

THE USE OF DIARY IN TEACHING OF WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS AT SMPN 03 BANJARBARU, SOUTH KALIMANTAN PROVINCE

Supiani

supi_rus@yahoo.com

Islamic University of Kalimantan MAA Banjarmasin

Abstract

The objectives of this research is to describe the process of teaching writing recount texts by using diary, to find out the teacher's problems and students' responses toward using diary. The research employs a descriptive qualitative research, in which the instruments come from observation, interview and documentation. The subject of this research is an English teacher and 30 students of the eight grade of SMPN 03 Banjarbaru in the academic year 2015/2016. Findings show the use of diary in teaching writing recount text could help and develop students' writing. The teacher explained and instructed in procedural teaching practice to diary usage. However, the problems were limited time at the activities and lack of the teacher's knowledge. Generally, the use of diary gave a creativity both the teacher and students and made students motivated in learning writing. Thus, diary is one of effective ways to express the students' ideas in writing because they can tell prior activities or experiences happened.

Keywords : Teaching writing, the use of diary, Recount Texts

Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan proses pengajaran writing recount texts dengan menggunakan diari, untuk menemukan permasalahan guru yang dihadapi pada pengajarannya dan untuk menemukan respon siswa terhadap penggunaan diari. Penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif dimana instrumennya berasal dari observasi, interview dan dokumentasi. Subjeknya adalah seorang guru bahasa Inggris dan 30 siswakesel VIII SMPN 03 Banjarbaru di tahun ajaran 2015/2016. Penemuan menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan diari dalam mengajar writing recount texts bias membantu dan mengembangkan tulisan siswa. Guru lebih mampu menjelaskan dan menginstruksikan praktik pengajarannya secara prosedur. Namun, masalahnya adalah keterbatasan waktu dan kurangnya pengetahuan guru terhadap writing. Secara umum, penggunaan diari memberikan kreatifitas bagi guru dan siswa dan membuat siswa termotivasi dalam belajar writing. Jadi, diari adalah salah satu cara yang efektif untuk mengekspresikan ide siswa dalam menulis karena mereka bias menceritakan aktifitas sebelumnya atau pengalaman yang telah terjadi.

Kata kunci: Pengajaran menulis, penggunaan diari, recount texts.

Introduction

As we know that writing is placed at the end after listening skill, speaking and reading skills. Writing skill is defined as a person's ability to express ideas or thoughts in the form of written language. It can be seen from the fact that scientific books, memos, novels, reports, letters, newspaper, magazines, brochures, diary, commercial advertisements are products of writing. The role of writing has given big impact to the humans because they need to communicate to each other in oral or written. It is estimated that 75% of all international communication is in writing, 80% of all international information is the world's computers, and 90% of internet contents are in English (Schutz, 2005: 1). Moreover, it can be used in a variety of purposes or different genres and different social background.

At schools, writing is viewed as a skill-based subject that must be taken by students of Junior High School especially. Students are expected to be able to compose well-organized pieces of writing in English as their foreign language. It is a challenge for the teacher to teach writing well. The teaching of writing is aimed at enabling students to master the functional texts and monologue texts or paragraphs in the form of descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report (Depdiknas, 2006). The work of writing is presented in the form of text types, usually known as genres, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. For especially the eighth grade, it is limited on descriptive, recount, and narrative.

Based on the preliminary research of the eighth grade students of SMPN 03 Banjarbaru in the academic year 2015/2016 shows that the students got difficulty in writing texts. The researcher found the results of the writing test were unsatisfactory. It was due to the teacher who taught writing skills not varied and monotonous for the students. They were not interested and motivated in learning writing skill. Therefore, the teacher should have an effective strategy to solve students' difficulties. Varied techniques or strategies in teaching writing actually give a chance more for the students to explore their ideas without feeling difficult. Moreover, teaching writing also needs a process gradually because writing itself is complex skill. It means that the teacher should teach how to organize the ideas, come up the ideas and put down in sentences, lexical and grammatical items and

mechanics (punctuation and spelling). Those must be taught by the teacher so that students are able to write the texts well. The fact the teacher is not able teach writing well and the use of writing techniques in teaching is boring and monotonous.

