INNOVATIVE DIGITAL MEDIA: I-PEN FOR TEACHING WRITING

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Abstract

Inevitably, to get involved in the Asia digital era, every student that learns English as a foreign language requires materials and teaching media in digital English. To support the creativity of students, especially in students' writing, it would demand development of interesting and challenging activities. This paper proposes an innovative digital media called **I-PEN** *(I create texts with a pen)* for teaching writing to the seventh grade of junior high school that had been designed using Research and Development (R&D) consisting of three steps: First, *Point* is an area to look for ideas and critical thinking sentences in integrating the clue given in each activity. Second, *Elaboration* is a creative pattern to encourage students to make a paragraph in a variety of text types in accordance with the template provided. And the last, *Net* is a style in writing that exists in the game. It has phenomena to enrich knowledge, experience and new vocabulary. The product (I-PEN) had been validated through Forum Group Discussion (FGD). The results of this research were as follows: a) Every tasks and activities in I-PEN can give motivation to students to create sentences and texts easily. b) I-PEN provides games to develop the students' creativity in creating descriptive text.

Keywords: *I-PEN, students' writing creativity, teaching writing.*

Introduction

Inevitably, to get involved in rapid change of information technology, every student that learns English as a foreign language requires materials and teaching media in digital English. As an English teacher, selecting media for teaching writing skill is not easy. There are some characteristics of materials namely self instruction, stand alone, adaptive, self contained, and user friendly (Widodo dan Jasmadi, 2008). So, he or she has to consider before using the digital media. It should be related to the curriculum, syllabus, and the students' needs.

One of the English skills that has to be mastered by the seventh grade students of junior high school is writing. It learns how to write sentences and texts correctly. Creating descriptive text includes in describing a person, things and animals. Sometimes, students got difficulties when

they begin to write it because they felt confused to arrange the sentences related to the generic structure and language focus of descriptive text.

Creativity on writing is a must. Students can use their imagination to develop their creativity in writing. Creative writing is used to refer to the activities we engage (Graeme Harper, 2010). To support the creativity of students, especially in students' writing, it would demand the development of interesting and challenging activities. Therefore, the researcher attempts to develop an innovative digital media called **I-PEN** *(I create texts with a pen)* for teaching writing. It consists of *Point, Elaboration* and *Net* step to encourage students' creativity in writing.

Writing

Exploring ideas is an exciting activity. It can be applied into written form. In writing, there are two crucial points to consider such as the different target readers and the purpose of writing. A process view of writing (Hyland, 2009) are as follows:

a) Writing is problem-solving. It means that in creating texts, planning is to point an aim. There are four stages in the planning process: analysis, finding ideas, selecting and clustering and developing an outline (Thoreau, M. 2011).

b) Writing is generative. Students not only have to distinguish types of sentences: simple, compound, complex or compound complex sentences but also they should know how to write sentences in declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory form. Then, students can try to explore their ideas in paragraph writing. It has four parts: a topic sentence, controlling idea, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences (Dorothy E. Zemach & Carlos Islaln, 2011).

c) Writing is recursive. Then, students can check unity, coherence and cohesion of their paragraphs. And the last, kinds of texts that want to be used such as descriptive, narrative,

recount, procedure or report text (Derewianka, B. (1990). Students can identify kinds of texts through the purposes, generic structures, and language focus of texts.

d) Writing is collaborative and developmental. Finally, students can revise their draft after getting feedback from their teacher to improve their writing.

Promote *I-PEN* Activities

I-PEN *(I create texts with a pen)* is an innovative media that developed for teaching writing. Basically, I-PEN has three main steps. First, *Point* is an area to look for ideas and critical thinking sentences in integrating the clue given in each activity. Second, *Elaboration* is a creative pattern to encourage students to make a paragraph in a variety of text types in accordance with the template provided. And the last, *Net* is a style in writing that exists in the game. It has phenomena to enrich knowledge, experience and new vocabulary. Activities in every steps of I-PEN discuss how to create from sentences until texts that have been designed related to core competence and basic competence of the seventh grade students of high school.

