Improving Students' Writing Ability Using Digital Multimodal Composition at SMAN 1 Katibung

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to enhance the descriptive writing abilities of tenth-grade pupils at SMAN 1 Katibung through Digital Multimodal Composition. The study showed that tenth-grade students faced difficulties in writing due to issues such as a limited vocabulary, grammatical structures, and expressing their ideas effectively. The research design is Classroom Action Research (CAR) following the approach of Kemmis and McTaggart, which includes 4 stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The research was completed over two cycles, with each cycle comprised of two meetings. The researcher utilized a writing test, observations, interviews, and document reviews as part of the methodology. The researcher using slide presentations and videos as digital media. The results demonstrated that the average score of pupils in the post-test of cycle 1 increased to 67% from 57% after the implementation of Digital Multimodal Composing media. Due to the percentage still falling short of the criteria, the researcher adjusted the plan for cycle 2, demonstrating enhancements in content, vocabulary, organization, grammatical structure, and mechanics. The difference approach taken in cycle 2 proved effective, resulting in 77% of students achieving the minimum standard score (KKM), which met the success criteria. According to the data assessment, the researcher found that the use of Digital Multimodal Composing media received positive feedback from students and enhanced their writing skills.

Introduction

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the university level requires practical help to enhance both spoken and written language abilities. This is a major problem for scholars and practitioners (Rido Achmad Yudi Wahyudin Ingatan Gulo, 2018). In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language since it is not commonly used in regular discourse (Berlinda Mandasari, 2018). In learning English, there are several skills that students must master. Reading, speaking, listening and writing skills are only a few of the factors that must be taken into account while teaching English.

Writing is one of the abilities that pupils should master. To learn Writing, students need a teacher to teach them. Quality education will never be realized without teachers who are competent and manage efficiently (Harahap & Ritonga, 2023). Therefore, it is essential for the teacher to innovate comfortable circumstances for students, particularly in their writing

skills. According to (La Oni, 2022), Writing is a crucial skill for English learners and is linked to academic success and future employment prospects. Students can deliver their ideas that exist in their minds into a text, students must master writing abilities because it will be vital in the future.

One of the aspects of writing skills that students have mastery is descriptive writing. According to(Harmer, 2004) descriptive writing is a fundamental writing skill that enables students to create vivid and detailed images. Students need to develop a diverse vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and understanding of language. English proficiency enables students to craft descriptive narratives that engage readers and evoke sensory experiences effectively (Purnamasari et al., 2021). Descriptive writing is incorporated into language curricula globally to enhance students' language abilities and foster their capacity to express themselves creatively. (S Moybeka et al., 2023) emphasizes that gaining a more profound insight into the construction of descriptive text structures is crucial for informing educational support.

However, numerous students still struggle when expressing the main ideas of writing. According to (Ahmed & Zhang, 2023)the majority of people struggle with writing abilities since they must convey their thoughts in a way that others can understand. Students may lack a diverse vocabulary to accurately describe objects or experiences. Moreover, limited vocabulary restricts learners' ability to express ideas precisely and creatively (Nation, 2001). Students may struggle to generate creative and original imagery or misuse figurative language, resulting in clichés or confusing descriptions (Clark, 2018).

In light of these challenges, the role of technology in improving writing instruction has received substantial attention. According to (Gilster P, 1997) digital literacy encompasses the ability to read and write in a digital environment, as well as successfully blend diverse media to transmit ideas. The inclusion of multimedia elements such as text, graphics, music, and video is congruent with multimodal learning concepts (Jewitt, 2008). This method is particularly beneficial for instructing descriptive writing as it enables students to enhance their narrative through Digital Multimodal Composition (DMC). DMC addresses the issues students encounter in descriptive writing by adding digital components to their projects, increasing creativity and coherence. Moreover, Digital Multimodal Composition could enhance learners' writing ability by increasing engagement, creativity, and coherence in their compositions (Maghsoudi et al., 2022)

Technology increases flexibility in writing teaching, allowing students to modify and enhance their work more quickly. According to (Göçer Demirel et al., 2023) incorporating technology into the learning of creative writing enhances the process of revising and developing ideas. Furthermore, (Blake, 2021) emphasizes that DMC fosters critical thought and allows students to assess how multiple media might improve their writing, resulting in more vivid and well-organized descriptive texts. Research studies, such as those conducted by (Nur & Sari, 2022) and (Xu, 2023), have investigated the effectiveness of Digital Multimodal Composition technique has the potential to significantly improve students' writing abilities.

