

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH AT THE EIGHTGRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 1 LOLOMATUA

By :

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Abstract

This research aimed to improve the Student's ability in writing descriptive text through Language Experience Approach (LEA). This research was designed by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was done in two cycles. In collecting the data, observation paper and test were used as the research instruments. Based on the data analysis, showed that the result of the observation paper of researcher's activities in meeting I was 68,75 % while meeting II was 81,25% and cycle II in the first meeting was 87,5% while in the second meeting was 93,75%. While the result of students' observation paper of students activities in cycle I in meeting I was 78,9% while in second meeting was 79,1% and cycle II in the meeting I was 83,2% while in the meeting II was 87,6%. The students' test result in cycle I was 59,5% while in cycle II was 75,46%. Based on the research findings, in implementing Language Experience Approach (LEA) in teaching writing more interesting, effective and efficient in learning English especially in descriptive text. The researcher suggested that the teacher is expected to teach writing descriptive text through application of Language Experience Approach (LEA) because through this approach, the students' ability in writing descriptive text can be improved.

Key Words: Writing Descriptive Text; Language Experience Approach.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of human communication to convey ideas, opinions, thoughts, feelings and to interact in a certain community. One of languages well-known world wide is English. English is one of international languages which have a great influence in human life dealing with the developing of science and technology. By using English, many countries all over the world can make an interaction in some aspects of life, such like: economics field, social and culture, politics, religion and education field.

Four skill in language are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is one of activities arranging words become a meaningful sentence that can be understood by readers. Writing activity needs the logical thinking with vocabularies used to build up sentences. Having a logical thinking and effective words are keys to produce good sentences in building up grammatical writing or standardized writing.

One kind of text is descriptive text. Writing descriptive text enables to build up the imagination, underwent and felt being described by the writer. Through writing descriptive text, students are motivated to convey their ideas based on the situation of a certain object to be applied in writing form.

Writing descriptive text is an activity of students in arranging words or phrases become a meaningful sentences by describing a certain object based on the observation, experiences and the feeling of the writer using the system of writing. According of Board of Studies in English K-6 Modules (2001:85) states that descriptive text is a text which focus our attention on the

characteristic features of a particular thing. The subject might be a person, a place or thing.

Students in Indonesia actually have problem in learning English specially for writing. They feel difficult how to designed their imagination or their ideas in English. According of Faisal and Suwandita Krisna (2013), says that the most difficult to write descriptive text in English are lack of Vocabularies and got difficulties in applying grammar. It means that, the problem above not happened at the eight grade of SMP N 1 Lolomatua but also all of students in Indonesia.

In reality, the expectation of students' mastery in writing skill are not achieved. Based on the interview has done with the teacher and some students by writer in SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua at the Eight Grade in 2017/2018 the students had weaknesses to convey their ideas through writing. They feel difficult how to designed their written text correctly. Some of them told that, they did not have a good selfconfidence to express their written. It caused by grammar, lack of vocabulary, less motivation, the teaching method is not interested. The indicator of student achievement based on the Minimum Competence Criterion (MCC) on that school is 64. Based on the score that I got from the teacher on that school, the average Minimum Competence Criterion of the Student's is 60.29. From the problem above to make the students get score MCC, researcher apply the approach in this case using Language Experience Approach (LEA) which is of this approach students build their experience in form writing by using their own language. Language Experience Approach (LEA) used to teach literacy skills to adults, including those learning English as an additional language.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to find the solution for the problem by conducting a research entitled "Improving Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text Through Language Experience Approach (LEA) at the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua".

Murray and Sarah Moore (2006:7), states "writing involves starting and finishing, both requiring very different kinds of orientation. Writing is not only requiring listening to and being guided by the voices of others, but also it demands your confidence and your willingness to present your own voice, your own perspectives and your own interpretations".

Writing is recognizing the relationship between oral language and writing, sharing common meaning, composing sentences and convey ideas. Wahlstrom (2010:4-6), says there are three types of writing namely:

- a) Argumentative, make an argument that is logical well-reasoned, and supported by evidence.
- b) Informational, conduct several research project that address different aspects of the same topic, using more complex books, articles and other sources.
- c) Narrative, write a literary analysis report, or summary that develop a central idea and a coherent focus and is well supported with relevant, examples, fact, and details.

According to Spivey (2006:112), says some steps of the writing process:

- a) Prewriting, brainstorm to generate ideas for writing.
- b) Rough Draft, put their ideas on paper.
- c) Peer Editing, Classmates share their rough drafts and make suggestions to each other for improvement. They help each other understand the story by asking *who, what, when, where, why, and how* questions
- d) Revising, The student use the suggestions from classmates to make additions or clarify details.
- e) Editing, Children work with the teacher and/or peers to correct all mistakes in grammar and spelling.
- f) Final Draft, Children produce a copy of their writing with all corrections made from the editing stage and then discuss this final draft with the teacher. The teacher offers the last suggestions for improvement at this point.
- g) Publishing, The writing process is finally at its end. Children publish their writing by making a copy in their neatest handwriting or using a word processor.

