

Research Article

Enhancing of college students' creativity with english digital multimodal composition

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Abstract

This paper studies students' creativity style in digital multimodal composition activities as a part of 4C skills in 21st century called creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaborative. Paragraph Writing class students' were chosen as the object of the study. This class is considered as the most suitable object since they learn about type of essays to be written and published digitally. This study applied pre and post observation in descriptive manner using genre-based approach to know the comprehensive variable of creativity in digital multimodal composition. A questionnaire is given to the students in Google form to see their responses. It is found out that the students' creativity is much more developed in doing digital multimodal composition compared to single mode text in essay writing since they tried to combine multi modes. They were more enthusiast and proactive in communicating their ideas and sharpen their critical thinking in the form of shifting written text to audio visual. They boost their creativity much more in collaborative framework as well. Thus, creativity as one of 4C skills criteria is one of dominant skills needed in creating digital multimodal composition.

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Introduction

The Industrial Revolution (iR 4.0) causes technological disruption in various fields of life, including education. Educators must act quickly in adapting teaching and learning methods that integrate device resources in class. Ally and Wrak (2020) mention that this integration makes learning to be customized for sustainable development in education. Later, one of the customize setting is dealing with digital teaching materials through learning innovations in order to improve the quality and quantity of learning. This current educational setting must also characterize creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking (4Cs) skills.

Furthermore, digital literacy skill, which is also inseparable from the 4Cs as 21st century skills in education, must be possessed by the students as an effort to prepare for the era of technological disruption. They must prepare themselves by highlighting the uniqueness and added value of digital literacy skills in learning English. Alfia, Sumardi, and Kristina (2020) emphasized that it is a need to integrate English skills and digital literacy skills for digital natives. They found out that photo-visual literacy, information literacy, reproduction literacy, and real-time thinking literacy were the frequently used. Furthermore, it is also strongly emphasized the importance of the C6 bloom taxonomy in which the students are required to 'create' in a lesson. Thus, the verb 'to create' is closely related to active skills in English such as writing.

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Learning English, especially an active skill like Writing requires the students to create and produce a written text. It is believed that if the course added with project-based activities with digital tools, the output will be highly recommended. It is hoped that this activity can improve the students' language skills in an integrated manner with other skills such as speaking, reading, and listening as well as other language components such as grammar and vocabulary. In some cases, this activity also supports a translanguaging whereby the students explore different sources such as written and spoken language, image, and sound effects in different semiotic resources (Ho; 2021, 2022). Then, writing activity can be shifted into digital form by integrating some multimodalities to form digital multimodal composition. This innovation was chosen rationally that the students should no longer create paper-based writing that can only be read by themselves, lecturers, and classmates. However, they can disseminate their writings in digital form, whether it is composed with audio, visual, or audio-visual so that they can be read by everyone around the world via the internet. Digital multimodal practises organize its knowledge and skills into the critical, creative, and technical domain (Liang, Wei, and Lim; 2021). It is very beneficial framework for language learners (Tour, Ekaterina & Melissa Barnes; 2022).

Creativity is one of unexcluded product manners in doing digital multimodal composition. Johnson (2015) mentions that creative thinking skills by understanding creativity process can be used to improve creativity itself as a part of problem solving. At the same term, Birgili (2015) also notes that these two abilities are interchangeable. He adds that one of the helpful tools for development of creativity and critical thinking is problem-based learning environment. In addition, creative thinking skill will also be developed by setting project-based learning (Wijayati and Sumarni, 2018). These two learning based are fit to digital multimodal composition. According Skains (2017) digital multimodal composition does not only impact individual creative writers, but also for students and teachers. Lim and Toh (2019) conducted a research on YouTube production by children in formal education and found out that digital multimodal composing practices demonstrate creativity, critical thinking, and semiotic awareness. Selfa, Pifarré, Cujba, Cutillas, and Falguera (2022) refer terms co-creativity and co-creation for the advantages of digital multimodal composing activities. Multiliteracies in multimodal writing activities create creative construction of meaning (Howell, Reinking, and Kaminski; 2015). Vicky (2016) highlighted the processual character of creativity and aesthetics aspects of digital creation based on the space, time, object, beings, and actions elements. They concluded that digital multimodal composition is the best way to be applied. To sum up. The activity of creating a text in the multiple modes digitally or best known as digital multimodal composition has many advantages for the students, as one if them is developing their creativity.