In the teaching and learning process, Ur (1996: 162) states that writing can be used as a means, as an end, and as means to an end. As a means, writing is widely used in foreign language courses as a tool for involving aspects of language other than writing itself. The objective of writing itself is used as a means of getting students to attend and to practice a specific language point or more frequently as a method of testing it.

Based on the statement above, the researcher took a diary as the way to teach writing skill to the students. The researcher believes that through diary, the students can express their ideas to be better. In diary, the students can express their interest, feeling, and wish. It means that the students' record what happened, what someone thought about it, how someone felt. Thus, it will give best solution to improve and develop students in writing texts especially recount texts. Besides, by the more opportunities acquired by the students, their writing improvement will be better. Diary can make them to be more motivated and easier to express their feeling by writing diary. It also can make students freely write their ideas in the written form.

Review of Related Literature

Teaching Writing at Junior High School

Teaching writing is like swimming; if we learn to swim, we need water in swimming pool and a teacher to teach us how to be a professional swimmer (Brown, 2001: 334). Like swimming, writing is taught if we are a member of a part of language society and there is someone teaching us. Not everyone can be an excellent writer; writing needs a long time and hard work to create words, sentences, and arrange them in a good composition or paragraph. Then, writing as communicative language is not only taught fluently but also accurately and uses contextual and authentic materials in the classroom.

According Virginia P. Redd, (1970:540), junior high school students are expected to reach informational level because they are prepared to the senior high

school. They are expected to produce knowledge using their own language. In this case, the students must be able to create a text using their own words. The texts used are narrative, descriptive, recount, etc.

In junior high school, literacy is the focus of development learning English in this curriculum. One of the goals in learning English at junior high school is to develop communication skill in English both spoken and written language. Therefore, the teachers must be careful in teaching writing to his/her students. According to national curriculum of junior high school, teaching writing should include Grammar (simple present, simple past tense, simple future tense); Introducing text (narrative, recount, descriptive); and Generic structure of the texts.

The Use of Writing Diary in Teaching Writing Recount Text

The diary is a personal record which contains about experiences and events experienced confidential writing style that is not binding (free). The contents of the diary one can devote all forms of flavors and experiences in the diary either feeling happy, sad, angry, pity, resentment, love, and others. Because it is free, then other people cannot read the diary except with the consent that had. According to Astri Kurnianingsih a diary is a record (originally in written book format) with discrete entries arranged by date reporting on what has happened over the course of a day or other period (2009:18). In addition, Bailey, Kathleen M. (1990:215) states that a diary study is an in-depth reflection on learning processes or teaching experiences regularly kept by an individual and then analyzed to look for recurring patterns or significant events.

Teaching writing by using diary can be implemented in the small group of discussions learning model. Byrne Donn said that writing the imaginary diary for a famous person of their choice or for a fictitious character is something they will be willing to share and will very likely stimulate their imaginations. The students should work in pairs or groups (1988: 46). Diaries also play an important role in the learning of languages. Rubin (ibid.) proposes the following ways of using diaries in an effective way:

1. The teacher can look over each diary and make suggestions.
2. The teacher can ask peers to look over each other's diaries and make suggestions. This can be very efficient for a number of reasons (a) peers can

often suggest other ways to address a problem (b) peers can learn from the solutions of their fellow peers, and (c) the teacher may not have time to read all the diaries but learners can still get input this way.

3. After several diary assignments are in, learners can be asked to look through them and see what their own patterns of problems are and what their strategies for solving them are
4. The teacher can look over the diaries and see what patterns of problems and solutions individual learners have and make suggestions

Research Design

In this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative design because the study tries to get description of the teaching of writing using diary. This study is designed to describe some activities at the classroom in teaching writing recount text by using diary at the eighth grade students of SMPN 03 Banjarbaru academic year 2015/2016. Moleong (1995:6) says that qualitative research is descriptive, which means that the analyzed data and its findings are in the form of description, instead of numbers. While Ary et al state that qualitative research is a study to understand a phenomena by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it down into variable. The goal is a holistic picture and depth of understanding, rather than numeric analysis, (2002:24-25). The data are taken from an English teacher and thirty students of the eighth grade. Those are conducted on the observation in teaching process at the classroom in which the activities recorded directly, interview, and documentation as eliciting teacher's problems in teaching and students' response toward diary.