Research Method

This research used a Research and Development (R&D) study adapted the R&D model proposed by Plomp (1997). There are five cycles and three of them were used in this research. They are as follows: First, Pre-Research, before making needs analysis and develop the course grid, the researcher conducted observation and interview the seventh grade students of junior high school in SMP N 1 Mungkid. The reason for choosing this school was it has A accreditation and language laboratories. Next, the researcher developed the draft of the media called I-PEN. The last, I-PEN had been validated through Forum Group Discussion (FGD) that consisted of three expert judgements, two teachers and four students in the evaluation cycle. They filled the

instruments about the I-PEN product that relate to content, writing skill developed: tasks and activities and graphics.

Results and Discussions

In observation activity, the seventh grade students of junior high school used a book entitle When English Rings a Bell (WERB) and students worksheet in their teaching learning process. They also used both traditional and modern media like whiteboard, pictures, flash cards and the example of texts for teaching writing.

Based on the result of interviews, there were students faced some problems in learning writing. They said that the writing materials were difficult to understand, sometimes they got difficulties to look for appropriate vocabulary, they felt confused to create sentences or texts although their teacher has explained it and the writing media was less challenging. The results of need analysis were planned as follows:

Table 1. The Results of the Need Analysis

Target Needs	Necessities	Students' objective of learning English writing is to write sentences and descriptive text.
	Lacks	Students are often confused to look for ideas.
		Students got difficulties to create a sentence and descriptive text.
	Wants	Students want their teacher selects the materials, tasks and activities that can improve their knowledge in writing by using an interesting materials or digital media.
Learning Needs	Input	Students want to create sentences related to the clue given.
		Students want to create descriptive text using provided template.
		Students want to identify the generic structure and language focus through games.
	Setting	Students want to do the tasks and activities both in individual and in group.
	Teachers	Students want their teacher giving detail explanation when they got difficulties with the materials and

	Role	using interesting media.
		Students want their teacher gives feedback on their writing.
	Procedures	Students want to write sentences and descriptive text based on the clue given, using provided template and through games.

After conducting the need analysis, the researcher made the course grid. It was used as a guideline to design the materials in media related to the result of needs analysis. It consisted of competence, topic, language focus: writing skill developed, method, and tasks and activities for the seventh grade of junior high school.

The product of this research is I-PEN. It is an innovative media application that can be used in smartphone or laptop. It stands for *I create texts with a pen.* It means that students can use their pen or forefinger to write sentences or texts based on their creativity. It has three steps as follows:

(a) Point is an area to look for ideas and critical thinking sentences in integrating the clue given in each activity. In tasks and activities, *Point* has an attractive clue and the five senses activity that explain how to create sentences. It begins from simple, compound and complex sentences. If the students want to open this activity, they have to insert the password. They can find the first password from their teacher and the next password; they will get it from the previous score activity. Here are the examples of two activities above:

a) An attractive clue activity

An attractive clue is like playing puzzle. It makes different because one picture is divided into seven parts. In every part can appear and move one by one. Then, students are required to create seven sentences related to the part of picture that appeared above. If the students have finished writing sentences, the complete image will appear.

b) The five senses activity

Students look for a word spontaneously based on their five senses: taste, sight, smell, touch, and sounding. Then, students create a simple, compound and complex sentence using that word. It also provides some guidance how to create sentences easily.
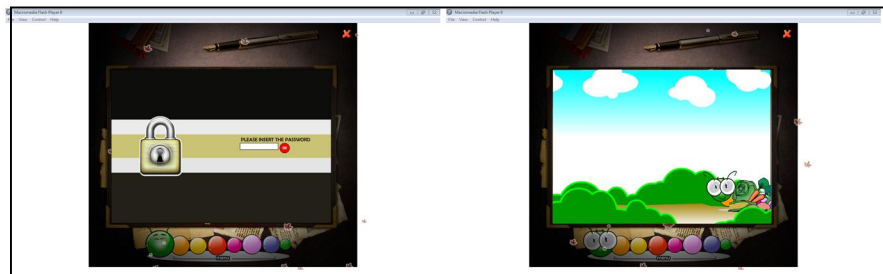

Figure 1. Password and an attractive clue

(b) Elaboration is a creative pattern to encourage students to make a paragraph in a variety of text types in accordance with the five text types template provided. In this research, tasks and activities in elaboration provide template to create a paragraph in descriptive text. It consists of topic sentence, controlling idea, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences. Here is an example of elaboration activity:

a) Students can choose a picture.
b) Then, select the template of descriptive text.
c) Next, write a paragraph based on the generic structure of descriptive text.
d) Finally, submit it to their teacher through email.