Problem of Study

Main problem and sub-problem statements.

- This main problem in this study is focused on finding out the students' creativity in English digital multimodal composition activities as a part of 4C skills in 21st century called creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

The sub-problem is then formulated using the following question:

- How the students' self-conscious in developing their creativity in producing English digital multimodal composition?

Method

Research Model

This research applied descriptive quantitative research model that proposed syntactical learning model in creating English digital multimodal composition by proposing genre-based approach. Pre and post observation in the term of learning stages were also taken into account as additional notes. The last, the students were given a questionnaire in the Google form that consisted of 15 question to see their responses in applying digital multimodal composition for learning paragraph writing.

Participants

A sample of this study was taken from 3 classes of Paragraph Writing class with total 69 students who were in the 3rd semester. In the final meeting, they were asked to create English digital multimodal text. This was considered as project-based learning.

Data Collection Tools

The data were collected by administering online questionnaire using Google form to determine the students self-consciousness in developing their creativity after they created artefact in English digital multimodal composition with 15 questions. The questionnaire was validated first by using expert judgement in this matter were the Paragraph Writing lecturer. The item of questionnaire was taken from The Creativity Style Questionnaire-Revised by Kumar (1997) that was scaled using Likert Scale from 1-4 (strongly disagree – strongly agree). There are 8 scales measured; creativity capacity, belief in unconsciousness processes, use of techniques, use of other people, final product orientation, behavioural self-regulation, superstition, and uses of senses.

Procedure

Before starting the study, some ethical research issues were fixed such as informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality from the participants. All students were willing to participate in the study without any pressure. This study used pre and post observation in descriptive manner using genre-based approach to know the comprehensive variable of creativity in digital multimodal composition. A product based of YouTube video has been assigned to assess students creativity in delivering meaningful multimodal message for composing review text and verbalized it into audio-visual mode. They were asked to follow creating procedure of review text in the classroom using Genre-Based Approach in some Teaching Learning Cycles. These cycles included (1) Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), (2) Modelling of the Text (MOT), (3) Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), dan (4) Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). After that, an online Google form questionnaire was administered to deal with the students' creativity in the activities.

Results

The first thing to do was to ask students to write the type of writing or genre they were studying based on the existing syllabus. They could choose the type of genre they like the most. They were given a freedom to explore their creativity based on their personal preferences. However, the focus of this activity was the text that was studied in the last 4 meetings; Text Review.

The steps of this learning innovation were designed following a series of steps or activities that have been carried out, including:

Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF)

Giving a pre-test in writing review texts independently to see students' prior knowledge in applying review texts based on daily contexts. The topics given to students are reviewing food, drink, tourism place, cosmetics product, smartphone application, book, and movie. The students are free to choose what theme they will develop for their text writing.



Picture 1. Students' activity in building prior knowledge

Modelling Text

After that, the review text material that has been prepared by the lecturer is given to discuss the generic structure and language features in the review text. They discuss the structure of the review paragraph and what language components should be in the review text. In addition, raw text is also given and must be discussed together. The students are asked to identify and analyze paragraph structure and language content in the text.



Picture 2. Students' activity in modelling text

Collaborative Writing

After the collaborative discussion is carried out, it is hoped that students will be able to analyze the initial errors in writing the review text in the first step. They were asked to return to collaborative writing or writing together about the topics that had been provided earlier. They can choose one of them.



