The Implementation of CTL Approach in the Teaching and Learning Creative Writing on Grade VIII of Taebenu Secondary School Kupang, NTT

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Abstract: Educational conditions in the Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) region may be said not to approach the provisions of national standards when compared to the educational conditions in other regions in Indonesia western hemisphere. There are some factors as the main causes of the conditions as referred to, namely the weak carrying capacity of natural resources, average economic ability at the level of pre-prosperous, cultural feast that is still hard to remove, and a strong mastery of local language. Some of the basic factors are then added by the preparation of facilities and infrastructure in each school unit that is still below the quality standards; this always leads the quality of graduations in this area in the red zone. In response to a number of main causing factors above, the regional government has improved itself through superior programs, such as intensification of agricultural land and livestock, forest conservation and reforestation surrounding catchment areas, cooperative development ranging from family, and efforts to promote the spirit of student learning through *gong* learning. All of the government programs lead to one single goal, namely to improve the livelihoods of NTT communities leading to better conditions. That is, if all the government programs are applied without any problems, then certainly the economic livelihoods of household, the health level of all family members, and the achievements of NTT graduations can be 'jacked up' out of the position in the red zone.

Keywords: Implementation, CTL Approach, Teaching, Learning , Writing

As an illustration, that the achievement picture of high school student graduations (Junior High School (SMP / MTs), Senior High School (SMA / MA), and Vocational High School (SMK / MAK)) in NTT is always lower than the students' graduations in the Bali, Java and Sumatra regions (Regional Office Department of Education and Culture NTT, 2015). The illustration is also corroborated by the statement of the Secretary of Regional Office of Department of Education and Culture NTT in the *Workshop literacy-boos* held by *Save the Children* agency in Bell-In Hotel Kupang on June 15th , 2016, that the average acquisition value of SMP / MTs students' national exam subjects and equal at schools in the NTT province are: 65-68 for Indonesian subject, 46-52 for English, 35-36 for mathematics, and 34 – 42 for Science. Range of these exam achievements has put the SMP / MTs students in NTT in category of C or in the red zone.

This research brings a contextual approach in creative writing learning. Taking this title has the background by a fact that the creative writing is a competence of using Indonesian language that is difficult to achieve by the students, especially students in the junior high school level unit. This difficulty is caused by low students' motivation to write and difficult to organize their oral thoughts into Indonesian daily written discourse, particularly in the appropriate word selection, creative and effective sentence structure, and creation of interesting style to read. To achieve such competencies, a contextual approach is selected by teachers to minimize those difficulties.

The contextual approach is a concept of learning that helps teachers to link the content to be studied by real-world situations. The practice of the contextual approach provides an opportunity for students to make connections between the knowledge which has been owned in their real life. The contextual approach has a unique character when compared to other learning approaches. Ministry of Education (2011: 11) explained that the learning with contextual approach reveals the characteristics: (a) cooperation, (b) mutual support, (c) not boring, (d) learning with passion, (e) fun, (f) integrated learning, (g) active students, (h) exchanging experiences with friends, (i) using a variety of sources, (j) critical students and creative teacher, (k) hallway classroom walls full with students, (l) report to parents are not a report book but student works.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative research with phenomenological approach. Selection of phenomenological approach is based on the character of the phenomenon under the study. That is, through the phenomenological approach, the researchers can reveal or describe in depth about teachers' experiences in operating conditions through advanced learning, learning strategies, and creative writing learning with CTL approach in class VIII of SMPN 4 Taebenu. Characteristics of the phenomenological approach are: (a) Description, in which the researchers can be sterile to any suppositions things in integrating and describing the phenomenon in the form of action (learning) as well, and trying to strip the whole theories, prejudices, and assumptions (Delfgauuw in Hasbiayansah, 2005: 159). (b) Reduction is an experience sorting process to get the phenomenon in its pure forms. That is, a phenomenon that appears to be the real thing is not necessarily acceptable, but the decision should be suspended or placed in brackets (bracketing). It aims that the researchers do not obtain any assumptions that could potentially interfere the description process. Such events by Husserl were called as *epoche*, namely an initial self-restraining process to assess whether something is right or wrong (Hasbiayansah, 2005: 169). In the epoche, the daily understanding, judgment, and knowledge processes are ruled out, and at the same time, the phenomenon is raised naturally because its creation is a new thing as if it is a pure ego (Moustakas, 1994: 33). (c) Essence, is the core meaning born of individual experience in certain phenomena as they are. The search process of essential themes involves exploration, imagination, intuition, and reflection activities that are freely to determine whether a particular characteristic is an important essence (Sudarsyah, 2013: 22). (D) Intentionality, is interrelation of subjective inter-reflection (*noesis*) and objective statement (*noema*) on experience. The combination of these two concepts in the creative writing learning study in the VIII class of SMPN 4 Taebenu implies that the reality comes from the participants, namely the teachers and students in its real forms, and not interfered by any ideas on its reality (Donoghue & Keith Punch (ed) in Sudarsyah 2013: 22).

