

CAR PAPER BASED POSTER PRESENTATION TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING ABOUT CAR

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ABSTRACT

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is well-known as a way to improve teacher's professionalism and the quality of teaching and learning. In line with that, teachers nowadays are required to conduct CAR to improve their teaching practice and to see what is actually happening in class in order to lead them to a positive change. Concerning to that issue, English Department of Muria Kudus University has included CAR as a subject that must be taken by 6th semester students. Yet, the students seem difficult to understand this research design. They also hard to differentiate between CAR and experimental research design. Therefore, CAR paper based poster presentation is used as a technique to enhance their understanding about CAR concept and the previous real works of CAR. This paper describes the result of survey on the students' responses on poster presentation technique. This study is designed as descriptive qualitative. Questionnaire is used to generate the data. In general, it can be concluded that poster presentation is seemingly effective to enhance students' understanding to Classroom Action Research. English teachers are strongly recommended to use this strategy and English education students should have sufficient complete references to deliver comprehensive and detail explanation of what classroom action research.

Keywords: poster presentation, CAR

INTRODUCTION

Classroom Action Research is a qualitative research design that is usually called AR (Action Research). To be specific, CAR is an action research takes place in a classroom with the emerging problems. In education field, this research approach is believed to be a new trend and new choice for teachers and practitioners to answer problems they face. This research design seems to be a good way to stimulate teachers to be much more reflective in teaching. In addition, it provides them an opportunity to explore and solve problems of teaching and learning English including the use of media, class management, teaching material, and so forth. AR stimulates teachers to develop their professionalism and improve their teaching quality. Thus, the requirement of being able to conduct an action research for

teachers nowadays has been positively accepted by teachers, practitioners, including those who concern in language teaching.

Today, some teachers are benefited by this requirement. By conducting action research, they are experienced to work on the research at the same time they are teaching. As their primary role is teaching, AR seems suitable for them; they do not need to spend too much time since they can carry out the research in their class. They can freely find what is happening in class as a matter of classroom action research and share with colleagues or teachers at the same interest. Teachers, practitioners, or people in the field of education will get an appreciation to what they do since AR brings about improvement. Though they are not paid for this, the result of this research can be much more meaningful for them since it leads to a positive change. Others, they can think critically toward problems emerge in class, explore some possible solutions to the problems, develop their knowledge, share to colleagues and work collaboratively in finding the best way to the problems faced.

Concerning to the requirement, English Department of Muria Kudus University includes AR as a subject that has to be taken by 6th semester since students of English Department are educated to be English teachers. This 2 credits subject is CAR that stands for Classroom Action Research. It is necessary to be included in the curriculum in order to give the students an experience what AR is and how to conduct it. It is expected that the students can conduct an action research either for skripsi or for real problem they face in the future.

However, based on the observation and informal interview, it is known that the students get difficult to understand and differentiate between CAR and experimental research. Therefore CAR paper based poster presentation is used to enhance their understanding about CAR as the research design. The inspiration of employing poster presentation in CAR class that is poster presentation usually held in a conference. This paper presents the result of survey conducted to know the students' responses toward the application of poster presentation in CAR class.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Poster Presentation

Poster presentation has been known well widely particularly to present a scientific paper work. It is believed that it is more effective since text, images, and graphics are

organized together. By looking at a glance to the images or graphics on the paper, the information can be figured out easily without too much time reading the texts. Poster paper has several advantages, they are: the presenter can present the poster in a shorter time that is about five to ten minute oral presentations and can discuss it in detail with the audience; the audience can view the poster at leisure (<http://www.aavso.org/how-present-poster-paper>).

