Improving students' ability in writing narrative texts using short animated stories and mind mapping at class VIII of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya

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Abstract

This research aims at improving the writing ability of the Eighth grade students of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya, in academic year 2016/2017. The problem was that they had low writing ability.This particular research is categorized as action research to improve the student's ability in writing Narrativr Text using Short Animated Stories and Mind Mapping. The actions were implemented in two cycles based on the class schedule. This research involved 20 students of class VIII of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya in academic year 2016/2017 and the English teacher was as the research collaborator.The data of the study were in the forms of qualitative data. The qualitative data were obtained by observing the teaching and learning process of writing of Narrative Text, interviewing the students of class VIII and the English teacher, students test, and documentation. The research findings showed that the use of short animated stories and mind mapping was effective to improve the students' writing ability. They could get students' attention and increased their learning motivation. It could help the students understand the story better as the video content visual or moving images that could help imagining the real situation in the story. The students who fulfilled the KKM was only 4 students (20%) in the pre-action, were able to increase their score up to 12 students (60%) in the progress test in cycle I, and were able to increase to 17 students (85%) in the post test in cycle II. It was indicated that they made a considerable improvement in some aspects of writing skills such as grammar, coherence, readability, diction and communicative purpose of text.

Keywords: *Annimated Stories, Mind Mapping, Narrative Text*

INTRODUCTION

English as one of the subjects in schools has an important role because English as an international language is widely used in communication by

people in most countries in the world. Furthermore, English is often used in writing science books, journals, or articles about knowledge and technology. Therefore, in order to be able to develop science, knowledge, and technology, and to communicate with people from other countries, English is taught in Indonesia as a foreign language from junior high schools until universities.

English is taught at schools in order that students are able to master the four skills; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Harmer (2007: 265) states as follows"...we use language in terms of four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing. These are often divided into two types. *Receptive skills* are a term used for reading and listening, skills where meaning is extracted from the discourse. *Productive skills* are the term for speaking and writing, skills where students actually have to produce language themselves.

Among those four skills, writing is considered as the most difficult and complicated language skill to be learned (Miftah, 2015:9). Also, it is most difficult skill to master because writing is an active or productive skill so that students who are learning writing have to learn how to find ideas and vocabularies using animated stories and mind mapping and can express them into writing. Richards and Renandya (2002: 30) state that "There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable texts." In line with these idea, Brown (2004: 218) states as follows,

> We also fully understand the difficulty of learning to write "well" in any language, even in our own native language. Every educated child in developed countries learns the rudiments of writing in his or her native language, but very view learn to express themselves clearly with logical, well-developed organization that accomplishes an intended purpose.

From the above statements, it can be seen that in learning writing the method and strategy are needed for the learners to be easy to find the ideas and easy to develop them into good writing.

According to the basic competence in the junior high school curriculum, in learning writing, students are expected to write some texts for example letters, short messages, greeting cards, monologs such as descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure and report texts. To produce those writing products, especially monologs, students have to follow the writing steps. Seow (2002: 316) states as follows: Process Writing as a classroom activity incorporates the four basic –planning, drafting (writing), revising

(redrafting), and editing and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing. Teachers often plan appropriate classroom activities that support the learning of specific writing skills at every stage.

In fact, most students hardly ever follow the writing stages in their writings. They often copy texts from the students who are good at English subject. Sometimes they just rearrange jumbled sentences given by the teacher or taken from the textbooks. The facts above frequently happen in many schools. Based on the observation in SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya Class VIII, it seemed that the students were rarely taught to write in English. They just did the assignment and discussed the answers together. When the students were asked to write, they were reluctant to write even a very simple text, and the products of their writings were far from the expectation. Actually students were expected to be able to write a good text with good content and coherence, but in fact, they could not do it well. Students did not have any ideas to write. In other words, they had blank minds when they were asked to write a text, for example a narrative text. Therefore, some media were needed to bring out their ideas. Some media here could be picture series, comics, movies, and animated stories. Of course each medium has its advantages and disadvantages. One medium might be appropriate for teaching a certain skill and it might be unappropriate for teaching other skills.

