

OPTIMIZING THE APPLICATION OF MACROMEDIA FLASH IN CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL OF RECOUNT TEXT

Rina Setyo Noviyanti, Dewi Rochsantiningsih, Suparno

English Education Study Program

Sebelas Maret University Surakarta

Email: rinasetyonoviyanti@ymail.com

Abstract: This research aims at: 1) identifying whether the optimalization of MF in CTL can enhance students' writing skill of recount text, and 2) describing the classroom climate when MF in CTL is applied in writing class of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Colomadu Karanganyar. This research was conducted in two cycles from March 16th to June 6th 2012. The research data were collected by using observation, questionnaire, interviews, field notes, photographs, and tests. The qualitative data were analyzed through assembling the data, coding, comparing, building interpretations, and reporting the outcomes. In the pre-test, the students' mean score was (66.70), the mean score of post-test 1 was (69.78), while in post-test 2 the mean score was (79.83). The students' enhancements in classroom climate were: 1) The students were more active during the writing class; 2) They more participated in asking and answering teacher's questions.

Keywords: writing, macromedia flash, contextual teaching and learning

In teaching learning English, there should be practice for the four language skills e.g. speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Writing can be regarded as one of important skills needs to be developed by the students. It is due to the facts that in this modern society, many occupations require people who are able to master writing skill. For example, people should have the ability to write application letters or any letters to start their career. Those facts proof that mastering writing skill is needed by the students to prepare them in a higher education level and in the field of work that demands them to understand English as a means of communication.

Byrne (1997: 1) defines writing as the act of forming letters or combination of letters: making marks on flat surface of some kind but it is more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of the sound. The symbols have to be arranged according to certain

conventions to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences.

Based on pre-observation in SMP N 3 Colomadu, there were some problems found in writing. The problems are indicated through 2 indicators i.e. students' writing problem and classroom climate as shown through the following: (1). The students got difficulties in generating ideas; (2). The students made few supporting details on their paragraphs; (3). The students got difficulties in organizing their story; (4). The students got difficulties in constructing the correct grammatical sentence; (5). The students were lack of vocabularies, especially the past terms of regular and irregular verbs; (6). The students could not vary the vocabulary. They often repeat the same vocabularies in sentences; (7). The students did many mistakes in applying mechanic especially spelling and capitalization.

On the other hand, from the

classroom climate problem, the writer found the following: (1). The students talked with another friend during the lesson. This situation disturbs other students' concentration in starting to construct a recount text; (2). The students seemed uninterested in writing class; (3). The students did not show participation in the class; (4). The students did non-academic activity rather than focusing to the lesson; (5). The students did not pay attention to the teacher and the classroom activities; (6). The students spent much time to start their writing; (7). Some students were noise during the lesson; (8). Students did not have enough self-confidence and courage to perform their task.

To solve the problems, the teachers are demanded to find and use an appropriate media which are capable to meet the learners' needs. One of most applicable and flexible media used now is the application of interactive multimedia in education. (Philipus, 2008) said that:

Macromedia flash is one of software applications of animation that is very popular for the developer and the multimedia designers. It is one of the most used products of Macromedia that very applicative and flexible, as it is used and applied in a broad field such as entertainment, business, and education. Flash is a professional standard to create webs experience on a high taste.

Besides using an appropriate media in teaching learning process, teachers can also apply certain strategies to facilitate students' needs. One of strategies can be used is Contextual Teaching and Learning. U.S. Department of Education in partnership with Bowling Green State University states that:

Contextual teaching and learning is defined as a conception of teaching

and learning that helps the teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations and motivate students to make connection between knowledge and its applications to their lives as family members, citizens, and workers and engage in the hard work that learning require (United States Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2001).

This research aims at: identifying whether the optimalization of Macromedia Flash in Contextual Teaching and Learning can enhance students' writing skill of recount text.

Teaching by Using the Application of Macromedia Flash

According to Strickland Patterson by Eva Handriyantini, S.Kom(2009), the types of CAI are: 1) Tutorial aims; 2) Drill and practice; 3) Simulation; 4) Problem solving; 5) Game.

