The Use of Magboard in Improving the Writing Creativity at Kangaroo School

Devi Oktasari
Universitasitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Indonesia

To cite this article:
The Use of Magboard in Improving the Writing Creativity at Kangaroo School

Devi Oktasari
Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Indonesia
devioktasari99@gmail.com

Abstract
This research aims to describe (1) the use of Magboard in improving English writing creativity at Kangaroo School, and (2) the benefits of Magboard in improving English writing creativity at Kangaroo School. This research was classified into Classroom Action Research (CAR). The subject of this research was Kangaroo school. In conducting the research, the Kangaroo’s teachers and supervisors were invited to provide feedback to the lesson plan made. Interview also conducted with the teacher as a collaborator to gain the data about the benefits of the Magboard. The results showed that various tasks using Magboard can be conducted in observing and experimenting stages. Based on the reflection, the researcher changed and used Plan-Do-Review as the final teaching and learning procedures. In each stage, Magboard can also be implemented on various tasks. Magboard benefited as 1) being the relevant media; 2) attract the students’ interest, attention and enthusiast; 3) facilitating the teacher, and 4) providing new idea for the teacher.

Keywords: Magnetic Board, English for children, writing, creativity.

Introduction

In Indonesia, English has been taught from secondary to tertiary education levels. The main purpose of teaching English is to prepare students earlier. However, many parents prefer to introduce English to their children earlier in preschool, kindergarten or in elementary school level. Introducing English at the preschool level allows children to be familiar with English in their early ages. They recognize and memorize letters, words, and some expressions commonly used in daily conversation. However, the earlier English is introduced to children, the more things that must be considered to support the success and effective learning. This is because introducing English in the early childhood requires several requirements such as competent teachers, interesting and safe media and appropriate learning materials. Considering of these three things, it is needed to arrange the English learning in preschool properly. The most important arrangement is the readiness of teachers who are competent in teaching English to early childhood.

Competent teachers for early childhood have several qualification standards based on PP RI Minister of National Education Nomor 16 Tahun 2007. There are four categories of teachers’ competency, they are, pedagogical, personality, social and professional competences. Spencer (1993) defined competency as a fundamental characteristic of a person related to the effectiveness of the individual’s performance. It has a causal relationship with criteria that is used as a reference, effective, excellent and or superior performance in a situation or job.

Furthermore, the interesting and safe media is required in teaching English for students in early childhood. Media is an educational thing to support learning activities to be more effective. It is expected to attract the attention of the students and can help them to increase their creativity and imagination. Gagne (1970) said that the media are various types of components in the student’s environment which can stimulate students to be able to learn. These reasons make a lot of media developers who develop learning media as an effort to optimize the potential and learning process to achieve the expected target. The media used is inseparable from safe materials, no harmful and easy to use so children can fully explore the media used.

In addition, the appropriate learning materials are considered to be important in the teaching and learning process. It must have a good impact, help students feel comfortable and develop their self-confidence, can facilitate self-
investment, students, expose students to language in authentic use, provide opportunities to them in using language targets to achieve communicative goals. Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 107) proposed several ideas about appropriate learning material such as; (i) good material does not teach the students, but it encourage them to learn, (ii) appropriate material contained interesting texts, fun activities that involve students’ thinking capacity, opportunities for students to use their existing skill and knowledge, it contents should can be overcome by the teachers and students; and (iii) appropriate material must provide a clear and coherent unit structure that guide the teacher and students through various activities in such a way to maximize the learning opportunities.

Kangaroo Preschool is a preschool which sets teaching English through science and arts as its excellency. The preschool has two branches located in Prambanan and Kalasan, Yogyakarta. The present research was done at Kangaroo Kalasan. When carrying out practicum EFC courses in 2019, the researcher found many interesting things from this school. The atmosphere was very supportive for the children’s learning activities. The teaching and learning activities were also well organized. Children were familiarized to be independent in doing their works. In the brunch time, for example, the students prepared the tables and chairs themselves. At this school there, were various media such as video, puzzle, magnetic cards, and many more for supporting the teaching and learning activities.

