

## THE USE OF DECONSTRUCTED MOVIE-BASED WRITING TO FOSTER STUDENTS' CREATIVE THINKING

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### **Abstract**

*In EFL teaching and learning, writing is one of important language skills which help students show their ideas, thought, and attitudes. Nevertheless, the phenomenon nowadays shows that EFL students cannot express their clear, correct, comprehensible, and creative ideas because of the lack of creative thinking skills they possessed. This research aimed at showing the implementation of deconstructed movie-based writing to foster students' creative thinking skill and describing the students' creative thinking skill reflected when they were taught deconstructed movie-based writing. This research used descriptive qualitative design. The data were collected from classroom observation, field note, documentation of the process of teaching creative writing using deconstructed movie-based writing and the students' writing performance to know their creative thinking. The data were analyzed descriptively. The result revealed that the use of deconstructed movie-based writing to foster students' creative thinking works well. There were three criteria of creative thinking skill which are improved from the first meeting to the last meeting; they are image, characterization, and voice. However, the story criterion was decreased on the second meeting compared with the first meeting and improved on the third meeting. The students' creative thinking skill was improved after they were taught deconstructed movie-based writing.*

**Keywords:** *Deconstructed movie, writing, creative thinking*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In EFL teaching and learning, writing is one of important language skills which help students show their ideas, thought, and attitudes besides as a result in increased practice of using language. When they come into real life, writing becomes the essential part of communication for sharing thought, persuading and motivating others. People have right to write public or personal writing for some reasons to audience.

Learning to write in English as L2 or foreign language is different from learning to write in L1 language, as (Shafer, 2006 : 5) stated that not only different in language system, but also the meaning represented. The phenomenon nowadays shows that EFL students are not able to express their clear, correct, comprehensible, and creative ideas and because of the lack of creative thinking skills they possessed. This is shown by the fact that there are extremely very few students who apply their creative thinking skills for writing. The teaching approach used by teacher in teaching writing also influence the students how to freely express their ideas. Students also may lack of writing exercises and activities so the results of performance and achievement are unsatisfactory.

There must be the need to foster students' creative thinking skills in teaching creative writing by giving joyful activities through deconstructed movie-based writing. The activities start by watching films until climax, then continuing the plot of the story based on the students' creativity.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

“A simplistic view of writing is assumed as written language is simply the graphic representation of spoken language ....” (Brown, 2001:335). In other words, writing is language that has system of words, character, and signs which has a function to communicate between people. Hedge (2005:10) also supported that writing is not merely on serving accurate and complex sentences or phrases, but also providing a tool of

communication for sharing thought, information, or arguments for the audience and “writing is also social because it is a social artifact and is carried out in a social setting or social interaction” (Cushing Weigle,2002:19). One of the important things is that writing helps learners to learn. It guides them to have an opportunity to make journey with the language, to go out of the box from what they have learned (Reimes,1993).

In Ahlsén and Lundh’ article, Cushing Weigle found that the writing ability or writing skills could be seen from several point of views; a social and cultural phenomenon and as a cognitive activity (2002:14).

### **Writing as a Social or Cultural Phenomenon**

Written communication by using English as a Second or Foreign language need to be essentially determined by the situation where the people communicate to another. Cultural difference aspect plays such the important rules in writing when people come to structure and discourse. The phenomenon happened when Brown brings up Kaplan’s study, which he sums up by finding out that English language learners have predispositions that come from their native or first languages, when they come to organizing and structuring their writing (2001:338).

### **Writing as a Cognitive Activity**

Cushing Weigle also finds that in reality, the authors use their time for planning and editing their work for both organization and content, as well as taking the audience into consideration (2002:22-23). As Strömquist says,” a writer goes through when writing is controlled by an over-arching factor; a component within the writer’s writing ability, through which the different thought processes in the writing takes place “(2007:32), while Brown tries to link writing and thinking skills, “Written products are often the result of thinking” (2001:335). In writing process, the writers need also cognitive activities to activate their ideas and argumentation into the product as the authentic writing. (2001: 347).