According to O'Malley and Pierce (1996:124), says there are three purposes of writing based on the types of writing in English language learning, those are:

- a) Informative, it is represented by "informative writing," that is purposed to share knowledge or information, give directions, and state ideas to other. Informative writing involves describing events or experiences, analyzing concept, speculating on causes and effect, and developing new ideas that are purposed to inform something may important to the readers.
- b) Expressive or Narrative, it is represented by "expressive writing" or "narrative writing" that is purposed to share a personal or imaginative expression. Commonly it is composed by the writer story or essay. Expressive or narrative often used to perform a pleasure discovery, story, poems, or short play.
- c) Persuasive, it is represented by "persuasive writing" that is purposed to persuade the readers to do something. It effort to influences others and initiate action or change. This type of writing includes evaluation of book, movie, consumer product, or controversial issues.

According to Schacter (2005:5), states that descriptive writing describe a person, place or thing in a way that enables the reader to visualize it.

Hamond (1992:4) says in learning descriptive text there are two generic structure of descriptive text namely:

- a) Identification, identifies phenomenon to be described
- b) Description, describe, parts, qualities, characteristics.

Hamond (1992:4), says that there are some lexical grammatical future of a description include:

- a) Focus on specific participants. (My English teacher, Andini's cat, My favorite place).
- b) Use of Simple Present Tense. (Use of Simple Past Tense if Extinct).
- c) Verbs of being and having 'Relational Processes' (My mum is really cool, She has long black hair).
- d) Use of descriptive adjectives (strong legs, white fangs).
- e) Use of detailed Noun Phrase to give information about the subject. (a very beautiful scenery, a sweet young lady, very thick fur).
- f) Use of action verbs 'Material Processes' (It eats grass, It runs fast).
- g) Use of adverbials to give additional information about behavior (fast, at tree house).
- h) Use of Figurative language (John is as white as chalk.)

Dixon and Nessel (1983:221), there are five basic stages in the Language Experience Approach :

- a) Share and discuss an experience.
The experience could be a trip, a role play, a story from the pupil text, a tale from a

- storybook, playing a game, a science experiment, etc.
- b) Dictation.
The pupil dictate their experiences to their teacher in English as far as possible.
 - c) Revision and editing.
The teachers and pupils read the story to make any corrections, changes and improvement.
 - d) Extension.
The teacher plans a range of follow –up activities to reinforce and extend what the pupils have learn .
 - e) Assessment
The teacher assesses the pupils' comprehension. Teachers also ask the pupils to assess their own progress and that of their peers.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the writer used classroom action research (CAR). Stephen and McTaggart (2007:271) state that classroom action research typically involves the use of qualitative interpretive modes of inquiry and data collection by teachers (often with help from academics) with a view to teachers making judgments about how to improve their own practices. McNiff and Whitehead (2002: 15), action research involves learning in and through action and reflection, and it is conducted in a variety of contexts, including the social and caring sciences, education, organization and administration studies, and management. Because action research is always to do with learning, and learning is to do with education and growth, many people regard it as a form of educational research.

Based on the explanation above, the writer summarizes that Language Experience Approach (LEA) is a research used to analyze the problem that appears during the teaching and learning process in the classroom and used by the educator or the teacher to improve the ability of students' in writing descriptive text through Language Experience Approach. In conducting this research, the writer should make a good collaboration with the English teacher to observe the teaching learning process. The observer is English teacher who teach at the class of Eight Grade. The observer observes the researcher's activities and students' activities.

The location of this research is SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua. It is located at Hilifalago village. The total number of the teacher in this school consists of 18 persons and total number of classes are 5. There are two classes at the Seventh Grade, one class of Eight Grade and two classes of Ninth Grade. The subject of this research is the Eight Grade of SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua, which consists 28 students.

There are some procedures of action implementation in some cycle, because this

research is classroom action research. Kemmis and McTaggart (2014: 18), stated that there are four steps of action research as follows: planning, action, observation and reflection.

1. Planning

Planning is the preparation activity. In this activity, the researcher will prepare lesson plan, material, evaluation paper, observation paper and other thing that should be prepared for doing the research.

2. Action

In doing the teaching learning process in the classroom, the researcher will let the students find their pairs, The teacher assigns a warm-up or team-building exercise for each home group, then the Students reading text/materials or otherwise experience the lesson and the students finding the passage of the text in their group, after that the researcher and students will discuss it if get some difficulties or problem about the material.

3. Observation

Observation is the activity of collecting data supervise to what extent the result of acting reach the objective. In this activity, the observer tries to observe the students' activity with their pairs and observe the students weaknesses in following the lesson during the action of the teaching learning process.

4. Reflection

Reflection is the activity in noting, analyzing, evaluating the result of observation and looking for the way out to improve the students' and researcher weakness during the teaching learning process of ability in writing descriptive text.

