Students' Originality in Expressing Their Ideas, Thoughts and Opinion in the Writing

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Abstract. This research aims to see how original students express their ideas, thoughts and opinions through essays. The research approach used is quantitative and qualitative. The data were obtained from the scores of students' essays which were determined using an assessment rubric for the instrument. The essay consisted of 4 themes written by 63 students with a total of 252 essays. The results of quantitative analysis show that the level of originality of students' thinking, opinions, and ideas has increased from one theme to another. The low level of originality can be seen in essays on the theme of "*Supootsu to Shiai*" (Sports and Matches). Students only repeat the opinions expressed by experts contained in newspaper articles or other references they read. Then, qualitatively average students have the ability to express opinions in sentences which are general ideas but expressed using their own language style. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Japanese language education study program students of UNNES have good abilities in expressing original ideas and opinions. This research has had an impact on increasing the ability to think creatively in terms of originality.

1. Introduction

"*Educational institutions aim to raise individuals who take on responsibility for their self-learning and who are lifelong learners*" [1]. This also applies to our institution, Semarang State University (UNNES). UNNES always makes improvements in its policies, especially in terms of curriculum. This is intended so that students studying at UNNES get learning experiences that can shape them into individuals who are ready to face the era of disruption in the 4.0 century. To answer this challenge, we created a learning design for the *Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan* course that integrates JF Standard with conservation values which is the vision of UNNES. This learning design is made with the aim of educating students so that they have the ability to think creatively, especially in the specs of originality of ideas, thoughts, and opinions.

Kamal [2] examined whether or not the concept of critical thinking could make a significant difference in reading performance of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners specifically the three reading items which are textually explicit items, textually implicit items, and script-based items. He revealed that there was no significant difference between the high and low critical thinking learners in te

rms of textually-explicit reading items, but for the textually-implicit and script-based reading items, there is a significant difference. The ability to think creatively in writing can be measured through aspects of fluency, detail, flexibility, and originality. The first three aspects often measured in our writing class. Mark's research [3] also proves that we, teachers have not any focus to measure the aspect of originality in student essays. In his research, he studied cognitive task complexity and L2 written syntactic complexity, accuracy, lexical complexity, and fluency.

Idoia [4] argues for the need to (1) question and redefine L2 writing pedagogy by re-evaluating literacy, writing genres, and associated instructional practices in the L2 classroom; (2) acknowledge the acute transformation from traditional notions of literacies to notions of digital literacies; (3) recognize the affordances of social tools and argue how L2 learners can more efficiently acquire and practice digital literacies; and (4) provide pedagogical frameworks to foster L2 writing in an increasingly digital age.

Meanwhile, another study [5] described the construction of a text generator (the CDG: Cheese Descriptions Generator), prompted by the need to assist Spanish-speaking professionals in the dairy industry in writing promotional cheese descriptions in English, the current lingua franca in business. Apart from research on writing for industrial purposes, I think that academic writing research is mostly done. An investigation into the learning transfer of English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) writing skills of engineering students in Singapore has been done [6].

The Indonesian government through the minister of education and culture instructs educational institutions to educate their students to become excellent individuals who have 21st century life skills which are formulated into 4C (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity). As part of the UNNES institution, teachers in Japanese language education study programs are also responsible for the success of the government's goals and supporting the institutional policies. As an effort in this direction, one example is in organizing a writing lecture in the fourth semester (*Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan*). Learning is designed and targeted to form students who have 21st century life skills, especially in terms of creativity. In this case, writing is one of the courses that trains students' creativity.

Creative thinking refers to the ability to generate new ideas or solutions in the problem-solving process [7]. Meanwhile, another opinion states that creative thinking is a new way of seeing and doing something that contains four aspects, namely fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration [8]. In this article we will discuss aspects of originality in student essays which are very important aspects of writing. In addition, we have trained the aspects of fluency, flexibility, and elaboration in the previous semester writing courses (the writing course that we made into research is given in the fourth semester). We still review all these aspects, but in this paper, we focus on the evaluation report on the extent of the originality that students have in writing. As a reference, here are the learning outcomes targeted at the fourth semester of the *Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan* course in the 2020/2021 school year.

