



ENGLISH DIGITAL TALKING BOOKS AS MEDIA TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING

Ainul Hufron[✉] Novia Trisanti, S.Pd., M.Pd

English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. State University of Semarang.

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Abstract

There are many studies have been conducted to investigate the use of talking book, but not with the digital talking book. In other words, the use of digital talking book has not been widely prevalent among the EFL learners. This study investigated whether there is any significant differences on the students' writing achievement between those who are taught by using English digital talking books and those who are taught by using simple brochure as media. The population of the study was the twelfth grade students of SMA N 1 Comal, Pemalang, in the academic year of 2014/2015). There were 80 students, divided into two groups of 40, participated in this quasi experimental study as experimental and control group. The result of t-test showed that the difference between the students who were taught using English digital talking books and those who were taught using simple brochures can't be seen significantly. It also showed that in this study, English digital talking books were more effective than simple brochures to improve students' ability in writing a narrative text.

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[✉] Correspondent Address:

B3 Building FBS Unnes

Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang, 50229

E-mail: ainoel20@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As one of the four language skills that should be mastered by English language learners, writing is a very different skill because it is needed to choose the words and phrases, and then somehow put them all in a good order. One of the common problems faced by students is the question about what things to write. It happens even when they are about to start their writing. Therefore, media are needed in teaching and learning process to make students easier in writing.

Media are important thing to attract the students' attention and motivation that can help them develop their creativity and imagination in expressing their idea. Related to media, Arsyad (2004: 4) states that learning medium, in general is a component of learning resources or a physical vehicle containing instructional material in the students' environment, which is able to stimulate the students to learn.

Dealing with the use of audiovisual aid as media in teaching, Stemplesky (1990:3-4) states about the importance of a moving picture component as a language teaching aid which is able to increase the students' motivation. Children and adults feel their interest quicken when language is experienced in a lively way through television and video.

Furthermore, Berk (2009) stated that video materials can draw on the learners' multiple intelligences and learning styles to maximize their understanding. When videos and multimedia learning are combined, an empirical basis is provided for the use of videos in teaching languages.

This study investigated the use and the effectiveness of English digital talking books as media to teach English writing, especially narrative text. There are some previous studies which are relevant to teaching English using audiovisual media: Hanik (2009) studied *The Use of an Animated Film Entitled "Garfield the Movie" to Improve the Students' Ability in Writing Narrative Texts*. This final project is an experimental study to answer the question of how an animated film entitled "Garfield the Movie" is used in teaching

writing narrative text. The result of the research showed that the use of the animated film entitled "Garfield the Movie" in teaching writing narrative text was effective. Besides, the film can attract the students' attention in learning process.

Mathew and Alidmat (2013) investigated the Usefulness of Audio-Visual Aids in EFL Classroom at undergraduate level at Aljouf University, Saudi Arabia. The findings of this investigation suggest that using audio-visuals as a teaching method stimulates thinking and improves learning environment in a classroom.

Shahani and Tahriri (2015) investigated the effect of silent and freeze-frame viewing techniques of video materials on the intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' listening comprehension. The results of this quasi-experimental study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental groups (using two types of viewing techniques) and the control group (using written materials).

Nurani (2012) studied *The Effectiveness of Using Video to Improve Students' Writing Skill of News Item Text*. The result showed that there was a significant difference on students' writing achievement between students who were taught news item text using video and those who are taught news item text using pictures.

Another study was conducted by Olivianti (2011). It was an action research that aimed to find an interesting and effective way in learning narrative. She used written story in the first cycle and a film in the second cycle. The result showed that there was a significant difference in the achievement of students' writing before and after using the audio-visual aid. It was proven by the significant difference between the average score of the pre-test (60.68) and the average score of the post-test (78.54).

Dealing with the media, digital talking book is an audiovisual aid developed from conventional talking book. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Talking Book is a spoken recording of a book, used especially by blind people.

