

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of six sections: the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, scope of study, significance of research and organization of the thesis.

1.1. Background of the Problem

Writing as one of the four skills has always formed part in syllabus of teaching English. Writing is different with spoken language. Spoken language can be acquired naturally as a result of being exposed, whereas writing has to be consciously learned (Harmer, 2006, p. 3). Specifically, writing assists people to learn how to form language, how to spell, and how to put the idea together in a good plot. It becomes one way to enable people to express their thoughts to other. It deals with the interpersonal communication which exists in the reflection of what people are thinking (Brown, 2007, p. 335; Harmer, 2006, p. 112; Kumaravadivelu, 2005, p. 8). However writing is not just a speech written down. It is necessary to make written texts full of information, than spoken texts, for there is no chance of adding information (Gibbons, 2002, p. 52).

Frequently, writing is now no longer the mode of representation in learning materials, such as textbooks, and teacher-produced materials. Meanwhile, images are increasingly prominent as carriers of meaning in writing (Bezemer & Kress, 2008, p. 166). Writing and images have become the major means of representing content (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 17). Technology is the one which impact human's way of communication and social change. People are now able to communicate instantly with a combination of texts, photos, or videos through mobile phone technology, different types of computers and multimedia devices (G. Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 2).

Writing and image relationships are frequently known as part of multimodality. Multimodality refers to meaning-making written texts which are combined with other modes such as images, sounds, gestures, and movement (Walsh, 2011, p. 12). The study of multimodality, especially in the relation of image and text to teach English as first language, has been conducted by several researchers (e.g. Royce, 2002; Salway & Martinec, 2005; Unsworth, 2006; Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Thompson, 2008; Walsh, 2008, 2009, 2010; Cumming, Kimber, & Wyatt-Smith, 2012). The studies reported that using image in the classroom has increased students' interactivity and discussion. However, none of this study has been conducted in EFL context. Thus, the present study is to reveal the effectiveness of multimodality, particularly photographs, to students who learn English as a foreign language.

Meanwhile, an approach which is relevant to teach writing using multimodal, particularly photographs, is the Genre Based Approach (GBA). Thus this study employs Genre Based Approach in teaching multimodal writing through photographs. The genre based approach is moving through four stages (Derewianka, 1990, p. 3; Gibbons, 2002). The stages are begun by Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), then Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). The multimodal materials were input in each stage. The teacher put several materials with photographs in the BKOF and MOT stages. Meanwhile the students put their own photographs to create the writing products in the JCOT and ICOT stages. At the end of the GBA cycle, it is expected that the students can understand the genres as well as their writing products.

By viewing the accomplishment of multimodality in teaching, this study is aimed to investigate the use of multimodality in terms of photographs and text to teach language in the classroom. Therefore, the study concerns on the implementation of photographs in teaching writing, and how these materials can develop the students' ability.

Since none of the studies about teaching multimodality has been conducted in EFL context, the present study, thus, aims to reveal the effectiveness of photographs on developing students' writing ability in EFL context, particularly at one junior high school in Bandung. Specifically, the study identifies the implementation of teaching writing using multimodal texts particularly photographs, the improvement of students' writing ability, and the students' opinions toward teaching writing using multimodal texts, especially photographs, in developing their writing ability.

1.2. Research Questions

In line with the background of the problem in Section 1.1, this research will attempt to address the following questions:

- a. Can multimodal texts, especially photographs, be implemented to teach writing using genre-based approach?
- b. How can multimodal texts, especially photographs, help to improve the students' writing ability using genre-based approach?
- c. What are the students' opinions toward teaching writing using multimodal texts, especially photographs, in developing their writing ability?

1.3. Research Objectives

With reference to the problem which will be examined, this study is aimed at:

- a. implementing multimodal texts, especially photographs, to teach writing using genre-based approach.
- b. exploring the extent to which multimodal texts, especially photographs, can develop the students' writing ability using genre-based approach.
- d. exploring the students' opinion toward teaching writing using multimodal texts, especially photographs, in developing their writing ability?

1.4. Scope of the Research

This is a case study carried out at one junior high school in Bandung. It uses triangulation of classroom observations, students' texts, questionnaires, and interviews as the data collection techniques. The implementation of multimodal text is limited in the use of photographs only. The analysis focuses on the social function, schematic structure, linguistic features, and thematic progression of the students' texts. The analysis attempts to identify the students' ability and their opinions on the use of multimodal text to teach writing recount texts in the genre-based approach classroom.

1.5. Significance of the Research

This study attempts to analyze students' writing development in the use of photographs to teach writing. Therefore, it is greatly expected that the findings of the study will give contribution theoretically and practically to the development of media in teaching language especially in teaching writing in the EFL context.

Theoretically, it is expected that the research findings will greatly enrich the theory of how to implement the photographs as multimodal text to teach English in the EFL classroom. It is also expected that the research findings will be beneficial as useful information for the following researchers or writers who want to conduct a further research concerning the using of media in language teaching.

Practically, it is hoped that the result of the study can give a feedback to teacher's understanding of the advantages of using multimodal text in teaching. Therefore, teacher may create a positive environment to support students in the process of writing.

1.6. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one gives general descriptions of the introduction to the topic of the research. Chapter two presents the theories that support the study. Chapter three discusses the research methodology. Chapter four discusses the implementation of the teaching program

in the classroom, the discussion of students' writing analysis using the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) and the discussion of students' opinion on the teaching program based on the data from the questionnaire and interview. Chapter five provides conclusions drawn from the discussion in the previous chapter and recommendation to the next researcher.

