

**THE APPLICATION OF AMBIGUOUS PICTURE STORY TO IMPROVE
STUDENTS' WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT ABILITY FOR
SECONDARY STUDENTS OF SMP N 8 PEKANBARU**

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Abstract

This classroom action research was aimed at explaining whether Ambiguous Picture Story technique can improve the ability of the students in writing narrative text. The researcher was helped by a collaborator and used observation sheets and field notes as the instruments of the research. Besides, she also used writing test to see the improvement of students' writing skill on each cycle. The research started on May 28, 2012 and ended on July 25, 2012.

This action research was conducted to the students at SMPN 8 Pekanbaru, class VIII⁵. There were 36 students in the classroom. The researcher conducted the test for three times. They were: Pre Test conducted before the technique was implemented; Post Test conducted at the end of cycle; and Post Test conducted at the end of cycle 2. The aspects of writing which evaluated were grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and organization. At the beginning of cycle 1 the average score of the students' writing narrative text was 51, 2. At the end of cycle 1 improved to 63, 8 and at the end of cycle 2 improved to 71, 0.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the application of Ambiguous Picture Story can better improve students' writing narrative text ability; therefore, the researcher should continue using this technique in teaching writing.

Keywords: *Ambiguous Picture Story, Students' writing narrative text ability*

INTRODUCTION

Most of Junior High School students in SMP N 8 Pekanbaru consider that writing is the most difficult skill to master because the ability to write in foreign language is more complicated than the ability to speak, read and listen. It is hard to teach the students how to write because it involves many components such as structure, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling.

Heaton (1975) stated that writing skill is more complex and difficult to teach, require and master. Not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judgment. Because of the difficulties of writing, some efforts have been done to solve the problem and the main objective is to make the writing become easier to learn by the students.

Refers to School-Based Curriculum or KTSP (2006) for Junior High School, second grade level are required to be able to express their ideas in a good rhetorical developmental text in written text. There are many genres should be learnt such as: procedure, descriptive, narrative and recount.

Based on the writer's experience in observing and teaching in SMP Negeri 8 Pekanbaru as the object of the research, the writer choose the second year students specifically, *VIII*⁵ class. There were thirty six students with numerous interests and background of knowledge. An interview with the English teacher has proved that the students' writing ability was not higher than their reading and speaking ability. It could be reveal from the previous writing scores showing that 19 students could not achieve the minimum criteria of achievement (KKM) of English subject; it was 70. Thus, this problem required a magnificent method to improve the learning achievement.

The writer found that most of students faced difficulties in learning writing narrative text. There are some reasons why it was hard for students to understand it, such as lack of vocabulary, lack of understanding about the text and having no idea to start writing. As a result, they were unable to write and build sentences or paragraphs well.

This problem caused by some factors, for example the teacher seldom used any interesting visual aids in teaching writing. In this case, the students

became bored and did not understand about writing aspects. In addition, students were not confident in attempting writing text or paragraph. The other cause might due to the way how the teacher teaches in class. In teaching and learning process, the teacher only asked the students to write a composition based on the topic that had been prepared in the text book without checking students' ability in mastery aspects of writing. It made the students did not really know about the correction of their own writing. Moreover, the teacher did not have enough time to guide or give special attention to all of students' mistakes in writing.

From the problems occurred above, the writer is nodded that the teacher pays greater attention in teaching writing. Therefore, in this study the writer wants to apply Ambiguous Picture Story to improve students' writing narrative text ability. Ambiguous Picture Story is a technique to develop students' writing narrative text ability by helping students to write their own narrative text by identifying the particular subject of picture and based on what they interpret in Ambiguous Picture Story.

The writer interested to apply Ambiguous Picture Story as a media that can help the students in increasing their ability in writing narrative text because by using picture as a media is useful to encourage students' imagination and motivation.

Based on the explanation above, the purposes of the research are: (1) To find out whether Ambiguous Picture Story can help the second year students of SMP N 8 Pekanbaru in writing narrative text SMP N 8 Pekanbaru; (2) To find out the components of writing that can be improved by using Ambiguous Picture Story. Hopefully, the result of this research will give contribution to: (1) Teacher can get input from this research about the application of Ambiguous Picture Story to help students in writing narrative text. (2) For the students, this research may provide motivation to improve their writing ability especially in writing narrative text. Besides, students are more confident in attempting writing text. (3) The reader can enlarge their knowledge about the application of Ambiguous Picture Story in writing texts. (4) The researcher

herself who has experience in conducting the research about the application of Ambiguous Picture Story in teaching writing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was a classroom action research that is used to improve students' writing narrative text ability. This opinion is in line with what Kemmis (1998:42) states that *action research* is a form self-reflectively inquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situation in order to improve the rationality of their own educational practices and situation in which practices are carried out. It means that the action research is done to acquire informational in order to solve the problem that are faced in certain condition or to give improvement on the situation where the research is applied in order to fill the need of teachers in daily teaching to improve their performance.

