

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Writing is a powerful tool for getting things done. Even young children sometimes recognize the power of writing. One of the most important features of writing is links with family, friends, and colleagues who are removed by both distance and time (Graham, 2007:2). According to Charles (1996:1) the power of writing is richly captured in the famous quote: "The pen is mightier than the sword." Although most people recognize that writing is important, they are sometimes confused about the source of its power.

There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for language second learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable texts. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. Second language researcher have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. The difficulty becomes even more pronounced if their proficiency is weak (Richards, 2002:303).

The students of class VIII SMP Bakti Bangsa Bandung also faced some problems above. Based on the observation conducted, it was found that the students' ability in writing recount texts was still far from what was expected. From the result of the students' writing, the average score of the students was 52.65. This score was computed from the average score of the element of writing.

The interview was conducted to the teacher in order to know the condition of the students of class VIII. The questions of interview were related to the students' writing ability, the difficulties that the students' faced in writing, and the teaching writing in class. The teacher said that the students of VIII SMP Bakti Bangsa Bandung have low ability in writing.

From the result of interview, it could be concluded that the students still have low ability in writing. They faced problems in writing, especially in making correct grammatical sentences, developing paragraph and finding appropriate vocabulary.

This research conducted a classroom action research in order to improve the students' writing ability. The classroom action research focused on the improving students' writing ability especially in the form of recount text. This was done for the reason that this kind of writing form was suggested in the syllabus used in SMP that is KTSP. Usually in the writing class, the teacher did not use a media to improve students' writing ability yet. The teacher only used handbook and students worksheet. In this research, the researcher used picture series to improve students writing ability, especially in writing recount text.

B. Theoretical Framework

This part contains some theories about writing and picture. Those theories served as basis for investigating the problem of the study.

1. The Meaning of Picture

Picture is categorized as one of aids in language teaching. Visual aids are a intuition where the learner can see what is named by the word to be learned (Allen, 1983: 33). Picture is drawings, photographs, posters, slides, cartoons, magazines advertisements, diagrams, graphs, tables, charts, and maps, can be valuable resource for teaching writing (Ann Raimes, 1983: 27).

While Wright says that pictures are not just an aspect of method but through their representation of places, objects, and people they are in essential part of the overall experiences we must help our students to cope with. (Wright, 1997: 2)

Furthermore, Wright suggests the use of picture series. According to him, pictures series are pictures, which show some actions or events in chronological order. They tend to range from four to eight pictures. They usually tell some short of stories, but they may also be used to depict a process how to make something. In addition, Wright states that picture sequence can highlight certain language features and it can illustrate a story or a process. Since the medium used in a foreign language the process of writing a recount text for beginning students may cause a problem. This can be anticipated by providing them with picture series or sequences, so that they concentrate more on the orderly arrangement of the story, by paying attention to the series of pictures and the language they use. The next step when they are more competent in using picture series, the teacher may take away one or two of series and asks students to use their own imagination to fill in the missing links of the story. (Wright,1997: 72-74)

2. The Benefits of Using Picture

Wright (1997: 10) says that picture can play a key role in motivating students, conceptualizing the language they want to use, giving them a reference, and in helping the discipline the activity. Because of that, pictures have been suggested as teaching aids in the classroom. While Betty Morgan Bowen (1994) gives a summary of the benefits of using visual aids in the language classroom:

1. They vary the pace of lesson
2. They encourage the learners to lift their eyes from their books which make it easier and more natural for one to speak to another.
3. They allow the teacher to talk less, by the diminishing the importance of the verbal stimuli provided by the teacher's voice and allow the students to talk more. This visual rather than verbal approach results in less teacher talking time and more student participation.
4. They enrich the classroom by bringing the topics from the outside world, which are made real and immediate by the pictures.
5. They spotlight issues, providing a new dimension of dramatic realism and clarifying facts that might past unnoticed or be quickly forgotten.
6. A student with a creative imagination will often find he learns a new language easily and enjoyable through the use of pictures while he finds it difficult to learn just from a textbook or dictionary.
7. They make a communicative approach to language learning easier and natural.
8. They help to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing and allow the teacher to integrate these skills constructively.
9. They inspire imaginativeness in teacher and students comments, guesses, interpretations and argument newly practiced phrases into a lively give and take.
10. They provide variety at all levels of proficiency. A collection of visual in the various media enters for all ages of learners and all types of groups from beginners to the most advanced and most highly specialized.

