



The Effectiveness of CTL using Realia in Teaching Writing To Vocational High School Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out how well vocational high school students learn writing through Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) using realia media. This study was carried out on several pupils who frequently struggle with their writing abilities. When producing documents, students frequently run into issues with sentence form, syntax, vocabulary choice, coherence across paragraphs, and logical idea organization. This study combined a quasi-experimental method with a quantitative approach. Students in the XI grade at SMKS PGRI 1 Blitar City served as the study's subjects. XI TKJ students served as the experimental group, while XI TPM students served as the control group. Researchers employed the ANCOVA approach, which was computed with the aid of SPSS version 20 software, to assess the study's findings. According to the analysis, the Contextual Teaching and Learning with Realia media treatment had a positive impact; its mean score (79.310a) was higher than that of the traditional approach (71.621a). This indicates that using realia media in contextual teaching and learning yields greater results than the traditional approach. Because contextual teaching makes learning more meaningful and encourages students to be more active and expressive, and because learning and realia media help students organize their thoughts and express ideas more concretely, it is recommended that teachers use contextual teaching and learning with realia media when teaching writing, particularly on procedure texts, to vocational high students.

Keywords: CTL; Effectiveness; Realia; Teaching writing

Introduction

English has become the primary language used for international communication in the age of globalization. Its extensive usage across continents has made it a universal language that facilitates communication in a variety of fields, including academia, commerce, technology, media, and diplomacy. (Patel, n.d.) emphasize that English is no longer limited to native-speaking nations; it is spoken by about 200 million second-language users and 320 million native speakers, making it one of the most important languages in the world. Proficiency in English enables people to access a wealth of information, take part in international conversations, and increase their career options. English proficiency is frequently seen by non-native speakers as an essential ability that increases competitiveness in both domestic and foreign employment markets. Therefore, learning English has become both a language requirement and a tactical advantage in navigating the contemporary world, especially for students in poor nations.

Writing is commonly acknowledged as the most complicated and cognitively demanding of the four fundamental English language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Vocabulary selection, grammatical precision, organizational structure, and the capacity to communicate ideas rationally and coherently are just a few of the many skills that must be integrated when writing. According to (Harmer, 2007) writing is a learning process that helps pupils internalize language elements and improve comprehension in addition to being a vehicle for communication. Writing helps students think critically, reflect on what they have learned, and create organized, long-lasting recordings of their ideas. Additionally, it fosters self-directed learning and language awareness. Despite its significance, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners still struggle with writing, especially in settings where instruction primarily concentrates on receptive skills like reading and listening.

From elementary school to higher education, English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia. Despite the curriculum's requirement that all four language skills be developed, writing usually receives less instructional time and is thought to be the hardest to master. Due to their restricted vocabulary, poor grasp of grammatical structures, and lack of exposure to real-world writing models, many Indonesian students find it difficult to articulate their ideas in written English. Additionally, there are seldom enough opportunities for pupils to practice writing, and criticism is frequently insufficient or unhelpful. According to (Harmer, 2004) students' reluctance to write is frequently caused by a lack of confidence, a fear of making mistakes, and trouble coming up with ideas. All of these elements work together to cause poor writing performance and low writing task achievement. The ongoing fight highlights the urgent need for creative teaching strategies that tackle these issues while fostering a positive and inspiring learning environment.

The procedural text is one specific genre that is essential to language teaching. This kind of functional content is very pertinent to everyday life and is intended to teach readers how to perform activities efficiently. Teaching procedural texts strengthens students' understanding of instructional language and imperative structures while also improving their capacity to arrange material sequentially. Procedural text writing is highlighted as a crucial learning objective in the development of practical literacy and life skills under the Indonesian government's Merdeka Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). However, because the learning materials are frequently abstract and decontextualized, many students find procedural texts to be uninteresting. Reduced motivation and interest result from the lack of real-world applicability. Furthermore, students often fail to comprehend the particular language and structural characteristics that characterize the genre or the communication goal of procedural texts. These problems make it even harder for pupils to become proficient writers. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a promising pedagogical option to address these issues. CTL is a teaching strategy that highlights the relationship between academic material and practical applications, making learning more applicable and significant to students. By participating in authentic tasks that mirror real-world situations, CTL enables students to actively construct knowledge (Berns, Robert G.; Erickson, 2001). The constructivist theory of learning, which holds that students learn best when they can connect new material to their personal experiences, is consistent with this method. According to (Ary, 2010) in order to promote student engagement and comprehension, effective teaching tactics must incorporate real-life circumstances. Six key components of CTL are identified by the University of Washington: 1. meaningful learning; 2. application of knowledge; 3. higher order thinking; 4. curriculum aligned to standards; 5. cultural responsiveness; and 6. authentic evaluation (GUNAWAN, 2021).