Picture 3. Students' activity in collaborative writing

Editing

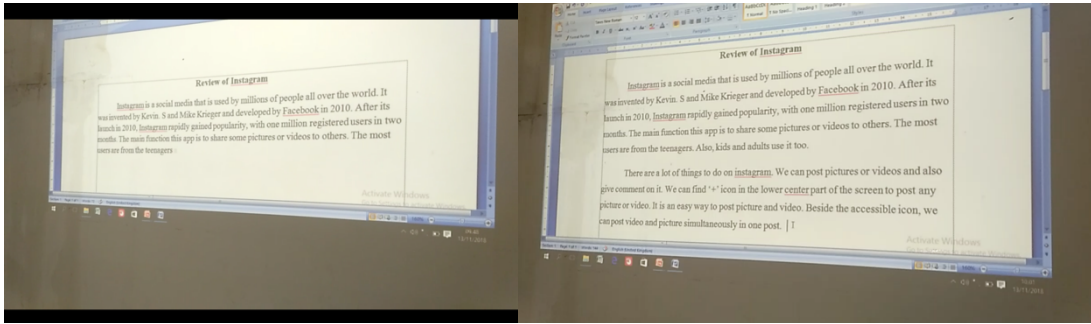
The students edit their writing independently and in groups. This is done to provide input on their writing results in order to be better in terms of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, even coherence and cohesion.



Picture 4. Students activity in editing phase

Revising

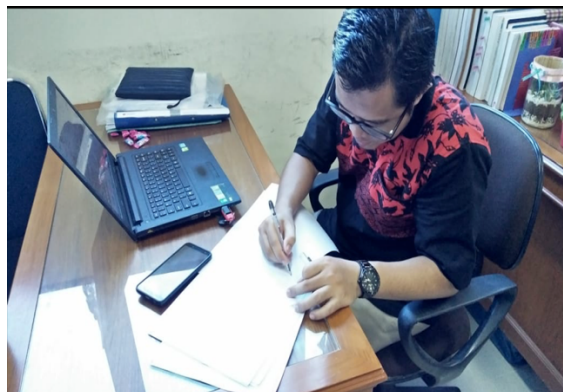
From the results of editing, their texts were revised together (peer revising) both by classmates and input from the lecturers.



Picture 5. Revising the text collaboratively

Independent Writing

After students are able to analyze the components in the review text, the next step is to write independently. This is done after students are considered to have been able to understand the concept and apply their writing.



Picture 6. Feedback from lecturer

Verbalize Digital Content Writing

The final stage of this series of learning innovations is to digitize their writings in the form of videos and upload them to their respective YouTube accounts.



Picture 7. Students' activity in verbalizing their writing



Picture 8. Students upload their artefact in YouTube

In simple terms, this study follows the genre-based approach theory which is widely adopted for learning writing. However, the researchers added a digital literacy component as a demand for 21st century learning. This component was later named verbalize digital content writing. The development of this learning innovation is the improvement of students' writing skills in various genres in the form of digital content that combines audio, visual, and audio-visual (multimodal) multimedia. In addition, this digital content writing learning innovation has succeeded to make learning more interesting for students in meeting the learning objectives in the Paragraph Writing course and improve the students' creativity.

The measurement of student understanding regarding the introduction of multimodal digital learning in the Paragraph Writing course was done by using questionnaire. This point is clarifying students interest in implementing multimodal digital learning. The results of these two categories of questionnaires will be used as the basis for the continued use of multimodal digital learning in this course. The results of all the questionnaires that have been distributed are as follows:

Table 1. Item analysis of the students' self-consciousness process in developing creativity

No	Scale	Statement	Σ	Category
1	Creativity capacity	I consider myself to be a creative person in doing digital multimodal composition.	3.1	Very High
2		I am engage in creativity type works in doing digital multimodal composition.	3	High
3	Belief in unconscious process	Creative ideas in doing digital multimodal composition simply occur to me without even thinking about them	2.9	High
4		I feel that new ideas in doing digital multimodal composition possess me and guided me through to completion almost automatically	3.2	Very High
5	Use of strategies	I typically create new ideas when I do digital multimodal composition by systematically modifying and combining an existing idea	2.9	High
6		When I get stuck in doing digital multimodal composition, I tend to leave the idea for a while, do something else, before returning to work on it	2.9	High
7	Use of other people	When I get stuck, I consult or talk with peers and lecturer about how to proceed my digital multimodal composition.	2.9	High
8		I physically isolate myself from peers and lecturer when I am working on my digital multimodal composition to come up with new ideas	2.8	High
9	Final product orientation	If I do not have a concrete creative product for my digital multimodal composition, I think I have failed	2.8	High
10		I work most creatively when I have deadline in doing my digital multimodal composition	2.9	High