Findings and Discussion

1. The Process of Teaching Writing Recount Text By Using Diary

The teacher began teaching process by greeting the students. The students answered the teacher greeting. Then, teacher checked the students' attendance list. Fortunately, for the first meeting, all of the students were present. The total of them were 30 students that consisted of 16 males and 14 female students.

After that, teacher asked the students about their activities and materials at the previous meeting. Students told their activities and materials at the previous

meeting. Before teacher delivered the material that will be given to students, teacher asked students. Had students some experiences and events in the previous time? Most of them enthusiastically answered that they had a personal experience that was quite impressive. But, one of them also answered that she/he had happily experience, shameful experience and sadden experience.

After the tudents responded about their experience, then the teacher delivered the material. There were activities involved in the use of diary in teaching writing recount text . The three kinds of activities were described as follows :

a. Introducing and Explaining Recount Text

In this activity, teacher began delivering materials on recount text. The teacher explained the definition of recount text, generic structure of recount text and language features of recount text. Students began understanding the definition of recount text and generic structure of recount text presented by the teacher. After explaining about definition, generic structure, types of recount text, teacher explained about language features of recount text focussed in the use of simple past tense. Teacher explained the use of simple past tense, explained the formulas of simple past tense and mentioned the examples of the infinitive verbs and preterite. Then students were asking to mention some others.

The teacher also did not forget to give the pattern of simple past tense and example of the sentences. Teacher explained formulas in the simple past tense to the students and provided a list of regular verb and irregular verb which in the list were infinitive verb and preterite. Teacher also did not forget to explain the use formula of simple past tense that used auxiliary verb. Teacher also provided a list of the auxiliary verb and the subject of its pair to the students. It was easier for students to be able and more quickly understood the use formula of the simple past tense.

The next activity, teacher gave example of sentences using the simple past tense, teacher asked students to come forward of class gave another example sentences using the simple past tense and teacher asked other students assessed example sentences made by the student. Student wrote the sentence "*I was cooked rice*" and the teacher gave an explanation of the past tense in the active sentence

in accordance formulas that had been given. Other students without hesitation corrected the sentence become "*I cooked rice*". The classroom atmosphere is quite enthusiastic to follow the subject and the teacher asked a student to come forward and wrote the example sentence "*I Studying English*", other students actively corrected example sentence to become "*I Studied English*". The both example of sentences written by students showed their good understanding about the use of simple past tense.

b. Introducing and explaining the diary to writing

In this activity, after understanding about recount text and language features of recount text focussed the use of simple past tense, the teacher continued material teaching about writing diary. Before the teacher gave an explanation of the diary, the teacher asked the students *Do you know about the definition of diary?* many students who enthusiastically responded that they know definition of Diary. Most of them were especially the girls who liked to write every event and exciting things they had ever experiences. Then, the teacher explained again in more detail on the definition of a diary, benefits of write a diary and steps to write a diary. Teacher explained that definition of diary were a personal record which contains about experiences and events experienced confidential writing style that is not binding (free). The contents of the diary one can devote all forms of flavors and experiences in the diary either feeling happy, sad, angry, pity, resentment, love, and others. Explanation about the writing of the diary was quite short, because most of them already knew. Diary form could add the images created by the students. This made the classroom more fun atmosphere, so the students became more active and enthusiastic.

c. The writing activities of using diary

Step 1, the teacher asked students to make a group in the classroom. Each group consisted 5-6 students, each student individually complete the worksheet that provided by the teacher. The worksheet contained the sample diary.

Step 2, in a group, each student has an active role to give an opinion in accordance with the tasks that had been given (elements diary).

Step 3, the students were asked to close their eyes while listening to stories presented by the teacher. Then, they wrote the story in the form of a diary by

considering the elements. After that, each group asked to write a recount text in English according to the personal experience of students and language features of recount text. Recount text written in the form of a diary with additional images created by students. This task was quite difficult for students, especially students must write a recount text in English. This was because students were still limited in their vocabulary mastery. At the end, teacher provided a help by allowing students to use their dictionaries. To help students, teacher asked students to arrange a recount text in Indonesian first, then translated it in English. When the students were busied and focused on translating into English, most of them ignored the language features of recount text especially the use of the simple past tense. The next activity, each group then presented the results of the discussion groups.