In collecting the required data in this research, the researcher used some instrument as follows:

1. Observation paper

The observation is the activity of observer in observing the action of observation paper student's and researcher's activities in the classroom. The observer notes whether the action is appropriate with the planning or not. The observer of the action in this research is an English Teacher of eight grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua. This observation is important in knowing the students' and researchers' activation in teaching and learning process of writing. It is also needed as the source to know the weaknesses during the action.

2. Test

Test is an instrument designed to convey their ideas from students with the purpose of measuring the students' capability in writing descriptive text. In this case, the writer used written test to measure the students' ability by writing a descriptive text.

The technique of data analysis, as following:

1. Qualitative data is analyzing data in description form. Nugent (2012: 35) said, "Qualitative data, on the other hand, deals with descriptions. Qualitative data can be observed,

but not measured numerically". The source of qualitative data can be obtained includes from observation and test. The data is in the form of words taken form the result of observation. It was done with her collaborator to know the situation of the teaching learning process and students' behavior.

As indicator of the students' achievement the writer was used minimum competence criterion which has been decided in SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua is 64. If the students get score Minimum Competence Criterion, the students will be classified successes and if the students get score Minimum Competence Criterion, the students will be classified unsuccessful.

Furthermore, the criterion of action success determined based on the students' achievement. If the students can improve their writing, the actionclassified successes, and if the students cannot improve their writing, the actionclassified unsuccessful.

2. According to Nugent(2012: 35), Quantitative data refers to data that can be measured in numbers, such as length, height, cost, ages, etc. In classroom Action Research, quantitative data might include test scores, student ages, number of discipline referrals, or student attendance rates.

In analyzing the result of the test, the first step that was done is finding out the average of the score per student in writing skill within the cycle. This is done to know the improvement obtained from the first cycle to the second cycle.

To identify the class percentage of students' score whether or not passing the Minimum Competence Criterion (*MCC*), the following formula will be used.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

- P : the Class Percentage
F : Total Percentage
N : Number of students

Then it can be interpreted into some categories, as follow:

- 85% - 100% = Very high
75% - 84% = Good
60% - 74% = Adequate
40% - 59% = Less
0% - 39% = Very weak

3. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research had been done in SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua which is located in Hilifalago village, LolomatuaSubdistrict, South Nias Regency. This school consisted of three grades students, namely the Seventh, Eighth and the Ninth grade. This school consists of 5 classes. The total number of

students is 117students.The Seventh class consists of 2class which contains 28 students, the Eighth class consists of 1 class which contains of 31 students, and the Ninth class consists of 2 classes which contains of 58 students. The total number of teacher is 18 persons. The English teachers are 2 persons. The subject of this research was the Eighth grade students which consists of 28 students, the researcher choosed the class because the students' ability in writing skill was low.The data that the researcher used in this study is English written test which taken from students Eighth Grade Students of SMP N.1 Lolomatua .

Before conducting the research, the researcher asked permission to the head master and English teacher at the school. After having the permission, the researcher entered the class and implemented the action of the research by using some steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection.The researcher applied Language Experience Approach in teaching learning process.

After teaching and learning process was done on Monday, 18thSeptember 2017 in second meeting of cycle I,and on Wednesday 20thSeptember 2017.The researcher evaluated the students' writing ability by giving test. The result of the test shows that there were15 students or 51.61% who successes and another 13students or 48.39% were failed. The average value was 59,5. The average score can be classified in Low level. Therefore, the research continued to the cycle II. It means that at the cycle I many of the students were failed or not success in writing, and the students' writing ability was far from expectation. It was caused by some factors, they were:

First, the researcher was not able manage the class during teaching and learning process. Therewere some students did not pay attention and response to the researcher during teaching and learning process in the classroom.

Second, The researcher did not encourage the students to get ready for studying, for example the researcher did not ask some questions in order to make the students' thinking become active to explore the idea. In addition, the researcher did not give any suggestions to solve the students' difficulties or to improve the students' ability in writing English.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the students were failed in writingskillbecause the researcher was not able to manage the time allocation and there were some activities did not do yet.

4. CLOSING

A. Conclusion

The score of students' test in writing in first cycle the students was 1667 mean 59,5% and in the second cycle the total of students score was 2113 mean 75,46%. Based on the description

above, it can be concluded that the students got improvement in learning writing.

Based on the result of the research research that was carried out in SMP Negeri 1 Lolomatua in academic year 2017/2018. The researcher could make conclusion, Language Experience Approach (LEA) and improved the students writing skill in descriptive text from the low level to a good level of writing.

In addition, in implementing Language Experience Approach (LEA) in teaching writing more interesting, effective, and efisien in learning English especially in descriptive text. Moreover, the students become active, creative during learning process in the classroom.

B. Suggestion

In this time, the researcher would like to give some suggestion based on the researcher found during doing the research in teaching writing by using Language Experience Approach:

For the students, they should study hard and more practice in writing English to improve their writing skill. They also should be active and creative in learning activity. For the teacher, approach is really important for teacher to be used in teaching one at approach that could able to help the student is Language Experience Approach (LEA)

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