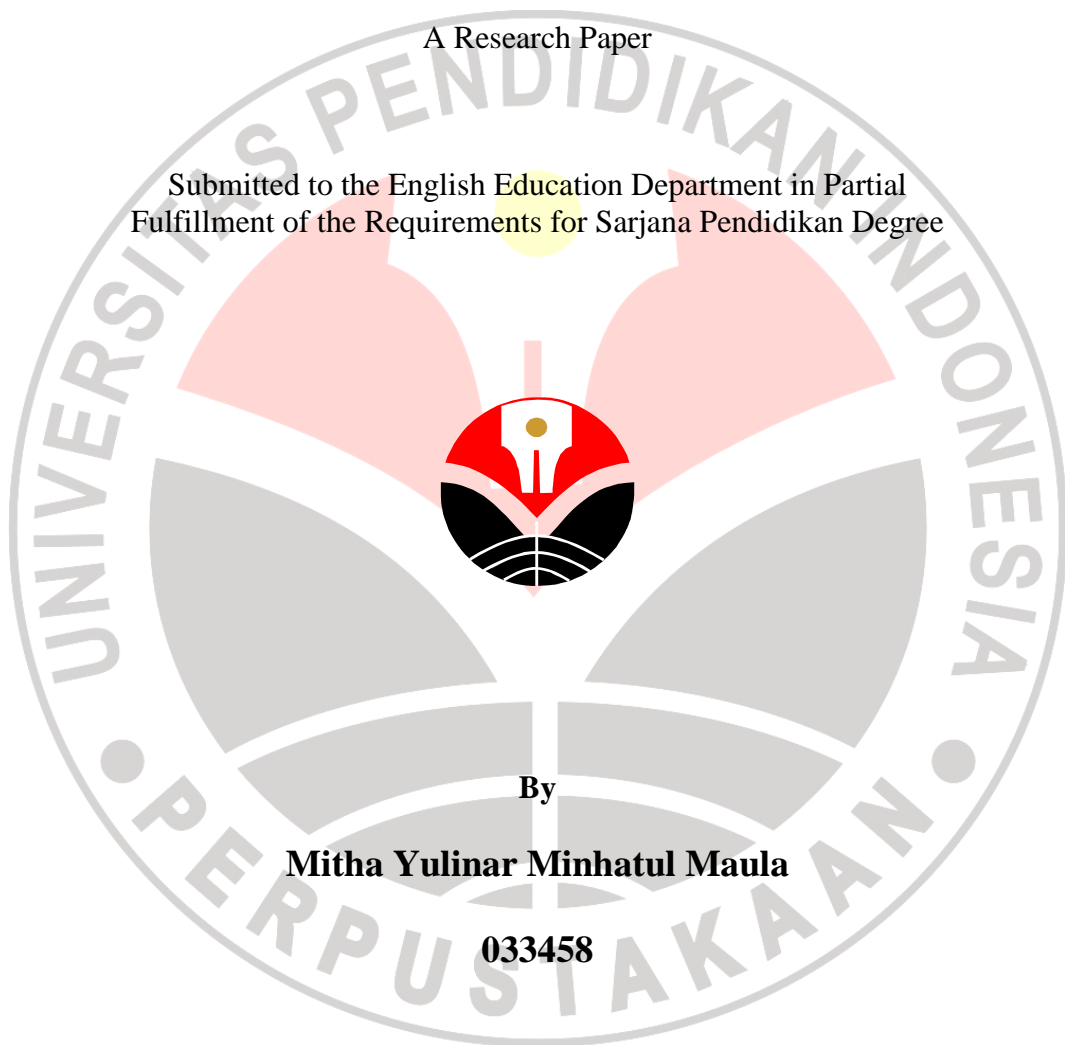


**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS  
IN TEACHING RECOUNT TEXT TO IMPROVE STUDENTS'  
WRITING ABILITY**

(An experimental study of the First Grade Students of SMA PGII 1 Bandung)

A Research Paper

Submitted to the English Education Department in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for Sarjana Pendidikan Degree



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**2008**

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background, research questions, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, hypothesis, population and sample, research method, research instruments, research procedures, data analysis, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

#### 1.1 Background

Nowadays English has become an important device that takes important roles in communication. Now, we are entering the global information era where every nation in the world shares information to fulfill needs of knowledge. Regarding to the global information era, English is essentially needed to be mastered by everyone because English is the first foreign language that is considered important for the development of science, technology, art and culture, and also the relationship with other countries. In English, there are four major aspects such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Since writing is an important aspect in language teaching and learning, teacher should continue developing some techniques in teaching writing that can help students to improve and master their writing ability. Alwasilah (2001) states “schools are responsible for developing a general writing skill which constitutes the foundation for developing a specific or a professional writing skill.” Abisamra (1998) supports the importance of writing by stating “writing allows us to express ourselves. Through writing we can inform others, carry out transactions,

persuade, infuriate, tell how we feel, and learn to shape our thoughts, our ideas, and our lives.”