Based on observation in the field, it could be found that there were some problems in English teaching and learning especially in teaching and learning writing skill at class VIII SMP GUPPI P.Raya in Academic Year 2016-2017. They came from the students and teacher's factor. One of the factors coming from the students concerned with students' low motivation. It could be seen from the situation in the classroom. Many of them did not do the homework, some of them looked sleepy, doodling, daydreaming, yawning, and did not pay attention to the teaching and learning process. Besides, students' ability in writing was low. It could be seen from their writing products. Some students even asked the teacher in Dayak Language, Banjar Language, and Javanese about what they should write and what language they should use. In writing, they often lacked vocabularies, had a lot of mistakes of spelling and choice of words, and lacked ideas. Moreover, they were reluctant to bring dictionaries. In the class which contains 30 students, there are only about 3 female students who brought dictionaries. When observation was being done, there was an announcement from the loudspeaker in the class about the school activities,

and the students became noisy and talked about the announcement. They ignored the teacher and this needed more time to lead the students into the lesson again. So, it could be seen that the students' attention was easily distracted. Meanwhile, the factors coming from the teacher were that the teacher used a conventional media such as textbooks and student worksheets, and the teacher used techniques which were not quite interesting for the students. He just gave tasks and students were asked to do the tasks. So, it looked like only testing activities. Actually, the teacher is humorous, but the students often paid attention to the jokes only, not the lesson. Even the students made jokes with their friends. Furthermore, the writing skill has small portion in the teaching learning process. Many research said that in teaching narrative texts, short animated stories are better to be used as media. Short animated stories are more interesting than picture series or comics because they are moving pictures, so students will see the actions of characters.

Meanwhile, short animated stories are almost the same as movies in their moving pictures. However, short animated stories are simpler and have less duration than movies. They do not contain too much dialog so that students can catch the content easier. In addition the language used in short animated stories is easier and more familiar for junior high school students. Furthermore, there are many short animated stories in the internet that students can download. The stories are in duration about 5-10 minutes with full stories, meanwhile a full story movie can be 1-2 hours duration. So in the teaching and learning process especially in writing narrative texts, short animated stories might be more effective than other media.

Beside that, the teacher should find methods, technique and media in teaching writing to the students (Harmer, 2007:83) in order to improve students' writing ability and to change the students' perception on the difficulties of writing. In this research, the researcher will take the strategy to help the students and teachers in writing narrative text. As the strategy in this research, the researcher take mind mapping as the technique to help the students to write narrative text based on the generic structure of narrative text.

Mind mapping is a graphic representation of ideas, it shows the ideas which are generated around a central theme and how they are interlinked. This kind of technique or strategy can help students to generate or explore a topic of writing beginning with a thought or words and can encourage the students to write through the process of writing in terms of discovering and organizing ideas (Miftah, 2010:180). It is a tool primarily used for stimulating thought. It is

very useful for educational system especially for writing, to encourage their skill ability and brainstorming. In addition, mapping is a good pre-writing strategy because it introduces important terms or vocabulary items or words that the students will encounter in their writing related to the topic given that is being discussed and is going to write (Sulistyo & Ningsih, 2013:42). Mind Mapping as like clustering or word mapping is a prewriting technique of making a visual map of ideas in which the writers use a key word placed in the center of a page, then, jot down all the free associations (Sabarun, 2013).

Based on that problems of research, it is assumed that narrative texts have been taught to the eighth grade students of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya in academic year 2016-2017.

