

Using Picture and Guided Question to Improve Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text

by Utami Ratna Swari

Submission date: 16-Dec-2020 08:29AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1476337428

File name: dents_Ability_in_Writing_Descriptive_Text_-_utamiratna_swari.pdf (624.49K)

Word count: 3227

Character count: 17383

USING PICTURES AND GUIDED QUESTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

Utami Ratna Swari

Teknik Elektro, Fakultas Teknik, Universitas Panca Marga Probolinggo
utamiratnaswari@upm.ac.id

Abstract

This research is classroom action research. It is carried out at 3rd semester students PGSD study program in Panca Marga University Probolinggo, consisting of 32 students. The objective of the research is to find out how can pictures and guided questions be implemented to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text. This research is conducted in 2 (two) cycles. The procedure of the research consist of: preliminary study, planning, action, observation, and reflection. Qualitative data are obtained from observation checklist, field notes and interview. While quantitative data are gained from the product of students' descriptive text writing. The result of the research shows that using picture and guided questions can improve students' ability in writing descriptive text. As the indicator of success, the researcher adapted scoring rubric consisting 4 level: Level 1 = Very Poor, Level 2 = Fair to Poor, Level 3 = Good to Average, and Level 4 = Excellent to Very Good. It is considered success if 63 % or more than 63% students have reached level 3. In preliminary study only 28% students belongs to level 3. In cycle 1 there a slight significant showing percentage improvement in level 3 (47% students reached level 3). In second cycle, the result of students' writing finally shows a high improvement, 69% students have reached level 3. It indicates that using picture and guided questions can improve students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Keywords: picture, guided questions, writing, descriptive text

INTRODUCTION

English teaching in Indonesia emphasizes the mastery of: reading, listening, writing and speaking. Writing, compared to the other three mastery skills, is indeed the most difficult skill to master for second language learners (Richards & Renandya, 2002:303). Chen (2002:59) suggested the idea that writing requires a complex skill, it is a means of learning, organizing knowledge and thinking. In writing, students are asked not only to use it as a communicative tool, but also to arrange and organize their idea smoothly. Students must try to find the best vocabularies that corresponds well to their thinking in order to deliver their ideas to the readers. They have to make the composition as clear as possible. However, students often cannot decide what to write or do not know what to write (Chen, 2002:60). Students sometimes do not have any idea about what to write with the topic given.

Lee (2003:134) mentions that most students are not ready yet for the assigned topics, or they do not know how to prepare.

Students should know why they sometimes do not know what to write, if not, it will lead to writing anxiety (Lee, 2002:134). In writing activity, students feels anxious about their handwriting, their vocabularies, their spelling, or their ability to make sentences and paragraphs. Students will think that writing is frightening and boring. As a result, the ability of mastering writing ability will be far away to be accomplished. To deal with those problems, students must be provided with enough writing practice and enough information to compose a good writing successfully. This research aims at reporting the result of action research conducted in PGSD study program, FKIP, Panca Marga University Probolinggo.

From the preliminary study, it was revealed that the 3rd semester students of PGSD study program in Panca Marga University Probolinggo encountered some problems in their writing class. Most of them got stuck in expressing their ideas into writing composition. They often confused on how to put the word, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs. They have

difficulties in choosing the right word and using the correct structure. Students said that it was difficult to write in English properly. The preliminary data were taken from students' previous writing in descriptive text.

In order to solve problems found in preliminary study, the researcher suggested to use picture and guided questions as one alternative in teaching writing. To produce a good writing, students needed simulator to help them express ideas from their thinking into writing composition. They need something attractive to stimulate their mind. Moreover, they also need a certain guide enabling them to develop their creativity in writing. Such clues worked well with pictures and guided questions. First, picture were chosen because it contains creative images that can stimulate students' mind to produce writing. It is the best-known sensory aids. Wright (1989:29) suggested that pictures are very useful in helping students retell experiences or understand something since they can represent place, object, people, etc and help the students understand more general context. Pictures can provoke creativity in students' minds. Second, guided questions were chosen alongside with the pictures, to provide an image about the construction of the writing. Through guided questions, students will be easier to write any topic given. Guided questions is a method in teaching writing by giving some questions to help students compose a good writing. Raymond (1980:15) gave idea that asking questions can be a way of playing with material before deciding what you want to make of its' shape. Guided questions will guide students to write chronologically and express their ideas smoothly on a topic given.