It has been realized that writing skill is highly important. However, many students are not interested in writing and regard it as the most difficult skill to learn. Alwasilah (2001) states that “compared to listening, speaking and reading, writing is perceived as the most difficult to acquire for some reasons.

No ideas to be developed in students writing is one reason that put writing into the most difficult skill to learn. Gould, Diyanni and Smith (1989) believe that the hardest part in the process of writing is how to start it. Many writers have been frustrated when there are no ideas in their mind. Another reason why writing is so difficult for ESL learners according to Cimcoz in Runi (2007: 2) that they are not able how to write, feel foolish when they could not find the most suitable words, and want to keep themselves away from the experiences of having a topic and a blank paper. That’s why students considered writing, especially in English as a difficult task. For that reason, it is important for teachers to facilitate students with some teaching techniques that can help them generate ideas.

It is a fact that writing is one of the important skills that must be learnt by the students. Gorman and Purves (1998) stated that:

Writing is an act of communication between the writer and the reader about some topics. Writing is also a cognitive process in which the writer presents and/or reflects on either externally observable or internally experienced reality. Through the writing process one’s knowledge and experience may be enlarge.

Moreover, it is important for the teacher to stimulate their students to be a creative person when they do the writing activity. Gould and Diyanni (1989) stated that “writing is a creative act”. From writing, students can express their feeling. They can write about their unforgettable experience, and they can also write about some phenomena which happened in their environment.

We know that the definition of writing has long been a matter of discussion. Writing may take a form of a diary, a short message service, a brochure, a journal, an essay and so on. Styles in writing vary according to its genre. For example, folklores could be reported as narrative writing, a personal trip to the zoo could be reported in a recount while a brochure for travel agency could be written in a description. However, writing is not only a matter of composing something but it is a form of thinking. It facilitates thought and helps us to think critically.

From this point of view, there are many different genres in writing such as recount, reports, narrative, descriptive, news item and many else. Based on the curriculum which has developed in Indonesia and to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the Kurikulum 1994 was revised into Competence-Based Curriculum or mostly known as 2004 Curriculum. In which, its fundamental goal is to develop communicative competence. As stated in 2004 English curriculum, there are twelve kinds of genre: recount, report, discussion, explanation, exposition (analytical), exposition (hortatory), news item, anecdote, narrative, procedure, review and description (Puskur, 2003: 72).

At this point, by seeing the mount of text types that should be taught by English teacher to the students, the effectiveness of teaching technique, media and

material has also become a great issue in teaching and learning context. In addition, in the last ten years, the use of authentic material has become increasingly popular in language instruction (Dumitrescu, 2000: 20). Roger (1988: 467) defines it as 'appropriate' and 'quality' in terms of goals, objectives, learner needs and interest and 'natural' in terms of real life and meaningful communication. Moreover, Jordan (1997: 113) refers to authentic texts as texts that are not written for language teaching purposes. The use of authentic material offers language instructor the opportunity to expose the learners to the materials which are produced for real life context.

Although many countries have emphasized the use of sample authentic materials, Asian countries, especially Indonesia, is not yet to catch this awareness (Liao, 2000: 2). Therefore, this present study is going to investigate the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching recount text to improve students' writing ability.

In this case, the writer is interested in using authentic materials in teaching recount text. Recount text is chosen as the specific genre to teach because of its social function and its familiarity to students' life. Recount as one of the genres has appeared in both written and oral. It also can be a central medium in dealing with others by giving and sharing experience. Furthermore, Marta and Gandes (2005: 10) have proposed the social function of recount text that is to retell past events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. They also state that recount text has its characteristics; they are the format and the generic structure.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research is aimed at finding out the answers of the following research questions:

1. To what extent is the use of authentic materials in teaching recount text effective to improve students' writing ability?
2. In what ways do the students respond to the use of authentic materials in learning recount text?

## **1.3 The Aims of the Study**

This study has several aims as follows:

1. To find out the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching recount text to improve students' writing ability.
2. To find out how students response to the use of authentic materials in learning recount text.

## **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

Considering the problems that have been formulated above, the scope of the study is to find out whether or not authentic material is effective to improve students' writing skill for the first grade students of SMA PGII 1 Bandung. The authentic materials used in this study are treasure hunt, that is students get news or magazine articles and a sheet of paper with a series of questions so that they look for certain items: dates, events, people involved, etc.

