Applying Ambiguous Picture Story as a Media to Improve Students' Achievement in Writing Ability

Suci Hawa[1]

[1]English Department, University of Lampung, Indonesia

Abstract: *The research aimed to find out the achievement of students descriptive text writing ability by using ambiguous picture story as a media. The researcher use true experimental design, where she took two classes randomly as a control class and experimental class. The sample of this research was the students in Senior High School 3 Bandar Lampung. The instrument of the research was test. The result of T-test is 4.4572. The result of level of significant 0.05 was 2.00. It means that, it is accepted because 4.4572 > 2.00. Then it can be assumed that there is significant achievement of using this media to improve students' descriptive text writing ability. By using ambiguous picture story as media in writing, it can help the students to create stories with their own idea based upon the observations from the picture.*
Keywords: Ambiguous Picture Story, Media, Writing.

I. Introduction

Our society believes schools should graduate students who are able to communicate effectively in written form; however, the major problem is that many students do not have knowledge of the writing process and mastery of the basic skills necessary to produce fluent writing (Budig, 2006; Quible & Griffin, 2007; Schoeff, 2007). Many students lack proficiency in usage and mechanics and in sentence formation; they cannot employ language that engages the reader. Heaton (1975) stated that writing skill is more complex and difficult to teach, require, and master. It is not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judgment, because 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.

Teaching writing is one of the most interesting and the same time one of the most difficult instructional activities teacher face (Mary C, 2009). Writing is more than composing a draft and fixing it up. Writing is the written productive language skill that is the skill of writer to communicate the information to the reader or group of readers. Her/his skill is also realized by her/his ability to apply the rules of the language. Writing has become a valuable tool in the high school classroom for engaging students in thinking, understanding, creating, communicating, and learning. Writing is an activity to tell the ideas to the readers on writing form, and usually it is used in the processing of communication which uses the graphic symbol (Byrne, 1955). Moreover, writing becomes the most important to learn in the context of education. Writing is one of the language skills in communication and thinking. Then, we can state that there are combinations of teaching and unique activity in writing. In other words, teaching writing is different from teaching other language skills.

Writing is seen as the most difficult of the four skills in English. This phenomenon happens to many students of Indonesia. Most of Senior High School students in Indonesia consider that writing is the most difficult skill to master because the ability to write in foreign language is more complicated that the ability to speak, read, and listen. It is hard to teach the students how to write because it involves many components such as content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics. Beside of that, to have a good writing, the students should use the steps of writing process. They are planning, drafting, editing and final version. In planning, writers have to think about three main issues. The first, place, they have to consider the purpose of their writing, the audience they are writing for, and the content structure of the piece. Then, in drafting the writer refers to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. As the writing process proceeds into editing, a number of draft may be produced on the way the final version. In the third section is editing, once the writer has produced a draft they then, usually, read through what they have written to see where it works and where it doesn't. The last is final version, where once the students have edited their draft, making the changes they consider to be necessary, they produce their final version (Harmer, 2007).

In fact, the students do not only understand about the component and process of writing, but also the certain instruction of the text. For example, the generic structure of the text, purpose and the language feature of the text. Sealing the weak of teaching writing, it should be helped by using media. In general, media is the name given all the activities used as a tool for learning, creativeness, experiencing, communication and getting ready

for adulthood and a way to express feelings, getting rid of bothers, and source of happiness which are done freely and which provide pleasure, develop and entertain children and support every area development in children (Poyraz, 1999). Media education is concerned with the teaching and learning about the media. This should not be confused with teaching through the media-for example, the use of television or computers as a means of teaching science or history. Matter, et., al (2009) stated that media can be a component of active learning strategies such as group discussions or case studies.

Media could be a a film clip, a picture, a song you hear on the radio, podcast of a lecture or newspaper article. Students can also create their own media. Many kinds of media can be taught to the students for example one of new media to help students' writing is Ambiguous Picture Story. Ambiguous Picture is the picture that has more than one meaning to be understood (Mast, 2002). Ambiguous is openness to different interpretations; or an instance in which use of language may be understood in diverse way. Using ambiguous picture will stimulate the participants to make the new instructions and perception about that figure (Mast, 2002). In the previous research, Nadya and friend (2016) stated Ambiguous Picture Story can 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. Ambiguous picture as a media is useful to encourage students' imagination and motivation.