The researcher carried out this research to understand the difficulties and improve the tenth-grade at SMAN 1 Katibung students' ability to write a descriptive text. The title of this research is "Improving Students' Writing Ability Using Digital Multimodal Composition at SMAN 1 Katibung". The researcher will investigate the students' skills to write a descriptive text in aspects of content, organization, grammar structure, vocabulary, and mechanics. Besides that, the researcher will also investigate the problems that pupils have when producing descriptive text.

Research Methods

This study's research method is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Action research is a sort of inquiry in which practitioners can watch and evaluate teaching and learning activities in the classroom. According to (Kemmis Robin McTaggart, 1998) classroom action research involves teachers using qualitative, interpretive techniques of inquiry and data collection with the objective of assessing how to improve their own practices. In this study, the researcher used a multimodal text learning approach to capture pupils' interest and enhance their writing abilities in descriptive text content.

This research used CAR as a strategy to solve a classroom issue, specifically one regarding pupils' writing skills. To collect the results, the researchers engaged observations and interviews with an English teacher and several pupils who had poor writing abilities. Researchers go through two cycles, each comprising of two meetings: one to confirm the information and the other to administer the writing test. If the outcomes are less than desirable, the researcher will alter the strategy and proceed to the next cycle. This study was carried out at SMAN 1 Katibung. The sample size of this study is 38 students, including 23 females and 15 males from X Merdeka 2 class. The researcher applied Kemmis and McTaggart model of Cyclical Action Research. Each cycle consists of four steps: planning, action, observing, and reflecting.

This study's data collection methods included both primary and secondary data. In primary data, the researcher employed a writing test; the written test will be administered when the approach is implemented. The writing test consist of describing an object based on the video supplied. In this assessment, the researcher altered components of (Arthur Hughes, 2003) including content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The researcher collected secondary data using interviews, document reviews, and an observation checklist. The data analysis employed in this study was qualitative. In general, (Miles & Huberman, 1994) describe three steps; data reduction, data display, and conclusion verification. The study is considered successful if the research aim indicators is met, which in this case is the proportion of pupils who acquire the required score (72) equals or exceeds 72% of all pupils taking part in the research. The study starts with a pre-test conducted on Friday, October 11, 2024, cycle 1 on Friday, October 18, 2024, and the second meeting on Friday, October 25, 2024, cycle 2 on Friday, November 1, 2024, and the second meeting on Friday, November 8, 2024.

Findings

This part describes the findings within the teaching and learning process. This study had two cycles; every cycle had 2 meetings. Before implementing this cycle, the researcher conducted a pre-test to assess students' writing abilities, as well as a gauge instrument to assess pupils' writing skills following utilizing Digital Multimodal Composing media. The result may be found in the table below:

Table 1. Pre-test Learning Outcomes for Students

Aspects	Description
How many pupils are taking the test	38 Students
How many pupils passed the test	9 Students (24%)
How many pupils who did not pass the test	29 Students (76%)
Total score	2169
Highest score	86
Lowest score	34
Average score	57

Table 1 presents the results, indicating that the overall pre-test score of the pupils was 57 out of 38, with merely 9 students achieving the minimum standard score (KKM). To solve this problem, the researcher intends to implement Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) media. By employing slide presentation and documentary videos that encompass various semiotic modalities of multimodal composition. This method aims to boost pupils' enthusiasm and assist them in generating ideas for their writing. A summary of the results from the study is presented below.

The first cycle

Planning

The researcher and English teacher determine for utilize Digital Multimodal Composition (DMC) medium to enhance pupils writing skills. The researcher worked together with an English teacher to discuss lesson plans and create a writing assessment. The researcher provided descriptive text resources that aligned with the syllabus standard and key competencies outlined in the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. The researcher concluded all aspects of the planning phase, including lesson strategies, educational resources, writing assessment, grading rubrics, and monitoring checklists. The action planning was carried out collaboratively with the English teacher.

