



USING DIGITAL FEEDBACK IN TEACHING ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

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Abstract

Argumentative Writing is the last writing skill given to the fourth semester of English Department students. It equips the students to present convincing argument as well as critical analysis in the form of argumentative essay. Argumentative Writing course is important since it introduces them in elaborating previous studies to support their argument in composing thesis. English Department students of STKIP PGRI Jombang tend to get difficulties in explaining the previous studies critically. As a matter of fact, most students were confused in relating their argument with the previous studies. Terms connecting previous studies indicate that the students are able to compose thesis scientifically. Thus, this study was conducted to show the use of digital feedback by involving both CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning) in teaching argumentative writing. The improvement of the students' ability in argumentative writing by using digital feedback is based on at least 15 achievement gain point reached by 80% of the class. The study found that some students need to have face to face consultation in confirming their final draft.

Keyword: *Argumentative Writing, digital feedback, poin capaian peningkatan*

Abstrak

Argumentative Writing merupakan ketrampilan menulis terakhir yang diberikan kepada mahasiswa semester empat program studi Bahasa Inggris. Ketrampilan tersebut membekali mahasiswa agar mampu menyajikan argumen yang meyakinkan sebagaimana menganalisa kritis



dalam bentuk essei argumentasi. Materi Argumentative Writing diperlukan karena mengenalkan mahasiswa dalam mengelaborasi penelitian terdahulu untuk memperkuat argumen mereka dalam menyusun skripsi. Mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris STKIP PGRI Jombang mengalami kesulitan dalam menjelaskan penelitian terdahulu secara kritis. Bahkan, kebanyakan mahasiswa kebingungan dalam mengkaitkan argumen mereka dengan penelitian terdahulu. Hal-hal tentang mengaitkan penelitian terdahulu merupakan indikasi bahwa mahasiswa mampu menyusun skripsi secara ilmiah. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menunjukkan penggunaan digital feedback dengan melibatkan CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning) dalam pengajaran Argumentative Writing. Peningkatan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam pembelajaran Argumentative Writing menggunakan digital feedback dilihat melalui sedikitnya 15 poin capaian peningkatan yang diperoleh 80% dari jumlah mahasiswa. Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa beberapa mahasiswa masih memerlukan konsultasi bertatap muka secara langsung untuk mengkonfirmasikan kerangka terakhir mereka.

Kata kunci: *Argumentative Writing, digital feedback, achievement gain point*

Introduction

Among four language skills, writing is an important skill which supports people in language learning. Henceforth, writing has an essential role in learning English for most human learning depends on written words that they are not as simple as spoken one (Thompson, 2003: 63). The importance of writing makes it necessary to be considered as discussion and study. In addition, people share specific meaning based on particular topic by writing in exploring ideas and other word, writing implies writer's opinion on certain topic. Writing is also the most complicated skill for EFL learners since it involves content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and punctuation (Brown, 2004: 244-245). Indonesian learners are EFL learners that they have difficulties on writing in English. They have problem in English writing since expressing ideas in written form is not simple matter for the writer must be able to use their own style of language in publishing productive skill (Harmer, 2007). In addition, EFL writers have problem in expressing style of other language as it is complicated task which involves some aspects.

English Department of STKIP PGRI Jombang provides writing subject to equip the students' skill on expressing ideas in written form. The last writing subject in the department is Argumentative Writing which is given to the forth semester students. By Argumentative Writing, students are trained to express their argument convincingly and critically based on scientific articles. It is meant to familiarize them in comprising previous studies to transcribe thesis and drill them in paraphrasing, quoting, and synthesizing paragraphs. Unfortunately, it is

not easy for them in elaborating sentences into paragraph. The students' draft on Argumentative Writing show that they tend to copy sentences of the articles, use the same vocabularies as those of articles even though they have been equipped on paraphrasing, quoting, and synthesizing paragraphs. It identifies that they need to have more than indoor learning activities—classroom activities. Considering the activities, digital feedback was then implemented to them since it can be done both indoor and outdoor.