One of objectives in Senior High School syllabus for the tenth graders is that the students are able to describe something object. Thus this teaching will be dealing with the daily activities of people that are commonly seen by students so it can ease their work later. It shows on the figure 1 the procedure of teaching ambiguous:

Figure 1: The example of ambiguous picture

1. Begin by asking the learners to say what they can see in the picture.
   Learner 1: *i think there is a flat field and there is a square house on it.*
   Learner 2: *no! It's a box in a room.*
   Learner 3: *it isn't! It's a square hole in a wall.*
2. Take one of the interpretations and use questions to establish a story.
   Teacher: if it's a box in a room, then tell me about the room. Is it a big room or a small room?
   Learner 1: *it's a little room.*
   Learner 2: *it's in the cellar of the house and there is no window.*
   Learner 3: *it's dark.*
   Through questions, help the learners to establish the beginning of the story.
3. Then, ask each learners to write the beginning of the story made by the class, but to finish the story in her or his own way.
4. Invite the learners to mill about and read their finished stories to several other learners. Their reading might make them want to modify what they have written.
5. Finally, collect all of the stories and publish them as a book, putting the Ambiguous Picture on the cover. Give the book a title, for example, the *Mysterious Box. A Collection of stories by..*

Ambiguous Picture Story media can be used to teach descriptive paragraph, because descriptive paragraph has a function to describe and explain the object to the reader. To create ambiguous picture, it is speculating as to the subject of an ambiguous picture using expressions of uncertainty. By using ambiguous picture story, the learners will observe different pictures and describe what they see verbally and in writing (Ardian, 2015). It means that the students can create stories based upon the observations from ambiguous picture. It is supported by Andrew (1996), using ambiguous picture to sponsor, stimulate, and possibly to guide, spoken and written description, narrations, or dialogs.

Considering the explanation above, the researcher tried to find out the purposes of the research. It can be formulated to the research questions as follows:
1. How is the achievement of students' descriptive text writing ability by using ambiguous picture story media?
2. What are the highest and lowest components that are used by students in writing descriptive text by using ambiguous picture story media?

II. Research Methodology

2.1 Methodology

This research was a quantitative research. It was conducted as experimental research. In conducting the research, the researcher used true-experimental research which has 3 main characteristics: 1) there is a control group; 2) both experimental; 3) pre-test is given to know the students' ability before treatment (Setiyadi, 2006). The population of the research was all the students at the second semester of the tenth grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung in 2017 Academic Year. There were six classes; X MIA 1 consisted of 36 students, X MIA 2 consisted of 36 students, X MIA 3 consisted of 36 students, X MIA 4 consisted of 37 students, X MIA 5 consisted of 36 students, X MIA 6 consisted of 35 students.

The population at the tenth grade was 216 students. The researcher took two classes as the sample; the researcher used the following steps: (1) Making the list of the classes and giving the code number. (2) Writing the code number of the classes in small piece of paper and then rolling those pieces of paper. (3) Putting the rolled papers into a box and shuffling them, and then the researcher took two papers randomly to be decided as sample of the research. The first paper was experimental class and the second paper was as control class. After doing those steps, the study was administered to 72 students of the second semester of the tenth grade of Senior High School 3 Bandar Lampung which 36 students in X MIA 2 as a control class and 36 students in X MIA 5 as experimental class.

2.2 Data Collection

In data collecting technique and instrument, the researcher used test. The test was used to know student's descriptive text writing ability. The tests are pre-test and post test. In the pre-test, it was done to find out the students' writing ability before the treatments. The test was done by asking the students to write descriptive text based on the pictures that were provided. In the post-test, it was done to find out the achievement of students' descriptive text writing ability, after they were taught by using Ambiguous Picture Story.

In collecting the data, the researcher used test in both classes and norm of scoring was based on Tribble (1996) 1) content (20%); 2) organization (20%); 3) vocabulary (20%); 4) language use (30%); 5) mechanics (10%). In content, the student should be good in treatment variety of ideas or argument. In organization, the student should express the idea clearly, logically, and appropriately. In vocabulary, the students should be accurate in word/idiom choice. In language use, the students should be confident handling appropriate structures, tense, number, word order, article, pronoun, and preposition. The last is mechanics, the students should demonstrate full command of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and layout.