RESEARCH METHOD
The Data and Data Collection Procedure

In order to get data, the researcher conducted observation together with her collagemate as her collaborator in the class. The observation focuses on how the writing course is conducted in the class and what method is used by the teacher in the teaching learning process. The researcher found the data in form of scores the students' writing ability before the research is conducted, which is in the form of pre-test in writing. Then, the data are compared to the result of the students' achievements on writing after the action is conducted. Besides, the researcher also tries to find the data about the students' opinion and impression on the method used by the researcher in the English teaching and learning process. The data are obtained through a questionnaire and an interview. During the research, the researcher makes field notes in order to control and to monitor the process of the research. It will help the researcher in capture some problems occuring during the research. In order to make the data valid, the researcher do triangulation with other research members by comparing the data from the observation and questionnaire from the other research members.

Instrument and Technique for the Data Collection

The Instrument and the data collection technique in this research are as follows. To gain the relevant data in this study, the reseracher uses these instruments:

1) Observation Sheet

Observation in the classroom was done during the teaching learning process. This observation was to know the data about the students' participation, attention, and activities in the classroom.

2) Interview Guide

Interview was done with the students, the teacher, and the principal of the research. The interview was about the action of the research in the classroom with their opinion and suggestion. In this case, the researcher uses an interview guide to interview the participants. However, there was any unpredictable questions that would occur found out more information from the participants.

3) Test.

Testing (written test) was done for the students to know the improvement of students' ability in writing narrative texts before and after the action is done.

4) Documentation.

Documentation was taken in the form of photographs. and videos during the teaching learning process when the research is conducted. In addition, recordings is use to record the interview with the students to know their opinion and their impression about the use of short English animated stories and mind mapping in teaching learning process, especially in wiriting narrative texts.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the researcher did some steps proposed by Burns (2010: 104-105). The first step is assembling the data. In this step, and start to look for broad patterns, ideas, or trends that seem to answer the questions. The next step is coding the data. In this step, the researcher will group the data into more specific categories and identify which data are explanations and numbers. The third step is comparing the data. In this step, the researcher will compare the categories of different sets of data to see whether the data say the same thing or whether there are contradictions. The fourth step is building meanings and interpretations. The researcher will analyze the data several times to post questions, rethink to connections, and develop explanation of the situation. The fifth or the last step is reporting outcomes. In this step, the researcher will describe the context of the research, outline findings, and consider how she would organize the whole research not only the analysis and findings.

To analyze the numbers of the data, the result scores of the pre-test before the action will be compared with data of the post-test after the action. Then the data will be analyzed whether their writing results is reaching the minimum standard or not, and having improvement or not. From the comparisons, the researcher make conclusions in the form of descriptions whether the students' ability at class VIII/2 of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya in writing narrative texts is improving by the use of short animated stories and mind mapping or not.

Subject and Setting of the Research

The subjects of the research are 20 students consisting of 11 females and 9 males of class VIII Semester 2 in SMP GUPPI in academic year 2016-2017, and the English teacher.

The research conducted in Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) GUPPI Palangka Raya in academic year 2016-2017. It is located at Mahakam Street number 31. The school has four classes for teaching learning process. The school also has some facilities that could support the teaching learning process. It has a teacher room, a principal room, a staff room, a library, a mosque, a laboratory, a hall, a wide yard, a basketball court, and a canteen. It also has parking areas for both the students and the teachers.

RESULT OF THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION
The First Meeting of Cycle I

The first meeting was done on Friday, March 1, 2017. The allocation time was 80 minutes. The lesson was started with a greeting, and a question about who was absent that day. After checking their presence, the students were asked about several questions to check their readiness, starting with "Did you study last night?", "What did you study?", "Have you ever heard an interesting story? Maybe about a legend. The students tried to answer them in English and explained shortly the story they had heard before. Most of them answered "Cinderella", "Malin Kundang", "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih", and "Frozen" After that, the students were asked about the homework that was given in the day they took the pre test scores.

Some students made noises and the teacher asked them to pay attention to her. Then, they were asked whether they brought their dictionary with them or not. Half of the students did not bring theirs. Then, the students were informed about what they would do that day. They were asked about what verb is. Some of them answered correctly but the rest kept silent.

There were also some of them who gave incorrect answers. Then, the teacher gave brief explanation about it.