The implementation of digital feedback is done due to the development of technology which tends to be handy and use mobile. It provides students to engage effective learning process by mobile tools. By the development of portable notebook and computers, portable notebook computers, smartphones, and iPad, the model of mobile learning has been communal in educational field (Korkmaz, 2010). Furthermore, learning activities by using digital feedback is corroborating with constructive and cooperative learning. Thus, digital feedback directs the students to have high-order thinking, authentic assessment (Castelli & Fiorentino, 2010), and technology literacy. Digital feedback offers indoor as well as outdoor activities anytime, anywhere, anyhow they are. Thus, digital feedback creates an unlimited time and space to learn, gives more freedom and autonomy in learning. By digital feedback, each student gets peer feedbacks and teacher's feedback. The feedbacks are done by both CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning). CALL is meant for those who tend to type with fingers of both hands on keyboard of computer while MALL is for those who tend to use few fingers or even a hand on smaller device—the mobile phone.

CALL has been applied since 1960's (Inggita & Gloria, 2018), but the development of technology makes people slowly and surely switch to use MALL in language learning. In 1990s, teachers were keen on using native speakers as the exemplary in language teaching. A decade later, the use of computer has been booming in integrating language classroom, helping teachers in interacting with students (Adieb H, Rendhi, & Salim, 2018). It happens because people tend to think of computer and mobile manoeuvres in relating technology and educational improvement (Brown: 2015). MALL has been proven to give more learning experiences for learners and teachers in language learning (Baleghizadeh & Oladrostam, 2010; Kim and Kwon, 2012; Khubyari and Narafshan, 2016). The implementation of MALL was due to the upward technology which makes mobile phone utilization as common term in daily life, including Indonesia. Amongst 85% Indonesian expenditure on the favourable of mobile devices, even they have more than one or additional mobile phones (Ramadhan, 2016). Mobile phone is incorporated with unresolved software which eases people in getting information, having interactive discussion with families, acquaintances, friends, colleagues, and even playing games.

The developing technology has also made the use of internet in supporting daily necessity both in factory floor and educational venue such as

effortlessness employees in finishing their work or facilitating students in doing their assignments. In language teaching, internet has been used for the sake of “technologically literate being” (Ni’amah & Puspitasari, 2016: 61). To be “technologically literate being” implies educational respond on the developing technology for the sake of educational improvement. Thus, Weller’s (2002: 65-67) statement can be considered that internet use in language learning is able to create active learning which causes the students experiencing independent and creative activities in achieving knowledge. In addition, Ni’amah and Puspitasari conclude the expenditure of internet gives the students opportunity to refresh and improve their innovative skill to be literate that they are responsive in applying personal online tactics in learning language (2016: 63-64). Applying personal online tactics is common thing in this digital era. As a matter of fact, those who are not familiar on the use of internet can be called as technologically illiterate being. The use of internet in this study is intended to enable the students in expressing their arguments and reviewing others’ writing.

The practise of internet in teaching reading and writing especially using WhatsApp has been done in enhancing vocabulary (Adib, Rendhi, and Salim, 2018). Henceforward, WhatsApp topographies ease the instructor in nurturing students’ realization, clarifying and enlightening the words since it is a text-based policy in which chatroom can be used to teach writing. Thus, text-based policy displays the students’ collective difficulties in learning language, especially in writing (Man, 2014). There are various difficulties faced by students in writing. This study was conducted by considering students’ difficulties in writing. Some students felt confuse in elaborating argument based on articles they choose. The researcher then gave explanation and references on the discussion. She also decided two peer reviews of students for each student and allowed them to have an online consultation. They were also allowed to have face to face consultation. The peer reviews were asked to give digital feedback by using their mobile phone, and so was the researcher. Most students prefer to state their feedback by using computer because they can involves fingers of both hands in typing that makes it easier and faster, but not for mobile phone. Those who prefer handy, small and portable device prefer to apply mobile phone in showing their feedback. Finally, this study applies both CALL and MALL in giving feedback. Both CALL and MALL are digital devices that the review is called digital feedback.

Research Method

This study benevolences exploration on the use of digital feedback in drilling the students’ ability on writing argument. The argument must be supported by paraphrasing, quoting, and synthesizing others’ article. The study was done based on the students’ confusion in expressing their argument. In other words, this study proposes to use digital feedback in improving the students’ writing ability, especially in elaborating argument. Teaching-learning activity which is planned to improve students’ ability is called classroom action

research (Latief, 2008:22). Classroom action research (CAR) in this study was started based on observation result on preliminary study. The observation showed the students' confusion in elaborating argument that an action needs to be done in solving the problem. The action was done by applying digital feedback in Argumentative Writing class. The result of the action was done by analysing the students' draft of Argumentative Writing. The analysis result was then conformed to the students' response on digital feedback implementation. The response was counted to know the percentage; the greater the response means the success improvement achieved.