However, the researcher found a few obstacles in their English learning, i.e. children were less interested in writing creativity. Kangaroo Preschool already has several models of magnetic board media but the topic in that Magboard has not covered all materials in the curriculum. One of the materials that does not yet have a Magboard is about Communication Means: Letter topic. On the other hands, the media used by Kangaroo School has not supported students to improve their writing creativity. In fact, creativity is very important to be develop at the preschool level because creativity applies in all fields in the early stage of children’s development such as skill, cognitive, language, emotional and physical. Nickerson (1999) mentioned that children’s abilities for creative imagination plays an active role during the early years of their life so it is very important to support students’ creativity at a young age.

**Literature Review**

**Teaching English for Preschool**

Preschool education is realized as a form of early childhood education, which is essentially learning through play. The intended play is a play that contains creativity which can train creativity itself in early childhood. Depdiknas USPN (2004: 4) early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth until the age of six carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to assist in physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education.

**Early Childhood Learning Theory**

There are two theories that explain cognitive development experienced in children. It comes from two expert name Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Jean Piaget’s theory indicates that each child has a different level of understanding at different ages. This theory also states that children’s thinking goes through four separate stages and can change qualitatively at each stage. The stages of Piaget’s cognitive development are as follows (Piaget, 1985): (1) Sensory motor stage in 2 years old. At this age, children use their senses to explore the world and develop their cognitive understanding. At this stage children are also excited by experiences that allow them to be explored by their sense of sight, hearing, touch, taste and feeling. (2) Pre-operational stage in 2 to 7 years old. At this stage, children are less dependent on senses and physical exploration and Piaget also said that this is an illogical thinker. (3) Concrete operation stage in 7 to 12 years old. At this stage, children begin to develop more logical thinking by using concrete materials such as the use of counters to solve mathematical problems in Early Childhood Education. (4) Formal operations stage in 12 years and above. At this stage, children are able to think more abstractly.

While Vygotsky (1978) believed that children can build a piece of knowledge. He also believed that interaction in a cultural context plays an important role in the learning process. Children learn and adapt according to the social environment they live in. This is where they build their knowledge in the stage of development of their age. There are three concepts underlying the cognitive development theory by Vygotsky i.e. Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding and thinking and speech. Zone of Proximal Development or abbreviated which is the difference between functions that children can do without help and which children can manage when given help. Scaffolding is a change in the support level. It relates to the cognitive development that used to describe the support changes during the learning session where people in the social environment includes family, school, community, and culture. Vygotsky also advanced the concept of thinking and speech. He said that language and
thought initially developed apart and then fused. Children use speech for social communication and help them complete their task. He believed that children at an early age use language to plan, guide and monitor their own behavior.

**Early Childhood Creativity**

Creativity can be called as a process that produces original things. This is the development of original opinions and the creation of new products and inventions by an individual. Creativity arises from the personality of individuals in interacting with their environment. Every child has their own creativity, this creativity is different for each child. Guilford (1968) said there are four creative characteristics in an individual. (1) Fluency, the purpose of fluency here is an ability that is able to generate, express, and develop creative ideas smoothly. (2) Flexibility, this is the ability of how the ability to see problems in various points of view. It is a basis of purity, authenticity and discovery. In this case, children are intended to be able to see the point of view of the problems they face, and then be able to find a solution to the problem. (3) Originality, this is the ability of someone who uses his thoughts to produce an idea or work. (4) Elaboration, it is about how to expand one's ability to enrich ideas in the minds of individuals becoming aspects that may not be seen or thought of by others.

Creativity is developed through education which is strengthened by a wealth of research. Lin (2011; 2 (03): 149-155) mentions that the three components of developing creativity through education are teaching, the environment and teachers. According to Armstrong (2000) teaching is to provide a creative and innovative educational strategy in the implementation process so as to stimulate the development of multiple intelligence, the possibility of thinking, and higher-level thinking, or how to involve opportunities to explore and solve problems. Furthermore, Fryer (1996) said that the teaching process was successful, it needed to be supported by the second component in the form of the environment. The state of the environment can provide support motivating students’ enthusiasm and creative behavior the third component is the teacher. Craft (2005) mentions the teacher is the link between the two previous components. A teacher creates a suitable environment that supports creativity using creative and innovative educational strategies.

The creative process helps improve student learning and involvement and give teachers the opportunity to present learning material in new and innovative ways. Creativity in the classroom builds a foundation for students’ adaptability and skills in problem-solving. Rogers (1999; 217-237) recommends two basic aspects of developing creativity: (1) Mental security - no participant’s products, ideas, opinions or beliefs are criticized or even ridiculed; (2) Mental freedom - participants have the freedom to conceptualize and express ideas that arise in their minds, their ideas, opinions or beliefs are respected and considered.