This product provides "save and edit" instruction that can help the students write, edit and save their writing safely.
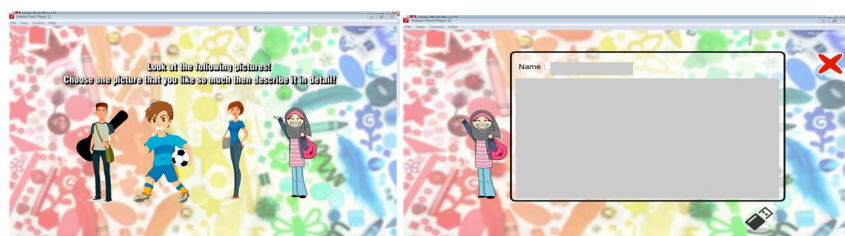

Figure 2. Elaboration tasks and activities

(c) __Net__ is a style in writing the essay that exists in the game. It has phenomena to enrich knowledge, experience and new vocabulary. Tasks and activities in NET provide games. Here is an example of net activity:

a) The students choose the number given (1,2 or 3).
b) There is a reading text that relates to five text types. In this research, the reading text only discusses descriptive text.
c) Next, the students can answer by clicking the picture and then the score will appear. In this step, students can identify how to write descriptive text through reading game.
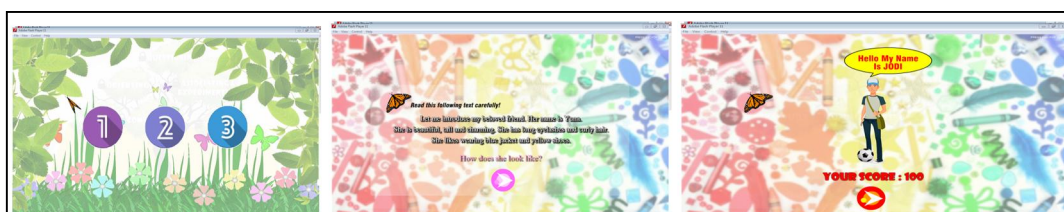

Figure 3. Net tasks and activities

In evaluation cycle, the product had been validated by the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with three expert judgments, two teachers and four students. They filled the instruments about the I-PEN product that relate to content, writing skill developed: tasks and activities and graphics. Based on the analysis of the data from the expert judgments, the media were evaluated and improved. There were some revisions, such as revisions in tasks and activities. First, Point, for example this step only using pictures as a clue, it should use word as a clue. It can encourage the students' creativity. Then, the researcher revised, the researcher added the five senses activity. It uses a word as a clue. Second, Net, for example, the slide is so colourful. Then, the researcher revised. The researcher made the elegant and concise slides.

Finally, the results of this research were as follows: a). Every tasks and activities in I-PEN can give detail explanation to students to create sentences and texts easily. b) It provides games to develop the students' creativity in creating descriptive text.

Conclusion

From the needs analysis, it can be concluded that students got difficulties to create a sentence and descriptive text. The teacher also got problem in selecting English digital media that related to students' needs. Therefore, the researcher decided to develop tasks and activities to teach writing skill. The use of digital in the development of the writing process is important to complete tasks and activities to improve students' motivation and enthusiasm in writing.

The I-PEN media for teaching writing for the seventh grade students of junior high school serve their functions in developing students writing skills in three steps namely Point, Elaboration and Net. It had been validated through Forum Group Discussion (FGD) and the results were as follows: a) Every tasks and activities in I-PEN can give motivation to students to create sentences and texts easily. b) It provides games to develop the students' creativity in creating descriptive text. This research constitutes an innovative Pedagogy in a Changing World.

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