2.3 Data Analysis

To get the data of students' achievement in descriptive text writing ability, the researcher used test that consisted of pre test and post test. The topic that was provided based on the syllabus that was taught at tenth grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. Besides that, to measure validity of writing test, the researcher used content and construct validity. Then, inter rater was used in order to measure the reliability of writing test. In constructing the research, the research procedure used these following steps: 1) Planning 2) Application 3) Reporting and 4) Scoring. In planning, the researcher made some planning to run the applicant well as follow determining of subject, preparing pre-test, determining the material, and preparing the post-test. In the application, researcher gave pre-test in the first meeting. Then, after giving the pre-test, the researcher conducted the treatment by using ambiguous picture in the experimental class and using textbook in the control class and for last meeting, the researcher gave the post-test. In the reporting step, the researcher analyzed the data was received from pre-test and post-test and made a report of the findings. The last step was scoring, in this step the researcher not only used inter-rater, but also used test in both classes and norm of scoring based on Terrible's theory.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 How is the achievement of students' descriptive text writing ability by using ambiguous picture story media?

From the written test in pre-test and post-test, there is a significant achievement of student's descriptive text writing ability. It can be seen from the table:

**Table 1:** Students' Result of Descriptive Text Writing Ability

Class	Pre-test		Mean	Post-test		Mean
	Highest score	Lowest score		Highest score	Lowest score	
Control	81.5	61.5	70.65	82.05	65	73.05
Experimental	79	65	71.30	81	67.5	76.48

It can be seen from the result of the mean score in pre-test and post-test between control class and experimental class. It means that there is a significant achievement of applying the ambiguous picture story as a media in improving students' descriptive text writing ability.

The result of T-test is 4.4572 while the df (number of sample from both control and experimental classes subtracted by 2) was 70. The result of level of significant 0.05 was 2.00. From this it can be seen that the result of T-test was significant range of 0.05 if $T_{observed} > T_{critical}$ H_a is accepted because $4.4572 > 2.00$. Then it can be assumed that there is good achievement of using Ambiguous Picture Story as a media to improve students' descriptive text writing ability at the tenth grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung.

3.2 What are the highest and lowest components that are used by students in writing descriptive text by using ambiguous picture story media in the post-test?

Post-test in control class
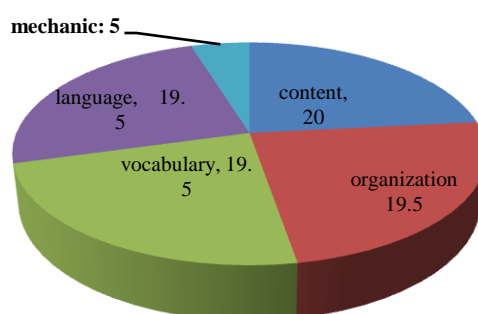
Post-test in experimental class
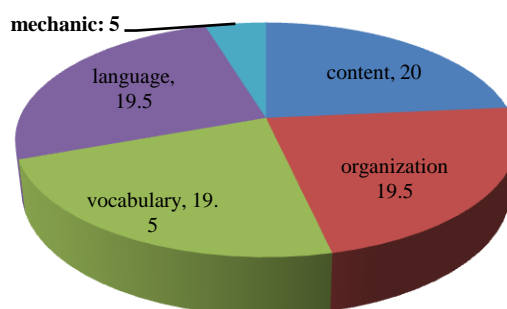
From the diagram above, we could know that the highest component in the post-test of the control class and experimental class is content aspect. Then, the lowest component is mechanic. Based on the result above, the data analysis indicates that there is good achievement of student's descriptive text writing ability by using ambiguous picture story as a media. It can be proved from the increasing score, from pre test to post test. The increasing score of the students can be seen from the use of some components in writing, especially the use of content. It can be followed by the statements of Nadya and friend (2016) that the improvements of the students' writing skills by using ambiguous picture story are in terms of content, vocabulary, mechanics, language, and organization.