**Writing Creativity for Preschool**

Writing is one of the methods used to establish a written communication It supported by the statement of Lysaker (2010) in his investigation, writing for children is only one of many interwoven modes in communication. For preschool children, creativity in writing is intended to write letters or words that are exemplified by imitating a letter or word. This writing creativity needs to be improved through methods or media for playing and learning that are appropriate to the growth and development of young children. The International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (1998) stated that two anal successes at school and in the future are learning to read and write. Those two abilities continue to develop throughout a child’s life; but the early childhood stage from birth to the eight age are the most important period for literacy development.

**Magboard or Magnetic Board Story**

A Magboard is a magnetic board story in which there are pictures or stickers equipped with vocabulary and letters of the word. It also has colorful colors and attractive pictures. Stewig (2013, 273-279) said that in children’s book illustrations, the message conveyed is reinforced by the colors in the picture. First of all the teacher introduces the Magboard to students. It contains a board that affixed with various stickers according to the learning topic on the Magboard and lesson plan. Compared to traditional media, Magboard or so-called magnetic board stories are new media that introduced to students. It is used as a bridge between learning while playing. Rowe (2010) explained that a conceptual game is that children focus on material goals; while procedural play is structured practice or skill activities such as board game; and creative play includes the use of open material for imaginative play; and socially oriented activities occur when students focus on the involvement of social rules and routines. The creation of Magboard media is the development of the results of Community Service activities (Abdimas) which were carried out by the implementation team with the accompanying lecturers in 2019.

**Research Method**
The central idea of this research uses Classroom Action Research (CAR). It is a process in which a teacher in that school became the practitioner and the researcher did the collaborates in evaluating the practice together that is called action research. In addition, the teachers also try new strategies and articulate the concept of values together. Making work easier and more understandable by other teachers so they can develop teaching theory with research practice. The research conducted is based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model as cited in Burns (2010: 7-9). The steps of the research were planning, action, observing and reflecting. The subject in this study was the Kangaroo School 2 Kalasan. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the researcher only focuses on the lesson plan design. Thus, the Kangaroo’s teachers and experts were invited to assess the lesson plan design. In this study the research techniques used were observation, interview and documentation. The data are analyzed in several steps as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) i.e. data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion.

Results and Discussion

1. The use of Magboard to improve the English writing creativity at Kangaroo School.

Magboard implementation conducted by two cycles. It was done by creating a lesson plan. The lesson plan contained a series of teaching and learning procedures. The teaching and learning procedures consisted of several stages. The focus of the stage was writing a lesson plan and a Magboard design. The lesson plan made refers to the national curriculum, and the needs analysis. While the Magboard used as a learning media that was the product design from the Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa 2019 (the 2019 PKM).

In the planning stage of cycle 1, the researcher used scientific approach as the teaching and learning procedures. There were five teaching and learning procedures. The first was observing, the teacher started learning by introduced and practiced how to use Magboard as new media. Then the teacher told a story to the students using Magboard. Second, in questioning stage, the teacher asked students to draw a simple picture related to the Letter theme and asked students to come to the front of class to tell the picture that they made according to their experience and imagination. Third, the association stage contained practical activities. The teacher guided the students in writing by imitating the letters that students have previously composed on the Magboard. Fourth, in the experimenting stage, the teacher asked the students to arrange the letters on Magboard which has been randomized to form an English vocabulary in accordance with a picture. The last stage was communicating, teachers guided the students to do role play. Students created a simple letter to their parent then put it on an envelope. Then played as a letter sender, postman, letter recipient, etc. From that teaching and learning procedure, the observing, experimenting were the stages that implemented the use of Magboard in learning.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the action in cycle 1 was done by validating the lesson plan to the supervisors and the Kangaroo teachers. Furthermore, the researcher continues the next step that was observation. The observation was done by coding and analyzing the validation sheets given by the supervisors and teachers on the proposed teaching procedure of Letter using the MagBoard. On the reflection stage, the researcher took several important points from the observation results. (1) Emphasizing the writing learning; (2) Simplifying learning and teaching procedures into three stages; (3) Adding the core competencies, basic competencies, and indicators of learning.

(1) Emphasizing the writing learning.