CTL can assist demystify the genre and increase students' willingness to write by placing procedural text training within familiar and helpful contexts. By doing this, CTL promotes language learning's emotive and cognitive components.

Using realia—tangible things or materials from everyday life—as teaching media is a crucial part of CTL. By giving students sensory experiences that bridge the gap between language input and practical knowledge, realia help to concretize abstract notions. According to (Natsir, 2023) Realia are items that function as significant real-world examples. It is used in the classroom to make sure every student understands the subject matter. Realia, on the other hand, are items that people utilize on a regular basis. Realia can help students understand and organize their texts based on direct interaction with items by making instructions more vivid and pertinent when writing procedural texts. According to research by (Adrianty, 2021) and (Irawan, 2017) using realia boosts students' enthusiasm and interest in studying English, particularly in writing assignments. In addition to improving vocabulary and comprehension, this method creates an engaging learning environment where students are more inclined to experiment with language and apply it to real-world situations.

Few studies have examined the synergistic effects of combining both techniques, especially when it comes to producing procedural texts at the vocational high school level, despite the fact that numerous studies have emphasized the individual advantages of CTL and realia in language training. According to earlier studies by (Sulviana, 2022) and (Gifelem et al., 2018) CTL by itself can improve students' writing skills by relating academic material to their experiences. In a similar vein, research by (Adrianty, 2021) supports the use of realia to increase students' comprehension and involvement. The literature on the combined use of CTL and realia in a targeted, genre-based writing curriculum is still lacking, nevertheless. By examining the efficacy of the CTL approach in conjunction with realia media in instructing vocational high school students in procedural text writing, this study seeks to close that gap. In addition to increasing students' writing skills, this strategy is anticipated to increase student engagement and offer a more fulfilling, relevant, and pleasurable educational experience. Ultimately, by providing useful insights into efficient, context-based writing teaching, the findings may help develop English language pedagogy in Indonesia.

Methods

This study used a non-randomized pretest-posttest control group design, which is a quasi-experimental method. When randomly assigning people to treatment and control groups is not practical, quasi-experimental research is employed (Ary, 2010). Convenience sampling was used in this study to choose two classes from the same school. While the other class functioned as the control group and was instructed using traditional methods, the experimental group was treated using the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method with realia as the learning medium. The researcher was able to compare the writing abilities of the students in both groups before and after the intervention by using this design.

A. Variables of the Study

The independent variable and the dependent variable were the two primary variables in this study. The teaching strategy, namely the application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) technique with realia media, was the independent variable. The pupils' proficiency in producing procedural texts served as the dependent variable. The main goal was to ascertain whether, in comparison to the traditional teaching approach, the CTL technique with realia considerably enhanced students' writing abilities.

B. Research Subjects

Thirty-two students from SMKS PGRI 1 Kota Blitar's eleventh grade during the 2024–2025 school year served as the study's subjects. There were sixteen pupils in the experimental class and sixteen in the control group. Convenience sampling was used in the selection process, which took into account student factors such prior English proficiency and curriculum

exposure, access, and class scheduling. The researcher was able to guarantee internal validity and regulate external variables with this method.

C. Time Allocation

The research was conducted between February 18, 2025, and March 18, 2025. This lesson lasted eight 45-minute sessions. Different meetings are required for each group. The experimental group requires three meetings to finish the lesson, whereas the control group just needs two.

D. Procedures of the Research

Pretest administration, therapy implementation, posttest administration, and data analysis were the four primary phases of the research. First, a pretest was administered to both groups to determine their baseline writing proficiency. After that, the control group was instructed using conventional methods for two sessions, whereas the experimental group was instructed using the CTL method using realia media for three sessions. Both groups received a posttest using the same rubric as the pretest at the conclusion of the teaching session. The impact of the intervention was then ascertained by analyzing the scores.

E. Treatment Implementation

In order to give contextual support for producing procedural texts, real-world objects like tools or ingredients were incorporated into lessons in the experimental class using the CTL technique. Using questioning strategies, cooperative group projects, and genuine assessment, the teaching approach adhered to the CTL principles of relating academic material to real-world scenarios. Before writing their texts, students were instructed to interact with tangible items and complete pertinent tasks. This helped them better picture and comprehend the steps involved in procedural writing.

