

Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Descriptive Text Writing Achievement by Using Realia at SMPN 1 Besuki Situbondo

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Abstract

This Classroom Action Research was intended to improve the VIII-D students' participation by using realia at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo, and to improve the VIII-D students' writing achievement by using realia at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo. The research area was chosen by using purposive method. The data collection methods of this research were interview, observation, documentation, and writing achievement test. The research participants were VIII-D students. This research was held collaboratively between the researcher and the English teacher. The research was done in two cycles while each cycle consisted of three meetings. Meeting I and Meeting II were used to teach the students by using realia and to observe their participation. Meeting III was used to conduct writing achievement test. Based on the observation result in Cycle 1, it showed that the average of the students' participation was only 38.70% students who were categorized as active participants. It increased become 83.87% students participated actively in the observation result in Cycle 2. Furthermore, the students' mean score increased from 67.16 in Cycle 1 to 82 in Cycle 2. Additionally, there were only 48.38% students who got score 70 or higher in the writing achievement test done in Cycle 1. The improvement was 83.87% students got score 70 or higher in the writing achievement test in Cycle 2. Based on the research results, it meant that the objectives of the research were completed.

Keywords: *Realia, Students' Participation, Students' Writing Achievement.*

INTRODUCTION

English is used as the instrument of communication among people all over the world (Thirumalai, 2002:2). English has an important role in human life. English as the key to the international communication and commerce makes it a compulsory subject. Sidek in Shafaei (2011:239) states that English is regarded as a foreign language that is learned by Indonesian students. Because of this reason, English becomes one of the most important languages taught from elementary schools to university levels in Indonesia.

There are four language skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Every learner may want to be able to write well in English. By having writing ability, the learners can share information, thoughts, experiences or ideas to other people.

Harmer (1998:79) argues that writing is appropriate for such learners and it can also be a quiet reflective activity instead of the rush and bother of interpersonal face-to-face communication. It means that for some students, writing is easily to do and the writers can also communicate their thoughts to readers without direct interaction

The teacher should try to introduce various ways as interestingly as possible in motivating students to write a descriptive text, because the students feel bored before they

do the task to write a descriptive text. Suyanto (2010:101) adds that in the teaching learning process, media can help

teachers to teach materials clearly and make the students easy to understand the materials. It means that the teacher should have various media to teach the students, because media is carriers of the messages from the teacher to the students.

Concerning with the students' difficulties in mastering writing, the researcher will used realia as the alternative media in teaching writing. Ruis (2009:7) says that realia means real things, object such as coins, tools, plants, animals or collection of artifacts that teachers can bring into the classroom to illustrate the meaning of the teaching material to be more memorable. Therefore, realia as visual media can be used as a guide to help the students directly see, hear, smell, touch, or even taste the object using their five senses and create the students' active responses to enrich achievement.

Realia could improve the students' writing achievement. It had been proved by the previous research which was conducted by Hidayati (2010) entitled "*Improving students' ability in writing procedure text using realia at SMPN 18 Semarang in the Academic Year of 2010/2011*". The improvements of the students' writing test

increased from 60.1 in the first cycle to 75.4 in the second cycle. In line with the previous research result, the other research entitled *improving the students' achievement in writing procedure text by using realia strategy at SMP Negeri 1 Salapian*" by Surbakti (2011) also proved that realia could improve the students writing achievement.

To make the research problem clearer, the researcher interviewed the English teacher of eighth grade at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo at december 20th, 2014. Based on the interview results, the researcher knew that VIII-D students had the low mean score of writing English. The students of VIII-D had the low mean score, it was 59.35, which could not reach the minimum requirement standard score of the English subject, it was 70. There were only 10 students who got ≥ 70 while the rest 31 students got < 70 . The English teacher said that it happened because the students of VIII-D mostly low in writing. It could be caused by some factors; Some students did not pay attention to the teacher because the English teacher did not use interesting media in teaching writing. In other words, the students were not interested and felt bored before they did the task to write a descriptive text. 2) The teacher focused only on the text book so, he did not give a model of how to write, how to compose the text in a good composition. 3) There was no feedback given by the teacher. The teacher did not explain the students' error in writing and their writing results. Then, the researcher observed the VIII-D students' condition while they were in teaching learning process of English subject at December 21st, 2014.

The observation's result showed that (1) most students of VIII-D did not know how to write a descriptive text (2) there were some students who did not follow the teaching learning process properly, they were often busy with their friends rather than paid attention to the teacher's explanation. The researcher identified their acts as a reaction because they were bored in the class when the teacher taught them by using an old and ordinary way in teaching English, that was the lecturing technique.