Practitioner:

*Jika emphasis on the writing, guru akan menggunakan media magnetic white board: menulis English vocabulary atau menyusun huruf-huruf magnet nya sehingga menjadi kata yang dimaksud. Misal: M-A-I-L (dengan capital letters) atau menggunakan lower letters m-a-i-l.*

Appendix 7/Validation Sheet

(2) Simplifying learning and teaching procedures into three stages.

Supervisor 1:

*Sederhanakan prosedurnya karena hanya untuk anak-anak PAUD. Jangan terlalu complicated. Gunakan Scoot n Wendy yang Pre-Whilst-Post itu saja. Dan itu juga ada masuk di skills kayak reading, writing itu.*

Supervisor 2:

Based on the reflection on cycle 1, some improvements were made on both the teaching and learning procedures on the planning stage of cycle 2. The researcher simplified the teaching and learning procedures into three stages that were Plan, Do and Review. First, there were three activities that contained in the Plan stage, i.e. 1) the researcher prepared the Magboard as learning media; 2) the researcher used story telling for the teacher to tell and deliver the material to students. The story entitled *Stainley the Postman* (task 1). This story was already on Magboard; 3) the teacher continues the activity by telling the facts about the *Letter* topic (task 2).

Second, the Do stage contained two activities. First, the teacher asked the students to draw an envelope, then they are asked to come forward to the class and tell the envelope picture according to their imagination and experience. Second, the most important activity was the writing practice (task 3). Here, students imitate the letters on the Magboard to form a word as an English vocabulary based on the picture. They practice the writing directly on the Magboard in the column space that has been provided specifically for writing.

Third, in the Review stage, teacher conducted the review of learning. There were three activities. First, to find out students’ understanding of the material they have learned, the teacher asked students to arrange the letters sheets that have been randomized on Magboard that forming an English word (task 4). Students assisted with the picture that already exist on Magboard. Second, students play roles (task 5). Researcher has written down the rules on the lesson plan. Here, they did their writing practice when they wrote simple letter to their parent, for example: I LOVE MOM. They chose separate and arrange the letter sheets contained in the seven-vocabulary introduced on Magboard. In brief, they also act as sender, recipient letter and the postman. Then sent it to the post office. They also act as sender, recipient letter and the postman. Last, students watched video which contained a song about the postman profession. This video played using the LCD.

The action in cycle 2 was done by validating the lesson plan to the supervisors and the Kangaroo teachers. Furthermore, the researcher continued the next step that was observation. The observation was done by coding and analyzing the validation sheets given by the supervisors and teachers on the proposed teaching procedure of *Letter* using the MagBoard. The supervisor 1 gave a comment that the story that used in the Plan stage was too difficult for the preschool level. It should be adjusted to the basic competencies and indicators used. The below snippet is basic competencies and core indicators.

### Basic Competencies:

3.12 Mengenal keaksaraan awal melalui bermain

4.12 Menunjukkan kemampuan keaksaraan awal dalam bentuk karya

### Indicators:

3.12.1 Menulis huruf-huruf yang dicontohkan dengan cara meniru

4.12.1 Menunjukkan kemampuan keaksaraan awal dalam berbagai bentuk karya

The researched paid attention to the teacher and expert feedback about the story used in the Plan stage and decided to improve the story plot based on the competencies and indicator of teaching *Letter* topic. It became a complete final lesson plan. On the other hand, there are four characteristics of creativity suggested by the Guldford (1968). There was fluency value in task 1, task 2 and task 3. In the task 1, the teacher calls the word STAMP while showing the picture when telling the story. At the end of the story, the teacher repeats the words and asks students to take the requested word property. In task 2, the teacher told about the facts of the stamp, students are asked to guess what property was being held by the teacher. Then they must take the property stamp, then stick it on the Magboard. Task 3 was writing practice, the fluency value was found in students’ activities when they can imitate the writing from Magboard than express their writing directly on it so they can develop their creativity gently from what they have seen and learned.
There were flexibility values that were found in the task 4 in arranging letters activity. Here the letters have been randomized on the Magboard. When students arranged the letters, they remembered how to arrange letters correctly so that they form an English word in accordance with the picture. Task 5 role play has an originality value. The students showed their action when playing the role. They showed differences in the originality of their ability to play a role model in the story. Here they also showed their writing creativity when making a simple letter to their parents.

