perspective sheds light on different aspects of how field studies contribute significantly to their educational experience and skill development.

"Writing report texts through field studies has notably improved my ability to structure my writing based on the findings I obtain. It's not just about writing; it's about organizing the information in a coherent and logical manner. I find this approach much more effective than traditional methods. It compels me to think critically about how to best present my observations and insights in a structured report format." (S4-P3).

"I believe that the process of writing report texts through field studies significantly develops our critical thinking skills. During the writing process, we are constantly challenged to analyze and evaluate our findings, to make connections between different pieces of

information, and to present our thoughts in a clear and concise manner. This constant engagement with the material at a deeper level fosters a more robust critical thinking ability." (S5-P4)

"In my opinion, field studies have a unique way of increasing my motivation to write report texts. Especially when working in groups, I find the collaborative aspect very effective. It's not just about individual learning; it's about sharing ideas, challenging each other's thoughts, and collectively working towards a comprehensive report. This group work aspect of field studies keeps me engaged and motivated, and I believe it significantly improves my writing abilities." (S6-P5)

Student 4 (S4-P3) reflects on how field studies have refined their approach to writing report texts, emphasizing the value of structuring their work based on the findings they gather. They note that this method is far more effective than traditional approaches, as it demands a coherent organization of information and encourages critical analysis of the data. This student appreciates the way field studies compel them to think methodically about presenting their observations, thereby enhancing the quality of their writing. Besides, student 5 (S5-P4) delves into the impact of field studies on critical thinking skills. They highlight that the process of writing report texts based on field observations necessitates a deep engagement with the material, fostering their ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information. This ongoing intellectual challenge, according to the student, is instrumental in developing a stronger capacity for critical thinking, a skill that transcends the confines of academic writing and extends to broader areas of problem-solving and decision-making.

Lastly, Student 6 (S6-P5) speaks about the motivational boost and collaborative learning experiences that field studies bring to the table. They find that working in groups on field studies not only enhances their writing abilities but also keeps them more engaged and motivated. The collaborative aspect of field studies, where ideas are shared, and perspectives are challenged, provides a dynamic learning environment. This group work, as the student points out, is effective in improving writing skills and makes the process of learning more interactive and enjoyable. Together, these responses paint a vivid picture of how field studies in report writing nurture a range of skills in students, from structured and analytical writing to critical thinking and collaborative learning, all of which are crucial for their academic and professional development.

Discussion

This study explores the effectiveness of teaching report writing through field studies, revealing the advantages of this method in alignment with the constructivist learning theories proposed by Vygotsky and Piaget. These theories emphasize the importance of direct experience and social interaction in learning. The findings support this, showing how field-based approaches can enrich the learning process by allowing students to apply theory in real-world contexts (Erbil, 2020; Huang, 2021). In the pre-teaching phase, the lecturer prepares students with activities designed to stimulate critical thinking and learning readiness. This strategy supports the active learning theory proposed by Massey & Strong, (2023). For example, using videos to spark discussion reinforces student understanding based on prior experiences, a fundamental principle in constructivist theory (Aura et al. 2021).

Before implementing field studies, the lecturer typically used traditional methods centered on their role, often correcting students' writing errors during the teaching process. This approach tends to reduce student engagement in the writing process. Therefore, the solution used in this research was to implement field studies. The research findings indicate that student engagement increases when they are actively involved in learning, which supports the importance of more interactive and student-focused learning methods (McDavid et al., 2018). Field studies in teaching report writing adopt Kolb's principles of experiential learning, emphasizing direct experience, reflective observation, abstract thinking, and active experimentation (McDavid et al., 2018). Through field studies, students can integrate real-life experiences into their writing abilities, enhancing observation skills and deepening their understanding and critical thinking skills, in line with Eyler's (2009) findings on the benefits of experience-based learning.

Furthermore, the application of field studies reflects the principles of problem-based learning (PBL), where students learn by solving problems in real-life situations, enhancing motivation, and developing cognitive skills (Hidayati et al., 2020). This research also highlights the importance of group work in learning, in line with Vygotsky's social learning theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction (Nurfaidah, 2018). In group work, students share knowledge and solve problems together, strengthening the elements of collaborative learning (Zhang et al., 2019). Thus, the findings of this research affirm the effectiveness of teaching report writing through field studies in enhancing student engagement and understanding. This approach supports constructivist, active, and experiential learning theories, promoting collaborative learning and social interaction. It is relevant to contemporary educational needs and prepares students with essential skills to face future challenges. The practical implications of this research provide valuable insights for educators in integrating innovative, experience-oriented teaching methods into the curriculum to enhance overall learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on teaching report writing through field studies at Widyagama, reveals a multi-stage educational approach, encompassing pre-teaching, teaching, and post-teaching phases. In the pre-teaching phase, students are engaged through videos and discussions, designed to stimulate their critical thinking and prepare them for the practical aspects of the course. This preparatory stage sets the foundation for the subsequent teaching phase, where the lecturer introduces specific report texts and relevant management vocabulary, with an emphasis on structure and linguistic features.

The core of this approach lies in the direct application of field studies, enabling students to observe, experience, and collect data from real-world environments. This hands-on approach is further reinforced through group work and post-teaching discussions, which not only enhance the learning experience but also encourage active student participation. The students' responses in the study highlight the manifold benefits of this approach, such as increased motivation, development of academic writing skills, valuable hands-on experience, and a deeper understanding of theoretical concepts. Moreover, it facilitates the development of essential skills like observation, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

However, the research acknowledges certain limitations. One significant concern is the partial effectiveness of this method for students who are less motivated or have different

learning styles. This observation suggests the need for more inclusive teaching strategies that can cater to a diverse range of learning preferences. Consequently, future research avenues could involve a longitudinal study to assess the long-term impact of field studies on students' writing skills and critical thinking abilities. Comparing this method with other teaching approaches could also provide deeper insights into its relative effectiveness. Furthermore, there's an opportunity to explore the adaptability of this method in various subject areas and among students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles, thereby broadening its applicability and effectiveness in different educational settings. In summary, while the field studies approach at Widyagama demonstrates significant potential in enhancing report writing skills and other key competencies, ongoing research and adaptation are necessary to optimize its effectiveness for a broader student population.

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