Betty Morgan Bowen (1994:1)

3. The Role of Pictures in Teaching Writing

Pictures have been suggested as teaching aids in the classroom also used to help students understand various aspects of foreign language. There are some roles for pictures in writing as follows:

1. Pictures can motivate student and make him/her want to pay attention and to take part
2. Pictures contribute to the context in which the language is being used. They bring the world into the classroom
3. Pictures can be described in an objective way or interpreted or responded to subjectively
4. Pictures can cue responses to questions or cue substitutions through controlled practice
5. Pictures can stimulate and provide information to be referred to in conversation, discussion and storytelling.

(Wright, 1997:17)

Pictures may also be used to test the students' knowledge. But, before pictures are applied in the classroom the teacher must consider some criteria of how they are used in teaching and learning process. There are five criteria as selected by Wright as follows:

1. Easy to prepare. The pictures should be easy to prepare to be used by the teacher in teaching and learning process.
2. to organise. The teacher has to decide whether the efforts of organizing the pictures are complicated or not.
3. Interesting. The pictures as the material given should be interesting to the students and the teacher.
4. Meaningful and authentic. The pictures should be meaningful and authentic when it is used for learning the new language.
5. Sufficient amount of language. The activity gives rise to a sufficient amount of language in the language lesson. (Wright,1997:3)

From the suggestion above, it can be assumed that the role of pictures is really essential in teaching English. It can be said then, the role of using pictures is quite appropriate in teaching writing.

C. Research Question

The study is conducted to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways can picture series improve students' ability in writing recount texts and its improvement.
2. To what extent is the use of picture series effective to increase students' ability in writing recount text.

D. Aim of the Study

This study is aimed:

1. To know the way in what picture series can improve students' ability in writing recount texts and its improvement.
2. To know the extent of picture series effective to increase student's ability in writing recount text.

E. Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give significant contribution to the teaching of writing skill. One of the advantages is that it can be implemented in the classroom to improve students' ability in writing recount text. In addition, it can become one of appropriate methods in teaching learning process; it can improve teachers and students' ability in writing recount text.

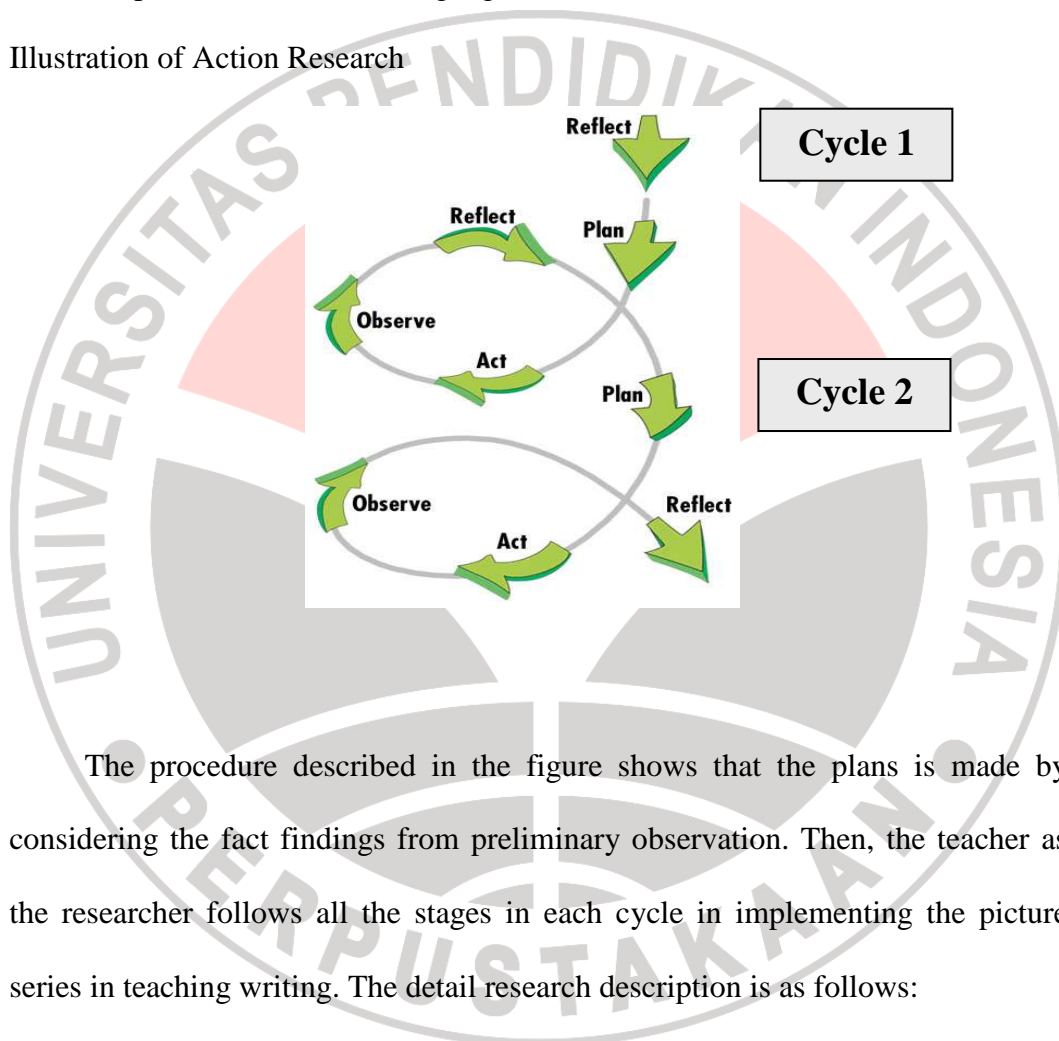
F. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study to find out whether or not pictures effectively facilitate the eight grade students of junior high school improve their ability in writing recount text in organization (generic structure) and grammar.