The researcher thought that the students need something new and attractive in the English class, so they would be more motivated to follow the teaching learning process and they could improve their knowledge in English especially for their writing achievement. The explanations above were the reasons why the researcher was interested to conduct a classroom activity research entitled *Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Descriptive Text Writing Achievement by Using Realia at SMPN 1 Besuki Situbondo*.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design of this research was a classroom action research with Lewin's model. It consisted of four basic stages: (1) the planning of the action, (2) the implementation of the action, (3) classroom observation and (4) reflection of the action (Elliot, 1991:70). The area determination was SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo. It was chosen by using purposive method because it was the school where the researcher did a teaching practice for three months so the researcher knew about what the students need there rather than the other schools. The research

participants were VIII-D students. They were chosen because they had low mean score of English.

There were two kinds of data which would be collected in this research. They were primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the writing test gained and the observation result while secondary data was obtained of the interview and documentation.

In this classroom action research, the evaluation about the students' ability in descriptive text writing by using realia was measured through the process evaluation and the product evaluation. In the process evaluation, the students' descriptive text writing is corrected in order that the students can know the mistakes in their descriptive text writing. Besides, the mistakes frequency of the students' writing from each aspect such as grammar, vocabulary, mechanic, content, and organization are counted. Observation in the classroom action research was used to describe the activities, responses, and involvement of the students in the teaching learning process. The observation of this research used a checklist containing the students' participation in the teaching and learning process of writing descriptive text by using realia. The checklist was used in collecting the data to observe whether they were active or passive during the teaching learning activities.

Interview had been conducted with the eighth year English teacher of SMPN 1 Besuki Situbondo in the preliminary study. The purpose of the interview was to get the primary data about the teaching media which was used by English teacher and the students' difficulties in writing achievement. The documentation method was used to get secondary data. The documents included the names of the research subjects and the previous writing score of class VIII D students of SMPN 1 Besuki Situbondo.

DISCUSSION

The use of *realia* in this research could improve Class VIII-D students' participation in their achievement in writing descriptive text. *Realia* could make the students easy to express their ideas. It can be seen from the teaching learning process that the students was attracted to see, touch, and smell the *realia*. In this research, the students observed the *realia* and they were asked to describe the *realia*.

There were three meetings in each Cycle which would be conducted in this research. The criteria used to evaluate the success of the implementation of Cycle 1 were: 1) at least 75% of students actively participated in the teaching learning process, 2) the students' means score was at least 70, because it was the minimum requirement standard score of the English subject in the school being researched.

The actions in cycle 1 were conducted in three meetings including the writing test. The first meeting was conducted on March 31st, 2015. The second meeting was conducted on April 1st, 2015. The writing test was administered at the end of the cycle and it was conducted on April 2nd, 2015. There were some stages covered in

cycle 1, they were planning of the actions, implementation of the actions, observation and evaluation, and reflections of the actions.

The implementation of the action was done based on the lesson plan made by the researcher. The researcher was the doer of the actions, while the English teacher was the observer. In the main activities of the actions, the researcher showed the students a realia of a watermelon and asked them some questions based on the realia and explained all about descriptive text from the definition until language feature. The students' answers and the example of descriptive text were used to explain deeper about the descriptive text and simple present tense as the characteristic of the text. Then, the researcher distributed task 1, answer sheet and three kinds of realia; guava, orange, apple, then the researcher asked the students to sit in pair and each pair got 4 kinds of realia, but the task had to be done individually. The students were asked to write sentences about the realia given using simple present tense. They had to submit their works after 25 minutes of the allocated time for task 1. Then the researcher distributed task 2, answer sheets, and realia. In task 2, the students had to write a descriptive text about avocado. They were asked to finish it in 10 minutes individually.

In the second meeting, the English teacher carried out the action and the researcher was the observer; it was done based on the lesson plan 2. The procedures of the action were mostly the same as that in meeting 1. The differences were in using the different kinds of realia, the task 1 and 2 were combined and done in the same time but still consisted of 2 activities and the explanation of descriptive text were simpler and shorter than that in meeting 1. The actions of the research were done in 2 cycles. It was because the result of the first cycle had not achieved the research target. The first meeting in cycle 2 was conducted on April 7th, 2015. The researcher was the doer and the English teacher was the observer. Meeting 1 was done based on the lesson plan 3. The second meeting was conducted on April 8th, 2015 done by the English teacher while the researcher was observing the students' participation during the teaching learning process. It was done based on the lesson plan 4. The writing test was administered at the end of the cycle and it was conducted on April 9th, 2015.

