

Using Web Blog Media to Enhance Students' Writing Skills

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Abstrak

In the technological era, due to technological developments, namely the internet is believed to be able to help students in developing their learning, especially writing skills. The research purpose is to enhance the student's writing skills of descriptive text by using a web blog media. The students were in the tenth grade. This study was classified as qualitative research of classroom action research with three cycles consisting of four stages, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The subject of this research was 34 students and the data was collected through the test, observation, and interviews. The results revealed that using a web blog media can enhance students' writing skills of descriptive text. This was proved by the increase of the score from cycle 1 up to cycle 3. The participation, attention, and responsibilities of students also improved as well from cycle 1 up to cycle 3. This means that the students were more active in learning during the use of web blog. Moreover, they were interested and had fun using web blog media. Therefore, it can be concluded that a web blog can enhance the student's writing skills of descriptive text. The teacher can integrate web blog as alternative media through online or offline learning mode.

Keywords: descriptive text, web blog, writing skills

1 INTRODUCTION

Writing is a skill that has to be mastered and developed by students (Nurhayati, 2018). Writing has important to provide the students with enhancing communication skills that this case is verbal communication, has important to provide students the opportunity to learn all the rules of language and how to organize the idea more coherently. Further, writing has important in teaching English because it can be used for students to express their idea and thoughts. The major parts of communication such as grammar, punctuation, vocabulary can also improve when learning how to use writing as means of expressing an idea. Writing is also crucially essential in teaching and learning English as a comprehensive skill that helps reinforces vocabulary, grammar, and other elements. Then, writing also helps to improve other English skills such as listening, reading, and speaking as they are all interrelated. Writing offers students the path to learn all the rules of their language and how they better organize their ideas more coherently using the language. However, writing can assist English students to memorize a lot of information such as teaching material, learning process, and many other important details, which means that those presented by the teacher will be easily understood by students, rather than being processed orally.

According to Indonesian Curriculum 2013 (K13), one of the purposes of English teaching writing skills is to compose written text of descriptive text about people, places tourism, and building famous historical that concern a social function, structure text, and language features correctly and appropriately with context. However, the researcher found the problems faced the students in learning English, especially in writing was they lack of motivation and the use of multimedia in writing class. Motivation is an impulse of will cause someone to do something actions to achieve certain goals (Suprihatin, 2015). Many students do not aware that writing is an important skill in English. Most of the students

write only because of the task that is given by the teacher. They do not accustom to writing as their initiative. Motivation is very influential in student learning activities, especially in writing because it is important in learning for achieving learning objectives. Motivation can make a process of continuous learning such as enthusiasm, knowledge curiosity of the sciences, as well as awareness of the importance in the learning process. Therefore, motivation is needed to obtain ideas, thoughts, and information to put down in the written form.

The media is needed to increase the student's motivation. Media is anything used by the teacher to facilitate the learning process. The use of media in teaching writing skills provides the student motivation that can create a real and contextualized situation and can stimulate the students. In addition, the use of interesting media provides more benefits to the student and helps them to learn English easily, especially in writing. However, the use of learning media must be suitable for the teacher and student. Therefore, based on the problems that the researcher found above, teaching writing should use interactive media as a facilitating tool in the writing process, so writing can be taught interestingly and interactively without tedious learning so that the students can be more participated instead of just listening to what the teacher has said. One interactive media and exciting way to teach writing is utilizing a web blog.

According to Holtz (Alsubaei and Madini, 2008), A blog is web publishing software that allows users to create and edit the content of a web page with minimal technical expertise. Blogs are online writing spaces that can be edited immediately and published publicly through web browsers (Zhang, 2009). Meanwhile, Boaz stated that blogs are easy to set up and posts are simple to comment on (Boaz, 2011). A blog can be set up and used by a teacher, by individual students, or by a class, students will access and read, and possibly add comments to, the blog outside the classroom. Teachers and students have become interested in using a blog because blogging activities focus on sharing plain text and commenting on each other posts (Oravec, 2002). Students can share their idea with text and can give comments on each student's posts about the topic.