G. Research Methodology

This study employed classroom action research method and will adopt cycle model developed by Kemmis, Ebbut, and Elliot (in Hopkins, 1993: 44 - 45). The aim of this research is to observe people and their environment, interact with them and attempt to understand the language.

Illustration of Action Research



The procedure described in the figure shows that the plans is made by considering the fact findings from preliminary observation. Then, the teacher as the researcher follows all the stages in each cycle in implementing the picture series in teaching writing. The detail research description is as follows:

1. Planning

After formulating the problem and analyzing the causes, the researcher plans the solution. The solution shall be appropriate and based on the relevant theories. Besides, the researcher also has to consider the feasibility of the implementation.

2. Acting

In this stage, the researcher starts to implement what he has formulated in planning. The implementation is not as simple as the planning because in reality, it is usually more complicated than what has been planned. Therefore, the researcher shall anticipate what is going on in the future.

3. Observing

Observing is the activity to monitor the effect of the implementation. The observation can be carried out while the researcher takes the action or sometimes after the action. To get the information, the researcher uses observation, interview, questionnaire, document analysis and test. The observation covers the event happened in the teaching learning process which can be noted down on the field note. The interview done in face to face interaction covers the teacher and students' perception and responses toward the implementation of picture series. It also covers the students' prior knowledge in writing form. In addition, document analysis covers all document collected relates to the implementation of picture series such as the students' worksheet, interview description, students' diary. Meanwhile, the test covers the effect of the implementation seen from the scored gained by the students.

4. Reflecting

Reflection is done in the end of cycle. It is started by analyzing everything in the implementation. It covers the process, effect, the successful plan, and

unsuccessful plan which can be the input for making the revised plan for the next cycle.

The researcher gives some reasons due to the use of Classroom Action Research (CAR) in this research. First, the characteristic of CAR is focusing on solving the problems in the class. Second, it allows the teacher as researcher to have self reflection. Third, the cycle will not be ended until the problems encountered can be solved. Fourth, it is one way to improve the students' ability in English.

H. Clarification of term

In order to give a clear view on this research, the researcher provides the definition of the main terms below:

1. Series of Pictures

According to Gerlach and Ely (1980:), picture is a two dimensional visual representation on person, place, or things. Furthermore, series of pictures is pictures (in series) which show participants and sequence of events in which is used as medium to improve students' ability in writing recount text.

2. Writing

Walter (1983) cited in Syafi'i (2010) views writing as the application of the grammar, lexical, and rhetorical pattern of writing producing a text.

3. Recount Text

Definition of Recount [Recount](#) is a text which retells events or experiences in the past. Its purpose is either to inform or to entertain the audience. There is

no complication among the participants and that differentiates from narrative.¹

I. Paper Organization

This research will consist of three chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will cover the background of the study, explanation around the research and followed by the formulation of the problem, aim of study, scope of the study, significant of the study, research methodology, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter 2: Findings

This chapter will present some findings of the research based on the data collected. These findings will be analyzed and presented in a systematic way.

Chapter 3: Conclusions

It will be presented in two parts, those are the conclusion of the paper which draws the important things of this research, and then the suggestions based on the research findings concerning further research and practical application of the study. That show an opportunity to conduct a further research.

¹ As written in <http://understandingtext.blogspot.com>