

USING COMICS IN IMPROVING THE ABILITY OF GRADE X STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 4 PALU IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengetahui apakah penggunaan komik dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas X SMA Negeri 4 Palu dalam menulis teks naratif. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah quasi-eksperimental. Sehingga, terdapat dua kelas yang diberikan tes awal dan tes akhir. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas X Ilmu Ilmu Sosial (IIS) SMA Negeri 4 Palu yang berjumlah 170 siswa dan sampelnya adalah kelas X IIS 1 yang berjumlah 31 siswa sebagai kelas eksperimen dan kelas X IIS 2 yang berjumlah 33 sebagai kelas kontrol. Sampel diambil dengan menggunakan tehnik purposive sampling. Instrumen pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah test. Data dianalisa menggunakan metode statistik uji-t untuk mengetahui perbedaan signifikan dari pencapaian siswa di kelas eksperimen dan kontrol. Berdasarkan hasil test, nilai rata-rata siswa pada kelas eksperimen adalah 73.11, sedangkan nilai rata-rata siswa pada kelas kontrol adalah 63.22. Hasil perbandingan nilai rata-rata melalui uji-t dengan mengaplikasikan perbandingan level 0.05 dan derajat kebebasan 62 (64-2) ditemukan bahwa nilai t-hitung (3.48) lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai t-tabel (1.999). Hasil dari uji-t menunjukkan bahwa hipotesa alternatif (H_a) diterima dan hipotesa nol (H_0) ditolak. Dengan kata lain, penggunaan komik dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas X di SMA Negeri 4 Palu dalam menulis teks naratif

Kata Kunci: Meningkatkan, Kemampuan Menulis, Teks Naratif, dan Komik.

Writing is an activity that people do to share ideas or information they have. Since it makes people possible to create imagine worlds of their own design, it is concerned as a functional communication. In the other words, trough writing, people can express thought, feeling, ideas, experiences, etc to convey a specific purpose.

In the context of education, writing is one of the language skills that have to be mastered by students. It is taught integratedly with three other skills – listening, speaking, and reading. The objective of teaching writing is clearly stated in Curriculum 2013. It is stated that students need to express the meanings of written short functional text and simple essay related to daily life and to access knowledge. The texts are taken from announcement, recount, descriptive and narrative texts. One of main indicators based

on this curriculum is the grade X students at the second semester in the senior high school should be able to analyze the social function, text structure, and language future in the form of simple narrative text. Therefore, the students need to improve their writing ability in order to achieve the goal.

The students are taught English since they are in the junior high school even most of them are taught English since they are in the elementary school. However, the students find it difficult to compose a good writing. By interviewing the English teacher at SMA Negeri 4 Palu in the preliminary observation, the researcher found that there were some problems faced by the students at the school. Firstly, the students' writing achievement was poor. It could be seen from the students' scores before conducting this research. Secondly, they had some difficulties in doing

the writing such as; using grammatical sentences, writing with correct generic structure order, and being lack in the vocabulary. Another problem was that the teacher rarely applied media in teaching the learning activity. The teacher always taught the students by using a presentation and taught through the students' work sheets. The students were more interested in writing if the teacher applied attractive media and they affect their English mastery especially in the writing ability.

The media used by the teacher also gave a great effect in improving students' writing skill. Various media had to be applied to encourage students' interest because one of the greatest enemies in learning was student's boredom. To avoid the boredom, teacher should use media such as using writing games; writing based on pictures, pictures series, or comics; or writing based on songs. Teaching writing through comics was considered as the attractive teaching media. It was a suitable medium which was supported to be tools that could make the students get the joyful learning in writing.

Comic is the story that contained all the elements of narrative text: characters, plot, dialogues, conflict, and climax. Through reading comics, the students were expected to recognize the characters and something happened in the story of the comics. They needed to understand the situation that was faced by the characters and how they solve it, and then they tried to re-write the story of the comics by using their own words. Comics could help the students to develop their creativities in writing, helped the students to arrange a story, and develop their ideas in writing. Also, comics were usually funny, therefore, applying them to methodological purpose had the same effect as using games in teaching English – it brought a cheerful atmosphere into the class.