The Procedure of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The procedures of CTL are: a) Improve the understanding that student will learn more effectively through self-learning, self-inquiring, and self-constructing using their own knowledge experience; b) Do the inquiring activity to achieve desired competences; c) Create learning community or learning in groups; d) Questioning as a learning tool; e) Do the reflections in the end of learning to make students feel that they have learnt something.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research was action research. It was conducted in SMP Negeri 3 Colomadu. It is located at Jl. Bandara Adi Sumarmo, colomadu. It will be

carried out by the collaboration of the writer and the English teacher of VIII H, Mrs. Rita. Here, the writer has a role as the teacher, and Mrs. Rita as the observer. The subject of the research is the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Colomadu, at VIII H in the academic year of 2011/ 2012.

Mills proposes action research as systematic inquiry done by the teachers or other individuals in teaching or learning environment to gather information about and subsequently improve they ways their particular school operates, how they teach, and how well the students learn (2000: 5). According to Kemmis and McTaggart, action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essentials moments: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In conclusion, action research is a systematic study of efforts to overcome education problems or to change things related to educational problem for enhancement through planning, action, observation and reflection.

DISCUSSION

1. Macromedia Flash in Contextual Teaching and Learning is Able to Enhance Students' Writing Skill

The application of MF as a media in teaching learning activities had enhanced the students' writing skill. Mayer and Moreno (2001) stated that computer-based multimedia learning environments - consisting of pictures (such as animation) and words (such as narration)-offer a potentially powerful venue for improving student understanding. Using together multimedia elements such as images and animation that are equipped with sound, video clips, and text, will be able to give clear meaning to those who need it. The focuses of the research involve five aspects of writing skill; they are content of the text,

organization of the idea, vocabulary mastery, language use, and mechanics. The results showed that those aspects had better achievement after the research was conducted.

The content of the text had enhanced. The students could develop and organize it nicely than before so that the topics were interesting for the reader. Therefore, the reader could catch and interpret the text conveyed by the students.

The organizations of the idea were much better than before the application of MF was implemented. The texts were well organized. The structures of the text were arranged sequentially so that the readers do not confuse to catch the overall idea of the text. In conclusion, the text is understandable for the reader.

The students saw and paid more attention to the attractive materials presented through MF. The materials do not look boring as the textbook. Besides, students were also better in producing correct grammatical sentences. They made fewer mistakes than the previous meetings. They were not to repeat and learn the material of grammar through MF although the topic was bored and difficult.

Students also got enhancement on their vocabulary mastery and the language used. Through the verbs presented on MF in forms of pictures, students were easier in memorizing the verbs. The drilling and reinforcement activities also contributed role to enrich their vocabularies. The students had also become more careful in writing, especially in applying mechanic in writing. They seemed learn from their previous mistakes done before.

The combination of MF as teaching media and CTL as a technique in teaching learning process is effective in enhancing the students' achievement in many skills

included writing. This cognitive theory of MF in education is in line with the theory of CTL as stated by Mayer:

For meaningful learning to occur, the learner must carry out each of these cognitive processes, i.e., selecting relevant words and images, organizing them into coherent verbal and visual representations, and integrating corresponding verbal and visual representations. These cognitive activities – particularly, the building of connections between verbal and visual representations – are more likely for situation in which the learner can hold corresponding visual and verbal representations in

memory at the same time. Thus, instructional messages should be designed to maximize the chances for such crucial cognitive processing to occur.

CTL also concerns on what students receive from the environments. For meaningful learning to occur, students should be able to build connections and integration from the new information with his or her prior knowledge.

Based on the result of the pre-test and post-test, the students' score was enhanced 3.08%. However, not all aspects of writing were improved. The details mean score was presented in the table 1:

Table 1. The Enhancement of the Students' Achievement

Aspect	C	O	V	LU	M	Total	Enhancement
KKM	21.00	14.00	14.00	17.50	3.50	70.00	
Pre-Test	20.95	13.8	13.33	15.27	3.35	66.70	
Post-Test 1	21.32	14.58	14.20	16.44	3.24	69.78	3.08%
Post-Test 2	24.70	16.9	16.19	18.60	3.44	79.83	10.05%

C: Content O: Organization V: Vocabulary LU: Language Use M: Mechanics

From the table, it can be concluded that the students had achievement at the end of each cycle. The number of students passing the test is presented in the Chart 1.