In this research, the researcher tried to develop an alternative method in improving the ability in writing of the 3rd semester students of PGSD study program Panca Marga University Probolinggo. Hopefully, this research would bring positive impact toward the improvement of the teaching and learning process. The descriptive text was chosen based on the preliminary data taken by the researcher. The writing activities were limited to giving students model on

how to write descriptive text and training them to write descriptive text by using pictures and guided questions in order to improve their ability in writing descriptive text. In line with the description above, the problem of this research can be stated as follow: How can pictures and guided questions be implemented to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text?

METHODOLOGY

This research applied classroom action research design. Action research is done to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Nunan (1992:18) mentioned that action research is a piece of descriptive research carried out by a teacher in his or her own classroom, which is aimed at increasing our understanding rather than changing the phenomenon under investigation.

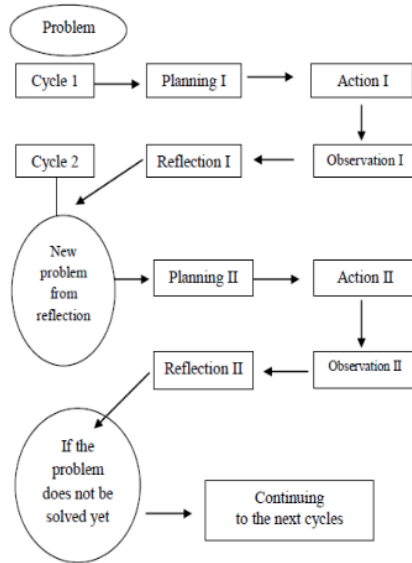


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Design according to Kemmis and Mc. Taggart in Sam's (2005:73)

There are four steps in every cycle used in this research by adopting design model from Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (in Sam's, 2005:73), they are: Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. The researcher also prepared some cycles in case the first cycle fails, it will be continued until the criteria could be achieved.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Preliminary Study

This research was done in 3rd semester PGSD study program in Panca Marga University Probolinggo. The subject of this study were 32 students. From the preliminary study, it was found out that there were problems faced by the students in writing descriptive text. They lacked of ideas, felt difficult in expressing ideas, and felt confused to write a tory of the given topic into a good order. The frequency distribution of the students' descriptive text writing can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Frequency Distribution of the Students' Descriptive Text Writing

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	0	0
2	20	63
3	9	28
4	3	9
Total	32	100

From the table, we could see that most students achieved level 3 in writing, and only few students gained level 3 and four. Among 32 students, 20 reached level 2, 9 students reached level 3, and 3 students reached level 4. Prior to that finding in preliminary study, it could be concluded that students writing score needed to be improved. This research used four levels of scoring writing text to determine the achievement of the students' writing in terms of: content, language use, and vocabulary. The researcher summed the levels into:

Level 1 = Very Poor

Level 2 = Fair to Poor

Level 3 = Good to Average

Level 4 = Excellent to Very Good.

In identifying in which levels the students are, the researcher adapted scoring rubric from Heaton (1990:144), and the description of the scoring rubric for writing could be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. The Levels of Scoring Rubric for Writing

Level	Component	Description
1	a. Content b. Language Use c. Vocabulary	Does not show knowledge of subject No mastery of sentence construction Little knowledge of English vocabularies
2	a. Content b. Language Use c. Vocabulary	Limited knowledge of subject Major problems in simple /complex construction Frequent errors of word/idiom form and choice
3	a. Content b. Language Use c. Vocabulary	Some knowledge of subject Effective but simple construction Occasional errors of word/ idiom form and choice
4	a. Content b. Language Use c. Vocabulary	Knowledgeable Effective complex construction Effective word/ idiom form and choice

Planning

In planning, the researcher prepared things needed to be implemented in the teaching and learning writing process. The preparation includes: instructional materials

in the form of pictures and guided questions, instrumental assessment, and criteria of success. Table 3 shows the instrumental assessment that is used in this action research.