The teacher gave some examples about verb base, to be and also modal to make them know the differences between the three of them. She explained it by highlighting the words in the text through an LCD. She also told them about how to check whether a word is a verb or not using a dictionary. After listening to the brief explanation, the students were given a task to find some words and the meanings of those words in the text. They were allowed to open their dictionaries. Most of them were still confused about the instruction given by the teacher. Therefore, she explained again slowly and let the students ask questions if they were still confused about something. Actually, that happened because they were not really focused on the lesson. There were some of them who were having conversation and not listening to the teacher. They were given time to do the task.

The Second Meeting of Cycle I

The second meeting was conducted on March 2, 2017. In this meeting, the activity was continued by showing the video as an input of the writing process. The allocation time was 80 minutes.The class was started with greeting and checking the presence. The students were asked several questions such as "Did you study last night?", "Do you remember what we have discussed in the previous meeting?". The students tried answer the questions as much as they could with insufficient grammar mastery.

Then, the students were informed what they would do that day. There were many students who still remembered the material that was taught in the previous meeting. The teacher informed them that they would watch "The Otters and the wolf" again. However, this time, they did not only watch the movie, but also they had to do something. She told them that what they needed to do was finding the verbs that were in the video. The students were allowed to do that in pairs. Some students asked her to repeat the instruction because they were still confused. She then explained it using simpler language that would be easier for them to understand. The students were asked whether they understood the instruction or not. After they all answered that they understood it, the teacher played the video. They focused on listening to and watching the video to find the verbs. She played it three times.

After that, they tried to find the meanings of the words in the dictionary. That day, only a few of them did not bring their dictionaries.

The teacher walked around the class to check if they found difficulties. Then the students were informed that the time to do the task was over and they were asked to stop doing the task because they were going to discuss the answers. The researcher started by asking some students the verbs they have found one by one. Some of them answered the questions and then the rest of them were asked whether the answers were correct or not and then discussed it together. She played the video again to check the verbs in every sentence. The video was paused in every sentence. After getting all the verbs, they were asked about the meaning of those words.

They were also asked about the meaning of the words, the present tense verbs of the words they found and also about pronoun. The next thing the students did was submitting their works. Then, they were given a task again. The task was to complete several incomplete sentences that actually were taken from the video. The teacher explained the task and said that she was going to play the video again. The students were required to complete the sentences by paying attention to the video. The task was done in pairs. They paid attention to the video in order to be able to do the task given to them. Many of them found difficulties on writing the right spelling, so after the video was finished, they were allowed to check their dictionary. After that, they discussed all the incomplete sentences one by one by checking through the video. In discussing the answers, she paused the video in the parts that needed to be completed and told them to watch and listen carefully.

Most of them still made mistakes in spelling. They also were not sure about the meaning of those words. She then told the students the right answers along with the meanings. She also asked them whether they had some questions or things they were still confused about. They were still reluctant to ask questions.

The Third Meeting of Cycle I

The third meeting of Cycle I was conducted on March, 8 2017. In this meeting, the students would be asked to write a narrative text in the end of the lesson before the progress test. The allocation time was 80 minutes. The researcher started the lesson with greetings and checking the presence. She then asked about the homework given to them in the previous meeting. They took out their homework to be discussed together. The task was to make a right paragraph from jumbled paragraph given by her. Most of them got the right answer.

After that, the students were informed about what they would be doing that day. They were going to watch again a video about The Otters and the Wolf before they were asked to write a narrative text. Before playing the video, she explained first about what they needed to do in the middle of watching the video.

They were informed that they needed to write some important point about the story in the video that would be played for them later on in order to be able to write the narrative text smoothly.

Then, the video was played and they paid attention to it. Sometimes, there were some of them who talked with their friends commenting the story in the video. Some of them took a note of several things they thought important. After that, they asked her to play it over and over again until they understand the whole story. Then, she asked the students to check their understanding about the story.

Reflection

After conducting the action in Cycle I, the researcher and the collaborator discussed the results to make the reflection on the teaching and learning process of writing using short English animated stories and mind mapping. This discussion also fulfilled the democratic and dialogic validity of this research.