In case of resolving the students' writing problem, the researcher implemented four steps of Kemmis and McTaggart in Latief (2013)—planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting (see diagram 1).

Planning

In the first step, the researcher set ideas on learning outcomes, learning activities by applying digital feedback, instruments of the research, and criteria of success.

Implementing

After preparing instruments of the research, the next step was implementing ideas have been planned on the previous step in order to achieve the criteria of success.

Observing

The result of the implementation was then observed to know the appropriateness of the action and measure the criteria of success achievement. In this case, research instrument is used in collecting the data.

Reflecting

On the final step, reflection on students' ability was done by confirming the students' score and the criteria of success. The students' score was used to extent the criteria of success while questionnaire were applied to know the students' response. Two criteria of successes were established in conforming the students' improvement in writing argument. The action is succeed when 80% of the students have reached at least 15 achievement gain point and 75% of the students feel very helpful on the implementation of using digital feedback. The action is fail when it is only one criteria of success is achieved.

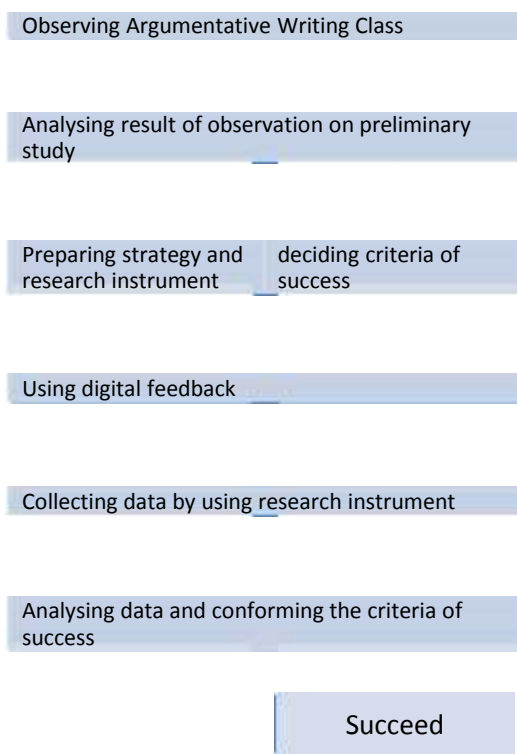


Diagram 1 Procedure of CAR

Finding and Discussion

The research was conducted in one cycle. Digital feedback was implemented in teaching Argumentative Writing to semester fourth students of English Department. There were two meetings done in the digital feedback implementation. In the first meeting, the students were given explanation about elaborating online journals to support argument. In the next meeting, task and two peer feedbacks were given. The task was about expressing argument and reviewing a classmate’s draft. Thus, every student wrote argument and revised other’s draft. After realising digital feedback, the students’ score are improving. The improvement implies the first criteria of success. Among sixteen students, only two of them reach 9 and 11 achievement gain point. It means fourteen students among sixteen (87.5%) have reached 15 achievement gain point. Thus, more than 80% of the students reach 15 achievement gain point that the first criteria of success are completed and the second criteria of success are then considered to be conformed. Further explanation can be seen in table 1.

Table 1 The Students’ Writing Score

No	Name	Preliminary Study	Cycle 1
1	Elro	62	77
2	Marso	63	78
3	Iqom	70	86
4	Nonlas	61	72
5	Rosno	70	85

6	Darif	63	78
7	Giprak	62	78
8	Fahzi	61	70
9	Nulfah	62	78
10	Kikho	72	88
11	Faqchi	72	87
12	Bilbra	70	85
13	Okpus	69	84
14	Rafsa	70	87
15	Arkim	70	86
16	Sinhay	70	88
Average score		66,6875	81,6875