Table 3. The Instrumental Assessment

Activity	Assessment	Instrument
Pre-writing Activity → Giving modelling writing	Outline of the descriptive text based on the pictures and guided questions given	Observation, checklist and field notes
Writing Activity	Students' descriptive text	Observation, checklist, field notes and interview

The instrumental assessment used in this action research consisted of two main activities: pre-writing and writing. While students focusing on the activity, the researcher observed them and took notes. The indicators to determine that the processes were successful was based on the observation, filed notes and interview. It was said as successful if more than 63% of the students' writing had reached level 3 or above, since the value (63 %) already showed a significant improvement when it was compared to the frequency distribution of the students' descriptive text writing from the preliminary study.

Action

The second step in this action research was action. In this step, the researcher implemented the activities arranged in the lesson plan, consisting of: pre-writing activity, writing activity and post-writing activity. In pre-writing activity, the researcher introduces pictures and guided questions to the students. There would be different topic in each cycle regarding the picture and guided questions given to the students. The example of picture and guided question with topic on describing most travelled tourism object could be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Example of Picture and Guided Questions

After showing the picture and guided questions, the researcher explored students' knowledge about the topic being discussed. The discussion in this pre-writing activity involved students' responses. Secondly, students were asked to make an outline about the picture and guided questions given to them. Then, the researcher explained a model of descriptive text and guided students to write descriptive text. The researcher then asked if there were any difficulties encountered by the students. Finally, students were asked to write a complete descriptive text through the picture and guided questions given. The researcher was there to control every step of writing, and answer students' questions.

Observation

Kemmis and McTaggart (in Sam's, 2005:74) explained that in observation, the researcher need to observe the action process, the effects of action, the circumstances of and constraints on action. In this cycle, the researcher observed and collected the data on events happening during the action step. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation checklist, field-notes and interview.

The researcher interviewed students to know students' response toward picture and guided questions given in their writing activity. The results from observation were analyzed for any revision and further cycle. The interviewed were related to the students' opinion about pictures and guided questions given, its advantages, and its disadvantages.

Reflection

This step was recalling what have been done through the whole steps in the action research. The researcher reflected all previous activities. The criteria of success had already made to determine whether the action research needed to be continued in next cycle or not. The result of the reflection was considered successful if it met the criteria of success that had been determined before.

Finding

In cycle 1, pre-writing, writing, and post-writing were done in the teaching and learning writing process. In pre-writing, the

researcher acted as the lecturer of 3rd semester PGSD study program in Panca Marga University Probolinggo first greeted the students. Then, gave explanation about the activities students were going to be followed: 1) the researcher explained the general knowledge of descriptive text (What is it and also its generic structure). The topic students learned in this cycle was describing person, 2) the researcher gave students' picture and guided questions in relation to the topic, and (3) the researcher asked students to write an outline of descriptive text that they were going to write based on the picture and guided questions given to them. In writing activity, students were asked to develop their outline made in pre-writing into a complete descriptive text. While, the students were developing their ideas, the researcher was there to give assistance. In post-teaching, the researcher recalled the activities done together by the students. Then, the researcher monitored and discussed students writing by giving comments and suggestions.

After following the action steps described above (pre-writing, writing activity, post-writing), the next step was observing. The researcher observed students' attitude during the writing process and students' writing were collected as the data to be analyzed. The last step was reflection, after analyzing the data and matched with the criteria of success created in planning step, it was found out that cycle 1 need further revision and planning for cycle 2. The frequency distribution of the students' descriptive text writing could be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. The Frequency Distribution of the Students' Description Text Writing in Cycle 1

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	0	0
2	15	47
3	15	47
4	2	6
Total	32	100

From the table above, it could be seen that the percentage n level 3 had not yet achieved 63%, however it still showed a slight

significance compared to the frequency from preliminary study.