Action

In action session, the researcher taught descriptive text writing using the medium that had been set up. This cycle included two sessions, and the steps for teaching writing were carried out as outlined in the lesson strategies that had been previously reviewed with the English instructor. The results from the first meeting are summarized below:

Findings of the first meeting

On October 18, 2024, the researcher organized the process of learning. Within the session, the English instructor supported the researcher by monitoring the pupils and completing a monitoring checklist. The media utilized consisted of worksheets and Digital

Multimodal Composing (DMC) tools like slide presentations. Since DMC is primarily dependent on digital resources, the researcher employed the school's LCD projector as the primary tool for displaying slides. In the main activity, the researcher started with a description of the written text material, covering its definition, social function, general structure, and terms frequently utilize in written texts. The researcher utilized a slide presentation as a digital multimodal composition medium. For the subsequent material, the researcher requests that the students compose descriptive text. The researcher delivering an example of "Bromo Mountain" and the students replied "tourist spot, snakes, jeep, mountain, etc."

After collecting a few points, the researcher provided the subsequent way, namely, outlining. The students elaborate on the words they develop into an outline for their writing. After describing the procedure for writing the descriptive text, the teacher provided an illustration of a descriptive text explaining a place, "Lembah Hijau". The researcher and pupils then discussed the features of the descriptive text. In the following activity, the researcher talks to the pupils to write a descriptive text on "Lembah Hijau". If the students face difficulties, the researcher assists them. The researcher talks to the students to write the new vocabulary in notebooks. After the lesson was over, the researcher talked to the pupils about their thoughts on the utilization of DMC (Digital Multimodal Composition) medium. Most of the pupils said that the class was not dull and made them joyful.

Findings of the second meeting

On October 25, 2024, a second meeting was held to assess students' writing abilities. The researcher asked students questions about the previous session. The researcher identified common faults in students' writings, such as spelling, capitalization, and plural singular. The researchers gave more explanations about their mistakes. After explaining about their mistake, the researcher gave each student a writing exam to assess their writing abilities and improvement. The students were assigned the topic "Way Kambas" and had to compose at least eight sentences. LCD devices were provided by the school. They were then asked to form accurate phrases and arrange them in appropriate paragraphs.

Students submitted their tests within the time limit until the test ended. In the last session, the researcher asked the pupils how they felt throughout the assessment, and they answered that it was not that challenging because they knew to write after seeing the Picture of "Way Kambas" in the slide presentation. The researchers and English teacher assessed students' essay tests, with an inter-rater tolerance for scores. The final essay test scores were determined by the difference between the teacher's and researcher's scores. The researchers and English teacher provided written feedback to assess students' writing abilities. The writing test assessed content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and structure. Based on the findings of the first cycle of post-test, students improved their writing skills from 57 in the pre-test to 67. The writing results table is given below:

Table 2. Student's Writing Test Score for Cycle 1

Aspects	Description
How many pupils are taking the test	38 students
How many pupils passed the test	14 students (37%)

Aspects	Description
How many pupils who did not pass the test	24 students (63%)
Total score	2591
Highest score	87
Lowest score	54
Average score	67

Observation

The researcher and English teacher investigated the circumstances within the process of learning. In the first session, when the researcher presents the subject to be addressed, the majority of them pay attention. In the primary activity, most pupils pay attention when the researcher delivers the content. During this session, the researchers utilized DMC medium on the format of a slide presentation. This medium uses a variety of semiotic modalities to capture students' attention. This medium also enables pupils to study the content and form their thoughts. On the other side, students demonstrated a sense of enjoyment and excitement. In this phase, pupils have problems in remembering the content that has been taught by the teacher and lack the belief in asking questions. The researcher asked students' the difficulty and their thoughts. Most pupils answered it's nice and they appreciate the learning process because it's different than before.