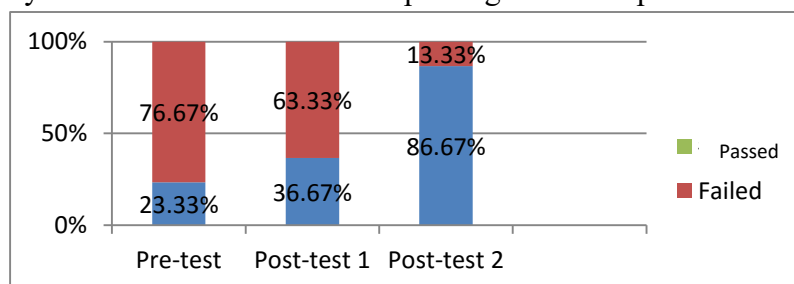


Figure 1. Chart of Number of Students Passing the Test

The chart showed that there was enhancement on the number of students who can pass the passing grade since the pre-test and at the end of each cycle. In pre-test, 76.67% students had the score under the passing grade. In the first post-test, 63.33% students had the score under the passing grade. In the second post-test, there were

only 13.33% students who had the score under the passing grade.

Hadi mentioned that when computers and software are used so that students have new methods of learning curriculum, these can promote and enhance students' understanding of content in powerful ways. They can find information,

use images and sound as well as text to communicate what they have learned. The

overall findings were summarized in Table 2 as follows.

Table 2. Research Findings

Research Findings	Before Action Research	After Action Research
a. The enhancement of students' writing skill	<p>1. Writing Ability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students got difficulties in generating ideas. - The students made few supporting details on their paragraphs. - The students got difficulties in organizing their story. - The students got difficulties in constructing the correct grammatical sentence. - The students were lack of vocabularies, especially the past terms of regular and irregular verbs. - The students could not vary the vocabulary. They often repeat the same vocabularies in sentences. - The students did many mistakes in applying mechanic especially spelling and capitalization. 	<p>1. Writing Ability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students could write a text with more detailed idea. Their ideas were more complex. - The students could make longer paragraphs with sufficient supporting details and more information. - The students could organize their text into good order (the introduction, orientation and the reorientation). The text was also understandable. - Students could produce correct grammatical sentence. They did much less mistake in producing sentences. - Students produced much more vocabularies in past forms. - The students could vary their vocabulary. They not used to repeat the same vocabularies on their writing. - The students did minor mistakes in applying mechanic.
b. The achievement of the students' test score	The students' mean score 66.70 was under the passing grade 70.00. The students who passed the grade were only 23.33%.	The students' mean score was 79.83 at the end of cycle 2. The number of students who passed the grade were 86.67%.
c. The enhancement of the classroom climate	<p>2. Classroom Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students talked with another friend during the lesson. - The students seemed uninterested in writing class. - The students did not show participation in the class. - The students did non-academic activity rather than focusing to the lesson. - The students did not pay attention to the teacher and the classroom activities. - The students spent much time to start their writing. 	<p>2. Classroom Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the students were giving full and more attention to the lesson. They were less noise during the lesson. - Most of the students were enthusiastic in joining writing class. - The students participated more actively by asking and discussing their problems with their friend and the researcher. - Students focused in doing the task especially individual task. - The students were actively paying attention to the teacher's explanation; they could answer teacher's question; they seriously did their individual task.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some students were noise during the lesson. - Students do not have enough self-confidence and courage to perform their task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students could start their task faster and better. - The students were less noise. - The teacher did not need to ask volunteer to perform their task.
d. The enhancement of students' behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several students ignored the researcher. - Only a number of students who actively participated in the lesson. - The students were enthusiast to follow the next meeting of writing class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the students were friendlier and closer to the researcher. - More students were actively participated in the lesson. - The students seemed not patient to follow the next meeting of writing class. They also did not worry in joining the writing class.

In this research, there were three students coming from different level of intelligence who got more attention in this

research. Their enhancement is presented as follows:

Table 3. The Sample of Students' Achievement

	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2	Mean Score
Student A (MAF)	65.5	64.5	81	70.33
Student B (RAG)	51.5	52.5	76.5	60.17
Student C (RR)	86	88.5	90	88.17

Student C is a smart student. She got good scores in pre-test and post-test. She made little mistakes in her writing. She could easily understand the instructions given. She did not need special treatment during the research. She had better writing after the application of MF applied in teaching learning process.

Student A is a student in average. He had a good motivation during the lesson. He was active during the lesson. When he found any difficulties during the lesson, he always asked questions to the teacher. Although he still made mistakes during the lesson, he always keeps his spirit and motivation in following the lesson.