The English digital talking books used in this research are published by Appuseries. It's a

weblog managed by Media Fusion. The Appuseries has a wealth of content for kids that not only helps them learn about the world around them but also helps in better retention of these lessons by mixing learning with multimedia entertainment.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The writer used quasi-experimental method with the design “Pre-test Post-test Nonequivalent Groups”. According to Hartoyo

(2002), with this design, both a control and an experimental group are compared. However, the groups are chosen and assigned out of convenience rather than through randomization. This might be the method of choice for our study on work experience as it would be difficult to choose students in a school setting at random and place them in specific group and classes. Those students who participated would be our treatment group; those who did not would be our control group.

The design of the experiment can be described as the following:

E	Non R	01	X	02
C	Non R	03	Y	04

It involved an experimental group, a control group, and treatments in collecting data. The two groups were taught with the same topic but using different media. The experimental group was taught using English digital talking book. Meanwhile, the control group was taught using simple brochure or leaflet.

The study involved 80 students, divided into two groups of 40, at the twelfth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Comal, Pematang, in the academic year of 2014/2015. I took XII IPA 1 as the experimental group and XII IPA 2 as the control group.

In collecting data, two kinds of instruments were used. The first was writing test consisted of try-out test, pre-test and post-test. It was used as an instrument to collect data because writing is a productive skill. The other instrument was questionnaire. It was used to find out the effectiveness of the media dealing with the students’ motivation and attitude to English teaching learning. Questionnaire design used in this research was closed-ended questions. There were two questionnaires given only to students of experimental group. The first one was given in the beginning of the study, before introducing the strategies (pre-test) and the second questionnaire was carried out in the end of the study (post-test).

Some steps which are done in a chronologic order are always required in conducting an experiment. In collecting data, the

writer firstly chose the twelfth grade students of SMA N 1 Comal as the population based on the following consideration:

- (1) After I checked the average scores of the population on English subject, XII IPA 1 and XII IPA 2 were in the same level or quality in English achievement. There was no significant difference between their scores.
- (2) In addition, after I consulted to the English teacher, he approved it and also recommended those two classes as the samples of the experiment.

The next step was taking two groups which had the same characters consisting of 40 students for each group from the population as the sample of the experiment. I chose XII Science 1 as the experimental group and XII Science 2 as the control group.

The third step was conducting try out test and the first questionnaire with the purpose of finding out the appropriateness and the reliability of the instrument. It was followed by giving the pre-test to measure the dependent variable before the treatment.

After scoring the result of the pre-test and analyzing them, the writer applying the experiment by giving the treatments for both groups. The students of two groups were given the same material about narrative text but the students in the control group were taught without using English digital talking book as a media. The

next step was giving the post-test and the second questionnaire, scoring the result of the post-test and analyzing them followed by calculating the means of the result (pre-test post test) of the two groups, comparing the difference between the result of the pre-test and the post-test, and applying the T-test to analyze whether the difference was significant or not. Finally, the writer drew the conclusion from the result.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the result and the analyses of the pre-test, post-test, first and second questionnaire will be presented.

Pre-test Finding

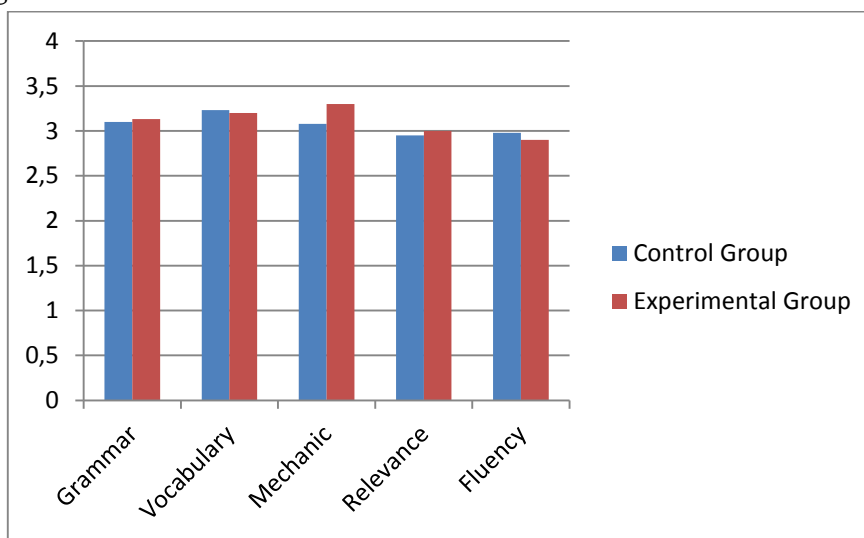
Pre-test is the test that is held before giving the treatments. It was conducted on Thursday, November 20, 2014. The average score of the control group was 61.30 and the experimental