Table 1. Learning Goals of *Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan* course

Can do (JF Standard)	JF Standard Level	My can do (learning goals)	Class Activities
Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.	A2.2	Students are able to write brief descriptions of events and activities that occurred in the past and are able to think logically, critically, creatively, innovatively, and learn independently according to their potential.	Writing national sporting events, problems and solutions
Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g., people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences.	A2.2	Students are able to describe their Japanese learning experience starting with the problems they have experienced then suggesting the causes	Write down Japanese learning experiences regarding obstacles that have been experienced, their causes and solutions.
Can write in short simple sentences a blog entry or a similar piece of writing about, for example, discoveries and mistakes that one made during a homestay.	A2	and solutions that have been made and able to think logically, critically, creatively, innovatively, and learn independently according to their	

Can do (JF Standard)	JF Standard Level	My can do (learning goals)	Class Activities
		potential.	
Can write a simple piece of writing promoting oneself, including one's strengths, weaknesses, etc. on a job application form.	B1	Students are able to write down their strengths and weaknesses as one of the provisions in writing a Japanese model CV (Curriculum Vitae) that is used when applying for jobs and understands their own shortcomings, strengths, and shows a confident attitude.	Make a self-analysis related to his hobbies, weaknesses and how he strives for these weaknesses to become their own strengths, strengths, toughness in dealing with problems and what solutions he applies when facing these problems, then based on these experiences what lessons they get applied in his life.
Can write in short simple sentences a piece for an in-house newsletter, for example, introducing oneself with basic information such as family, jobs, hobbies, etc.	A2	Students are able to write a Japanese-style CV by understanding their own weaknesses, strengths, and showing a confident attitude.	Writing a Japanese model curriculum vitae

Note: "*My Can do*" are learning outcomes which is the integration of JF Standards with the vision and mission of UNNES

2. Research Method

This research uses quantitative and qualitative approaches with descriptive analysis techniques. A quantitative approach is used to analyse student learning outcomes. A qualitative approach is used to analyse the learning process of the *Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan* course and students' originality in expressing their ideas, thoughts, and opinions.

The research subjects were 63 students of the fourth semester of the Japanese Language Education Study Program, Semarang State University, who took the *Sakubun Chukyu Zenhan* course and the research object was student essays.

The data collection technique used in this research is writing assignments. The assignments were given in the form of writing assignments based on the theme "*Supootsu to Shiai*", "*Kotoba o Manabu Tanoshimi*", and "*Shigoto o Sagasu*". The research instrument used was assessment rubric. The rubric was adapted from an example of a rubric for assessing creative thinking skills developed by Rudyanto [8]. After the data was collected, data analysis in this study was carried out using a qualitative descriptive method. The following is an assessment rubric of the essay aspects of originality.

Table 2. Writing Assessment Rubric

Rubric	Score
The opinion expressed in the sentence is its own idea and is expressed using its own language style.	4
The opinion expressed in the sentence is a general idea, but is expressed using one's own language style.	3
The opinion expressed in the sentence is a general idea, and is expressed in a general language style.	2
There are no sentences that express opinions or ideas	1

The results of the assessment of each essay were converted to the scoring system applicable in UNNES [9], with the following criteria.

Table 3. UNNES Grading Criteria

Score Range	Value	Grade Point	Criteria
86-100	A	4.00	Excellent
81-85	AB	3.50	Verry good
71-80	B	3.00	Good
66-70	BC	2.50	Adequate
61-65	C	2.00	Fair
56-60	CD	1.50	Insufficient
51-55	D	1.00	Poor
0-50	E	0	Failed

3. Result And Discussion

In accordance with the learning outcomes we have designed, during one semester students make 4 essays with different themes, namely *Supootsu no Shiai* (Sports Match), *Kotoba O Manabu Tanoshimi* (Enjoyment in Learning Languages), *Jiko Bunseki* (Self-Analysis), and *Rirekisho* (Curiculum Vitae). First, the theme Supootsu no Shiai was chosen to develop an attitude of logical, critical, creative, innovative thinking and the ability to learn independently according to its potential. In this theme, students are assigned to write a brief description of events and activities that occurred in the past related to national sports events, their problems and solutions.