Research Participants / Subjects

This research was conducted at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Taebenu, Oeltua Village, Taebenu Sub district, Kupang Regency, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) Province. The participants are the source of data based on this research focus and purposes and it was selected by considering on Creswell criteria (2014; 2016), Denzin & Lincoln (2009). Based on the provisions there are 6 research participants consisting of 2 Bahasa Indonesia subject teachers, 1 Counseling teacher, 2 homeroom teachers, and principal of SMPN 4 Taebenu.

Research Instruments

The main instrument in this research is the researchers themselves and supported by observational guide, guide-depth interviews, and documentation. Utilization of observational guide is to obtain data about the research and learning location, namely at SMPN 4 Taebenu. The interview guide contains question items, are used by the researchers to obtain information about feelings, view of the participants about the conditions, strategies, and outcomes that have been done. The documentation research guide is used to obtain the data concerning curriculum documents, learning tools, such as Indonesian subject syllabus, lesson plans and worksheets that have been planned and prepared carefully by the Indonesian subject teachers. The use of supporting instruments in the forms of observational guide, interview and documentation study leads to the researchers themselves as the main instrument. Explicitly Guba (1985: 39) stated that "*...that all instruments interact with respondents and objects but that only the human instruments is capable is grasping and evaluating the meaning of that differential interaction"*.

Research Location

This research was conducted at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Taebenu, Oeltua Village, Taebenu Sub district, Kupang Regency. The distance between the research locations to the center of Oelamasi regency city is estimated to be ±45 Km. the research location as the SMPN 4 Taebenu is one of the educational institutes in the junior high school level (SMP) having its natural authenticity, cultural authenticity, and language authenticity.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was conducted using the flow of "*a data collection circle"* Creswell (1998:109-135) as follow.
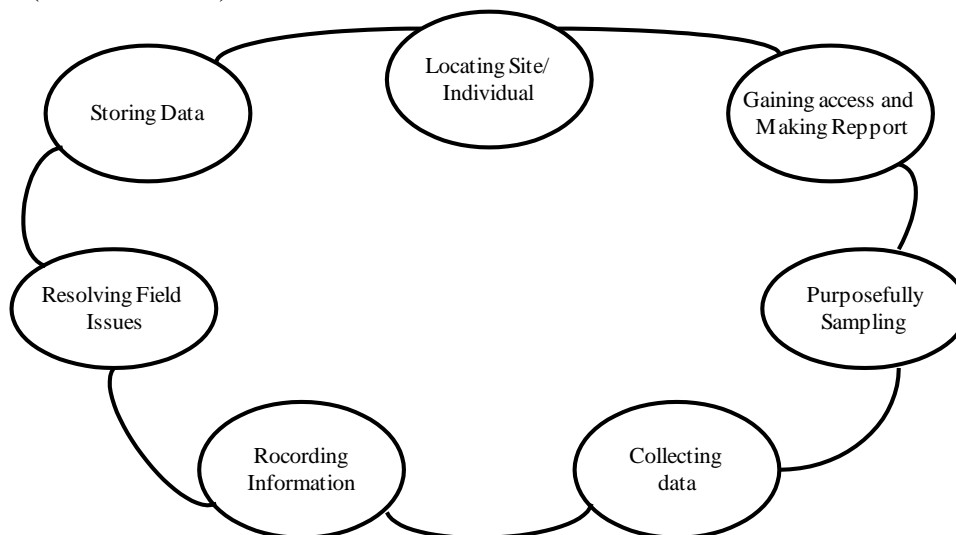
(*source: Creswell, 1998)*

