Improving Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability through Realia

Reni Andriyani, Patuan Raja, Muhammad Sukirlan
FKIP University of Lampung, Jl. Prof. Dr. Soemantri Brojonegoro No. 1
Reniandriyani1826@gmail.com

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peningkatan yang signifikan secara statistik pada kemampuan menulis deskriptif teks siswa setelah belajar menggunakan realia. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Sasaran penelitian ini sebanyak 25 siswa kelas VIII.A di MTs. Raudlatul Muta'allimin Kasui, Way Kanan. Tes menulis (*pretest* dan *posttest*) digunakan sebagai alat untuk pengambilan data. Hasil menunjukan bahwa terdapat peningkatan yang signifikan secara statistik pada pencapaian kemampuan menulis siswa dengan tingkat signifikansi $p<0.05$. Dapat disarankan bahwa pengajaran menulis menggunakan realia membantu siswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan mereka dalam menulis.

Abstract. The aim of this study was to find out whether there was statistically significant improvement of students' writing descriptive texts after the implementation of realia. This research was quantitative research. The subjects of this research were 25 students of class VIII.A at MTs. Raudlatul Muta'allimin Kasui, Way Kanan. Writing tests were used to collect the data. The result showed that there was a statistically significant improvement of the students' writing with the significant level $p<0.05$. This suggests that writing through realia facilitates students to improve their writing.

Keywords: descriptive text, writing, realia.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a thinking process to share one's idea in written form by arranging the words into structural order. Writing is also a complex process that involves a range of skill and tasks. Although writing is often used to clarify and express personal thought and feeling, it is used primarily to communicate with others. Students need to be discipline thinkers in order to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively. Writing is one of the productive skills that must be learned by the students. They must apply the five general components of the writing process, i.e., content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic.

Raimes (1983: 76) states that writing is an ability in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thought arranged in words, sentences and paragraph using eyes, brain, and hand. In other words, writing is process of expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings of the writer by using a conventional system, so that the readers understand the message of information conveyed. Furthermore, writing can be required by the act of communication between the writer and the reader about some topics. Writng activity is very useful for the learners because it can stimulate them to be creative people. Writing is emphasized not only at senior high school level but also at junior high school level because writing skill should be taught in early age.

Based on School – based Curriculum (Depdiknas: 2006) the students are required to communicate oral and written text. There are several kinds of texts that have to be learnt by students, especially at junior high school. One of the texts is descriptive text. According to Crimmon (1983) description is strategy for presenting a verbal portrait of a person, a place or a thing. It can be used as a technique to enrich other forms of writing or as a dominant strategy for developing an object of what it looks like. It means that when we describe something, we need to capture the details in order the reader can understand what we mean. Therefore, the uses of various teaching media or materials are necessary for motivating students in writing descriptive text, as well as for adjusting the material and avoiding the students' boredom.

Based on the researcher's experiences when doing PPL in SMPN 1 Sendang Agung, Lampung Tengah, it was found out that although the students had been given a topic to write or describe something, they could not automatically start their writing assignment. Furthermore, some students complained that they did not know what they should describe. It was because the students tend to learn something real, not something abstract. The students would be easier to write if they connect with the real object. Therefore, the researcher assumes that the teacher needs appropriate media in teaching learning process in order to achieve the target. Besides, the teachers should be created interesting class, fun, and motivating students in learning.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher applied realia as media in teaching writing descriptive text. According to Berwald (1987) realia

are not only a series of artifacts that describe the customs and traditions of a culture, but they are also a set of teaching aids that facilitate the simulation of experience in the target culture. It means that realia is the real items found in everyday life as a visual aid for teaching English, but not all real things can be used as media in teaching learning process.

Rokhmawaty (2010) conducted a research on the use of realia in improving the students' speaking ability in procedure text at MTs. Mathalibul Huda Mlonggo Jepara. She found that using realia in teaching speaking could improve students' mastery of speaking. Mulyani (2015), found that realia could improve students speaking skill. Kurnia (2016), who had did a research claims that , there was an increase of the students' vocabulary achievement related to things in the classroom, parts of human body and fruits after being taugh by using realia.