There may not be changes in the first and second meetings. The pupils greeted the researcher enthusiastically and also paid great attention to the teacher. Based on the findings of monitoring, the pupils performed better than in the last meeting. With Digital Media Composition (DMC), students look more active, fully attentive, and very enjoy the learning process session. Nevertheless, several students remained apprehensive about raising questions. The researcher had to verify each of their work and inquire where the pupils' troubles were; some of them demonstrated their lack of comprehension. At the end, the teacher talked to the pupils about the problems in the process of learning. They gained confidence by responding to questions using difficult-to-memorize vocabulary. The researcher also questioned pupils' perspectives on adopting Digital Multimodal Composing in learning writing. Most pupils said with a positive response.

Reflection

The reflection was finalized after evaluating the pupils' writing assessment grades and the monitoring checklist. grades rubrics that encompassed various elements, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, were utilized to assess how effectively the students' examinations were graded. The researcher and English teacher identified notable deficiencies during the first cycle, which are; the researcher swiftly explained the content, the researcher did not provide additional grammar and vocabulary to the students, the researcher did not pay attention to the students' notes and the researcher is only providing a slide presentation in teaching descriptive text.

According to the problems above, some pupils continue to fall under the success criterion (KKM) because they struggle with grammar, delivering ideas, and word usage. However, 37% of pupils through the assessment, which is still below the anticipated success rate of

72%. The researcher found that the first cycle did not achieve the desired level of success. In the second cycle, the researcher will provide further explanations about the content and analyze their faults in producing descriptive text. On the other side, the researcher will add extra vocabulary, researchers and English instructors will construct programs that utilize more videos to make the learning process more fun and to encourage pupils' interest.

The second cycle

After reflecting the cycle one, researchers and English instructors altered the plan and moved on to the second cycle. The second cycle was carried out since the previous cycle had not yet identified the aim of success. The explanation of the research implementation cycle 2 is described as follows:

Planning

Following a discussion and reflection on the teaching and learning, the researcher will elaborate further on the material related to the descriptive text. The researcher will offer a more in-depth clarification regarding the utilized of grammar in descriptive text, selecting vocabulary, and developing good sentences. The teacher also provides extra vocabulary commonly utilized when describing places, and all pupils are required to record the content provided by the teacher.

Action

The action in cycle 2 mirrors meetings as in cycle 1, the results are described below:

Findings of the first meeting

On Friday, November 1, 2025. The researcher entered the classroom and requested the pupils to assist the researcher in setting up the LCD projector and speaker. After that, the researcher followed the exercise by inquiring about the students' preparation for the learning process, and then requested them to open their notebooks. Before describing the content, the researcher presented a video about Komodo National Park. They were silent and paid attention to the video. After the video was played, the researcher asked the students, "What do you know from the video?". Several Students answer "Komodo", "Rusa", "Babi", "Laut", etc. Then, the researcher gave a conclusion about the video presented. Before delivering the material, the teacher offered numerous questions about the previous cycle. Some of them have good recall of previously learned content. Following that, the researcher finished by providing a brief explanation of the descriptive text content.

In this learning exercise, the teacher provides a brief explanation of descriptive text, practices describing pictures, and focuses on pupils' challenges, which are: utilizing correct grammar, justifying mechanics, introducing new vocabulary, paying attention to social functions, and language features. Pupils are required to record the material and ask the researchers about their writing. The researcher advises the students about their writing, which must be corrected. At the end, the researchers inquire about the problems and motivate them. Before closing the class, the researchers informed the students about the upcoming test, emphasizing the importance of studying diligently to ensure they pass.

Findings of the second meeting

On Friday, November 8, 2024. In this session, the researchers start the writing assessment in cycle 2. The researcher created the equipment utilized in this test, which comprised an LCD projector and a speaker. The topic test in cycle 2 remained the same as cycle 1, focusing on tourist attractions. The researcher showed a documentary video on "Raja Ampat", and the pupils characterized based on its visual features. They were requested to follow the previously mentioned processes for creating descriptive text. The researcher allocated 60 minutes for the students to complete the assessment after watching the video.