Data Analysis Technique

Data was successfully collected from observation, interviews and documentation study and then analyzed by referring to the *Interactive Models of Analysis* technique by Miles and Huberman (1992 in Moleong, 2000; Alwasilah, 2003).

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In accordance with the research focus namely to explore and obtain experiences of Indonesian subject teachers in using a contextual approach to improve the power of imagination, inspiration, and creativity of VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu, then data exposure and data analysis of this dissertation are outlined in 3 themes. These three themes as mentioned in this dissertation research focus are (1) learning condition theme, (2) learning strategy theme, and (3) learning outcomes theme.

Breadth of Indonesian teachers' experiences in the three main themes is elaborated into 12 (twelve) subthemes. The twelve subthemes are derived from each theme, namely 4 (four) sub-themes: (a) learning objectives, (b) characteristics of study field, (c) learning barriers, and (d) characteristics of students or learning participants, derived from theme 1, namely the learning conditions. The learning strategy theme is elaborated into seven (7) sub-themes. The seven subthemes derived from the principles of the approach contextual, namely (a) constructivism principle, (b) inquiry principle, (3) questioning principle, (4) learning community principle, (5) modeling principle, (6) reflection principle, and (7) authentic assessment principle; meanwhile the third theme is a description of learning outcomes of the creative writing with nuance of contextual approach.

Learning Conditions

Picture of the learning conditions are specified into (a) the purpose of creative writing learning in Indonesian Language subject at SMP / MTs unit level, (b) characteristics of Indonesian Language field of study, (c) creative writing learning obstacles in VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu, and (d) characteristics of VIII class students of SMPN 4 Taebenu with speaking and cultural backgrounds of *Dawan-Amarasi*. Out of the four sub-themes are described as an inseparable part from one sub-theme with other subthemes. The sub-themes will appear in these exposure and analysis as an inherent relationship, which is inseparable from others.

Learning Objectives

Results of the observation, interviews, and documentation in the research location of SMPN 4 Taebenu provide a picture as described below. The learning objectives portrayed here are more focused on the learning objectives of Indonesian Language subject which have been stipulated in the competency-based curriculum of Indonesian Language subject of (SBC) SMP / MTs unit level. SMPN 4 Taebenu Kupang regency uses the SBC curriculum. The school principal said that this institution, SMPN 4 Taebenu (until the study was conducted) has used the 2006 competency-based curriculum (SBC). SBC is as a guide for learning and testing quality of SMPN 4 Taebenu students' results, ranging from grade level of VII to grade level of IX. Teachers at each grade unit utilize the competencies Standards (SK), basic competence (KD), and the subject syllabus from sources of SBC-2006. The Curriculum 2013, known as K-13, has once disseminated to teachers in this school, but the application is still waiting for regulatory use of K-13. The principal said, teachers of SMPN 4 Taebenu have been sent to participate in education and training of K-13 use, but SMPN 4 Taebenu is not a school selected for a pilot of K-13.