Student B is a student in the lower level. He had low motivation in writing. He often spends long time to start his writing. The researcher gave special treatments to make him independently did the writing. As the result, he had better writing skill

although he still not confidence enough to perform his work in front of people.

In conclusion, the sample students have had enhancement on their writing skill. It was proof by the enhancements of students' achievement in writing from the pre-test until the post-test 2 and their behavior toward the lesson during the research conducted.

Moreover, Mayer added the superiority of MF in education, Mayer (2001) when only words are presented, the learner is likely to build a verbal mental representation but is less likely to build a visual mental representation and mentally connect it with a verbal one. When words and pictures are presented, the learner is more likely to build verbal and visual representations and to make connections between them. In conclusion, a meaningful learning is enhanced when learners can build connections between corresponding

visual and verbal representations, then the students should learn more deeply when animation is added to narration.

2. Macromedia Flash in Contextual Teaching and Learning is Able to Enhance the English Classroom Climate.

MF helps the teachers to manage the class effectively. It can attract students' attention and make them more focus on the lesson. Vaughan in HadiSutopo stated that multimedia can bring radical changes in the learning process, from passive student learning to active student learning. The students seemed more active during the writing class. They more participated in asking and answering teacher's questions. Besides, the combination of pictures and sounds can help the students to strengthen their long-term memory in memorizing

certain information. Finally, students were more motivated to follow the lesson. By images and sound, the students were more enthusiastic in following the lesson. By the application of MF in teaching learning process, teachers can create interesting material through attractive slides in presentation. It will engage students and involve them more in the lesson.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The final discussion in the previous chapter can be summarized into two conclusions. Firstly, the application of Macromedia Flash in CTL can enhance students' writing skill on some aspects of writing as mentioned in the research findings. The enhancement included some aspect as mentioned in table 4.:

Table 4. Table of Students' Enhancement in Writing

No	Aspects of Writing	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2	KKM
1.	Content	20.95	21.32	24.70	21.00
2.	Organization	13.80	14.58	16.90	14.00
3.	Vocabulary	13.33	14.20	16.19	14.00
4.	Language use	15.27	16.44	18.60	17.50
5.	Mechanics	3.35	3.24	3.44	3.50

Secondly, the application of MF in CTL can enhance the classroom climate during the teaching-learning process. Based on the research findings, the macromedia flash created conducive atmosphere and made the students were involved actively in finishing their works both in individual and group works. The students showed great enthusiasm toward the lesson, paid more attention to the material, and got more self-confidence in performing their work in front of people. Besides, most of them got encouraged to ask questions and express their ideas during the lesson. In addition, the application of MF in CTL can attract students' attention and motivate them in

following the lesson. Through the attractive material and task presented by MF, students got more eager to follow and finish their task in writing. The application of this software had stimulated them to write better.

In conclusion, MF can effectively be applied as the main media in writing. The advantages offered by MF have enhanced the students' writing skills of recount text and the classroom climate in the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Colomadu.

Based on the conclusion and implication, there are some suggestions related to teaching writing as follow: 1) for teachers: The writing class commonly seems monotonous for the students. Therefore, the

teachers should provide attractive media with the appropriate teaching method. They could use MF as an interactive and attractive media in CTL as a method which is close with the students' need and the real life situation; 2) for students: Students should motivate themselves to learn English. They can enhance their English skill by practicing more and keeping on trying; 3) for other researchers: It is expected that the result of this research can be used as an additional reference in conducting classroom action research by using the application of MF and CTL to enhance other skills like speaking, reading, and listening; 5) For institutions: The schools should support the English teacher to improve their quality in teaching. It can be done by providing facilities to support the teaching learning process and training for the teacher to enrich their knowledge of teaching methods.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Byrne, Donn. 1997. *Teaching Writing Skill*. London: Longman.
- Golub, Jeffrey N. 1992. *New Assumptions, New Assessment in an Interactive Classroom*. Florida English Journal 28. 1 (Spring): 5-7. Available at www.ncte.org. Accessed at January 5th, 2012.
- Johnson, Elaine B. 2000. *Contextual Teaching and Learning: What It is and WHY it's here to Stay*. The United States of America. Library of Congress.
- Mayer, R. E. 2001. *Multimedia Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mills, Geoffrey E. 2000. *Action Research: A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Reid, Joy M. 1993. *Teaching ESL Writing*. United States of America: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Sadiman, Arief S. 2002. *Media Pendidikan, Pengertian, Pengembangan dan pemanfaatan*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada