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Journal of English Language and Education (JELE), to appear twice a year (in June and December) for lecturers, teachers and students, is published by the Unit of Scientific Publishing and Intellectual Property Rights, Mercu Buana University of Yogyakarta. This journal welcomes articles which have never been published elsewhere and are not under consideration for publication in other journals at the same time. Articles should be original and typed, 1.5 spaced, about 10-20 pages of quarto-sized (A4), and written in English. For the brief guidelines, it is attached in the end of this journal.

PREFACE

The challenges in the educational field trigger the researchers in the attempt of improving the education quality in Indonesia particularly, dealing with the methods and media used as well as the sources. *Journal of English Language and Education (JELE) Vol.2, No.1* provides articles which share ideas that hopefully they can give contribution to the education betterment by its new findings. This journal contains seven articles concerning on English language teaching and literature. They are categorized into content analysis, English syllabus, English literature, and techniques to teach English that aims to improve the quality of English learning.

We would like to thank to the contributors who have already participated in sharing the idea towards this journal. We would like also to express our sincere thanks to all members of editorial board who have worked hand in hand in creating this journal. We hope that this fine collection of articles will be beneficial and valuable to stimulate a further research.

Yogyakarta, June 2016

Editor

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IMPROVING THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL BY USING PICTURE SERIES

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Abstract

As a foreign language, English language is not easy to study by students in every grade. Many students cannot understand their materials because they have perception that studying English is very difficult for them. Writing is one of important components in language skills. On the other hand, it is considered difficult by learners including the students of SMA N 1 Sedayu especially class X IIS 3. The students' writing achievement was still low. To solve this problem, the researcher did the classroom action research. The objectives of this research are describing the improvement of students' writing skill through recount text using picture series, analyzing the students' interests in writing skill through recount text using picture series, and finding out how far the improvement of the students using picture series in writing skill through recount text. This research involved 32 students from tenth grade of SMA N 1 Sedayu. In this research, to get the data researcher gave questionnaires, did observation, interview and tests. A classroom action research was used in this research to overcome student's problem in writing skill. The mean in pre-test and post-test showed a different number. The mean of the pre-test was 61.7 which was still low score because the KKM is 75. Afterwards, the researcher conducted the next treatment, then did post-test and the mean of the students' score was increased into 77,7. Besides, students also showed different interest in their learning English especially English writing skill.

Keywords: CAR (Classroom Action Research); Picture Series; Writing

INTRODUCTION

English as an International language in the world is very important in our life. Almost every country uses that language as a second language (*ESL*), but in our country, English is still as a foreign language (*EFL*). In learning English, there are four language skills that should be learnt, they are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Compared of those four skills, writing is considered as the most difficult skill to be mastered. The students have been taught how to write well, but they still find difficulties. In writing class we often find the students cannot write English spontaneously or easily, they might get struggle when they write, or have some difficulties in making a good sentence. The

biggest problem is the students cannot arrange the text based on the correct generic structure.

Moreover, based on the early observation for the sake of conducting this research, the researcher found the problem of writing ability in tenth grade at SMA 1 Sedayu. Based on the appeared problems, it is necessary for the researcher to improve the students' writing skill especially for the tenth grade by using picture series. When the researcher observed the English class, some students were not interested in joining the writing class. It could occur because of the way of teacher teaching that did not give motivation to the students and they were not exciting to the old methods used by teacher. This may affect the students' learning achievement.

During the observation in SMA N 1 Sedayu, the researcher found some problems related English teaching and learning. The problems can be identified as follows: writing skill is still difficult to learn by student in SMA N 1 Sedayu due to their limit in vocabulary mastery; students' interest in writing is low because they are not accustomed to write in English; students still have difficulty in formulating the English sentences, so they need long time to think although only a few sentences; they felt it was difficult to memorize new vocabularies; and the teachers did not find the suitable methods in stimulating students in learning writing.

Based on the problem identification, the researcher limits the problem in investigating the students writing skill using picture series. Based on this case, the researcher only focuses on improving the students' writing skill using picture series due to the fact that their writing skills were still low. In addition, the researcher used picture series to increase the students' motivation, as the picture series are good teaching aids. The use of picture series is intended to make the writing process easier.

The objectives of this research, could be stated as follow: to describe the improvement of students' writing skill through recount text using picture series; to analyze the students' interests in writing skill through recount text using picture series; and to find out how far the improvement of the students using picture series in writing skill through recount text.

The Nature of Writing

The nature of writing can also be defined as both physical and mental activity that is aimed to express and impress (Nunan 2003). It is categorized as the physical activity because a writer is required to be able to do the act of committing words or ideas. As a mental work, the activities of writing focus more on the act of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express and organize them into clear statements and paragraphs that enable a reader in understanding the ideas of the written work.

“Writing is viewed as a means of communication which is commonly used to express and impress” (Nunan: 2003). It means that when writers compose writing works, they commonly have two main purposes. Firstly, the intention or desires to express the ideas or feeling they have in minds, or in other words, the written text is used to communicate a particular message. Secondly, the text is written to communicate the ideas to the readers or audience. That is why, writers need to have ability to communicate and express the ideas in certain ways depending on the level of complexity.

The Roles of Teacher in Teaching Writing

Kimble and Garmezy in Brown (2000) state that “learning is a permanent process of the change in behavioral tendency and a result of reinforced practice”. From the previous quotation, we can infer that teaching is not only a simple transferring knowledge activity since it is aimed at the behavioral change. Therefore, teachers have to make sure that their students learn something beneficial that permanently will contribute to their future.

Teachers are expected to realize their important roles toward students' development in learning, particularly in writing. Teachers are required to have various strategies and great interest when they are teaching writing to the students. Moreover, the success of students in learning writing is also determined by the teacher's performance in helping them learn writing. It means that in the process of teaching writing, the teacher has to help the students to understand and learn how to write effectively, give clear explanations and instructions and guide the students in each step of the writing process.

In relation to teacher's roles in the process of writing, Harmer (2004:41) also purposed some tasks that the teachers must perform before, during, and after the process of writing.

Picture Series

Picture series are one of the solutions to cope the problems in teaching writing. A picture is an illustration that can be used as two dimensional representation of person, place or thing. It means that picture is one of the media of communication that can show people, place and thing that are far from us. Harmer (2002) said that there are various number of writing tasks that students can be asked to undertake and one of them is students can be given a series of pictures which tell story and they have to write story based on the pictures. He then adds that giving the students sequence picture as the writing task will incite them to be creative writers.

Smaldino (2005:9) said that picture series is recommended for it has many benefits in the writing learning process. The first benefit of using picture series is that it will make the students interested in writing English because picture series is one of the visual teaching media. Another benefit is picture series will stimulate the students to develop and use their imagination so that they will be able to write well. Then, it will also help students in expressing the ideas they have in mind become more readable. The last benefit is that picture series will improve the students' motivation in writing.

The students will explain their understanding of pieces of art, revealing details about their literacy processes and strategies. The same kinds of revelations by using series pictures, likely on a more advanced level, are revealed in this lesson, where students explore background actions and others related to the art they study. All students can find success "where they are" through this exploration of culture, vocabulary, voice, and characterization in the specific context of the inspiration artwork. Because of the open-ended nature of this lesson, it is particularly appropriate for multi-leveled classrooms and classrooms with special-needs students and English Language Learners.

The Use of Picture Series to Teach Writing

Picture series are usually used to help teaching or presenting writing subject, because picture series tell the students activities from beginning until the end. It is like a story,

presented in chronological order. The source of materials can come from a variety of different places depending on what is available what can be found and deemed appropriate for each episode where the teacher obtained from text books, magazines, or newspaper. The researcher chooses picture series as a material because it is an interesting media for the students and she thinks that everybody likes picture. With picture series, the students will enjoy their writing.

METHOD

This research involved Classroom Action Research. Cohen, Monion and Morrison (2008:298) say that Action Research is designed to bridge the gap between research and practice. Based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart, there are four steps in action research. They are planning, action, observation, and reflection. The researcher did the research at SMA N 1 Sedayu, Argomulyo, Sedayu, Bantul, Yogyakarta. The participants were the first grade students of SMA N 1 Sedayu, in Academic year 2013/2014. The researcher involved 32 students at tenth grader senior high school.

In conducting a research, the instruments are needed to collect the data. In this study, the type of instruments used to gather the data were questionnaires, interview, observation, and test. The questionnaires were distributed to find out the student's information about learning English. Interviews were done to get the deeper information about their needs of English. The researcher will observe the students and teachers' activities,

students' need, condition of class, media and the material used in the class. Then, test was used to compare students' writing achievements before conducting the research and after conducting the research.

In this research, the researcher used questionnaires and test as techniques in gathering data. The test was in the forms of pre-test and post-test conducted for first graders of SMA N 1 Sedayu. The researcher analyzed the data through giving test to the students. It needed some steps in analyzing the data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008: 501) stated that quantitative data analysis was a powerful research form, emanating in part of positivist tradition. The researcher computed of mean score as indicator of the combined performance of entire participants.

The research procedures started from interviewing with the English teacher. After that researcher also observed the class while the teaching learning process. After interviewing and observing, it was found the problems that happened there. Then, the researcher made an analysis about it. The next step was the materials by using picture series was made and developed by the researcher. After that, the cyclical treatments were given to the students by using the materials that had been developed by the researcher. From the cyclical treatments, the data or score of the students was got by the researcher. From the data, researcher made an analysis what the researcher should do next till the student's average score achieved the KKM or even higher than it. If the mean of the students' score improved higher than KKM, the

treatments could be stopped. So, the learning writing by using picture series can be the alternative to teach writing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After figuring out the situation in the pre-test, the researcher got a description of the situation of the class before action research and then made some plans to overcome the problem which was faced by the students. Researcher consulted the teaching materials with the English teacher. After that, the researcher designed the materials that it would be taught to the students and consulted again with the teacher. Those materials would be implemented in cyclical process.