Step 4, each group assessed the other groups' work to make comments in accordance with the assessment rubric. Teacher also assessed groups' work. The assessment consisted of a generic structure of recount text, the precision the use of simple past tense in recount text and creative writing in a diary.

Step 5, the teacher determined the best work. The best work of the group was read in front of the class and the best result one of the groups would get reward from the teacher. It motivated the students to produce the best writing in recount text.

2. The Teacher's Problems in Teaching Writing Recount Text By Using Diary

The teacher's problems appeared when the teacher explained about writing skills. The teacher had no interest to explain much more about writing. It was because the teacher lacked of writing knowledge. The teacher did not explain in detail to teaching writing. As the result, some of the students' understanding to writing was also low. It looked in their performance and their achievement in writing skill. For example, they could not express the ideas well and could not organize the ideas into the paragraphs. Besides, students did not choose the vocabulary appropriately and many errors in grammatical forms. Sometimes the also forgot the spelling and punctuation. It made their writing not meaningful. In addition, the teacher got a problem in time. The teacher's feedback to students' errors in writing is limited because of the time and low knowledge. Actually in writing recount text should be based on correct language structure, in this case the

understanding of using diary and the simple past tense were not explored well to the students.

Moreover, the teacher could not manage the group in class activities. Some students were busy with their activity without paying attention to their task. The class was little bit crowded. Finally, the classroom atmosphere was not controlled well by the teacher because probably the teacher had low motivation to teach writing and no interest to writing.

3. The Students' Response toward Using Diary

To get the students' responsetoward using diary was conducted on observation and interview to students' activities at the classroom. According to the students, theyadmitted that the diary used by the teacher was good enough, the students become morecreative and motivated to make the personal stories in diary. One of students said in interview that:

“kegiatan menulis diary seperti ini cukup baik untuk membuat saya semakin kreatif untuk membuat karangan cerita yang mendidik, saya semakin termotivasi untuk membuat cerita yang menarik dan menyenangkan”

The task of writing a recount text considered difficult by some students. However, this was no longer burden the students, because the task was carried out in groups. Students can work in doing the task and able to exchange their thoughts with their friends in group and gave their opinion each other. A student revealed that:

“pelajarannya menyenangkan, dapat kerja kelompok bersama teman dalam membuat text menggunakan diary”.

Writing activities in a recount text using diary also recognized by students as one of the interesting ways, because the form of diary that can be added to the funny pictures that decorate their writing. So, it did not look a formal writing. Based on the observation, writing activities using diary made them more active and enthusiastic to follow the subject, because there was any reward or gifts given by the teacher for the best result of their performance in writing a recount text. The reward or gift aims to motivate students in completing their task with the best products. Related to the interview, the students said that:

“sebelumnya kami sering malas-malasan, sekarang ada hadiah jadi lebih semangat”.

Another student also said that:

“yang menarik adalah membuat diary yang ada gambarnya, sebelumnya belum pernah membuat diary”

However, in the activities of writing recount text using diary actually still had difficulties for some students. The difficulties were about understanding the simple past tense, they also had difficulty in translating sentences from Indonesian into English and pouring the ideas into paragraphs. Actually they used the dictionary but the choice of words were not appropriate. In addition, sometimes they were also confused about how to express the ideas and develop the ideas into better. Finally, their stories in diary was not coherence and not logic to other sentences.

Findings and Discussion

The implementation of diary writing technique could motivate the students' writing recount text. In writing diary, teacher asked student to make a group, each group asked to make a recount text in English according to the personal experience of students and language features of recount text. Recount text written in the form of a diary with additional images created by students. The task was carried out in groups, so students can work in doing the task and able to exchange thought with a friend of the group and gave their opinion within the group. It helped students to make recount text easily. As Elizabeth, et. al (2005: 256) that working together can help students to learn and perform the stages of writing more effectively.