Several researchs conducted on the use of web blogs have a good result in students writing. Alsamadani & Hasheem, A (2018) points out that writing using a blog is more interactive and can enhance students writing skills in terms of content, vocabulary, punctuation, and style. Amal Alsubaie (2018) findings that there was an enhancement in students' writing performance and contributed to extensions vocabulary knowledge. Suhaili (2016) conducted using a blog to improve students writing skills find out that a blog can improve writing skills and the students find out the step to solve the problem in writing. In addition, Musfera (2018) research finds out enhancement results as well.

To fill the literature gap regarding the use of web blog media to enhance students writing skills, this study investigated whether blogging enhances students' skills in writing particularly five writing components called; content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. This research also used an interview design with the lower, middle, and high achiever students. The technique of collecting data for the observation of this research implemented specific indicators of attitude in the teaching and learning process that consist of participation, attention, and responsibility. Instead, the student's participation in this research cannot be observed comprehensively.

2 RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative approach called classroom action research (CAR). CAR is an observation of activities that are deliberately raised, and occur in the classroom. Applying the principle of an action research design, the researcher took the model of action research proposed by Kemmis and Taggart, in which each cycle consists of four steps, namely planning, the research and collaborator plan action based on the objective of the research. Both researchers and collaborator prepared lesson plans and research. Action, this step was the accomplishment of planning made by the researcher and collaborator at

advance which was expected to solve the student's problems with writing skills. Observation was intended to observe and record all activities or indicators during the research process where the researcher and collaborator carried out the observation together to gain valid data. The last is reflecting, in this step, the data received from observation was collected and analyzed by both the researchers and collaborator. If there are problems, it will move to the next cycle with the same concept as the first cycle. The result will be used as the reference for the next plan (Arikunto, 2010).

Data source in this research was one class, namely the tenth grade of SMA Pangudi Rahayu consisting of 30 students, there are 15 girls and 15 boys. The teacher became a research collaborator. The technique of data collection of this research consisted of observation, test, and interview. Observation was used to obtain data about all the things that happen in the teaching and learning process by observing the teaching and learning activity, describing the interaction between teacher and students, the way a teacher teaches, and the student's response during the teaching and learning process in the classroom, and also students' attitude toward the learning process. The interview was used for getting data about students' responses after an accomplishment or using web blog media in teaching writing. In this study, the researcher conducted a direct conversation with students. The researcher interviewed nine students to obtain the data based on the score they had. They were students who get low, middle, and high scores. The interview focused on students' responses after the accomplishment of web blog media in writing. The test was used to find out students' progress and achievement in writing and it was given at the end of the action step. The test was carried out by the students with a writing test of descriptive text.

To analyze the data from the classroom action research, the researchers used techniques of data reduction, data description, and data verification. Data reduction was considered as a collecting process which covered data categorization and classification. After data classification, the data were grouped and continued to be summarized. The researchers simplified the data by making a summary. Data description referred to how the result from the research was organized, summarized, and characterized by interpreting the insight of what happening in the class during the treatment of each cycle. The next stage of analysis data was verification. The verification is a process in which the data were checked in order to make a final summary.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Test Result

The result of the students' writing tests showed that the use of web blog media in the learning process can enhance the students' writing skills. Based on the chart in each cycle, the students who passed the minimum criteria of a passing grade in the first cycle were 26% or 9 students and the rest, 25 students or 74% of students failed the minimum criteria of passing grade with an average score of 61.55. The result of the second cycle showed that 17 or 50% of the students passed the minimum criteria of passing grade and the rest of 17 or 50% of the students failed the minimum criteria of passing grade with an average score of 73.29. After that, the third cycle showed that 32 or 94% of the students passed the minimum criteria of passing grade and the rest of 2 or 6% failed the minimum criteria of passing grade with an average score of 80.94. The data of the writing test in each cycle can be seen in the chart below.