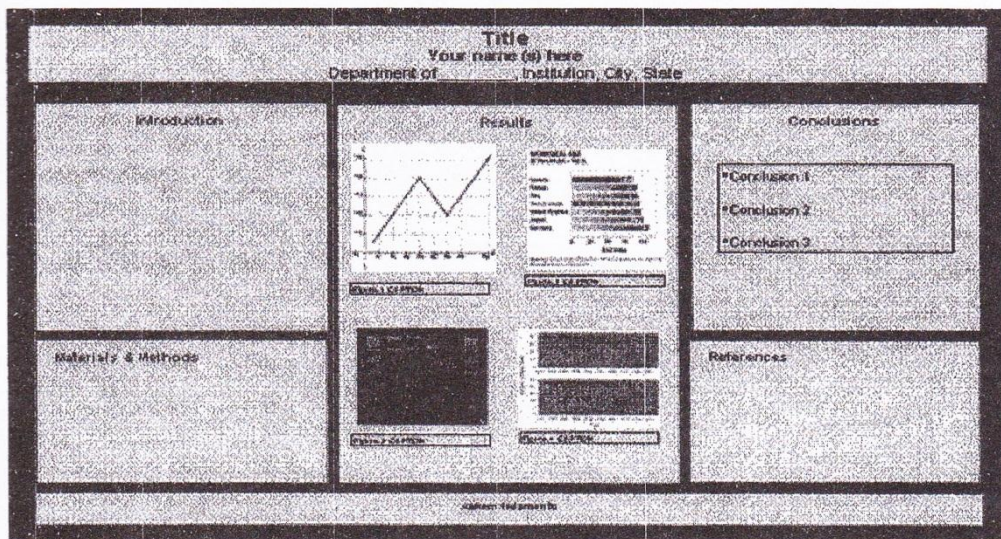
An effective poster operates on multiple levels, they are: 1) a source of information; 2) 'conversation starter'; 3) advertisement of your work; and 4) summary of your work. So an effective poster is not just a standard research paper stuck to a board. Since it uses a different visual grammar that shows, not tells. Posters are more efficient than a talk because they can be viewed even while you are off napping, and especially desirable if you are terrible at giving talks. And once you have produced a poster, you can easily take it to other conferences (<http://www.fatcow.com/edu/posteradvice-be/>).

In the previous study (Rusiana: 2011) argues that poster can be considered as an effective teaching media in teaching CAR since the students are experienced with various previous studies in a relative short time. Moreover, it is an interesting visual media to deliver the material. They enjoy and learn the content of the poster that is CAR as a *research topic* rather than a *subject*.

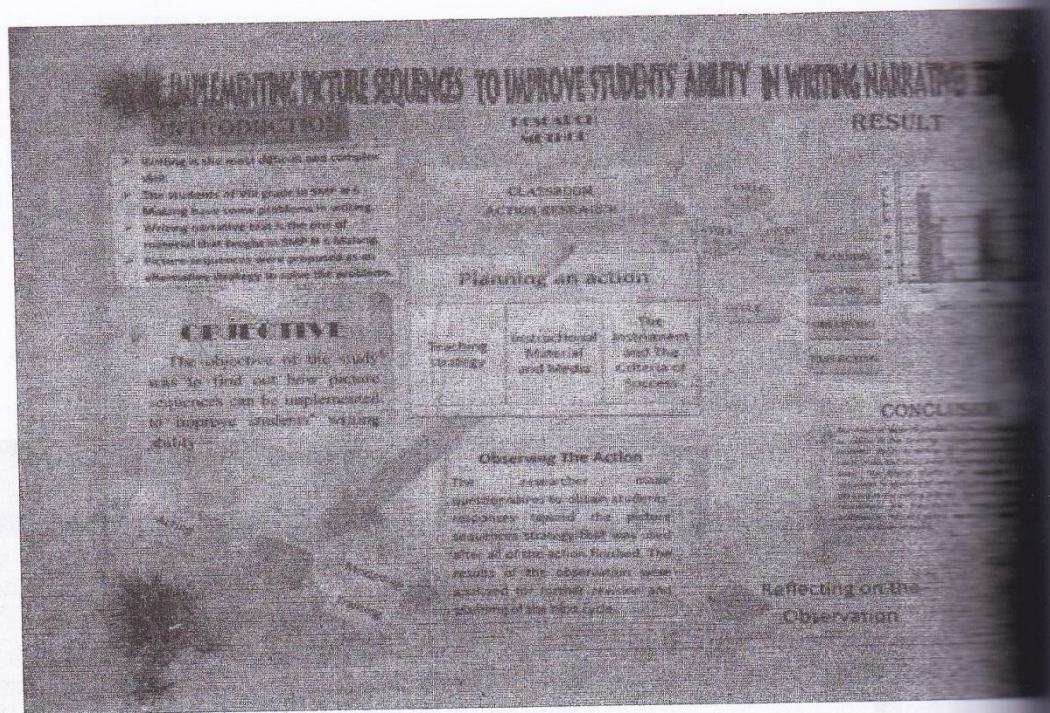
Poster presentation that is employed in CAR class is quite different from poster presentation that is usually held in a conference. Substantially, the media is the same as a poster. What makes it different is the way to present the poster. Since the number of students is big enough, the poster is presented in group of which 4 students. They present it in turn order with the guidance of the poster they made. They may use slide or other media to make the audience understand, but still the presenters must use the poster in presentation.