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Subject Characteristics

The Indonesian Language learning is directed to improve the four language skills namely (a) listening skill, (b) speaking skill, (c) reading skill, and (d) writing skills. There are two receptive skills, namely listening and reading, and two others, namely speaking skills and writing skills are the productive ones. The presenting process the four language skills cannot be separated among the four, although administratively, SK and KD of four skills are separated in each unit class, and semester unit. As an illustration, it can be drawn that, SK and KD for listening aspects of by VIII class are grouped into the 1st and 2nd semesters. The following is the quotation of SK and KD of 1 semester of SMP / MTs unit level by the 2006 Curriculum.

Learning Obstacles

There are some obstacles requiring for solutions. The expression of teachers in the quotations implies that there are two obstacles. First, there is less learning time needed to complete tasks. Consequently, the learning time must be added to some matters or subjects. Extra time will be at home or at school. Second, it is concerning the students' readiness to increase learning time at school. If it is seen from the readiness of supporting literature in library, it still cannot answer the needs of students because the book contents at the school library are still far from the students' needs. These two obstacles are not only experienced by Indonesian Language teachers, but also to the teachers of other subjects.

Learning Participants Characteristics

Mrs. Mary Y, a Indonesian Language and literature teacher at the school has already full understanding on the students in the VIII class that they are not included as adolescents with high achievement. The average Indonesian Language subject values in the report card sheets of the second semester by the VII show a number of variety achievements. There are only small portion of students out of 40 students in VIII class having a average number of values above the standard. This condition allows Indonesian Language subject teachers and other subject teachers to immediately find solutions.

Learning Strategy

Contextual learning process has characteristic of having priority on the students' interest, this is described in cooperative, collaborative strategies, problem-solving learning. These cause students to be more expressive and imaginative. The contextual strength as seen its success in creative writing learning is revealed in the following details.

a) *Contextual forwarding constructivism*. Accompanying the students in the creative writing in VIII class of SMPN 4 Taebenu requires different strategies. The cooperative and collaborative strategies as the main characteristics constructivism are references of elaboration from the constructivism principles. The cooperative and collaborative strategies has favored on the cooperation process among the students in small groups. This strategy is more selected by Indonesian Language teacher as the superior strategy. Implementation of the cooperation strategy by teachers at the school has proved its superiority that the problem-solving process, such as choosing shape, topic, theme of creative writing, can be solved in the cooperative strategy. Tactical, the students are guided in the classroom and outside the classroom in small group unity. The presence of teachers in the group is only through the creative writing worksheets and models (principle modeling). Practically, the presence of

cooperative strategies has been successful in helping to build the spirit of students' learning to formulate one-round short play. This kind of learning spirit must be accompanied and guided in more planned and systematic manners. In order to create the more-planned mentoring and coaching processes, the learning tools, such as syllabi and lesson plans should be revalued. The VIII class of SMPN 4 Taebenu teachers, especially Indonesian Language and literature teachers should be aware that in order to facilitate students with strong local language of Dawan-Amarasi, the teachers should take over the roles. The teacher roles as observed during the research, has already and really live the constructivism spirit in the cooperative strategy. The teachers have taken actions to anticipate the entire process of "telling" and substitute it through the mentoring process. The researchers concluded that the teachers in SMPN 4 Taebenu actually have conducted the CTL correctly. In other places, there are students in the cooperative groups requiring to be helped. At this time, the teachers present students' worksheets. The presentation of students' worksheets proves that the teachers want to immediately eliminate the conventional strategy of lecturing in the study group. The collaborative nuance has turned into a cooperative one. The advantage of collaboration in 1st-round playwriting learning is by the presentation of students' worksheets by the teachers. Atmosphere of 1-round drama writing learning is moved from a room limited by wall space, into outdoor rooms. The achievement competency was formerly at the level of applications based on a model example, then it is raised to the level of productive-creative. Although the teachers' spirit and motivation in the VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu are very strong, though to make the students learn with a language background as described above will still be achieved, but it takes a long time. The students' mindset in the VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu has been established through the mindset of cultural pattern and first language. By referring to Lev Vygotsky's theory, the researchers concluded that that the cultural features such as language (Dawan-Amarasi) experienced by the VIII class teacher has colored the creative works of the VIII class students in SMPN 4 Taebenu.