## 1.5 Hypothesis

According to Hatch and Farhady (1982: 85-86), the most common hypothesis used in experimental study is null hypothesis, stating that there is no difference between the sample and the population after receiving the special treatment. In agreement with Hatch and Farhady, the writer chosen the null hypothesis because the writer does not have strong evidence yet to make a directional prediction or expect a difference before conducting the experiment.

Since this study is designed to investigate the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching recount text to improve students' writing ability, this study is guided by the following hypothesis:

*There is no difference between students' writing ability in control and experimental group after being given authentic materials in teaching recount text.*

## 1.6 Population and Sample

The first grade students of SMA PGII 1 Bandung are taken as population. It is done to the fact that recount text is taught for the first grade students and SMA PGII 1 Bandung has been applying genre-based approach to English language teaching.

This study uses two classes as the sample. The first class is X-3 as the control group and the second class is X-5 as the experimental group. This sample is purposefully chosen due to both classes are the class which have similar schedule in English lesson compared to the other class.

## **1.7 Research Method**

To answer the research question, it is important to select an appropriate research method. Hatch and Farhady (1982: 4) state that the research method should be the most efficient way to answers the questions. The research method that will be used in this study is experimental method. According to Hatch and Farhady (1982: 22) experimental method involves two groups of students; the experimental and the control group. Both groups are taken as the examined group.

An experimental group refers to a group of students that will receive authentic materials in teaching recount text as its treatment, while a control group refers to a group of students that will receive no treatment. The control group is needed for comparison purposes. The treatment is given to find out the effectiveness of using authentic materials in teaching recount text for improving students' writing ability. After conducting pre-test, treatment and post-test, the data will be interpreted.

### **1.7.1 Research Instruments**

In this study, writing test serves as the research instrument. It is used to reveal the effectiveness of authentic materials in teaching recount text. In addition, questionnaire which also serves as the research instruments is used to support the data in finding out the students' response to the use of authentic materials in learning recount text.



### **1.7.2 Research Procedures**

This study will be conducted based on the following procedures: first, administering try out test in order to find out the validity and reliability of the test; second, organizing teaching procedures in the experimental and the control groups; third, administering pre-test to both groups in order to investigate the initial differences of the two groups; fourth, conducting treatments for the experimental group; fifth, administering post-test to both groups in order to investigate the results of the treatments; sixth, administering questionnaire for the experimental group in order to gather information about students' response to the use of authentic material; seventh, analyzing the data collected from the pre-test, post-test and questionnaire.

### **1.7.3 Data Analysis**

The data of this research is analyzed through quantitative and qualitative analysis. Thus, the procedures of analyzing the data are as follows:

1. Analyzing test of normality distribution and homogeneity variance taken from student's pre-test and post-test score in both groups.
2. Analyzing student's pre-test and post-test score in both groups using t-test in Statistic Product Service Solution (SPSS 13.0) in order to find out whether or not the mean in pre-test and post-test of both groups have significant difference.
3. Determining the student's point of view (response) using percentage.
4. Interpreting the research finding in order to give the explanation about the result of the research.

## 1.8 Clarification of the Terms

In this study, there are some terms need to be clarified to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the terms used in this research. Some terms are clarified as follows:

1. Effectiveness in this context is the final work of the student's writing work while according to oxford dictionary, it means producing the results that one wants.
2. According to Harmer (1991) cited in Matsuta (2001) defines authentic texts as materials which are designed for native speakers. They are real text and designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language. In this study, it is specifically authentic "treasure hunt" materials in which students get a sheet of paper with a series of questions so that they look for certain items: dates, events, people involved, etc.
3. According to Marta and Gandes (2005), recount text is used to retell past events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. It unfolds with a series of events (ordered in a chronological sequence).
4. Writing is as the application of the grammar, lexical, and rhetorical pattern of writing in producing a text (Walter, 1983). Whereas according to oxford dictionary, ability is defines as someone's competence in doing certain skill. Based on the definition above, students' writing ability defines as students' competence in producing written text.

## 1.9 Organization of the Paper

The writer will organize the paper into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I Introduction. This chapter provides the background, research questions, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, hypothesis, population and sample, research method, research instruments, research procedures, data analysis, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II Theoretical Foundation. This chapter consists of related theories from the expert, definitions, and some widely accepted research which closely related to this study.

Chapter III Research Methodology. This chapter presents research questions, research design, research variables, population and sample, research procedures, research instruments, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussions. In this part, the writer will shows the calculation of try-out test, the calculation of pre-test scores, the calculation of post-test scores, the calculation of experimental group scores, the calculation of control group scores, and the result of questionnaires.

Chapter V Conclusions and Suggestions. This chapter provides the conclusions that are taken based on the results of data analysis and interpretation. It also provides some suggestions for further study which are expected to bring some benefits.