group was 62.10. It meant that the students' achievement of the control and the experimental groups was relatively the same before the treatments were given. It was proven by the t-test formula.

The number of subjects in this study for the control and the experimental groups were 80 with the degree of freedom (df) = 78, that was $N_x + N_y - 2 = 78$. At the 5% (0.05) alpha level of significance, t-value for the pre-test that was obtained was 0.277. The t-test for Equality of Means yielded Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.782 which was higher than α level of 0.05 ($0.782 > 0.05$). Therefore, it could be concluded that there was no significant difference between the mean score of the two groups in the pre-test at 5% significance level with 78 degrees of freedom.

Below is the chart of the students' average score which covers five components of writing.

The Average Scores Result of the Pre-test



Post-test Finding

The post-test was conducted on Tuesday, December 02, 2014. The purpose of this test was to find out the students' ability in writing narrative text after the treatments were given. The post-test average score of the control group was 70.70 and the experimental group was 74.90. It showed that the achievement of the experimental group was higher than the control group in the post-test. However, there was no significant

difference between those two groups' achievement. It was proven by the t-test formula.

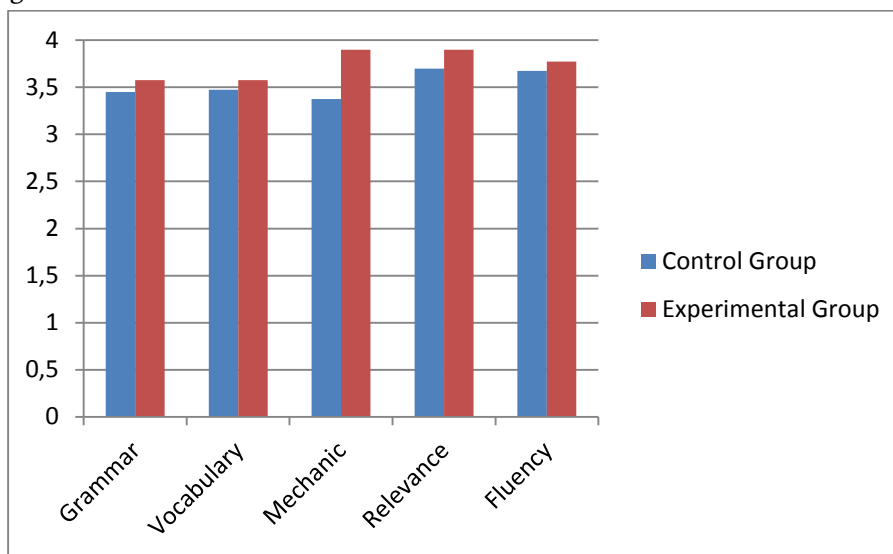
The number of subjects was 80 with the degree of freedom (df) = 78, that was $N_x + N_y - 2 = 78$. At the 5% (0.05) alpha level of significance, and t-value that was obtained was 0.943. The t-test for Equality of Means yielded Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.068 which was higher than α level of 0.05 ($0.068 > 0.05$). It meant that H_0 (There was no significant difference between mean score of control and experimental group in

the pre-test) should be accepted. Therefore, it could be concluded that there was no significant difference between the mean score of the two

groups in the post-test at 5% significance level with 78 degrees of freedom.

Below is the chart of the students' average score which covers five components of writing.