The content component is being the highest score of making the text. It happens because the ambiguous picture forces the students to make the text based on their own idea, argument and word. It is supported by Andrew (1996), using ambiguous picture to sponsor, stimulate, and possibly to guide, spoken and written description, narrations, or dialogs. It means that the students can create stories based upon the observations from ambiguous picture and they can apply it into a descriptive text. Content becomes the highest dominant because when the teacher gives the ambiguous picture to the student, they are too focus to make a story based on what they see and based on the ideas, the knowledge about that pictures. That is why, the scoring of vocabulary, mechanics, language, and organization is not more higher that content. In this research, mechanic becomes the lowest component. It happens when the students are lack of the use spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and layout. The students too focus to give their opinion, arrange the content and language to make a descriptive text by using ambiguous picture. Then, it makes the students are lack of using mechanic. In this case, we know that a

media is really needed to be a tool in teaching. It can help the students to motivate them to understand what the teacher explains in teaching learning.

IV. Conclusion

To conclude what has been analyzing previously, it can be conclude that media is a tool to tell the information to other people. Sometimes, the media is used to make the people easy to understand something. In this research, the researcher uses Ambiguous Picture Story Media, because this media has a different function from the real/common picture. The diffrence between Ambiguous Picture Story Media and the real picture; for example the teacher shows to the students the real picture of an animal; *Rabbit*. The respon of the student, they say "that is a rabbit" directly, because they have seen that picture commonly. It is different from using Ambiguous Picture Story Media, because when the teacher shows to them that media, the student can not say the picture directly.

The student must think twice before they say something about that picture, because by using Ambiguous Picture Story Media, the students have to speculate first then they can guess that picture. It can practice them to think first before they talk something to the object. Based on the statement, the researcher uses Ambiguous Picture Story Media to improve students' achievement in writing ability. It can be said that ambiguous picture story can be a media that helps the students to create the story based on their own mind, argument, and ideas. In addition, it is suggested to further research in teaching learning to use this media in teaching others kind of text.

References

[1]. Budig, G. A. 2006. *Writing: A necessary tool*. Phi Delta: Kappan.
[2]. Byrne, Donn. 1955. *Teaching Writing Skill*. New York: Longman.
[3]. Felly, Nadya, et., al. 2016. The Application Of Ambiguous Picture Story To Improve Students' Writing Narrative Text Ability For Secondary Students Of Smp N 8 Pekanbaru. *Journal English Teaching*: Vol 1, Faculty of Teacher's Training and Education Riau University.
[4]. Heaton, J. B. 1975. *Writing English Language Test Practicing Guide for Teaching English as a Second Language*. London: Group Limited.
[5]. Mary C, Karen Kuelthau Allan. Spadorcia. 2009. *Learning to Write with Purpose*. New York, London: The Guildford Press.
[6]. Mateer, G., Dick., et., al. 2009. *Using Media to Enhance Teaching and Learning*. Access https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/media/index.html, on December 11th, 2017. At 9.20.
[7]. Mast, Fred W., and Stephen M. Kosslyn. 2002. *Visual mental images can be ambiguous: insights from individual differences in spatial transformation abilities*. United States of America: Harvard University.
[8]. Poyraz, H. (1999). *Media and Game in the Preschool Period*. British: Cambridge University.
[9]. Quible, Z. K., & Griffin, F. 2007. Are writing deficiencies creating a lost generation of business writers? *Journal of Education for Business*, 82(6), doi: 10.3200JOEB.83.1.
[10]. Setiyadi, Bambang Ag. 2006. *Metode Penelitian untuk Pengajaran Bahasa Asing*. Graha Ilmu: Yogyakarta.
[11]. Tribble, Christopher. 1996. *Writing*. Oxford University Press: New York.
[12]. Wiratma, Ardian. 2009. *Every Picture Tells A Story*. Bandung: NASA/MSU-Bozeman, Ceres Project. Available at http://btc.montana. edu/ceres/html/PictureK-4/pic-4.htm, access on September 21st, 2017, at 12.59.
[13]. Wright, Andrew. et. al. 2006. *Games for Language Learning* United States of America: Cambridge University Press.
[14]. Wright, Andrew. 1996. *1000+ Pictures for Teachers to Copy*. London: Longman.
[15]. Mateer, G., Dick., et., al. 2009. *Using Media to Enhance Teaching and Learning*. Access https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/media/index.html, on December 11th, 2017. At 9.20.