11	Behavioural Self-Regulation	I have set aside a particular place and time for creative works in doing my digital multimodal composition	2.9	High
12		I reward myself in some way after I have worked on my creative ideas for a designated period of time	2.9	High
13	Superstition	I have a favourite tool without which I would find it hard to concentrate when I am engaged in creative work of my digital multimodal composition	3	High
14	Use of Senses	I tend to use my visual sense a lot in doing my digital multimodal composition	3	High
15		I tend to use my audio sense a lot in doing my digital multimodal composition	2.8	High

Note: $N = 69$

The table above shows that each statement asked to the students gets a high response from students. There are two categories which are very high and high since the score reach 2 point above. This of course illustrates directly that multimodal digital learning in writing courses is very much needed and welcomed by students. This is certainly related to the tendency of today's students who prefer things that are multimodal that are digitized.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was focusing on the phases of creating English digital multimodal composition that was in specific circumstances develop the students' creativity style. The study showed that implementing the genre-based approach as process combined with verbalized visualization of written text as product oriented lead the students to consciousness creativity process. They paid attention and considered themselves to be creative in producing and creating all components of modes in digital multimodal composition. It indicated that creativity all in one package is needed in exploring the students' ideas for writing digital multi modes pattern. The finding could be meant that creativity in digital multimodal composition is always interconnected to the product oriented goals since they are trying to create a digital artefact of their writing. The recent study's finding confirms Hafner (2015, 2020) that digital multimodal composition is not only about copy, edit, and share digital content, yet it is about the process of creative works. further, he mentioned about authenticity production and plagiarism detection as its effectiveness on implementing this type of project. Since the students are asked to create their own product in digital multimodal, they will try to generate the ideas originally. It can highlighted that the model is assumed to be applicable in making students to use their critical thinking. However, Cousin (2021) still emphasized that the creative process in composition need to be considered more compared to the product itself since it can help the teacher to appreciate students' productivity and creativity. Further, this study exposed that digital multimodal composition evaluate meaning-making in processing written text to digital multimodal mode. The study of Kim & Belcher (2020) indicated that the students has generally positive perception toward digital multimodal composition since it is very effective in meaning making. Compared to traditional writing, they added, this process and product of writing improved the students' writing skills. The previous study by Gagich (2018) also claimed that digital multimodal composition project disrupt traditional academic writing conventions. This point can promote students' agency, and effectively integrated rhetorical strategies to reach real audience via online. Ho (2022) revealed that by orchestrating written text to digital multimodal, it required the students to mobilize a wide range of semiotics resources. It contributed the creation of a translanguaging space and make the students to creatively and critically distinct the inside and outside classroom knowledge.

Recommendations

From the series activities that have been carried out, it can be concluded that digital multimodal composition is a writing activity that can be integrated with other language skills such as speaking, listening, reading and grammar and vocabulary in the form of multimodal digital media uploaded to social media. The students are given the freedom to choose the theme they will write and publish on their social media. The main purpose of this learning innovation is to increase the ability and creativity in creating English digital written content such as blogs, vlogs, YouTube, and even memes. With

this learning innovation activity, students are expected to have additional abilities that can be used to create their own jobs such as becoming a social media specialist, youtuber, vlogger, blogger, celebrity, graphic designer, and even a social media traveller. Further, the teacher must consider this type of learning mode to engage students to be more creative in generating and producing their ideas.

Limitations of Study

This study is limited in some short of points since it only surveys in limited place, participants, and time. Thus, the finding of this study can be said to reflect the whole point in holistic manners about creativity in digital multimodal composition. Therefore, it is a need to extend more about creativity consciousness in digital multimodal composition in different perspective such as the perspective of teachers.

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