b) *Contextual presents in various learning community.* Efforts to maximize the contextual concepts and characteristics in the context of camping-scout are the choice of VIII class teachers at SMPN 4 Taebenu. The teachers at SMPN 4 Taebenu have practiced adventure learning as a selection strategy to facilitate the VIII class students in writing. That is, to promote the creative writing creativity, the teachers choose open space. This kind of strategy is selected by Bahasa Indonesia teachers to help students acing difficulty to learn with other friends in the group. Such learning atmosphere allows the students of VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu to express their own experiences. The constructivism acknowledges the diversity of students' learning time. Personally, the students in VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu actually have different learning times. Data of this study noted that from the learning time factor, there are 15 students selecting the best time to learn to do school assignments (including writing, completing math problems, and IPA) at night; there are 12 students stating their best time in the morning and evening and there are 13 students stating their best learning time is when they have done to help their parents. The following is about the best time for reading textbooks, out of 40 students in the VIII class, there are 31 students stated at night, while 9 others stating after helping their parents. Meanwhile, the best time to do the written assignment, including free composing, out of 40 students, there are 11 students stated at night, two students expressed in the morning, and 27 students stated at any time after finishing to help their parents. From the data distribution, we can conclude that in fact the students at this school, especially the VIII class students do not have much time. Their learning time is only really at school. Thus, individual assistance, in addition to cooperative and collaborative strategy is greatly necessary for improving the creative writing competence.

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c) *Contextual presents in self-learning context.* Brooks & Brooks in Johnson (2014: 175) stated that self-learning frees students from all ages to work on school assignments. The self-learning requires teachers' dedication. Without teachers, the process will fail. Brooks & Brooks asserted that the way teachers view, that the tasks of self- learning determine the quality of students' education. Qualified CTL teachers allow students to not only reach the national standard with high academic value, but also obtain essential knowledge and skills for learning throughout their lives. The Brooks & Brooks concept, has been applied by teachers in the practice of creative writing of poetry in VIII class. The VIII class teachers have created a learning environment at school leading to various inspirations. This concept has given more experience to Indonesian Language and Literature teachers at the VIII class to assist the students in finding ideas independently. The teachers have given the best ways for students to attempt to relate the knowledge acquired at school with real experiences at home, at cornfields, on grazing animals. With such experience, they can create simple poems, although it still takes time to guide them. Strategically, application of a self-learning still requires the teacher presentation. This pattern is rather difficult to detect, because the learning time at home is difficult to monitor. However, the tasks assigned to do at home are always included by the worksheets. Conclusions: students' worksheets have been a highly superior learning guide in an effort to improve students' achievement.

Effects of Contextual Approach

All teachers at any schools have the same view, that is, if you want to make the students be able to write, first the teacher must be able to demonstrate that he can write. So is the creative writing. If you want the students to be able to produce creative writings, the author should be more creative. In this context, of course, is somewhat different. Teachers in this context are not prepared to make all students in SMPN 4 Taebenu become creative writers. But he can provide way or manner, how one student in VIII class may be in an atmosphere allowing him to be able to write creatively.

Creative things cannot be seen by naked eye. Strong support for creative person is imagination. Even the imagination cannot be seen, touched, felt, or whatever in a sense. However, the results of both can be seen in the forms of creative and imaginative. The process of generating creative and imaginative forms is unpredictable. Researchers also cannot confirm, that "if one student is sitting alone under an oak tree, in the school yard area in front of VIIIA class are working to create a poem?"