## **The important of Essay Writing**

Essay writing is one of the kinds of writing. Ali & Yunus (2004) stated the essay writing can be in the form of descriptive, cause and effect, narrative, compare and contrast, process, argumentative and division and classification. In teaching writing, especially in writing process, the teachers commonly focus on the mechanics of writing including sentence structure, tenses and cohesion, and emphasis less on generating (Johari, 2004:35). “Generating idea is an important step in academic essay writing” (2004:36). What the teachers focus causes the students cannot express their thoughts in writing freely and creatively because they were afraid of making some errors on sentence structure, tenses, and cohesion.

## **Deconstructing Films**

In line with the meaning of film, Anderson (2008: 1-2) on her dissertation stated, “In writing instruction, film is a pedagogical tool with a wide range of theoretical and practical applications. Composition scholarship and research commonly identifies film as a form of communication, a kind of language that produces meaning through separate technologies and discourses of the camera, lighting, editing, sound, and mise-en-scene.” It means that there will be the process system work together to present an aural-visual narrative and to communicate social, cultural, and political values.

While, the term deconstruction is defined “something like conceptually decomposing the literary/artistic work into separate components looking for items inside that subvert the explicit and original intention of the work, as a new way to analyze culture products” (2008: 5-6).

## **Deconstructing films vs. Writing**

For some writing composition given by English language teachers, film (and other media) can help to start a process of getting on the

construction of representation and its representation of realities in written (Berlin, 1996). “Students can understand how different media communicate; they critique film arguments using literary and critical cultural frameworks; they begin to recognize that meaning is constructed based on film codes and conventions as well as the social-cultural backgrounds of its ‘readers’” (George & Trimbur, 2001: 77).

In these cases, the film text can be assumed the same as writing objectives (e.g., the exploration of narrative themes, the discussion of social-cultural problems, the investigation of film, culture, and ideology, and the study of film as composition and argument). (Anderson, 2008)

The researcher chose the film as a media in writing because film can be used to stimulate the students’ imagination so that they can write or continue the story easily because they have already had the image of the story from the film. It will be different with the situation, if the students are asked to write or continue the story without watching film, they will have difficulty in writing or continuing the plot of the story.

### **Creative Thinking Skills**

Creativity is something that people cannot find everyday life. Fehér (2015: 64) states that people use their creativity by joining the elements of a language in the way that people have never heard before and show their thoughts that are truly theirs. There will be the process of making decisions in situations that people never did before, and shape new ideas, improvise them beyond what are designed to. As Kurtz also supported,

“Creativity is a fascinating phenomenon. We typically view it in terms of thinking outside the box, in this way generating partly unexpected, unconventional, or novel ideas. Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes, and having fun” (2015: 78)

Creativity need special skills that something differently, moving laterally to the side track and finding that it makes complete sense and it is

called Creative thinking skills. (Bono,2009). Cottrell points that creative thinking skills are the skills which have the attitude and self-confidence naturally. Somehow, creativity in fact cannot be predicted, less structured and ordered, “Creative thinking skills use very different approaches to critical thinking skills. They involve a much more relaxed, open, playful approach. ....” (2016: 45)

In writing, Cottrell also shows that creative thinking skills involves the process of learning for students to arrange and apply them into specific contexts, looking at the situations in different way, finding the alternative explanations, and formulating new ideas to reach positive outcome.

Mozaffari (2012) cited in Suarez (2015) provided the analytical rubric to assess creativity in writing, there are the four criteria to determine whether the writing categorizes as creative or not, they are image (maximal use of significant details and minimal use of abstraction, generalization, and judgment), characterization (maximal use of characters’ physical appearance, action, thought, symbol, etc. to reveal characters), voice (maximal use of images to make the voice appealing) and story (the use of narrative to convey purpose).

### **Deconstructing Films to Foster Creative Thinking Skills**

For some composition and English teachers, film (and other media) can help begin a process of inquiry on the construction of representation and its representation of realities (Berlin, 1996). Students ‘read’ and/or produce film to understand how different media communicate; they critique film arguments using literary and critical cultural frameworks; they begin to recognize that meaning is constructed based on film codes and conventions as well as the social-cultural backgrounds of its ‘readers’ (George & Trimbur, 2001, p. 77).

## **Previous Study**

There was another research which had the same focus on students' creative thinking skills was dissertation written by Anderson (2015) entitled "Destructing Film in composition: Developing critical thinking skills through the study of film in first-year composition". This research merely focuses on how creative or critical thinking skills possessed by students bring them to feel new environment.

## **METHOD**

The research design of this study was descriptive qualitative because the data was in the form of words or sentences (Moleong, 2006). This descriptive study aims to describe the use of deconstructed movie-based writing to foster students' creative thinking as well as the students' creative thinking reflected when they were taught deconstructed movie-based writing.

The research subject was undergraduate students of English education department in batch 2014 at University of PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya. However, the researcher limited the research subject; it was merely 12 students from one of the classes in batch 2014 who will participate in this study since there were some students who did not participate in all meetings (three meetings). That batch was deliberately chosen by the researcher because they got Creative Writing course in this semester and they have got Writing I, II, and III course at the previous semesters in which the basic skills of writing an essay had been taught. Therefore, the researcher assumed that they had been able to write an essay well.

The data of this study was the students' creative thinking which were expressed in their creative writing performance. The source of data in this study was the students' creative writing performance. The data were collected through classroom observation, field note, and documentation of

the process of teaching deconstructed movie-based writing and the students' creative writing performance.

The procedure of collecting data in this study was started by asking permission to the head of English education department for conducting a research. After having the permission, the researcher prepared the materials of creative writing, chose 3 films and arranged 3 lesson plans for applying the use of deconstructed movie-based writing to foster the students' creative thinking. Next, the researcher set up the rubric as a guideline for assessing the students' creative thinking in their creative writing performance. The rubric was adopted from Mozaffari's framework cited in Suarez (2015).

After all preparations for taking the data were ready, the researcher took the data three times. Before the students continued writing the plot of the story until the end, they were given some activities to stimulate their thought in order that they were able to write and express their thoughts smoothly. After doing some pre-activities, the students watched the film then the researcher stopped the film when the plot is in the climax and she asked the students to write and continue the plot of the story until the end.

Since this study used descriptive qualitative design, the data were analyzed descriptively. The researcher firstly analyzed the process of the implementation of the use of deconstructed movie-based writing. Therefore, classroom observation was undertaken. The researcher then analyzed the students' creative thinking from the way they continue and compose the ending of the story creatively. In this case, the researcher used creative writing assessment rubric. To avoid subjectivity in analyzing the data, the researcher involved 2 raters from creative writing lecturers.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Before implementing how to teach deconstructed movie-based writing to foster the students' creative thinking, the researcher gave three



activities in each meeting to stimulate their thought in order that they were able to write and express their thoughts smoothly. For the first meeting, there were three kinds of activities, such as: Thank-You Letters, A Postcard Home and Cartoon Treasure Hunt. These activities were done before watching the video of Mr. Bean entitled “Back to School”. It was adapted from Anae (2014).

In this Thank-You Letters activity, the students were asked to take one picture of *gift* given by the teacher. The pictures can be teddy bear, painting, watch, flower, mobile phone, birthday cake, etc. The teacher told them about the situation “*Yesterday was their birthday and they received this present from someone special*”. The students started to think and write the letter using the useful language given by the teacher. After finished writing the letter, they directly submitted it and the teacher asked some of them to demonstrate their work.

In A Postcard Home activity, the teacher divided the students into groups and she gave each group one postcard. Then, the teacher elicited the answers from the question of “*what do you write on postcards when you are on holidays?*” After that, the teacher gave instructions to the students to discuss among the group, where the place is and write down a short message to friends or family. The teacher also asked the students to decorate the postcard.

While in Cartoon Treasure Hunt, the students were asked to describe and narrate the events based on the cartoon sequence given by the teacher. These were the following instructions: grouping the students into 3 people, giving one picture for each group with different cartoon sequence, asking the students to write a sentence which describes what happened in the picture and narrate the events from the beginning until the end, reminding the students to use an appropriate tense in narrating the story, exchanging work with other groups to have peer-checking.

After giving those three activities, the teacher invited the students to watch Mr. Bean’s movie entitled “Back to School” written by Ciaran

Murtagh & Andrew Jones. Before playing the movie, the teacher gave an explanation to the students what to do. The teacher distributed paper to all students and then she played the movie until the climax of the story. After that, the students were asked to guess what happened next and continue the story based on their creativity and imagination in the written form on a piece of paper. They continued the plot until the story was ended. After finished writing the story, the students submitted their work to the teacher.

The second meeting, there were also three kinds of activities such as: frame poetry, haiku, and metaphor poetry. These activities were adopted from Kent & Philips (2007). In Frame Poetry activity, the students were asked to choose a topic about food. Then, the teacher gave an example how to do the frame poetry. The students got a piece of paper and started to fill in the blank. They did the activity individually. The example can be seen below.

I love _____ because _____
I love _____ because _____
I love _____ because _____
But I hate _____ because _____

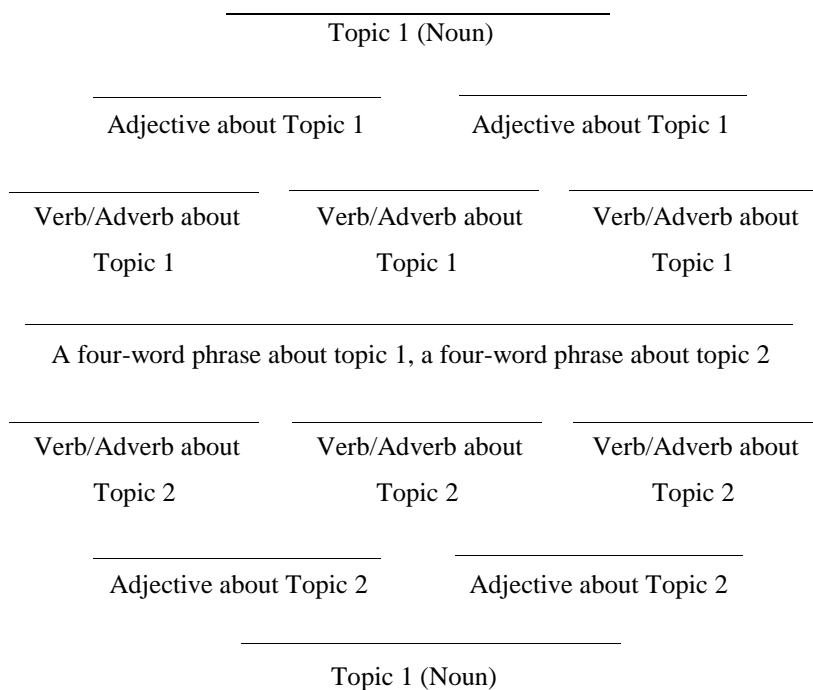
The second activity was Haiku. This type of activity was imaginative poem and brainstorming. The purpose was to describe objects and feelings. In this activity, the students were asked to choose the topic cards and cutting them up into small pieces, choose a word with many associations, asking the students to provide as many words as they can be connected with this word. They were divided into small groups which consist of not more than three students. Next, they were asked to write as many haiku as they can.

The third activity in the second meeting was Metaphor Poetry. A metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things without using “like” or “as”. Using the frame below, create a metaphor poem about someone important to you. The following is the example of metaphor poetry:

<b>(person)</b> To	e.g. To my lovely <b>husband</b>
<b>(food)</b> You are	You are as sweet as an <b>ice cream</b>
<b>(weather)</b> You are	You are my <b>sunshine</b> in my life
<b>(furniture)</b> You are	You are a comfortable <b>chair</b>
<b>(transportation)</b> You are	You are as fun as a <b>sport car</b>
<b>(clothing)</b> You are	You are a warm <b>jacket</b>
<b>(part of the house)</b> You are	You are a <b>guest house</b> fulfilled with joy
<b>(colour)</b> You are	You are <b>red</b> just like a heart full of love
<b>(animal)</b> You are	You are as cute as <b>kitten</b>
<b>(time of year)</b> You are	You are <b>December</b> , the best time of the year

The last activity was watching Mr. Bean’s movie entitled “Lord Bean” created by Ciaran Murtagh & Andrew Jones. The same like the first meeting, the teacher prepared the movie of Mr. Bean. Before playing the movie, the teacher gave an explanation to the students what to do. The teacher distributed paper to all students and then she played the movie until the climax of the story. After that, the students were asked to guess what happened next and continue the story in the written form on a piece of paper. After finished writing the story, the students submitted their work to the teacher.

In the third meeting, the first activity was Diamante Poem (taken from Kent & Philips, 2017). Diamante poem is used to describe feelings and characteristics. The instructions to do this activity are: to create a diamante poem, first, come up with two opposing topics (Cats/dogs; light/dark). Then use the poem frame below, which asks you to use different parts of speech to describe your topics.