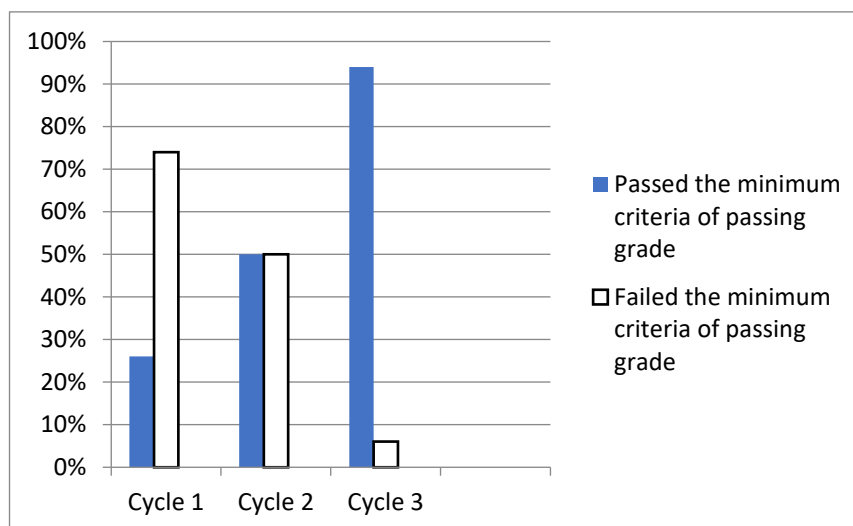


Chart 1 Enhancement Result of Writing Skill in Each Cycle

Based on the data presented above, there was an enhancement in students' results in each cycle. The enhancement was 24% from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Then, the enhancement was 44% from cycle 2 to cycle 3.

3.2 The Observation Result

The researchers and collaborator conducted observations of whole students' activities during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The observation result was obtained from the collaborator's observation sheet for the researchers, the collaborator's observation sheet for the students, and the researcher's observation for the students. The chart below points out the result from the researchers' observation of the student.

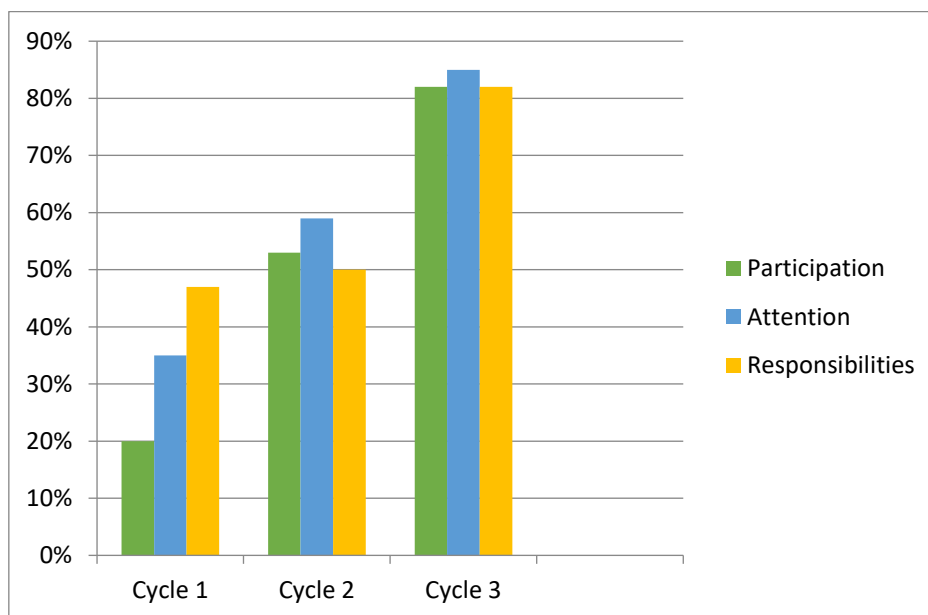


Chart 2. Enhancement Result Observations in Each Cycle

In cycle one, the number of students who participated such as active in learning when the researchers asked was 20%, the number of students who paid attention when the researchers explained was 35% and the number of students who responded when the researchers asked the test on time and starting the lesson on time was 47%. The result of

observation in cycle one could not reach the target of 80% or more. It meant the next cycle was needed to be administered.

In cycle two, the number of students who participated such as active in learning when the researchers asked was 53%, the number of students who paid attention when the researchers explained was 59% and the number of students who responded when the researchers asked the test on time and starting the lesson on time was 50%. The result of observation in cycle two could not reach the target of 80 percent or more. It meant the next cycle was still needed to conduct.

