

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The level of literacy can determine the education development of a country. Literacy deals with how people read and write. It is a natural stage of a child's development as learning to talk (Beaty, 1994), and an integral part of people's lives (Cameron, 2001).

Sinatra (1986), as cited by Schweizer (1999), classifies the development of children's literacy into the following genres: (1) visual literacy, as the primary; (2) oral literacy; (3) written literacy; (4) visual literacy as representational; and (5) computer and technological literacies. Children's development of writing skill is dependent on the visual and oral literacy. Thus, their literacy on written text should be developed from the visual aspects. As stated by Eisner (1993b), cited by Schweizer (1999), that the reintegration of visual learning with verbal learning within the curriculum is necessary to provide a more holistic approach to learning.

As a result, it is important to introduce and develop writing. However, in Indonesia it is not a habit for many Indonesian people. Therefore, to build the writing habit, it should be introduced since childhood (Alwasilah, 1999; Nagin, 2006).

However, writing is considered as the most difficult language skill to acquire (Hudelson, 1989; Heaton, 1995; Ioannou-Georgiou & Pavlou, 2003;

Paul, 2006). It requires the language users to be able to convey their idea in mind into a piece of paper. They have to be provided with many vocabularies and relevant references, and also have to be able to synthesize sentences. Again, it seems to be more difficult when they must deal with such kind of revising, drafting, editing, concluding, and so forth. That is why teaching general writing skill must be emphasized in pre-college education, taught and learned in a correct manner (Alwasilah, 1999). Dealing with this problem, it is significant to make young learners accustomed to literacy, especially on writing.

In accordance with that, journal can be used as a tool to introduce young learners to literacy and to build their literacy awareness. As stated by Harmer (2004) journal serves important pedagogical process. By writing in a journal, young learners will be able to express their feeling and idea freely. They will also reflect their imaginative mind, as young learners writer's mind is truth and real (Alwasilah, 1999).

Picture is considered as one of the powerful media to teach young learners. When they are encouraged to draw picture, they are in effect being trained to verbalize thinking and feeling in a systematic manner (Alwasilah, 1999). Harmer (2000) also supports this argument by stating that picture can provide stimulation for writing habit activities. By adding picture to their journal, young learners will be more expressive and their willing to write will be increased. As the implication, journal can be chosen as an appropriate media.

Based on the issue above, this study is aimed to describe the use of picture journal in young learners' writing activity, and the young learners' responses toward it. The scope of this study will expose the use of picture journal in English for Young Learners learning activity.

Therefore, this study is concerned about investigating young learners' writing activity. One of the programs, which is reported effective in writing to young learners, is through journal. As stated by Brown (2004), that journals obviously serve important pedagogical purposes. He further states that the use of picture in the journal is an effective medium to stimulate written response

1.2. Research Questions

The following questions were proposed to discover the use of pictures in young learners' journal writing, as follows:

1. What are the benefits of using pictures in young learners' journal writing?
2. How do the young learners respond toward the use of picture in their writing activity on journal?

1.3. Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are to find out:

1. The benefits of using pictures in young learners' journal writing.
2. Young learners' responses toward the use of pictures in their writing activity.

1.4. The Scope of Study

This study limits its investigation into two concerns. The first is on how picture will help young learners to write on their journal, and the next is about how the young learners respond the using of picture in their journal writing activity. Those concerns are within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia.

1.5. Significances of Study

This study is expected to provide theoretical, practical, and professional benefits.

1. *Theoretical benefits*

The research finding can be used to enrich the theories and methods in teaching writing using pictures, and journal, particularly to young learners.

2. *Practical benefits*

Practically, the research finding will be beneficially useful for the students, the improvement of teaching method of English for Young Learners programs, and also for the readers who are interested in teaching writing to young learners.

a) The students

- They can improve their mastery on English writing, they will be able to writer better, especially by using the picture prompts,
- They will be able to express themselves freely in a written form.

b) Teaching method of English for Young Learners program

- To present the implication of using pictures in young learners' EFL writing activity
- To give solutions to the English for Young Learner (EYL) learning process, especially on EFL writing.
- To present the implication of using pictures in young learners's EFL writing activity;
- To provide information about young learners's responses about the use of pictures to their EFL writing activity on journal;
- To provide sufficient evidence about the benefits of using journal in young learners's EFL writing activity

3. *Professional benefits*

In this perspective, the teacher, school, and even a language course will get benefit from the research finding.

a) The teacher

- The teacher knows the level of students' mastery in writing activity
- The teacher can improve the strategy on teaching writing for young learners.

b) The school or a language course

The research findings can be used as a consideration to improve the teaching language, especially in teaching English to young learners. It

has a function to enrich the instruments on teaching writing, especially by using pictures and journals.

c) The writer

For the writer her self, the research finding is valuable as self-reflection on teaching writing to young learners, by using picture prompts and journal.

1.6. Clarification of Key Terms

To steer clear of the misconception and misunderstanding, several terms are clarified. Those are:

- a) *Use* refers to the application of a program or instructions, or on how something is being applied. In the present study, it is connected with the use of picture in journal writing teaching for young learners.
- b) *Picture* is related to the chosen media in stimulating young learners to write on their journal.
- c) *Writing* refers to a task that requires young learners to write something in English. Their writing is as a part of learning, and picture is used as a stimulus to write.
- d) *Young learner* is a group of students of five to fourteen years old who learn writing in English. In this research, they are the third to fourth grader of elementary school students, age 10-11 years.

e) *Journal* is a tool used on teaching writing for young learners. The young learners can write anything, draw, and color freely there. In the present study, the journal has a role as a language-learning log.

1.7. Contents of Study

The present research paper will be organized as the following:

1. Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter contains introduction which provides the information on the background of the study which is related to the use of picture in young learners' journal writing, the scope of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

2. Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This section focuses on the theoretical foundations that are relevant to the present study, with picture as a writing stimulus for young learners as the main issue.

3. Chapter III: Methodology

This part comprises the research method that includes the formulation of the problems, aims of the present study, data collection, scope of the study, analytical framework, and data analysis.

4. Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter provides the results of the research and discussion of the research findings.

5. Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestion

This chapter presents all the conclusion of the study and also provides for implications and suggestions for further researchers and related institutions.