The second activity in this meeting was Freaky Pables (Hadfield, 1990). The steps of how to use the activity are: divide the students into a small group of three or four prepare the story of pables (Cinderella, The Sleeping Beauty, the Four Little Pigs, The Frog Prince, and The Little Red Riding Hood), distribute the example of the picture “The Little Red Riding Hood,” discuss the story with the students including the moral story, make it sure, it has happy and predictable endings, give them one fairy story for each group and have the students to come up with their best ideas to continue the story, ask the students to create the new endings for the fairy tale, ask the students to write the moral message of the story.

The third activity was Cafe Portraits (taken from Hadfield, 1990). The steps to do the activity are (1) preparing pictures of different people. It can be a single person or in a couple. The students tried to get a range of different types: old, young, happy, sad, etc, (2) before handing the pictures to the students, open a discussion. Asking them to discuss with a partner:

what they will do in a cafe, what they are wearing, what they will order, what things make them happy, (3) eliciting the answer and writing down on the whiteboard, (4) in pairs, they should choose a picture and start to describe. The description can be: who the person is, what they are doing, what makes them sad, etc. Further, they also should describe the appearance and the character.

The last activity was watching Mr. Bean's story entitled "Friendship" by Ciaran Murtagh & Andrew Jones. The same like the first meeting, the teacher prepared the video of Mr. Bean. Before playing the video, the teacher gave an explanation to the students what to do. The teacher distributed paper to all students and then she played the video until the climax. After that, the students were asked to guess what happened next and continue the story in the written form on a piece of paper. After finished writing the story, the students submitted their work to the teacher.

To know whether deconstructed movie-based writing gave an improvement to the students' creative thinking skill or not, the researcher analyzed the students' creative writing performance. The result of analyzing the students' creative thinking skill reflected when they were taught deconstructed movie-based writing can be seen from the following tables:

Table 5.1 Average Score

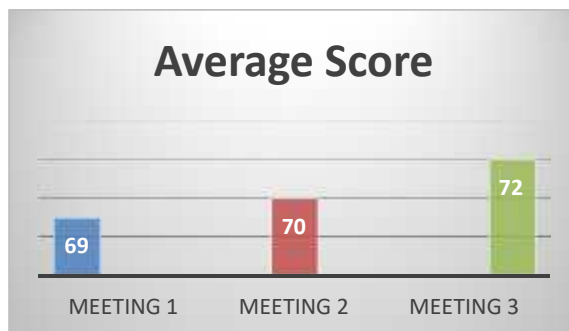
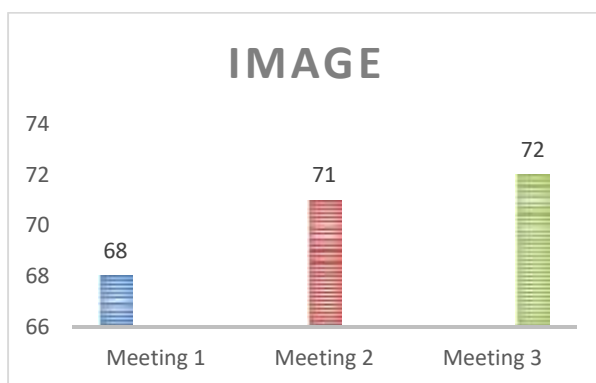


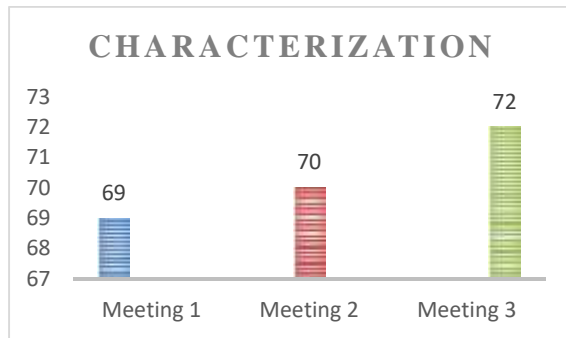
Table 1 presents the average score of overall meetings. For the first meeting, the average score is 69 (sixty nine). While for the second meeting, the average score shows 70 (seventy), and for the last meeting, it obtains 72 (seventy two). The average score of three meetings is taken from the scores of twelve students during creative writing class. From the table above, it indicates that the students' creative thinking skill is increased every meeting. The third meeting is significantly increased compared with the second meeting. It can be concluded that the implementation of deconstructed movie-based writing gave a positive effect on the students' creative thinking skill.