Then, in cycle three the number of students who participated such as active in learning when the researchers asked was 82%, the number of students who paid attention when the researchers explained was 85% and the number of students who were responsible when the researchers asked the test on time and starting the lesson on time was 82%. The result of observation in cycle three could reach the target of 80 or more percent.

3.3 The Interview Result

The researchers interviewed some of the students at the end of the research. The interview was conducted with the students that gained low, middle, and high scores. Based on interview result, the students showed that they like to learn writing using a web blog. The students like the web blog media because they felt boring with paper and pen, it is easy to use, and it is not difficult like writing on paper just make a login by cellular phone anytime and anyplace. Moreover, students have many opportunities to share their own creation. They also expressed that there is "commenting room" similar to social media character and this made them to have some fun of learning.

In the interview, the students said that web blog media can help them in writing descriptive text. They said they were able to identify writing errors from the comments given by the teacher and other students. Therefore, they can make a revision at that time or any time they want to. In addition, the students explained that their writing scores improved after using web blog media and there are no difficulties in using web blog to learn writing as well.

The researchers made a conclusion that the use of web blog media can enhance students' writing skills for the tenth-grade students of SMA Pangudi Rahayu. A web-blog media can be a solution to solve the problems faced by students in term of writing descriptive text. Briefly, most of students found enjoyment in writing descriptive text using web-blog.

3.4 Discussion

3.4.1 The Students' Enhancement in Writing Skills

The researchers implemented web blog media in enhancing students' writing skills. Based on the research findings, the researchers made a conclusion that web blog as a media can enhance students' writing skills in the tenth grade of SMA Pangudi Rahayu Jakarta. From cycle one until cycle three, the researchers asked students to look at the material in the web blog that the researchers made, shared and gained information about the descriptive text and the example of texts as well. Further, the researchers gave a test to write in the student's web blog and uploaded it. After uploading their work, the next section was to give some comments in order to improve student's writing and this process can be done outside and inside the classroom. The researchers and other students gave comments about the student's work and they had time to make revisions and then directly uploaded which is considered as the final version.

The enhancement of the students' writing skills showed significant result after using web blog. The students' writing ability enhanced in every cycle. The results of this research were in line with the research conducted by Lutfian which said writing skill improves significantly through blogging activity (Lutfian, 2011). Besides, this study is also supported by Fadzli (2016) research result described that web blog media can enhance students writing skills in English covering five aspects, namely content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic.

3.4.2 The Students' Participations, attention and Responsibilities

The students' affective behavior in the class during the implementation of the web blog in each cycle shows increased. Students were increasingly active in the learning process. More students participated in learning, they were active when the researcher asked, and they paid attention when the researcher explains the class. The results of this research are in accordance with the research conducted by Musfera (2018). It stated that a web blog can motivate students to learn and increase their learning awareness which lead to create fun learning. A web blog can improve students writing skills because it helped students to be more participated and interacted in learning (Alsamadani,2018).

3.4.3 The Students' Response on the Use of Web Blog Media

The students' response toward the use of web blog media was good. The students were enthusiastic about the web blog media. It happened because they are bored with the paper and pen in writing English. The students are excited and motivated by the media. A web blog can help students to enhance their writing skills with a feature on it. These are in line with the result conducted that stated that students have a positive response to the web blog media. The students can improve their writing skills by sharing ideas, opinions, and comments, and also can solve problems (Suhaili,2016).

4 CONCLUSION

The result of this research showed that there was an enhancement in students' scores in writing descriptive text. From cycle one to cycle two, the enhancement was 24% and from cycle two to cycle three the enhancement was 44%. The observation result showed that the student's participation in answering the researchers' questions, paid attention when the researchers explained the material, and their responsibility in completing the learning was enhanced.

The students' response about the implementation of using web blog media in the teaching process was good. In fact they got boredom in writing because of using paper and pen. They said learning to write using a web blog is interesting and they experienced fun in learning. They said they did not feel boredom in writing using using web blogs. Moreover, it was easy and they can share their works using web blog and they are happy with the commenting spaces because it was like on social media. They also explained that web blog media has helped them in writing as they can edit and make revisions based on comments posed by the researchers and the other students.

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