To present the design of the poster, the following is the example of design of a scientific poster and the poster made by the students of CAR class.

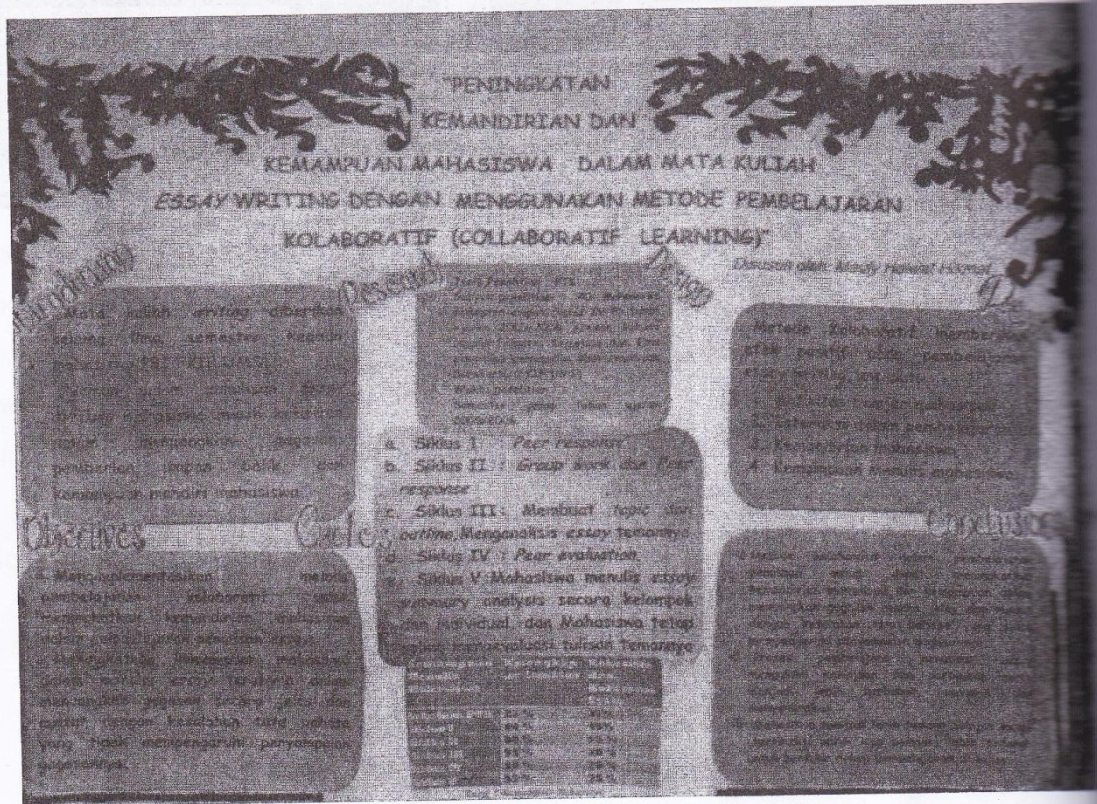
Poster design



Source : <http://ppop.stanford.edu/posters.html>



Source: students' work



Source: students' work

Classroom Action Research (CAR)

The idea of action research is developed by Kurt Lewin (one of action research's founding fathers). Actually, his own work was intended to change the life chances of disadvantaged groups in terms of housing, employment, prejudice, socialization and training. In the field of education, it is influenced by **Kemmis (1983), Ebbutt (1985), Elliott (1991), Hopkins (1985)** and others. What attracts researchers and teachers is the combination of action and research.

AR has defined broadly and differently by many people. Therefore, it is necessary to present some of them in order to know what actually AR is.

Action research...is a direct and logical outcome of the progressive position. After showing children how to work together to solve their problems, the next step was for teachers to adopt the methods they had been teaching their children, and learn to solve their own problems cooperatively.

(Hodgkinson 1957, cited in Cohen and Manion 1994:190) in Burns (1999:29).

While Bogdan and Biklen 1982: 215) in Burns (1999:29) claims that action research is the systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change. Similarly, Wallace 1998: 4) in Burns (1999:29) argues, "it is done by systematically collecting data on your everyday practice and analyzing it in order to come to some decisions about what your future practice should be. This process is essentially that I mean by the term *action research*". Further, Cohen, et al, (2007: 297) claims that action research is a powerful tool for change and improvement at the local level.

Based on those definitions, it can be said that AR is a tool to solve problems by collecting data regularly and systematically to bring about a positive change and improvement to the future practice.

AR as one kind of classroom research that sometimes is confusing either for some teachers or students. It can be as the effect of being used to with the presence of experimental research design. Thus, the difference between AR and experimental or other research will be presented. AR is qualitative research that absolutely different from quantitative research. Therefore, the comparison of quantitative and qualitative research is presented (Burns, 1999: 23).

Table 1. *Comparison between quantitative and qualitative research.*

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • values objectivity through the discovery of facts or truths • tests pre-established hypotheses through the collection and measurement of data • establishes cause and effect and controls variables • reduces data to measurable quantities • ensures reliability through the consistency and replicability of methods • generalizes beyond the research population • focuses on research outcomes that confirm or disconfirm hypotheses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encompasses socially subjective and relative interpretation of phenomena • Draws on data to develop and refine hypotheses • Interprets human behavior from participants' perspectives • Explores naturalistic cultural settings without controlling variables • Gathers 'rich' data and interprets them through 'thick' description and analysis • Ensures validity through multiple data sources • Does not seek to generalize beyond the research context • Focuses on the processes as well as the outcomes of research.

Further, more specific distinction between AR and experimental research as stated by Burns (2010: 13) are:

Table 2. *The difference between AR and experimental research*

Experimental Research	Action Research
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt an objective approach in which the researcher wants to control the variables that may affect the findings, for example, differences in language proficiency. 2. Make a new contribution to body of existing 'scientific' evidence about effective teaching and learning. 3. Adopt a structured and controlled set of methods, using control and experimental groups of students and employing pre and post testing. 4. Concern to connect with and test out 'grand' theory from the field. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt a subjective approach. The researcher explores the best possible way of setting up classroom activities. 2. Focus on addressing an issue of immediate practical and personal concern. S/he wants to know more what works well in class. 3. Use a much more flexible and open-ended approach, selecting and changing the method as needed and as new insights emerge. 4. Personal knowledge becomes the main basis for developing a theory about teaching and learning.

Basically, AR and experimental research are classroom research. It is used differently based on the purposes. Many teachers have been familiar with experimental research which they use to find whether a particular thing works for the class or not. Recently, they carry out AR to solve their problems in class and to find what works best in class. In other words, AR is more flexible than experimental research design. Its flexibility allows AR to

cyclical process; they are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Those four steps are the common ones among some models of AR introduced by the experts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is designed as a qualitative method in which a survey is conducted to know the students' responses dealing with CAR paper based poster presentation as a technique for enhancing their understanding about CAR concept.

The data of this study is generated from the questionnaires that are distributed randomly to 56 students. There are 7 classes in which 8 students of each are given questionnaires. The questionnaire consists of 20 closed items and 1 open item to know the students' opinion and suggestion toward this teaching technique.

NO.	ITEMS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Students' difficulty to find CAR paper	59%
2.	Students' difficulty to understand CAR paper	70%
3.	Ways to make poster:	
	a. Discussion in group	98%
	b. Making summary	86%
	c. teamwork	91%
4.	Feeling happy in making poster	80%
5.	The effectiveness of poster presentation	
	a. the effectiveness of poster presentation	70%
	b. understanding and presenting CAR paper through poster	61%
	c. understanding the steps of conducting CAR	75%
	d. being inspired to conduct CAR	45%
6.	General opinion	

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data, there are some findings that need to be discussed to get a clear overview on students' perception on the effectiveness of using poster presentation technique. The result of the questionnaire is presented in the following classification.