Second, on the theme *Kotoba O Manabu Tanoshimi*, students are targeted to be able to describe their Japanese learning experience starting with the problems they have experienced, then suggesting the causes and solutions that have been made and being able to think logically, critically, creatively, innovatively, and learn independently according to their potential it has. Students are assigned to write about their experiences in learning Japanese, what obstacles they have experienced, what causes them and how they have worked out the solutions. Third, *Jiko Bunseki* and *Rirekisho* are interrelated themes. In the theme of *Jiko bunseki*, students are expected to be able to write down their strengths and weaknesses as a provision in writing the Japanese model CV (Curriculum Vitae) that is used when applying for jobs and understands their own shortcomings, strengths, and shows a confident attitude. Broadly speaking, students are assigned to make a self-analysis related to their hobbies, weaknesses and how they strive for these weaknesses to become their own strengths, strengths, toughness in dealing with problems and what solutions they apply when facing these problems, then based on that experience. what lessons they can apply in the afterlife. This is the outline of information that Japanese companies usually collect when they recruit prospective employees [10].

Finally, after students are deemed capable of self-evaluation, they are assigned to make a Japanese CV format Curriculum Vitae. This material was given considering that many Japanese Language Program graduate students work in Japanese companies. In fact, recently there have been several alumni working in Japan. Each theme of the essay is written starting from the introduction of the theme, what things should be discussed with that theme, determining the approximate flow of how, after that students are asked to do lots of reading activities to find information, then write essays.

The lecturer made two corrections to the essay. The first correction is done by providing error codes [11] so that students analyze their own mistakes and how to fix them. The second correction is

done by immediately pointing out the error and how to correct it. Feedback is done to help students correct mistakes [12], and is done both classically and individually. Every essay that has been corrected is then corrected by the students. After we finished learning activities in one semester and analyzed the result based on the quantitative analysis, 4 students (6.35%) have "excellent" ability to express original thinking, 39 students (61.91%) have "verry good" ability, 17 students (26,98%) have "good" ability, and 3 (4.76%) students have "adequate" ability. Based on the rubric of assessing (qualitative analysis) the ability to think creatively, it can be explained that 43 students (68.3%) have the ability to express opinions which are general ideas but expressed using their own language style; and 20 students (31.7%) students have the ability to express opinions which are general ideas and are expressed using a general language style. Then, if it is seen from the average value of creative thinking skills in the aspect of originality, the achievement of learning targets can be studied as follows.

Table 4. Originality Average Score

Theme	Average Score	Category
Supootsu no Shiai	48.41	Failed
Kotoba O Manabu Tanoshim i	75.99	Good
Jiko Bunseki	95.24	Excellent
Rirekisho	97.02	Excellent

According to the table 4, it can be seen that students have succeeded in meeting the target of being able to express their ideas, thoughts, and ideas originally and failing in essays with the theme *Supootsu no Shiai*. On average, students' essays on this theme do not contain original ideas, especially in terms of providing solutions to sports events/problems that occur. They prefer to recite the solutions that have been given by experts or people who are competent in their fields which are published in newspapers, magazines, and others. This is probably because students do not master the material and insight into national sports and lack the ability to solve problems. Students cannot provide solutions to prevent problems that occur in the world of national sports because the problems being studied are not too familiar with their lives and lack of reading habits [13].

4. Conclusion
In terms of the ability to think creatively in the originality aspect, students failed to meet the target on the theme *Supootsu no shiai* with predictions of the causes of the problem being too broad, not familiar with students' daily lives and lack of reading habits among students. However, on other themes that are related to student life, their abilities have increased significantly. This can be used as a basis for thinking about the improvement of the learning design especially for writing courses, so that it can focus more on themes that are closely related to student life. Although it does not rule out the possibility of still being able to provide general themes, because students also have to master and have insight into themes outside their major. As an initial thought for general material, project work techniques can be tricked, in which students are assigned to read a lot and observe various phenomena that occur. Discussion and collaboration techniques can also be applied in conjunction with project work, so that students are expected to be able to explore their original ideas to be expressed in essays.

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