In line with the explanation before, the researcher conducted a research on comics to improve students' abilities in writing a

narrative text. The research was conducted to Grade X students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu. As mentioned earlier, based on the researcher's preliminary research, there were three main problems found in this school; (1) the students were lack of writing by using grammatical sentences; (2) they were lack of writing organically; (3) they were lack of vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher would like to solve these problems and improve the abilities of Grade X students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu in writing a narrative text through by using.

Based on the background stated above, the researcher formulates a research question as follows: *Can the grade X students' abilities of SMA Negeri 4 Palu be improved in writing a narrative text through comics?*

The objective of this research is to prove that the use of comics improves the grade X students' abilities of SMA Negeri 4 Palu in writing a narrative text through comics

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the most important language skills that must be learnt and mastered. It is a process of thinking how to use effective words to convey ideas and feeling to others in the written form so that people understand the idea easily. However, so many experts have different perspectives about the definitions of writing itself.

In Raimes (1983: 76) states an opinion "Writing is the skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts in words, sentences and texts. Besides, Lawrence (1972:13) stated, "Writing is a communication process. Since writing is the form of communication and that the process of writing as one active thinking process." Meanwhile, Murcia (2001:207) states, "Via writing a person can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers."

Those definitions above show us the important information about writing. Firstly, writing can be a medium for human being to express the idea. Writing can be done by all people who need to show their opinions. Secondly, in writing we transfer our message to another people. It is a good medium to give information to our readers. Thirdly, in writing we make a communication process. That is why writing becomes a medium to make a connection between the author and the readers.

The Process of Writing

In doing writing, we make it just like building a house. It means that writing needs mature organization. Hogue (1995:34) defines that writing needs plan. We would never start building a house without a plan. Similarly, we should never start to write a paragraph without one sentence. Thus, in producing good composition of text in writing, it goes through many stages of process before it is finished.

According to Harmer (2004:5), the stages of writing process are divided into four steps; they are planning, drafting, editing, and final draft. First, we need to explore our ideas and make a plan about what we are going to write. Second, we make a draft of writing pieces that it is not yet finished. Third, we read and reflect what we wrote, then correct and improve the text. The last is we produce a finished version of our writing.

Narrative Text

Narrative text is like a storytelling. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007:35), “narrative is the kind of writing that you do when you tell a story.” The purpose of a narrative is to entertain or amuse the reader or listener. However, as Anderson (2003:6) states “Narrative text is to present a view of the world that entertains or informs the reader or listeners, not only it does an entertainment, but also makes the readers or

listeners think as well about an issue, gives them a lesson, or even excites their emotions. In addition, Pharr and Buscemi (2005:174) state that the success of a personal narrative essay based on the search for significance. The narrative essay tells a story, to be sure, but the true value of the narrative text comes from what the writer and reader learn from it. It means that, the narrative text gives the readers or listeners a moral value in every story. It differentiates with other kinds of passages.

Narrative text contains an action, dialogues, an elaborate detail, and/or humor. The example of narrative text can be found in every novel. However, narrative writing is also found in poems, short stories, essays and plays. It informs and entertains readers with a story or factual experiences. A story has characters, a setting, time, problem, attempts at solving the problem, and the solution to the problem. Those are can be named as elements of narrative text.

In constructing narrative text, there are generic structures that should be considered. The elements of it are also provided to guide the readers in reading the text. The generic structures of narrative which is stated by Anderson and Anderson (1997:8) are as follows:

1. Orientation

This is a part in which the narrator tells the audience about who is in the story, when the story is taking place and where the action is happening. It can also be called as introductory part of a story. Therefore, the reader can figure out what will happen next and who are involved in it.

2. Complication

This is the part of the story where the narrator tells about something that will begin a chain of events. These events will affect one or more of the characters. The complication is the trigger. From this part, the story begins. This is the part where the characters totally play their role. This part

also tells about the events with the conflict or problem in the story.

3. Resolution

This is the part that can be found in the end of the story. This is the part of the narrative where the complication is sorted out or the problem is solved. In some narratives, the narrator includes the part which is called by 'coda' if there is a moral or message to be learned from the story. That is only the optional part of a story.