In the first meeting, the doer showed realia of chili and asked the students some questions related to the realia. Then explanations were emphasized on the example of descriptive text, the use and the example of simple present tense, nouns, and adjectives. The task were divided into two activities; wrote some sentences based on the questions given by using realia of spinach, eggplant, and carrot and

the students wrote a descriptive text based on the realia cucumber. Both of the tasks were given in the same time and the students were asked to do it individually. In this cycle, the students should bring a dictionary and the doer allowed them to open the dictionary.

In meeting 2, the actions were the same as that of the first meeting. The doer gave different realia in order to introduce the students learning experiences of using each realia. The tasks were given as in the meeting 1 and the students became very active, when there were questions.

RESEARCH RESULT

This classroom action research was focused to improve the students' participation and their writing achievement of descriptive text by using realia. It was conducted to VIII-D students at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo. This research was held in two cycles, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Each cycle was carried out in three meetings, they were Meeting I, Meeting II, and Meeting III. Meeting I and Meeting II were used to conduct a teaching learning process of writing achievement by using realia. The students' participation was also observed in those meetings. While, Meeting III was held to conduct writing achievement test. It aimed at knowing the students' score of writing achievement test given by the teacher.

In the implementation of Cycle 1, Meeting I and Meeting II were taught by the researcher. It happened because the English teacher could not teach in Meeting II. Moreover, the observers of the students' participation in Meeting 1 were the English teacher and a colleague then there were two colleagues acted as the observers in Meeting II. Based on the observation results, it showed that only 38.70% students participated actively in the teaching learning process. It had not achieved the criteria success which stated that at least 75% students participate actively in the teaching learning process of writing achievement by using realia. Furthermore, the students' mean score of writing achievement test given in Meeting III was 67.16. Besides, the students who got score 70 or higher were only 48.38% from the total students of VIII-D. They could not achieve the criteria success which the students' means score of writing achievement test is at least 70.

After knowing the research results in Cycle 1, the researcher did a reflection collaboratively with the English teacher and a colleague. The reflection was done to revise some necessary aspects in order to make the results of the implementation of Cycle 2 better.

In the implementation of Cycle 2, Meeting I was taught by the researcher while the English teacher and a colleague observed the students' participation in the teaching learning process. Then, the English teacher taught the students in Meeting II while the researcher and a colleague acted as the observers during the teaching learning process. Based on the observation results in Cycle 2, it was known that the average percentage of the students' participation increased up to 74.19% into 83.87%. students

who were categorized as active participants. The observation results of Cycle 2 proved that it had achieved the criteria success which stated that at least 75% students participated actively in the teaching learning process of writing achievement by using realia. The students' mean score would be known after the writing achievement test was given in Meeting III. Based on the writing achievement test results, it was shown that the students' mean score was 82. It could be concluded that the students' mean score of writing achievement test had achieved the criteria success which must be at least 70, because it was the minimum requirement standard score of the English subject in the school being researched. Another criteria success was at least 75% of students get the standard score, it also had been achieved because there were 83.87% students got score 70 or higher.

Finally, based on the research results of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 which were conducted by the researcher, it was concluded that the use of realia could improve VIII-D students' participation and their writing achievement at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that:

The use of realia could improve the VIII-D students' participation at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo.

The use of realia could improve the VIII-D students' writing achievement at SMP Negeri 1 Besuki Situbondo.

Due to the results of the research which showed that the use of realia could improve VIII-D students' participation during the teaching learning process and their writing achievement, some suggestions are proposed to the following people:

- The English teacher

The English teacher is suggested to consider the use of realia as a media to teach writing. Then, the English teacher can find a solution of how to encourage the students' active participation and students' writing achievement in teaching learning process of writing descriptive text. It is based on the result of the research that realia could improve the students' writing achievement.

- The Class VIII-D Students of SMPN 1 Besuki Situbondo

The students are suggested to practice their writing by themselves using realia because realia is easily found around them. They can touch, see, and observe the object to write. By practicing more, the students' will be more easily in improving their writing quality.

- The Other Researcher

The other researchers who have the similar problem in the process of teaching writing, are suggested to use the result of the research as source of information and it can also become additional references to other researchers who want to conduct further research by using different research designs or even the same

research design with other levels of students of different school.

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