Prior to the result from cycle 1, cycle 2 was done to meet the criteria of success. In cycle two, the topic given to the students was describing tourism object that mostly travelled. Hopefully, the topic would make students to be more engaged in writing activity. Action step in this cycle followed: pre-writing, writing activity, and post teaching. The process done in this step was still the same, however the researcher tried to explained more about the picture and guided questions given to the students. In observing step, the researcher observed students carefully by sometimes interviewed them related to the writing order. The reflection step was again recalling the previous activities and the researcher reflected the result of students' writing and the predetermined criteria of success. The result could be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. The Frequency Distribution of the Students' Descriptive Text Writing in Cycle 2

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	0	0
2	8	25
3	22	69
4	2	6
Total	32	100

Table 5 showed a high significant improvements in students' writing. 22 students finally were able to achieve level 3 in writing descriptive text, it means that the predetermined criteria of success had met the result of students' writing in cycle 2, because more that 63% students reached level 3. Then, the action researched is finished in two cycles. In conclusion, using pictures and guided questions can improved students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Discussion

Based on the result of using picture and guided questions to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text, it is indicated that there are some improvements on the students' writing. In first cycle, 47% students (15 students) achieved level in writing, there is an improvement compared the result in the preliminary study in which

only 9 students → 28% reached level 3. Since the result has not met the predetermined criteria of success (63% or more than 63% students reach level 3), the action research continued to cycle 2. The improvement in cycle 2 is high, 22 students or 69% students have achieved level 3 in writing descriptive text. It is found out that by implementing picture and guided questions the students were able to express their ideas of the topic given, and develop it together to make a good order of descriptive writing. The rubric criteria of writing indicates three points: in terms of content, language use, and vocabulary. Through the result, the students have gained a better understanding of how to develop content properly, produce simple and complex sentences correctly and apply word/idiom form and choice well.

The improvement achieved because the effect of picture and guided questions, the students becomes easier to explore ideas on the given topic. It made students more engaged in the writing descriptive text activity. The percentage achievement also indicates that using picture and guided questions made students understand more about the topic. From the interview, the students said that they were more

REFERENCES

- Chen, Y. 2002. The Problems of University EFL Writing in Taiwan. *The Korea TESOL Journal*. (Online) Vol.5 No 1: 59-80. <http://iteslj.org/>, Accessed on 8th October 2020.
- Heaton, J.B. 1990. *Classroom Testing*. New York: Longman.
- Lee, S. 2003. Teaching EFL Writing in the University: Related Issues, Insights, and Implications. *Journal of National Taipei Teachers College*. (Online) Vo. 16, No.1. www.o.ntust.edu.tw, Accessed on 8th October 2020.

enthusiastic to write descriptive text. The pictures and guided questions gave them an insight about what to write chronologically. By viewing the picture, the students gained a clear image about the topic. While, the guided questions gave them an insight to develop ideas in a good order. The students' achievement in level 3 by more than 63% students in writing descriptive text writing indicates the measurement of success in this action research.

CONCLUSION

The result showed that using picture and guided questions can improve students' ability in writing descriptive text. The improvements could be seen from their abilities in understanding the topic and develop ideas into a good order. By using picture and guided question, the students could make descriptive text better than from preliminary study. Moreover, more than 63% students gained a better knowledge about content, language use and vocabulary. Thus, picture and guided questions are able to enhance the quality of teaching and learning of writing activity. For other researcher, it is suggested to try using picture and guided questions to improve other skills besides writing.

- Nunan, D. 1992. *Research Method in Language Learning*. Australia: Cambridge University Press.
- Raymond, J. C. 1980. *Writing is Unnatural Act*. New York: Harper & Row Publisher.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). 2002. *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Sam's, R.H. *Model Penelitian Tindakan Kelas*. Yogyakarta: Teras. 2005
- Wright, A. 1989. *Picture for Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Using Picture and Guided Question to Improve Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text

ORIGINALITY REPORT

4%

SIMILARITY INDEX

4%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

0%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

repository.uinjkt.ac.id

Internet Source

2%

2

lib.unnes.ac.id

Internet Source

2%

Exclude quotes On

Exclude bibliography On

Exclude matches < 2%