As it has been mentioned before, it can be concluded that in writing narrative text a writer has to pay attention to the generic structures. It is very important because a good narrative text has to consist of several parts.

There are many types of narrative text. They can be fiction or nonfiction narrative. Narrative fiction presents imaginary narrator's account of story that happens in the imaginary world. Meanwhile, narrative nonfiction (also call factual narrative) presents a real-life story. The narrative story may include fairy stories, science fiction, romances, humor, horror stories, folktales, historical stories, and mystery stories.

Comics

A comic combines an art and writing. It is a printed paper consisting of images and incorporating text such as narrative images. Usually, the comic contains, almost, all the elements of narrative text: characters, plot, dialogues, conflict, and climax. Elements such as the size and placement of panels control the pacing of the narrative text. Comics, as sequential art, emphasize the pictorial representation of a narrative text that describes a sequence of fictional or non-fictional events.

There are several things that make comics are different from an ordinary picture. First of all, there are plots of story that join the continuity of each picture, and then dialogues in the shape of balloon that pops

above the head of characters. Comics, the combination of cartoon with a story line, laid out in a series of pictorial panels across a page and concerning with a continuous character or set of characters, whose thoughts and dialogues are indicated by means of "balloons" containing written speech. The comic form can be employed to convey a variety of messages. Comic provide a good way of communication because it consist of story that has beginning, middle, and end.

Comic is one of visual aids that can be used as a medium in language learning and language teaching. In addition, comic is often regarded as interesting and motivating medium. For a young learner of English, a comic can be very effective to be taught because it can attract the student's interest. Sabay (2006) states that comics are usually funny; therefore, applying them to methodological purposes have the same effect as using a game in teaching English - it brings a cheerful atmosphere into the class. Also, comic is easier to read and are more understandable than an article in the newspapers or books. It will help the students who are lack of the ability to capture the message on the text.

Morrison, et al. (2002) define that there are some reasons why comics have more strength rather than other teaching materials as follows:

1. It is an evident that the comic is familiar to and popular with the middle and high school students.
2. The comic is a form of literature that students enjoy.
3. Students engage in the greater literacy exploration than they otherwise would, due to comics' popular and easily accessible format.
4. Through comics students investigate the use of a dialogue, succinct and dramatic vocabulary, and nonverbal communications.
5. Such methodology helps enliven a classroom that can prevent the historical

content from being boring and meaningless, as it is often in the typical classrooms.

Those reasons indicate that comic has an important role in education, especially in teaching and learning activities. By using attractive media like comics, it can absolutely encourage students' desire to learn the English subject with pleasure in the school.

The Use of Comics in Teaching Writing Narrative Text

By adapting the process of writing which is stated by Harmer (2004) that the writing processes are divided into planning, drafting, editing, and final draft, the uses of comics in improving the ability of the students in writing a narrative text contains some steps, such as: pre-writing, drafting, and post writing. Before doing the steps in every meeting, the students are given some tasks with materials related to the characteristics of the narrative text such as identify the generic structure, answer some questions based on a text, make sentences in the form of past tense, etc. The students then are divided into some groups and they are given comics to each group. The comic is a simple one. After that, they do the first step such as pre-writing. In this step, teacher gives a brainstorming or helps to prompt students' prior knowledge. The teacher guides the students to discuss their own group to explore the story of the comic together and explain the unfamiliar vocabulary. The next step is drafting. The students have tasks while they are reading the comic. The teacher provides some questions in a chart to get the key information. The students fill in the chart and make a note about some main information encountered in the comic:

Where and when? _____
Who are in the story? _____

What was the problem? _____
How did she/he try to solve the problem? _____
How did the story end? _____

adapted from BSE Bahasa Inggris (2008)

The last step is post writing. The students are being guided by the teacher to re-write the story of the comic into a simple narrative text individually. It is based on the story of the comics which has been stated in their drafts and then check their writing based on checklists given.