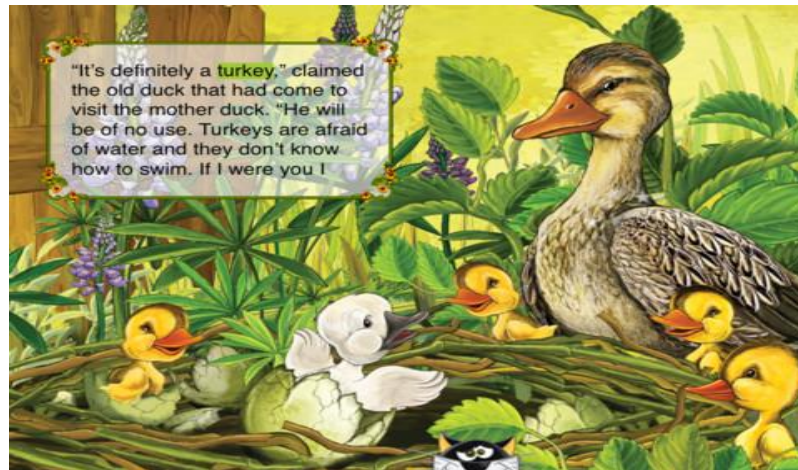
Action research is a process in cycle. There are four steps of cycles in action research; they are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. At the same time, the purpose of action research is to improve the quality of teaching and learning process.

The research was done at SMP N 8 Pekanbaru, located on Jl. Adi Sucipto. Participants of this research were the second year students at class *VIII*⁵, academic year 2011-2012. The number of the students was 36.

To get the data, the researcher used the instrumentation as follows: (1) an *written tests*, used to evaluate the students' writing ability; (2) The *observation sheet* for the teacher's and the students' activities; (3) *field notes*, a kind of notebook for recording the thoughts and events during the teaching and learning process that were not covered on the observation checklists. Then all of the data were analyzed in quantitative and qualitative form.

One example of the teaching procedures is that, the researcher divided the students into small groups, four students in each group. To guide the students came into the materials and to stimulate their interest in the topic, the

researcher asked the students to view the picture and then the students start writing a storyline based on the picture. This is an example of the Ambiguous Picture Story, “The Ugly Duckling” (Picture 1):



At this point the researcher pointed out that the big duck on the picture was a mother duck that is waiting for her last egg to break out. Then the researcher asked some questions related to the picture and discussed it with the whole class. The purpose here was to further stimulate students' interest in the topic and to introduce some of the vocabulary they may need in writing narrative text. Then, the students start writing storylines by identifying the setting, main character, conflict and resolution based on the next parts of the Ambiguous Picture Story set.

Then the researcher came to the lesson, introducing the topics, words that can be used in beginning to write a narrative text, such as:

Orientation : *Once upon a time, ...*
One day, ...
 Complication: *Next day...*
Then...
 Resolution : *Finally, ... etc*

At the next step, the researcher gave the students opportunity to share their storylines with other students in their group for critique about the narrative text that their friend wrote.

Next, the students were asked to sit in pairs back and read the story again each other and discussed the difficult words that they found. While the students were involved in the discussion with their pairs, the researcher monitored the discussion and checked whether the students had any problems in understanding the materials. Then the students were asked to write their own narrative text individually.

The last step of applying Ambiguous Picture Story is the researcher invited the students to present the result of their narrative text written by using Ambiguous Picture Story with the rest of the class. At the end of the class, the researcher gave comments and feedback.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

To know the base score of the students' writing narrative text ability, the researcher together with the collaborator conducted the test. The students' writing then observed and evaluated based on the scoring rubric with writing indicators on it: grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency, and organization.

After collecting the data and computing the students' score, the researcher found the result of pre – test showed that the average score of the students' writing narrative text was only 51, 2 and it was not achieved the minimum criteria of achievement (KKM) of English subject at SMPN 8 Pekanbaru. In other words, the level of the students writing narrative text ability was not yet satisfactory. The students still had difficulties in expressing their ideas, opinions, or explaining something in narrative text form. Next the researcher and collaborator arranged the lesson by applying Ambiguous Picture Story for cycle 1. The implementation of action in the first cycle was done in four meetings.