F. Research Instruments and Data Collection

A writing test intended to evaluate students' proficiency in creating procedural texts served as the main tool for gathering data. A scoring rubric that was modified from (Brown, 2007) had five components—content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics—was used to assess the results of both pretests and posttests. A scale of 1 to 4 was used to score each component. Expert judgment and item analysis were used to validate the instrument, while Cronbach's alpha and Pearson Product Moment correlation were used to test its reliability and guarantee internal consistency.

G. Data Analysis Technique

The researcher used SPSS version 20 and the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to examine the quantitative data gathered from the writing assessments. To account for initial variations in pretest scores and more precisely assess the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable, ANCOVA was selected. After controlling for any pretest variations, this statistical technique enabled the researcher to ascertain whether the improvement in the experimental group's posttest scores was noticeably higher than that of the control group.

Results and Discussions

In order to verify the correctness of the analysis, this study performed two preliminary assumption tests prior to doing an ANCOVA. The first was a linearity test, which sought to determine whether the dependent variable (posttest scores) and the covariate (pretest scores) had a statistically significant linear relationship. Because ANCOVA assumes that the covariate

has a constant linear influence on the dependent variable across all groups, establishing this relationship is crucial. The homogeneity of regression slopes, which looked at whether the interaction between the covariate and the independent variable was statistically non-significant, was the second assumption that was checked. This guarantees that the covariate's impact on the dependent variable is constant across groups, enabling a significant comparison of the adjusted means in the ANCOVA analysis.

A. Linearity Test

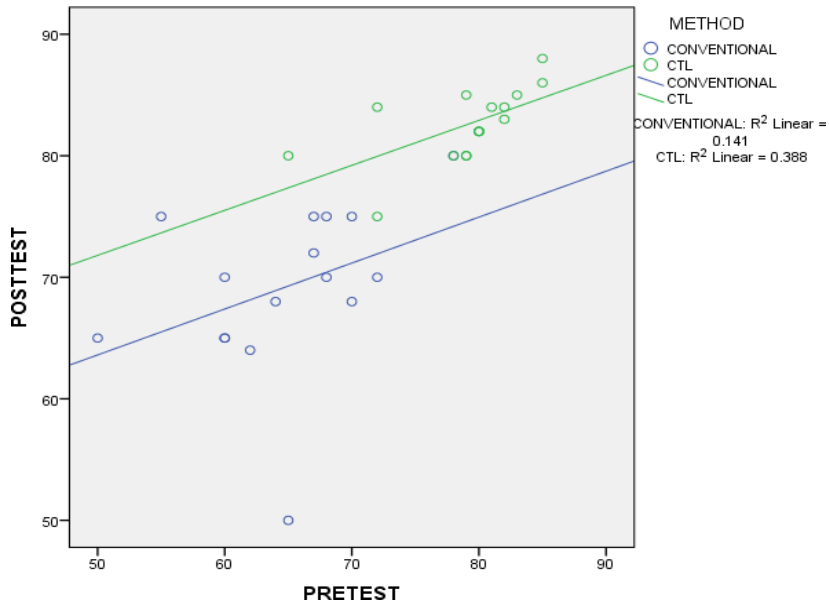


Figure 1. Linearity Test

The association between pre-test and post-test scores for both the traditional and CTL approaches was evaluated using a linearity test. Both groups showed a positive linear trend in the scatterplots, with the CTL group showing a greater correlation ($R^2 = 0.388$) than the traditional group ($R^2 = 0.141$). One of the main presumptions of ANCOVA, according to (Pallant, 2016), is the linearity between covariates and the dependent variable. Visual examination supported the use of ANCOVA to account for pre-test differences and reinforced the method's suitability by confirming that this assumption was met, especially in the CTL group.

B. Testing of Homogeneity of Regression Slopes

The goal of testing the homogeneity of regression slope is to determine if covariates and independent variables interact to predict the dependent variable. ANCOVA should not be used if this interaction is substantial since it renders the analysis incorrect.

Table 1. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1570.711 ^a	2	785.356	32.374	.000	.691

Intercept	513.639	1	513.639	21.173	.000	.422
METHOD * PRETEST	1570.711	2	785.356	32.374	.000	.691
Error	703.508	29	24.259			
Total	186347.000	32				
Corrected Total	2274.219	31				

a. R Squared = ,691 (Adjusted R Squared = ,669)

According to (Pallant, 2016), an interaction is considered statistically significant if the significance level is less than 0.05. With a strong effect size (Partial Eta Squared = 0.691), which explained 69.1% of the variance, the study revealed a significant interaction between the method and pre-test scores on post-test results ($p = 0.000$). The teaching strategy and pre-test scores had a considerable impact on post-test results, as evidenced by the intercept, which was also significant ($p = 0.000$) but had a smaller effect (Partial Eta Squared = 0.422).