1. Students' difficulty in finding AR paper

It is found that 59% out of 56 respondents get difficulty to find AR papers. It is caused by some reasons: the limit of the journal number available in the library, especially the library of English Education Department; the limit number of AR papers that are published in journal either printed or electronic; few number of students do not really understand the characteristics of AR. Among the three reasons, the limit number of papers or journals seems to contribute much.

b. Students' difficulty in understanding CAR paper

Based on the data, it is found that 70 % respondents are difficult to understand AR papers. It is a new thing for them that they have never known before. Therefore, they need more effort and more time to construct their understanding about CAR. They have to differentiate between this research method and other research methods which they have studied, i.e.: descriptive qualitative and experimental one. Since there is not absolute difference for research in education, the students are often confused with particular researches that are similar to AR. Mostly, they are confused with experimental research design and qualitative research that uses the same instrument as AR does.

c. Strategies of making posters

No.	Items	Percentage
1.	Group discussion	98%
2.	Making summary	86%
3.	Teamwork	80%

From the table above, we can see that in making posters, most of students discuss with their group firstly before doing poster presentation. They must get the paper and decide how and what the poster would be. There are 86% respondents that summarize the paper to get the key point. Summarizing can be done through reading for many times. This strategy helps students understand more about the content that will be realized in some points to be presented in the poster. Another strategy used is teamwork. There are 91% out of 56 respondents do this assignment together with their group. They work with their group members consisting of four to five students that has been grouped by the

lecturer. By employing group work, it is expected that they can have an intensive discussion before making the poster and can understand the concept of AR.

d. Feeling happy in making poster

Based on the collected data, 80 % out of 56 respondents said that they feel happy doing such an activity. Students' psychological condition could strengthen or weaken their effort in achieving a goal. Being happy or positive psychology fosters students' motivation to study about the theory of Action Research and its application portrayed in the paper. Thus, they are encouraged to make a poster based on CAR papers they found.

e. The effectiveness of making poster

No	Items	Percentage
1.	The effectiveness of making poster	70%
2.	Understanding & presenting CAR paper through poster	61%
3.	Understanding the concept and steps of conducting CAR	75%
4.	Being inspired to conduct CAR	45%

From the table above it can be seen that 70% respondents agreed that making poster is an effective strategy to understand what AR is and how it is applied in the class. It means that most students perceived the advantage of making poster is real and easy to do. Furthermore, 61% out of 56 students reported that they understand & present CAR paper through poster. There are 42 students out of 56 students reported that by making poster they can know the concept and steps of conducting CAR. From those facts, it reveals that making poster is a meaningful learning strategy because it provides contextualized learning experience. When they read CAR paper and try to reconstruct the message through poster, they not only get the knowledge about CAR but they also strengthen what they perceived in their mind by explaining it through presentation. Furthermore, during the presentation students discuss with their friends so that feedback may reinforce and

make them know more not only the theory but also the application in the field (classroom) which is more challenging. Unfortunately, it cannot inspire all students to do classroom action research. It is found that only 45% students are interested in investigating daily problems occurring in the classroom through classroom action research.

f. Students' opinion about poster presentation

Most students think that poster presentation is an effective strategy to understand the concept of AR and also they can get a clear example of how to conduct it.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In general, it can be concluded that poster presentation is seemingly effective to enhance students' understanding to Classroom Action Research for some reasons; 1) it stimulates students to be creative; 2) it develops students' teamwork; 3) it fosters the students' understanding about the concept of AR.

The following recommendations are based on the major findings of the study that are addressed to English teachers and English education students.

1. This strategy could be helpful for English teachers in teaching Classroom Action Research. So, it is strongly recommended to use this strategy.
2. In making poster, the size should be large enough with readable fonts to make it easier to read.
3. In explaining the steps of making poster, it would be better if teachers guide in summarizing and making the points of the paper. Therefore, students can focus and fully concentrate to the class.
4. Students, to deliver comprehensive and detail explanation of what classroom action research, should have sufficient complete references.

CONCLUSION

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