The Average Score of the Post-test



Difference between the two means

It was hypothesized that the difference occurs. To measure the significance of the pre-test and the post-test, the t-test was used. In this case, the researcher used manual statistical computation. The number of subjects in this study for the control and experimental groups were 80 with the degree of freedom (df) = 78, that was $N_x + N_y - 2 = 78$. At the 5% (0.05) alpha level of significance, the obtained t-value was 0.94 and t-table was 2.00, so the t-value is lower than t-table. It means that there is no significant difference between the two means.

It meant that H_0 (There was no significant difference between mean score of control and experimental group in the pre-test) should also be accepted. Therefore, it could be concluded that there the difference between the mean score of the two groups in the post-test at 5% significance level with 78 degrees of freedom can't be seen significantly.

Analysis of the first questionnaire

The result of the first questionnaire revealed that the students' attitude toward the English narrative writing still needed improvement. They had realized the importance

of learning English narrative writing. However, they felt that it was a difficult task to do writing. It can be seen from their responses to the fourth question. They thought that their writing ability was not the same with their expectation.

Although the class ran relatively well, there was still something can be done to improve the quality of the learning process. Since more than half of the class was not so interested in learning English narrative writing, an interesting technique or medium is needed to draw their interest and attention in learning process. From the next questions, it can be concluded that the students had a high interest to learn English narrative writing through audiovisual media. Therefore, it was expected that they could improve their ability in writing, especially in producing narrative text.

Analysis of the second questionnaire

The result of the second questionnaire showed that the implementation of the treatments had made the students changed their perception toward writing, improve their ability, and create more comfortable and enjoyable learning activities. The students had also felt the benefit of learning by using audiovisual media as they

admitted they had been satisfied with their writing result. Moreover, they also considered the use of it was quite needed to help improving their ability in learning English, especially in writing narrative. The other thing to be considered is the process in choosing and applying audiovisual media which should be done creatively, carefully, and effectively to make them helpful in the learning process.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The aim of the test is to investigate whether there is any significant difference of the students' achievement in writing narrative text taught using simple brochure in control group and English digital talking book in experimental group as media at the twelfth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Comal, Pemalang in the academic year of 2014/2015.

In the pre-test, the average scores of the control and the experimental groups were 61.30 and 62.10. From the pre-test, it can be said that the ability of the two groups was relatively the same. From the scores, it can be concluded that the two groups were homogenous, because there was only slight difference in the pre-test result between the control group and the second one (experimental group).

After receiving the treatment, the average score of the experimental group was higher than the control group. The experimental group got 74.90 and the control group got 70.70.

Providing students with English digital talking book made an upgrading in their writing ability more than just giving them simple brochure. It can be seen in the average of each aspect both in the pre-test and the post-test section below.

Average of Each Aspect both in Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Control Group

Aspect	Pre-test	Post-test
Grammar	3.10	3.45
Vocabulary	3.23	3.48
Mechanic	3.08	3.38
Relevance	2.95	3.70
Fluency	2.98	3.68

Average of Each Aspect both in Pre and Post-Test of the Experimental Group

Aspect	Pre-test	Post-test
Grammar	3.13	3.58
Vocabulary	3.20	3.58
Mechanic	3.30	3.90
Relevance	3.00	3.90
Fluency	2.90	3.78

From both of the tables above, it can be seen that the students' writing narrative ability which were taught using English digital talking book and simple brochure showed an improvement. However, mean the post-test score of the experimental group of each aspect was higher than the post-test score of the control group. The increasing ability involving the whole aspects of the components of writing: grammar, vocabulary, mechanic, relevance and fluency.

From the pre-test finding, the students' grammar was still weak, most of them (in both groups), translated words from Indonesian into English. They did not understand how to produce some English sentences into a good structure. It was revealed that they forgot about Simple Past Tense and Passive Voice. They did not change Verb 1 into Verb 2. Although they have been XII grade senior high school students, most of them did not use the form of "to be" for Past Tense properly. They also forgot about plural forms, and other small grammar errors. After getting treatments using English digital talking book as the media, on average, students' grammar ability of the experimental group (3.58) improved more than the students' which were taught using simple brochure (3.45).