The researcher implemented the target teaching materials cyclically for two cycles by using EGRA (Experience, Generalization, Reinforcement, Application) technique. Moses (2001:1) in Helena (2004:2) says that EGRA is an effective way to create lively interaction among the students, EGRA technique will make students active. Moses (2001:1) stated that there are three phases in EGRA such as: (1) Experience. In this phase, the teacher asks the students about their experience to build their knowledge. (2) Generalization. The teacher asks the students to look at the sentence and make conclusion in groups. After finishing the exercise, the teacher asks each group to discuss his/her exercise in front of the class (starting from this step, the teacher is only a facilitator). She walks around the classroom to observe the discussion and helps the students if it is necessary. Then, the teacher asks students to make conclusion from

material that they had learnt before. (3) Reinforcement. In this phase, the teacher offers the example of recount text, the students will analyse it. (4) Application. The teacher may ask the students to make summary of the text if the time is still available. Then the teacher reviews and concludes the lesson together with the students. At the end of teaching and learning process The teacher gives homework to the students about the text.

The researcher used EGRA technique in teaching and learning process because it was appropriate to implement in teaching writing skill by using picture series. The procedures of using EGRA in this research were as follows: (1) Asking the students about their own experience to build their knowledge (experience), (2) Giving materials about recount text then the students identify characteristic of recount text (generalization) and asking the students to underline the verb (generalization). Then they were asked to make the conclusion about recount text (generalization), (3) Giving sentence samples and offering the example of recount text then analyzing it (reinforcement), (4) Asking them to write a recount text based on picture series (application).

During the teaching and learning process, the students enjoyed and were interested with the media. Using picture series as a means for helping the students to understand how exactly the events develop in a story worked in it. The students thought that using this media in learning writing were as follow (1) the picture series were enjoyable, (2) with the picture series, the students could

improve their ideas, (3) writing using picture series were more interesting.

To get some data from the students' ability in writing skill using picture series, the researcher did some test such as pre-test before treatment, test, and post-test after treatment. The numbers of the students were 32, consisted of 15 male and 17 female. After doing pre-test for the students, the researcher computed the data using mean difference analysis. The students' data of the students' learning achievement for writing test before cyclical teaching and learning process resulted only 61.7. It was under the determined standardized achievement. The minimum criteria standard was 75. Each of cycle was ended by test. These were the result of the pre-test, test, and post-test: the result of the students' average score in pre-test was:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{1977}{32} = 61.7$$

The result of the student's average score in the test was:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{2298}{32} = 71.6$$

The result of the student's average score in the first post-test was:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N} = \frac{2487}{32} = 77.7$$

Based on the calculation result, it was found from the students of X IS3, the researcher did research that consisted two cycle. Each cycle had procedure such as planning, action, observation and reflection. While doing the teaching and learning process, the researcher sometimes was helped by the English teacher in doing the classroom action research. The researcher showed lesson plan

and the materials that would be taught. The researcher collected the data based on the observation list and students' achievement. In the pre-test the average of students' score was 61.7. That meant the students' writing skill through recount text was fair. It was still under the KKM which was 75. The students had difficulties in expressing their ideas and they did not know what they should write. Most of their writing results were not enough to evaluate.

In cycle one, after the researcher implemented picture series in teaching and learning process, the result of the students' writing product were improved. The score was 71.6 but still had not achieved minimum passing grade criteria. So, the research was continued to the second cycle.

Finally, the result of the second cycle showed that all students had achieved the standard score of school. It indicated that the students' competence in writing skill through recount text were improved after cyclical and teaching and learning process using picture series. The students' mean score was 77.7. From the explanation above, it could be concluded that using picture series could help the students to improve their writing skill through recount text. Once the students got interest in doing the activities, they found it easily to explore their ideas and feelings based on the picture series.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the data calculation, it can be concluded as follows. First, it was about the students' activity in

learning process by using picture series. Before implementing the treatments, the students felt being confused in expressing their ideas. Sometimes, they were afraid in making the mistakes. After the researcher gave the treatments by giving picture series, the students were so enthusiast in learning English especially in writing competence. Second, it was the students' interest in learning writing through picture series. The students found that picture series were easy and interesting since they had already got what they were going to write from the picture series. They became enthusiastic when the teacher gave motivation in the end of teaching and learning process. The situation in the teaching and learning process became more enjoyable. Third, it was about the improvement of students writing competence using picture series that was increasing based on available evaluation. The result of the test showed that the mean in pre-test was 62. The result of the first post-test was still under the KKM (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum*) 71.6 and the Mean in post-test was 77.7.

It can be concluded that improving students' writing competence using picture series is more effective and matched with the aim of English learning and needs.

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