Table 2 Image Criteria



In assessing creative writing performance, the researcher create assessment rubric which consists of four criteria: image, characterization, voice and story. In regard to the result of image criterion as shown in Table 2, it indicates statically different. The findings for image criteria show that there is a significant difference between meeting 1, meeting 2 and meeting 3. The average score of image criteria for the third meeting is higher than the other two meetings, which is 72; whereas for meeting 1 is 68 and meeting 2 is 71. Thus, the results of image criteria reveal that the students are able to use several significant details. In other words, they are significantly more than abstractions, generalization, and judgments.

Table 3 Characterization Criteria



In reference to criterion characterization, it is reported that the students are able to use several character physical appearance, action, thought, symbol to reveal characters while they are doing the creative writing task. Further, average score for meeting 3 is still the highest for characterization criteria. Therefore, the students' ability in using criterion characterization can be categorized as good.

Table 4 Voice Criteria

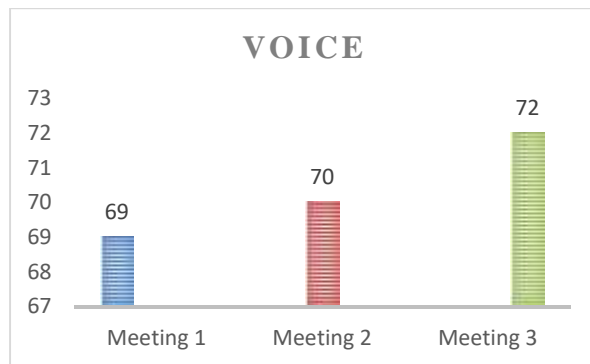
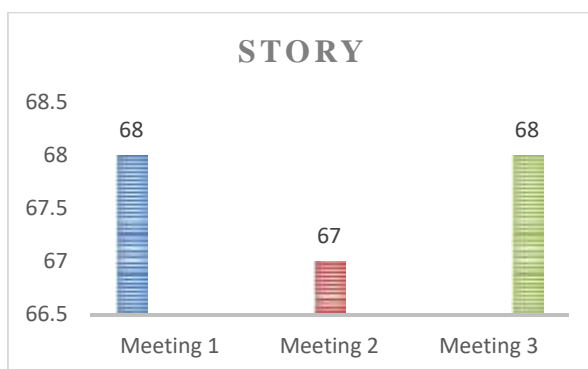


Table 4 describes about voice criteria. The voice criterion includes several uses of images to make the voice appealing. The table above shows twelve students' average score in using criterion voice in doing the creative writing through Mr. Bean's story. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a progress on students' performance of voice criteria from meeting 1 up to meeting 3.

Table 5 Story Criteria



As shown in Table 5, the story criterion is the last criterion in assessing creative writing task for the students. From the table, meeting 1 and meeting 3 have similar average score, which is 68 while meeting 2 is 67. The story criterion highlights the use of narrative to convey purpose. Majority of the students in batch 2014, E class are workers. They attend the class in the evening right after they finish working. The result above indicates that the students are already tired or exhausted while they are doing the task. They seem still have difficulty in using narrative and need more time to accomplish it. That's why the chart shows that average scores in meeting 2 are lower than meeting 1 and meeting 3.

To know further the improvement of creative writing skill, the researcher tried to analyze the creative writing performance of each student. There has been an increase score of student A among those three meetings. In meeting 1, student A reached 68 whereas for meeting 2 was 72. On the other hand, the average score of student A grew at 74. To sum up, average score in three different meetings displayed different results. The number for meeting 1 rose dramatically to meeting 2 and in meeting 3 represented the largest result.

The average score of student B from three meetings showed diverse tendencies. The number of meeting 1 firstly peaked at 68 and grew



sharply at 71 for meeting 2. Student B showed continuous slight rise in his performance, with the number of approximately at 75. All in all, student B has tried his best in creative writing class.