C. Testing the Homogeneity of Variances

To ascertain whether the equality of variance assumption is satisfied, Levene's Test for Equality of Error Variances is utilized. The variance is homogeneous if the significance value is larger than 0.05; if the value is less than 0.05, the variance is not homogeneous, or, to put it another way, the variance is different and the variance similarity assumption is broken (Pallant, 2016). The significance value in this instance is 0.057, which is higher than 0.05. This indicates that the error variance does not significantly differ between the groups. As a result, the ANCOVA analysis can proceed as one of its primary requirements has been satisfied and the assumption of variance homogeneity is satisfied.

Table 2. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

df1	df2	Sig.
1	30	.057

a. Design: Intercept + METHOD PRETEST

Levene's Test showed a significance value of 0.057 (> 0.05), indicating no significant difference in error variances between groups. Thus, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met, supporting the continuation of the ANCOVA analysis (Pallant, 2016).

D. One-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)

Table 3. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Corrected Model	1570.711 ^a	2	785.356	32.374
Intercept	513.639	1	513.639	21.173
METHOD * PRETEST	1570.711	2	785.356	32.374

Error	703.508	29	24.259
Total	186347.000	32	
Corrected Total	2274.219	31	

a. R Squared = ,691 (Adjusted R Squared = ,669)

The teaching strategy and pre-test scores significantly interacted to predict post-test performance, according to the ANCOVA results ($p = 0.000$). The model explained 69.1% of the variation in post-test scores ($R^2 = 0.691$), suggesting that prior knowledge and teaching strategy have a significant combined impact. Furthermore, the interaction effect was statistically significant, indicating that these factors made a significant contribution to the model. (Pallant, 2016) states that a significant difference between groups is shown by a p-value less than 0.05. The null hypothesis should be rejected, as further supported by the SPSS result ($F = 32.374$, $p = 0.000$). Consequently, it can be said that as compared to the traditional method, the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach significantly improves student learning results.

E. Estimemate Marginal Means

Based on the Marginal Means Estimation, an alternative hypothesis stating that students taught using Contextual Teaching Learning with realia and conventional methods achieve better writing skills than those taught with conventional methods is accepted, as the average score for Contextual Teaching Learning with realia is 79,310a, which is greater than 71,621a for conventional method.

F. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the use of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach combined with realia media significantly improves students' ability in writing procedural texts. This is evidenced by the increase in post-test scores of the experimental group compared to the control group. Moreover, students in the experimental group showed higher motivation, greater confidence, and reduced anxiety when writing. These findings align with previous research, (Sulviana, 2022) found that CTL improved student engagement and interest in writing by connecting learning to real-life contexts. Similarly, the present study confirms that CTL makes learning more meaningful and encourages students to be more active and expressive. (Jayanti & Rozimela, 2022) found that CTL is a strategy to learning emphasizing the students' involvement in the full process, so they can find the material studied and relate them to the real-life situations encouraging them to apply the materials in life. (Ali et al., 2023) also showed that the use of realia significantly improved students' writing skills by helping them visualize concepts and relate them to daily experiences. This supports the current study, where realia helped students organize their thoughts and express ideas more concretely.

Unsimilar previous studies, which focused on CTL or realia as separate strategies, this research integrates both within a single instructional framework and applies it in a vocational high school context. Therefore, this study provides new insights by demonstrating the combined effectiveness of CTL and realia in teaching writing. The findings not only reinforce the positive impact of each approach but also highlight the strength of their integration in promoting meaningful and context-based learning. Based on the results, the CTL method using realia is recommended as an effective strategy for teaching procedural text writing in English classes.

Conclusions

The findings showed that students who were taught using Contextual Teaching and Learning with realia media outperformed than those who were taught using conventional

method. The average score of students taught with Contextual Teaching and Learning using realia media (79.310a) was higher than that of students taught using conventional methods (71.621a). This result also supports the null hypothesis stating that both approaches (Contextual Teaching and Learning with realia and conventional method) are acceptable. In addition, the study showed that using Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach combined with realia media significantly improves students' ability in writing procedural texts. This is evidenced by the increase in post-test scores of the experimental group compared to the control group. And Contextual Teaching makes learning more meaningful and encourages students to be more active and expressive and Learning and realia media help students organize their thoughts and express ideas more concretely.

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