In reference to the background above, this research is entitled "Improving Students' Writing Descriptive Text Ability through Realia at the Second Grade of MTs, Raudlatul Muta'allimin Kasui, Way Kanan''. The objective of the research is to find out whether teaching using realia can improve the students' writing descriptive text ability at the second grade of MTs. Raudlatul Muta'allimin Kasui, Way Kanan.

METHODS

The researcher conducted the quantitative research based on the experimental method. This research applied one-group pretest-post test design of pre-experimental design. The population of this research was the second grade of the students at MTs. Raudlatul Muta'allimin Raudlatul Muta'allimin, Way Kanan in the year 2016/2017. In this research, the reseacher used one class as the sample of this research. The class was VIII^A that consists of 25 students. The instrument on this research was writing task to check the comprehension of the students in writing specially writing descriptive text trough realia. The pretest and posttest were conducted for 80 minutes with two kinds of topic that the students had to choose. The students were given pre-test before treatment and they were given post-test after treatment. The research was conducted in five meetings. The first meeting was for pre-test, the other three meetings were for treatments, and the last meeting was for post-test. The pre test was done to find out the students' basic ability in writing descriptive text before treatment. Then, the three meeting for treatments were done to guide the students in writing descriptive text. The last, post test was done to find out the students' improvement in writing descriptive text. The data collection instruments were meticulously found valid based on the curriculum. Moreover, in order to make sure that the data collection instruments were reliable, the reliability was analyzed by using rank order correlation. The students' scores from pre-test and post-test were analyzed by using t-test of SPSS 16 program. The gained data were analyzed by the repeated measure t-test. t-value higher than t-table (14.326 > 2.064) at significant level of 0.05.

RESULTS

The objective of this research is to find out whether teaching using realia can improve students' descriptive text writing through realia. The researcher conducted the research at the second grade of MTs. Raudlatul Muta'allimin Kasui, Way Kanan in the academic year 2016/2017 from 23th March – 6th April, 2017. The class was VIIIA which consists of 25 students as the sample of research.

The result of pretest and posttest in the experimental class implied that realia can improve the ability of students in wrting descriptive text. The researcher presents the improvement of students' scores in the following table.

Table 1. The Improvement of Students' Scores

Aspect of Writing	Mean Score of Pre-test	Mean Score of Post-test	The Improvement
Content	9.400	12.800	3.4
Organization	8.500	12.300	3.8
Vocabulary	7.500	10.800	3.3
Grammar	5.600	10.000	4.4
Mechanic	7.500	10.300	2.8

The table above shows that the score of five aspects of writing from the pretest to posttest. In terms of content, the score improve from 9.4 to 12.8, organization from 8.5 to 12.3, vocabulary from 7.5 to 10.8, grammar from 5.6 to 10.0, and mechanic from7.5 to 10.3. It could be stated that realia could improve in all aspects of writing.

Table 2. The Analysis of Hyphotesis

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Posttest - Pretest	2.56000	8.93495	1.78699	21.91183	29.28817	14.326	24	.000

From the data above, t-value is 14.326 in which the data are significant based on t-table (2.064). t-value on the table above is higher than t-table (14.326 > 2.064) at significant level of 0.05. This suggests that H_1 is accepted (There is difference of the students' writing descriptive achievement after the implementation through realia) and H_o is rejected (There is no difference of the students' writing descriptive achievement after being taught through realia). It can be concluded that the hyphotesis of this research is accepted.

DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the research, the researcher conducted the pretest as the first activity. When the students were doing the pretest, the researcher found them that they were really busy by asking each other. It means that the students did not know what they should write and some students chose not to do because they had difficulty in writing and they problem in developing the idea. After observing the pretest the researcher knew the capacities of the students. They got difficulty to express the ideas into their writing and got difficulty in organizing to become good paragraphs. Furthermore, they often got difficullty in choosing and using appropriate words or vocabulary, so they did not know the meaning of words. It made them difficult to explore their ideas. Then, they always got a difficulty in grammar to make sentences into paragraph and had a difficulty in determining mechanics (punctuation and spelling).

After giving pretest, the researcher did the treatments in three meeting and gave material that was relevant to the students' capasities. According to Finocchiaro (1973), she said that in order to be successful in writing, the material has to be relevant to the students' interest, needs, capacities, and ages until they are able to make a composition with view or even no errors. The researcher tried to prove the Finnachiaro's statement by giving relevant material to the students. In treatments the reseacher used realia as media in order the students could related to the real object and helping the students developed their ideas. The students' classmate and the students' classroom were the real object or realia used as the examples in this research. Therefore, the researcher explained about descriptive text and how to make good descriptive text. To make good writing, the researcher asked students to create an outline of the descriptive text that they would write. After completing the outline, the students rewrite descriptive text based on the outline that they had been made. After finishing their draft, the students submit it. Then, the researcher evaluated the students' work and gave the feedback about the material.

The last meeting, the researcher gave the posttest as the activity. Then, the researcher analyzed the result of posttest. It was administered in order to find out the improvement of the students' achievement in writing descriptive text through realia. It was found that there was an improvement in each aspects of writing. The highest aspect that improve was grammar. The Improvement of grammar is 4.4. The improvement can be seen from the total score of pretest to the posttest, from 5.6 up to 10.0. It could be seen which the students' final draft is better than before. But, the weakness of result of students' work in posttest was the students very imitating the example that was given by the researcher in treatment. For example the researcher used ''then'' as conjunction in giving the example in treatment. So, the students just used the conjunction ''then'' in postest, although the researcher gave the other vocabulary of conjuntion in treatments.

The next obstacle found was the students' inability to organize words

into sentences. It happened because the students tended to use Indonesia structure in their writing. This migth be caused by the fact that most of Indonesian' students arranged the text in Indonesia first and then translate it into English word by word. Morever some students stated that they dislike English. English subject is so difficult and so fear in students' mind. Because the students still lacked knowledge in almost all aspects of writing. To overcome the problem, the researcher or teachers should make the classroom enjoy, fun, choosing the material based on students' ability, and choosing the appropriate media. in addition, the reseacher should give the feedback on their writing practice.

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From the explanation above, it can be concluded that realia could improve the students' descriptive text writing ability because realia is the real object that related to students. The highest aspect that improves was grammar. So, relia can be applied not only in teaching descriptive text, but also in and other kind of texts and other skills in English like speaking, reading, vocabulary, structure.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the discussion of the research findings on the previous chapter, the researcher comes to the following conclusion. There are many media that can help teachers improves students' ability in writing descriptive text. Realia is just one of them. Realia can significantly improve the students' writing achievement and also improve all aspect of writing especially the grammar aspect. In addition, realia not only could be implemented in writing skill but also in other skills in English like speaking, reading, vocabulary, and structure. Furthermore, realia is one of media that effective implemented in process teaching learning English.

SUGGESTIONS

In reference to the conclusions above, the researcher would like to give some suggestions for the further researchers. The researchers used realia as media to improve students' descriptive text writing achievement in junior high school. Researcher suggests for the further researchers to use realia for other kinds of text writing and for different levels of students. Then, for the English teachers. It is essential that the teachers know that one of the factors that can improve the students' ability in writing is the method in teaching learning process. They should be facilitators, controllers, and guide all students who need helping when they face the problem of learning in writing. In this research, the researcher suggests to English teachers to apply realia as one of alternative media for teaching

learning process because realia helps the students to develop their ideas in writing. In addition, the students' lowest score of the aspect in writing is mechanic. The English teachers should help the students improve their scores of mechanic by giving the students more practice in writing.

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