Students did great work as they followed the instructions. When the time is running out, the researchers compel them to take the assessment. At the end, the researcher asked the pupils about their problems. Moreover, the researcher asked students' opinions about the utilized of DMC medium. Many of them answered fun and keeps them from getting bored. The researcher and English teacher utilized the score from this task to assess the students' writing ability. The researcher and the teacher had inter-rater tolerance for their writing test scores. Based on the data gathered from the post-test of cycle 2, the value is derived in the table below.

Table 3. Student's Writing Test Score for Cycle 2

Aspects	Description
How many pupils are taking the test	38 students
How many pupils passed the test	29 students (76%)
How many pupils who did not pass the test	9 students (24%)
Total score	2831
Highest score	90
Lowest score	63
Average score	75

According to the data in Table 3, the average score for the cycle 2 post-test was 75. Of a total of 38, 29 received a score equal to or greater than the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM 72). A total of 76% of students received a higher score. Thus, Cycle 2 might be deemed a success.

Observation

In this part, the researcher and English instructor both observed the learning-process, students' involvement, and students' will to learn in class. The teaching and learning process in the second cycle improved compared to earlier. Students are highly engaged while the material is being presented. In this cycle 2, the researcher supplies pupils with some new vocabulary. They must record the content and any new vocabulary they encounter. Based on the result observation, pupils appear more engaged and pay full attention when utilizing DMC media. Students appeared to be quite comfortable and engaged in the writing activity. However, throughout the questioning exercise, some students are confident in their answers, while others are not.

At the end of the class, the researcher spoke to students about the problems they encountered during the learning process. Some of them said it was hard to remember

vocabulary and deliver the ideas. Then the researcher motivated students by encouraging them to study. The researcher also asked about students' opinions on using Digital Multimodal Composing media, and the students had a positive response to Digital Multimodal Composing media in the learning process.

Reflecting

During this step, the researcher commented on the use of DMC to teach writing. This cycle consisted of 2 meetings. While teaching and learning, the researcher evaluated the pupils' writing skills. Based on the observation checklist, the utilization of Digital Multimodal Composing medium may pique pupils' curiosity in studying English. They listened to the researcher's explanation. The utilized of video as a Digital Multimodal Composing medium enhances students' ability to express what they looked in written form.

However, the researcher discovered that a bunch of the students struggled with writing, such as forming ideas into effective sentences, acquiring new vocabulary, and understanding certain grammatical structures. They struggle to memorize some language due to their limited study time. The data on students' writing scores in the second cycle indicated an improvement over the data in cycle one. The pupils made progress in mechanics, word choice, and grammatical structure. The following table will show the scores from the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2.

Table 4. The recapitulation of students' writing scores

Aspects	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2
Total Score	2169	2591	2831
Average Score	57	67	75
Students who passed	9	14	29
Percentage	24%	37%	76%

According to Table 4, the proportion of students obtained the KKM was 24% in the pre-test, 37% in post-test 1, and 76% in post-test 2. It showed pupils with better writing abilities increased by 53% from the pre-test. The pupils' pre- and post-test scores increased, as seen in the table. Based on KKM 72 or above. Although Digital Multimodal Composing was an appropriate media for improving pupils' writing skills, the researcher and English teacher decided to discontinue the activity since it met the criteria for a successful study.

Discussion

This part presents a discussion of the research results, which are related to the theories. Improving students' writing skills by using Digital Multimodal Composing media could help students overcome their difficulty in writing. It could be seen from the students' scores. According to the early research data, the pupils' average score was 57, with 24% achieving the required minimal mark. It demonstrated that the pupils' writing abilities were inadequate.

According to a preliminary study conducted through interviews with the English teacher and pupils, the elements that make pupils' writing abilities low include the students' lack of vocabulary, uncertainty in grammatical structure, and trouble delivering their thoughts.

According to Byrne in (Elbashir, 2023), The three main problems make writing skills difficult to master, namely psychological, linguistic, and cognitive problems. Therefore, the researcher created an instructional medium to pique their curiosity in learning English. Utilizing media in improving students' writing is more interesting. According to (Ertan Özen & Duran, 2021) Students' use of digital media in the classroom has been proven to increase their engagement and knowledge of the course. The researcher found that Digital Multimodal Composing media could help the teacher and students communicate the topic using tools such as a poster, infographic, slide presentation, etc.