No	What to check	Yes	No
1	Have you mentioned the time?		
2	Have you mentioned the place?		
3	Have you mentioned the characters?		
4	Have you mentioned what happened to the characters?		
5	Have you mentioned how the characters solve the problems?		
6	Have you mentioned the ending of the story?		
7	Have you used verbs in past tense?		
8	Have you checked your spelling and punctuation?		

adapted from BSE Bahasa Inggris (2008)

By training them continuously via this way, it is expected to the students are able to minimize their mistakes and comprehend how to construct a good writing.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was a quasi-experimental research. The samples consisted of two classes: the experimental and the

control class. Both classes were given the pretest and the posttest, but only the experimental class was given the treatment by using comics. The control group was taught by using conventional teaching technique. The population of this research was the grade X social major students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu which consist of five parallel classes. The total numbers of population were 170 students. The samples of this research were selected by using the purposive sampling technique because there was no random assignment of subjects. There were two kinds of variable in this research, the independent variable of this research was the use of comics, and the dependent variables were students' writing abilities.

In this research, the researcher tested the students to collect the data. The test was in the forms of the pretest and the posttest. The treatment was conducted after giving the pretest and it was administered to the experimental class. It was done in six meetings. The data of this research were analyzed statistically. To explain the results of the test, the researcher used *t-counted* formula as proposed by Gay (1996:486) as follows:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{SS_1 + SS_2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)}}$$

To measure whether the hypothesis of this research was rejected or accepted, the researcher tested the hypothesis. There were two kinds of hypothesis in this research, the alternative hypothesis and the null hypothesis. The criteria of the testing hypothesis were as follows:

1. If the value of *t-counted* is greater than the value of *t-table*, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. It means that the use of comics significantly improves the ability of Grade X students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu in writing a narrative text.
2. If the value of *t-counted* is smaller than the value of *t-table*, the alternative

hypothesis (H_a) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. It means that that the use of comics does not significantly improve the ability of Grade X students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu in writing a narrative text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the results of the test data, the problem statement was answered. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The results of tests show that the value of *t-counted* (3.48) is greater than the value of *t-table* (1.999) and the students' mean scores of the experimental class is improved significantly from 58.27 to 73.11 after getting the treatment. It increases around 14.84. This means that the use of comics helps students to improve their abilities in writing a narrative text.

The students' writing achievements are improved because the students are trained to use comics as media during the pre-writing, drafting, and post-writing activities. As the use of comics, the students employed more after they learned through the procedure in teaching learning activities. Comics helped them overcome difficulties when writing. It can be seen that in the teaching learning process via comics, students enable to learn new vocabularies through the dialogues in the comics which are give understanding about the meanings of vocabularies just by looking at the pictorial story. Moreover, students are able to identify the elements of story such as a plot and characters through the dialogues and a visual on the comics. The story in comics consists of the elements of narrative text. Thus, by knowing the elements of story and vocabularies, students write their own story more easily. During the treatment, the researcher finds that the students are actively give attention to the teacher's explanations. The students are really enjoying the teaching learning process

because of the new media that are introduced to them, that is comics. In the class, they do not just attend the class and do nothing, but they are active in doing the teaching and learning activities.

It is different with the experimental class; the students in control class are not really active. They are passive during the teaching and learning process. When the teacher explain the materials, some of the students just sit and listening to the teacher and even talking to their friends without give a feedback. These are the reasons why the scores in control class are low. In the control class, the mean score is not significantly improved. The mean score in pretest is 57.16 while in the posttest, the mean score is 63.22. It increases only around 6.06.

The explanations above indicates that there is significant difference between the students' score in writing narrative text by using comics and the students' score in writing narrative text without using comics. In other words, the use of comics in improving students' ability in writing narrative text is effective because there is a progress in students' score.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

After analyzing the data in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that the use of comics significantly improves the abilities of the Grade X students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu in writing a narrative text. It is proven by the results of *t-counted* value (3.48) which is greater than *t-table* value (1.999). So, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. In addition, the students' mean scores of the experimental class is improved from 68.9 to 80.5 after getting the treatment.

Suggestions

In accordance with the results obtained, the researcher would like to share several

suggestions. First, the teachers and students should use comics as media in teaching and learning about other kinds of writing text such as descriptive and recount texts and about other language skills such as reading. Second, for other researchers who want to conduct research by using comics, they may use other technique of data collection, such as observation, questionnaire, and interview in order to get more data and to support the findings in their research.

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