At the end of cycle 1, again, the researcher gave the writing test. After it was analyzed, it was found out that the result of the test in each components of writing was increased than the pre-test. It can be seen from the average score of pre- test and average score of post – test at the end of cycle 1. The average

score of pre – test was 51, 2, while average score of post – test at the end of cycle 1 was 63, 8. The difference between result of pre – test score and result of post – test at the end of cycle 1 score was 12, 6. It means that the increasing was 12, 6 points but the average score of post – test at the end of cycle 1 still under the Minimum Criteria of Achievement (KKM). Besides, the researcher analyzed the field notes, and the observation checklist, the researcher found that some students got trouble in expressing their feeling, ideas, and opinions. Their problems were still in all components of writing narrative text ability. Besides, the time allocation is also one of the factors that made the researcher and the students did not effective to do all activities.

The most mistakes made by the students were in terms of grammar and fluency. Basically, the mistakes occurred because the students translate Indonesian into English word by word. Whenever the students translated Indonesian into English word by word, of course, they would use unsuitable pattern of grammar. Next point is about the students' skill in term of fluency. Fluency in a sentence is the readability of the paper. Students' writing needs to flow smoothly from word to word, phrase to phrase, and sentence to sentence. The term "sentence fluency" refers to the way individual words and phrases sound together within a sentence. However, the mistake made by the students is in choosing good words in writing sentences. So that, the sentences made by the students did not flow smoothly from one to the next.

On the other hand, the average percentage of students' activities from all meeting was still not yet satisfactory. It was only 57%. Therefore, the researcher continued the research to the next cycle 2.

Again, at the end of cycle 2, the test was given. The result showed that the students' ability in each components of writing was increase significantly. It can be seen from the average score of post - test given at the end of cycle 1 and the average score of post - test given at the end of cycle 2. The average score at the end post - test cycle 1 was 63, 8, while the result of post - test at the end of cycle 2 was 71, 0. The results of post – test at the end of cycle 2 was higher than 70 as the minimum mastery criteria or KKM at SMP N 8

Pekanbaru. The students also can comprehend all components of writing better.

In short, the finding indicated that teaching writing by applying Ambiguous Picture Story at the second year students of SMP N 8 Pekanbaru improved the students' writing narrative text ability. The improvement for the two cycles can be seen at the following table:

Table 1:
The Average Scores of the Students' Writing Narrative Text Ability

Writing Indicators	Students' Base Score	At the End of Cycle 1	At the End of Cycle 2
Grammar	50	60	67
Vocabulary	55	71	77
Mechanics	51	64	71
Fluency	50	63	69
Organization	50	61	71
Average	51.2	63.8	71.0

The table above showed that the students' average score in each aspect of writing in Pre Test, Post Test at the end of cycle 1 and Post Test of cycle 2. It can be concluded that the students' writing narrative text ability was improved significantly. In detail, the average score of Pre Test was 51, 2 and increased as 63, 8 in Post Test at the end of cycle 1. After that the average score was increase again as 71, 0 in Post Test at the end of cycle 2, and the average score showed that the student's ability in writing narrative text is higher than Minimum Criteria of Achievement or KKM.

On the other hand, based on the observation in teaching and learning process in the cycle 1 and cycle 2, the researcher found the improvement that was reached by the students. The researcher found that the activeness of students increased after applying Ambiguous Picture Story technique. In the cycle 1, there were only 21 students or 57% who active in teaching and learning process by using Ambiguous Picture Story. Next, in the cycle 2, there

was increase to 32 students or 88% activeness of the students in teaching and learning process by using Ambiguous Picture Story technique. In the other words, after doing teaching and learning process, the achievement of the students increased in students' activities from pre – test to post- test at the end of cycle 1 and post test at the end of cycle 2.

After doing the reflection, the researcher and the collaborator agreed that action research in applying Ambiguous Picture Story can improve the level of students' writing narrative text ability. They also agreed that the research was successful enough. Therefore, they decided to end the research.

CONCLUSIONS

After conducting the classroom action research in teaching writing by applying Ambiguous Picture Story for two cycles, it can be concluded that: (1) Ambiguous Picture Story can improve the students' writing narrative text ability at the second year students of SMP N 8 Pekanbaru. The improvements of the students' writing skills are in terms of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency, and organization. The improvement of the students can be seen on the given tests at the end of every cycle of students. In the data, the achievement of students' ability in writing narrative text before given treatment is lower than the Minimum Criteria of Achievement (KKM) in SMPN 8 Pekanbaru that is 70. It shown by students' average score in Pre Test is 51, 2; (2) The Ambiguous Picture Story technique boosted the students' motivation in writing and applying Ambiguous Picture Story. From the six-time meetings, all students were motivated to using Ambiguous Picture Story in writing narrative text. All aspects in writing could be improved well by implementing this technique.

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