After completing the first criteria of success, the students' response is then conformed to meet the second criteria of success. The students' response on the implementation of digital feedback in Argumentative Writing class also displays positive reply. Questionnaire was published in order to know the students' responses on the use of digital feedback. There are seven questions with three optional answers—very helpful, fairly good, and useless. The seven question includes the use of digital feedback in inspiring them to state argument, triggering ideas, improving skill of writing, supporting argument, giving joyful learning, the necessity of reading articles, and the awareness of being technologically literate. The questions were meant to know the response of the students in fulfilling the process of writing and applying digital aid. Most response on each question shows greatest response. It is proven by the calculation of each optional answer which approximates 10 to 15 for 'very helpful', 6 at most for 'fairly good', and not more than 2 for 'useless'. The percentage of the responses shows 79.5% of the students feel very helpful, 17% of them feel fairly good and only 3.5% students feel useless on the implementation of digital feedback. The percentage shows that the second criterion of success is completed—more than 75% students feel very helpful. It means most students agree on the use of digital feedback in Argumnetative Writing class, only a few of them felt digital feedback does not give impact on writing, especially on providing ideas to elaborate oipinion and heightening delighted learning atmosphere. Further explanation can be seen in table 2.

Table 2 The Students' Response

No	Using digital feedback	Very Helpful	Fairy good	useless
1	I was more inspired in stating my argument	13	3	
2	It gives me extra ideas to elaborate opinion	11	3	2
3	I can improve my writing by the	14	2	

reviews given				
4	It enables me to support my argument with previous study	10	6	
5	Joyful learning atmosphere is boosted by digital feedback	12	3	1
6	Reading much article is necessary to maintenance opinion	15	1	
7	It realizes me that being technologically literate is beneficial	14	1	1
Average point		0,795	0,170	0,0357

The students' attainment on the use of digital feedback in Argumentative Writing illustrates progressive advance. The progress involves the criteria of successes—the percentage of the students who approximate at least 15 achievement gain point and the students' response on the application of digital feedback. The students' achievement gain point touches 15.3 and their respond that feel digital feedback is beneficial in argumentative writing class reach 79.5%. It can be seen in table 3.

Table 3 The Students' Achievement

No	Criteria of Success	Preliminary Study	Cycle 1
1	Students' average score	66.6875	81.6875
2	achievement gain point		15.3
3	Students' response	72%	79%

The research finding covenants with the implementation of digital feedback to the fourth students' of English Department. The application of digital feedback shows students' improvement on Argumentative Writing score. The improvement can be seen on the students' average score in writing which were increased 15.3. In preliminary study, the students' average score before applying digital feedback was 66.69 while it was 81.69 after fulfilling digital feedback. Unfortunately, do not all the students reach the achievement gain point formulated—three of them extent 11 and 12 point, but most of them reach 15 to 18 achievement gain point. Additional 15-18 point on the students' average score proves the study achievement on the first criteria of success—80% of the

students have reached extra 15 point. Thus, the action in increasing their achievement gain point was stopped since it has reached the criteria of success formulated.

The study also achieves the second criteria of success which is proven by the students' response on the implementation of digital feedback. Approximately 79.5% of the students feel very helpful on the use of digital feedback in Argumentative Writing class. The statement of 'very helpful' means digital feedback is really a worthy aid which supports them in writing argument. Some of them stated the use of digital feedback is 'fairly good' and others said 'useless'. The statement 'fairly good' means they felt easier in expressing their written argument by applying digital feedback while 'useless' means digital feedback does not signify any effect in writing opinion even they were technologically illiterate being. They felt to be technologically illiterate being for they were confused in operating digital feedback. They did not have intention to be technologically literate for they do not have interest and sense on technology usage. Fortunately, there are only 0.36% students who are technologically illiterate being. However, technology literate being is not the criteria of success of this study.

Conclusion

In case of improving students' writing skill in Argumentative Writing class, digital feedback is implemented. The implementation of digital feedback involves both CALL and MALL. The improvement is emphasized on the students' achievement gain point and the percentage of additional 15 gain point. The implementation of digital feedback made 87.5% of the students approximate 15 achievement gain point. The improvement of students' writing skill is also proven by their response after implementing digital feedback. Most of them felt 'very helpful' on the use of digital feedback. The response of feeling 'very helpful' is increasing 7%. It even made them to be technologically literate. Nevertheless, there should be a research which considers students' difficulties in writing. It would be better if the students' problem is considered to create something as a problem solving in writing. In other words, students' problem in writing can be used as consideration in designing plans related to classroom activities for writing class.

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