The above description is only to state that the discussion of this section does not need to downgrade, even to eliminate any ethical factor. That the presence of ethical factors such as the form of poetry, simple essays, and plays on the students' worksheet is an important form to be understood. However, *emic* factors will have more roles in this context. That is, through the strategy how to create a poem, discourse essays, and plays, and possibly other fictional works. Therefore, the concentration of this discussion is not directed at a yield of writing, but rather to (1) the teachers' spirit, motivation, creativity in the VIII class SMPN 4 Taebenu showing their ability to maximize the contextual approach in creative writing learning, and (2) strength of the contextual approach making the teachers and students present in a learning to write by more creative, active, creative, innovative, and fun (PAIKEM). Such creativity is created in the learning strategies with the constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning communities, modeling, reflection, and actual assessment principles. The principles of contextual approach can only be sustained if the teachers want to involve students actively in the strategy animating the constructivism, inquiry, questioning, community learning, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. The principles reflect in the learning having emphasis on self-learning,

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learning in the context of diversity, and learning by considering students' diversity. The description leads us to examine a number of these research findings.

CONCLUSION

Description on teachers' experiences in applying the contextual approach by considering seven principles of contextual is concluded as follow:

a) The constructivism principles animating the entire student-centered learning strategies have been able to create teachers' spirit and creativity in designing student-teacher activity process so that they can find problems about how to learn to write from variety of contexts.

b) the contextual approach emphasizing on the inquiry principles in the cooperative and collaborative learning is proven to be effective in teaching creative writing in the VIII class at SMPN 2 Taebenu. Implementation of the contextual approach with the inquiry characteristics has been able to motivate and encourage students so that they are able to adapt to new environment in each subject. Through the assistance and guidance of worksheets prepared by the teachers, the students are managed to break into the context and the new environment. Through the students' worksheet and expertise of assistant teachers, the students have shown their skills in formulating their experience findings through common learning in cooperative and collaborative groups.

c) Learning by presenting diversity of atmosphere, allows the students to adapt to the diversity. Together in a group, the students find problems during the learning period making obstacles for them to create creative writing. In an atmosphere of learning community diversity, it can facilitate the students to find themselves. Common learning in a sense of community learning is proved to encourage weak students to strive to produce creative works such as poems, essays, and plays through unity in diversity.

d) The creative writing learning with the contextual approach turns out to be the teachers' and students' selection to produce creative works, such as personal experience narrative, script of drama dialogue, diary quotation, and activity reports. The contextual approach forwarding the cooperation in an atmosphere of collaboration is proved to be effective for all subjects and all main discussions.

e) The pattern of self-learning for SMPN 4 Taebenu students in fact faces obstacles in regulating the students' learning time. The appropriate selection of learning time can encourage students to create creative works as a result of reflection in all places and at all times. This statement is inversely not in line with the experience of SMPN 4 Taebenu teachers facilitating the students in VIII class. The self-learning is supposed to be the selection pattern, it is not able to make SMPN 4 Taebenu students have critical thinking and free thinking. The application of this pattern also faces obstacles namely very limited time learning at home. That is, the pattern giving priority on the self-learning still takes hard work for SMPN 4 Taebenu teachers to provide guidance on an individual basis at school.

f) The contextual approach using authentic assessment can only be done for the learning materials with a low degree of difficulty, such as text summarizing stories, or re-writing drama text by considering EYD. The contextual approach application requires the time learning to be able to hear other people.

Finally, as the culmination of a description on the teachers' experience in applying the contextual approach in the creative writing learning, it can be concluded that the contextual approach is proven and can help students to express their experiences on a regular basis during 'they' produce simple creative works such as creative fiction works. The contextual approach has succeeded in reducing the teachers' role as teachers at SMPN 4 Taebenu and strengthened the teachers' role as a facilitator in assisting students to learn to write in a contextual nuance.

SMPN 2 Taebenu has already appropriate understanding on a proper learning atmosphere not only limited in the classroom limited by walls.

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