The second writing aspect is vocabulary. In the pre-test, the students in both groups used some inappropriate words for showing ideas in their writing and as stated above, most of them translated words from Indonesian into English. They sometimes looked up in their dictionary (most of them used Alfablink – an electronic dictionary) then use the translation inappropriately to the context. In the post-test, for students of the two groups, their vocabulary improved because they had been taught more about narrative stories and vocabularies.

The next aspect is mechanic. The students' spelling ability was also weak. Most students, in both groups, typed some English words incorrectly, for example: they wrote hapily or happyli instead of happily. Another word was beautiful which was written as beautifull or beautiful. Dealing with the grammar problem, many students typed verbs in the participle or past-participle incorrectly. The next problem was the use of articles "a" and "the" where many students did it inappropriately. i.e, "Once upon a time, there lived the clever deer in the very thick forrest". Article "the" in "the clever deer" should be article of "a" because it was the beginning (introduction) stage. After they were explained the way how to spell those words and some others, they could write them correctly in the treatments and post-test.

The last two writing aspects were the worst compared to the other aspects. The students' ability in relevance aspect was so poor in the pretest. They lacked of understanding of how to give appropriate title, to make effective introductory paragraph, lead to body, or give supporting evidence for generalizations. Some of them, even, did not give the title for their texts. After providing them with English digital talking book completed with the help of explanation from the teacher, the students of the experimental group were better in organizing their ideas compared to the control group.

Talking about the fluency (content), there was a significant difference between the content of students' writing in the pretest and the posttest for both of control and experimental group. In the pretest, they did not have any sources what they have to write, except their own prior knowledge about the topic. So, they only produced very simple sentences. It made the writing rather confusing to be understood. After getting treatment, the content of students' writing was improved. The English digital talking book provided them much more needed information related to the topic than the simple brochure did. Therefore, they produced more sentences.

Based on the statistical computation from the writing test result, it can be seen that there was no significant difference on the students'

achievement between those who were taught writing narrative using English digital talking books and those who were taught using simple brochure as the media.

The computation result also told us that there was strong evidence that the teaching using English digital talking book improved the students' marks on writing narrative text. In the computation, it improved marks, on average, by approximately 12.80 points. It can be concluded that English digital talking book was effective to be used as a medium in teaching narrative writing, although it was not significant.

From the questionnaire, we could see that the implementation of the treatments had made the students changed their perception toward writing, improve their ability, and create more comfortable and enjoyable learning activities. The students had also felt the benefit of learning by using audiovisual media as they admitted they had been satisfied with their writing result. Moreover, they also considered the use of it was quite needed to help improving their ability in learning English, especially in writing narrative. The other thing to be considered is the process in choosing and applying audiovisual media which should be done creatively, carefully, and effectively to make them helpful in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

As the result indicated, the difference on students' writing narrative text achievement between those who were taught using English digital talking book and those who were taught using simple brochure as media can't be seen significantly. However, based on the mean of pre-test and post-test score of each group, the use of both English digital talking book and simple brochure improved the students' achievements in writing narrative text. The result also revealed that the experimental group performed better than the control group in their post-test. Thus, the writer come to the conclusion that even though it can't be seen significantly, the use of English digital talking book still yielded a better improvement of the students' writing narrative

text ability and was more effective to be used in teaching writing narrative text.

English digital talking books could be suggested as an interesting media in teaching writing narrative text because they are able to attract not only the students' attention but also their willingness to learn writing. Next, the use of English digital talking books could also help teachers to find another way in teaching especially in writing narrative text and will trigger them to improve their teaching methods so that they can make their students more motivated to write English text since they need enjoyable and not monotonous teaching-learning activities and finally improve the students' achievements in their writing ability. Then, using short text is suggested because students sometimes feel bored listening to teacher's explanation. Also, the text should be easy to be understood by the students so they can easily make the reconstruction text.

Finally, it is hoped that the result of this research will be useful for readers. This research also can be used as one of the references for the next researchers who want to conduct deeper research by using all various kinds of media including English digital talking book. They are also expected to be able to cover the limitation in this study and provide more detailed information about this study.

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