After that, they had a chance to revised of generic structure of writing recount text, focused in the use simple past tense. And they also checked and evaluated the result of other group by sharing with the friends in the group. It is based on Tompkins (1994: 26) states that through this sharing, students communicate with genuine audiences who respond to their writing in meaningful ways. In addition Murcia et. al (2000: 100) that a writing class should bring the students to the point where they are willing to revise and feel comfortable about

revising what they have written. Therefore, they needed to write their work correctly as Harmer (1991: 53) states that a piece of writing should be correct. Finally, the students could write and understood the structure of language in writing recount text.

In fact, by writing diary the students felt motivated and developed their writing. The teacher also tried to create good atmosphere in teaching writing at the classroom so that the students feel comfortable in learning it. As stated by Astri (2009:20) concluded that writing diary is joyful activity so the students hopefully can be freely writing their idea and digging their idea. In addition, Bailey, Kathleen M. (1990:215) states that a diary study is an in-depth reflection on learning processes or teaching experiences regularly kept by an individual and then analyzed to look for recurring patterns or significant events.

On the other hand, the difficulties also faced by teacher when teaching writing recount text, the time is limited to teach it. It is not enough to give and explain the material in teaching of writing recount text using diary. So, the students gained an understanding about the material is not maximal. As Artika Werian, (2014) states that availability of time is closely related to the success of the students in understanding the subject matter. How sufficient time to make the students master more in a material that is taught, and how long it takes the students to understand the lessons in different intelligence. The instructions for use diary is still unclear and the limited ability of the teacher and students' knowledge also become problems faced by teacher in the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

Using diary in teaching writing recount text can help students of the eighth grade students of SMP N 03 Banjarbaru in the academic year 2015/2016 and motivate the students in learning writing a recount text. It can be seen from their enthusiastic and performance in writing as well. Students become more creative and active to learn and write the personal stories. The implementation of using diary can be done in group where the students can work together and share the ideas each other. This way raises their confidence to write freely. However, the problems appear when teaching writing recount text is at the classroom, the time provided is

limited. It is not enough to give and explain the material in teaching of writing recount text using diary. So, the students gain an understanding about the material is not optimal. Besides, the teacher and students' knowledge are not also developed and explored well in teaching and learning process.

Thus, the use of diary in teaching writing at the eight grade of SMP N 03 Banjarbaru in the academic year 2015/2016 gives implications to teacher and students. Teacher can create the innovative teaching so that the objectives of teaching writing can be achieved by the students. For students feel freely in expressing the ideas without being lazy and passive. They can explore the ideas into group and share them each other. Therefore, to develop teaching writing for further, teacher should allocate the time much more to explain and provide feedback to students' work and the teacher should update about teaching writing so that his/her students can write well.

References

- Ary, et al. 2002. *Introduction to Research in Education*. Northern Illinois University. USA.
- Bailey, Kathleen M. 1990. *The Use of Diary Studies in Teacher Education Programs*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, H. D, 2001. *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Second Edition, San Francisco State University.
- Byrne, Donn. 1988. *Teaching Writing Skills*. London : Longman.
- Depdiknas, 2006. *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)*. Jakarta: Department Pendidikan Nasional.
- Elizabeth, et al. 2005. *Collaborative Learning Techniques*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass.
- Harmer, J. 1991. *The Practice of English Language Teaching: An Introduction*. New York: Longman Publishing.
- Harmer, Jeremy. 2004. *How to Teach Writing*. New York : Pearson Education Ltd.
- Kurnianingsih, Astri. 2009. *Writing Diary As An Alternative Technique In Teaching Writing Recount Text at SMP II Bae Kudus*. Semarang: UNNES Unpublish Thesis.

- Moleong. 1995. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung : Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Murcia, et al. 2002. *Discourse Context In Language Teaching*. London: Cambridge University.
- Redd, Virginia P. 1970. *Teaching Writing at Junior High School. The English Journal*. Published by: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Schutz, R. E. 1995. *English-the International Language*. <http://www.comp.br/sk-inst>. Accessed on June 20th, 2010.
- Ur, Penny. 1996. *A Course on Language Teaching*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- www.berpendidikan.com. posted on 15 May 2015.*