2. The benefits of the Magboard in improving the English writing creativity at Kangaroo School

Researcher conducted a semi structured interview where this interview conducted aimed at discovering the benefits of applying Magboard as a learning media to improve English writing creativity in the preschool level. The teachers as the resource person were asked to issue their opinions and ideas. The benefits of the Magboard implementation were taken from the teacher’s interview. First, being the relevant media. The design of the Magboard was relevant to the topic of the Letter. This design adjusted to the topic used and the writing creativity to be improved. The tasks that were designed also took into account the characteristics of creativity. So that each activity was always associated with increased writing creativity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>Menurut anda apakah teknik pengajaran dan media Magboard yang dipakai sudah tepat dan bisa dikombinasikan dalam pembelajaran dikelas? Berikan penjelasan anda.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Second, attract the students’ interest, attention and enthusiast. There were interesting activities that can be done using this media by the students. Magboard contained interesting story to enhance children’s writing creativity. Dyson (1998) discusses how children’s stories are embedded in their artistic abilities, social interactions, and wider experiences in their world. This story has been attached by researchers to the final lesson plan. It aimed to stimulate students who explore their creativity in writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>Menurut anda, apakah anak-anak akan tertarik dan termotivasi saat belajar dengan menggunakan Magboard? Berikan penjelasan anda.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>“Saya rasa, mereka akan tertarik. Barang tahun 2019, Kangaroo menggunakan more magnetic media. Sebelumnya, magnetic media hanya digunakan untuk menjelaskan tentang magnet. Dengan MagB, bisa diprediksi, anak-anak akan lebih antusias belajar menggunakan media berbahan magnet mengingat anak-anak sering bisa bermain more than 15 minutes dengan apa pun yang berhubungan dengan magnet. Mereka juga sering bercakap dengan magnet. MagB yang didukung dengan gambar dan tulisan yang colorful dan lucu-lucu, kemungkinan besar, akan menarik perhatian anak-anak lebih besar”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, facilitating the teacher. Magboard can help and facilitate teachers who have a non-English background in applying classroom learning. According to Nyerere (2017), the teacher is someone who is able to teach knowledge and shape young people through a broader scope of knowledge. It is important to the teacher ability to master the learning and then convey it to their students, so the media is needed to support the teacher’s competence in conveying knowledge to students.
Fourth, providing new idea for the teacher. Magboard provides new ideas for teacher in developing the teaching and learning creativity so that is become an effective media to apply in the classroom. Newby, Stepich, Lehman, Russell (2000: 100) stated that the media is anything that can convey learning material from sources based on certain plans to create a useful learning process so that the recipient can learn effectively and efficiently.

Conclusion

For the first research question, it can be concluded that the use of Magboard in improving writing creativity at Kangaroo School was conducted by making a teaching procedure on the lesson plan. Researcher adjusting the material to the lesson plan, and adapted to the steps in learning. The learning topic used on Magboard were Letters for preschool level. The researcher used three stages of teaching and learning procedures i.e. Plan-Do-Review. There were tasks in each stage. At the Plan stage, there were two tasks i.e. storytelling and telling the fact about Letter. At the Do stage, there was one task. It was the crucial task or activities in this lesson plan. Here the students did their writing practice to improve creativity on writing. Last, the review stage consisted of two tasks i.e. arranging the letters and playing roles. Each given task contained the creativity characteristics value.

While for the second research question, the used of Magboard with the Letter topic was also predicted to provide several benefits. There were four useful benefits that found and explained in finding. Both of teacher and students got the good benefits in the teaching and learning process. First, being the relevant media. Second, attract the students’ interest, attention and enthusiast. Third, facilitating the teachers. Fourth, providing new idea for the teacher.

Recommendations

Please add recommendations here. The Tamansiswa International Journal in Education and Science (TIJES) is a peer-reviewed research journal published in February and August regularly. For one publication session, there are 6 selected papers. The TIJES welcomes any academic research papers internationally concerning on education and sciences.
The sent articles must be original, unpublished and not be sent to other journals. During the publication process started from acceptance, review, revision and production, the papers cannot be withdrawn without the editorial approval.

**Acknowledgements or Notes**

This research is a continuation of *Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa 2019* that is followed by researchers. Besides, this research is also as a collaborative research or umbrella research Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa.

**References**


Authors Information

Oktasari Devi
Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa
Jl. Kusumanegara, 157 Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Contact:
E-mail Address: devioktasari99@gmail.com