On the first meeting the score of student C was great, it peaked at 66. However, it decreased dramatically at 61 on meeting 2. In meeting 3, the score slightly decreased again by 60. There was a tendency, it happened because the student was very tired after working all day in doing the task during creative writing class. That is why; this student could not focus and concentrate in doing the task.

The creative writing performance of student D slightly rose from the first meeting to the last meeting. The largest number was in form meeting 3, which was 75. The second largest number was in form meeting 2, which was 72. And the smallest number was meeting 1, which was 71. So we can say that the highest number of the average score of creative writing was in form of meeting 3 and the least in form of meeting 1. There are different 4 points between meeting 1 and meeting 3.

The highest score of student E was in meeting 3, it reached 71. Meanwhile the others each represented about 68 and 69 points. The student reached 1 point respectively from meeting 1 to meeting 2. Also, student E on the last meeting increased 2 points, which was 71. It confirms that student E was consistently increased his performance in creative writing class.

It can be seen from the creative writing performance of students F that the point went up slightly from meeting 1 to meeting 3. The point of meeting 1 was 68, on meeting 2 was 69, and meeting 3 was 75. The score was relatively low, starting first meeting. However, student F grew steadily by 6 points from meeting 2 to meeting 3. Overall, we can see a clear average score of student F increased sharply in subject of creative writing.

Student G's score was higher in meeting 3 than in meeting 1 and 2. To begin, student G started at 67 points for the beginning. It then climbed up 3 points to 70 for meeting 2 and ended approximately at 71 points for

the last meeting. Interestingly, this student achieved his score higher and passed the subject of Creative Writing class.

Student H did a remarkable progress in creative writing class. Student H was well ahead in meeting 2 (the score was 73) compared to meeting 1 (the score was 70) and meeting 3 (the score was 72). It was clear from the overall meetings, student H was pretty much dominating in meeting 2, but there was a considerable decrease point in meeting 3 became 72 points.

The total growth score of student I went down to about 71 in meeting 2. From that time, the student has been performed gradually growing again although it increases slowly down. The average score between meeting 1 and meeting 3 remains stable. As it is observed, the progress of improvement of student I went ahead in finishing his task.

Student J has made a significant improvement in creative writing class over one semester. Initially, he was ahead in meeting 3 than the other two meetings. In meeting 3, the score showed 70, meeting 2 was 69, and meeting 1 was 67. In accomplishing his work, he was struggle hard and did his best. In summary, student J has done a remarkable progress in class.

There was a major increase of student K's score on the second meeting (it was 71) compared with the first meeting (it was 65). Meanwhile, on the third meeting, the score was slightly increased to 72. Student K showed a notable increase in his work. Most changes has made from meeting 1 to meeting 2. On these grounds, we concluded by saying the performance of student K in meeting 3 was outstanding when we compare the score of meeting 1 and meeting 2.

Student L had a good score in meeting 1 compared with the other meetings. Among the three meetings, this student dropped the average score into 67 points from 72 points. We were really surprised with the result since this student was an active student and had a good ability in English. The reasons of exhausted and felt sleepy become the major problem for this student in finishing his work. It can be concluded that even a smart student

cannot guarantee that he/she can obtain a good score. However, mood and feelings of a student need to be considered in the teaching learning process.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of data analysis above, it can be concluded that the use of deconstructed movie-based writing works well to foster students' creative thinking. It can be seen from the average score of the students' creative writing performance from the first meeting to the last meeting. It is significantly improved. It reveals that deconstructing film can be used as an alternative strategy to foster students' creative thinking in writing.

To assess the students' creative writing performance, the researcher adopted Mozaffari's Framework in determining the criteria should be assessed in creative writing performance. The result of data analysis above shows that the criteria which are significantly improved are image, characterization, and voice. There is merely one criterion which is not improved well; it is story. On the second meeting, the story criterion is slightly decreased compared with the first meeting. However, it is increased on the last meeting and the score is equal with the first meeting. Majority of the students in batch 2014, E class are workers. They attend the class in the evening right after they finish working. This result indicates that the students are already tired or exhausted while they are doing the task. They seem still have difficulty in using narrative and need more time to accomplish it.

The conclusion above revealed that the story criterion is decreased on the second meeting. It occurred because the data were taken from the evening class which the majority of the students are workers, so that they come to the class in tired or exhausted condition. Therefore, the researcher suggests to the future study not to take the data from the students who are workers if we want to get a maximum result.

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