This action was carried out over two cycles. There were 2 meetings each cycle, one meeting for teaching and another for writing assessment. The researcher describing the content at the first meeting and then did some tasks explaining the tourist attractions. In the next session, the researchers examined the content from the prior session and concentrated on offering comments on students' faults in their writing tasks. The researcher uses a slide presentation and a video documentary as learning media for descriptive text. PowerPoint is a media for communicating subject matter the uses digital multimodal text. According to (Rahmawati & Khusnun Muhsin, 2021) PowerPoint makes the learning process more interesting and less monotonous, helping students to find ideas and improve vocabulary and language use. On the other hand, video as digital media could assist students carried out their ideas for writing descriptive text. According to (Lane, 2016) Digital videos create authentic writing contexts, motivating students to write for real audiences. This boosts creativity, collaboration, and makes writing more meaningful and enjoyable.

The value of students' writing skills improved to an excellent overall score after utilizing Digital Multimodal Composing media. Digital Multimodal Composing media make distinctive conditions in the class because they make pupils more active in learning. According to (Liang & Lim, 2021) Digital multimodal composing transforms classroom dynamics by engaging students in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. This media has the potential to capture the attention of pupils and assist them in developing their ideas. It's related to the studies from (Yu et al., 2024) students who engage in digital multimodal composing media perform better than someone who write traditional essays in aspects such as grammatical accuracy, lexical variety, text length, communication efficacy, and content quality.

The pupils' results improved after the researcher adopted Digital Multimodal Composing medium. The students who achieved the minimum score in the preliminary were 24%. After the researcher used Digital Multimodal Composing medium in post-test 1, the percentage improved 67%, and the proportion of pupils reached the minimal score in post-test 2 is 76%. Proved there was an increase in the pupils' writing skills. Moreover, after the researcher explained the content utilizing the Digital Multimodal Composing medium, the students fully paid attention to the researcher until the end, as they followed directions and properly replied to the researcher's question and actively posed several questions.

In comparison, the Digital Multimodal Composing medium has several downsides. This learning style requires pupils to be active in the utilization of the digital medium. After adopting the Digital Multimodal Composition medium, pupils are assigned project tasks or

generate multimodal writing. Nevertheless, the emphasis of this research was on the role of the Digital Composing medium in boosting pupils' writing skills. Since a lot of pupils lacked digital resources, the plan was not realized. Teachers should discover Digital Multimodal Composition useful for their pupils. As a result, this study's implementation of Digital Multimodal Composition was tailored to the pupils' needs and the school's capabilities.

According to the results from post-test 2, nine students obtained low scores. It is likely that the pupils have not yet fully comprehended the content that the researcher has been conveying. Despite the researcher's efforts to explain the content, such as engaging in talks with the students about the obstacles they face, some students are still hesitant to communicate their issues. According to (Ryan & Deci, 2000)students' motivation and desire to participate openly in learning conditions are greatly impacted by their perceptions of psychological safety and autonomy. As a result, some students may struggle to keep up with the teaching, they require more support and a more open environment in which they feel comfortable discussing their learning obstacles. Students' academic progress is intimately tied to the quality of their connections with teachers and classmate (Wentzel, 1997)

The researcher chose to discontinue the process since the results of the action in cycle 2 demonstrated a significant increase and met the success criteria. As a result, the researcher does not need to change the strategy before moving on to the following cycle. It may be observed in the study listed above.

Conclusion

After conducting this research, the researcher summarized several processes in implementing DMC media in the classroom. Particularly in this research, the researchers selected learning material in the form of slide presentations and videos that use Digital Multimodal Composing. Slide presentation with video, as digital media can make it simpler to describe the place. Following that, the researcher began the lecture with a slide show and an oral explanation. In the writing assessment, the researcher showed a video documentary from YouTube, and the students were asked to describe it. The use of Digital Multimodal Composing medium might help students enhance their writing skills. In cycle 2, 77% of students received the standard minimum score (KKM), and 72% met the success objective. The slide presentation and video help the students to recognize the content and deliver their ideas. Moreover, the students felt happy in the learning process and paid close attention as the researcher explained the content to the end.

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