In the process of a discussion, the researcher analyzed the data from the result of the observation of the implemented action. She also interviewed the collaborator and the students to look into the implementation of the action.

Finding in Cycle II
1) First Meeting

The first meeting of Cycle II was conducted on Thursday, 9th March 2017. The allocation time was 80 minutes. The lesson was started with a greeting, and a question about who was absent and continued with the teacher asking the students' readiness. She asked as usual questions such as "Did you study last night? What did you study?" Then they were asked about their opinions on using videos in the teaching and learning process. Most of them showed positive responses about that.

After that, the teacher gave them their works in the previous meeting that were already given feedbacks. They were informed about some highly frequency mistakes that they had done. She also asked them to pay attention more and not to repeat the same mistakes. They were asked whether

they had something they needed to ask before the lesson was started. They had nothing to ask. Then, the class was started with the researcher telling them that they would still learn about narrative text and that they would be watching videos again. The students were so excited about that. They waited for watching the videos.

The teacher began with giving them a warming up activity. They were given some list of words that would help them to understand the story better. They were asked to guess the meanings of the words. There were already the meanings of the words that were provided by the teacher. The meanings were not the translations into Bahasa Indonesia. They were in English. They were given about 15 minutes to do the task and after that they discussed it together. After done discussing it, the teacher told them that they would be watching a video about Malin Kundang. They seemed interested about that idea because it turned out that there were quite many of them who still did not know about the story. They who claimed they knew also did not know the detail of the story, they just knew that Malin Kundang was a rebellious child.

2) Second Meeting

The second meeting of Cycle II was conducted on Wenedsay15th March 2017. The allocation time was 80 minutes as usual. The lesson was started by greeting and praying. Then, they were asked whether they actually learned about the generic structure of a narrative text and the tense that is used or not. Some of them claimed that they studied about those two things in the previous meeting. After that they were asked whether they were ready or not to start the lesson. They answered that they were ready.

The teacher asked them to pay attention to the screen because she would play the video again before asking them the generic structure of narrative text. They watched it seriously. Then the teacher asked them to mention the generic structure. Most of them were able to mention the parts. After that, she asked them to mention which part of the video was the orientation, complications and resolution. They were required to write it briefly on their papers. Later on, they were asked to write the answers on the white board one by one. The teacher was the one who pointed which students should write their answers.

Then, they discussed it together. She communicated with them actively to ask whether the answers were correct or not. If they were incorrect, then she asked who were able to correct them.

After giving exercises concerning with the generic structure, the teacher continued giving grammar exercises for the students. They were given some tasks to make them understand and aware of the grammar and tense they should use.

3) Third Meeting

The third meeting of Cycle II was conducted on Saturday 16thMarch 2017. That was planned to be the last meeting in this research. So, they would be writing the narrative text here. The lesson was started by greeting and praying as usual. Then, the researcher asked about who was absent that day and whether they studied or not on the previous night. She also asked whether they still remembered the lesson they learned in the previous meeting. Most of them still remembered.

She informed the students that they were required to write a narrative text about the video they had watched before, that was about Cinderella. They were informed that the video would be played once again before they wrote the text, so they needed to pay attention to it.

Reflection
1) Using Short English Animated Stories and Mind Mapping

The students had expressed their thought about the activities carried out during the teaching and learning process. They revealed that they enjoyed the video so much. However, based on the interview done with the researcher and collaborator, they argued that there should be a limitation on playing the video because the students seemed too comfortable to ask the teacher to play the video again. So, in Cycle II, she limited the number of playing the video to them into three times only.

2) Providing Narrative Reading Texts

Just like what the teacher and colaborator have done in the first cycle, in Cycle II, they still gave them narrative reading texts. However, now the texts were in the form of grammar exercise such as jumbled paragraph, etc. Then, the students were asked to tell which parts of them were the orientation, complications and resolution. The texts were meant to give them exposures so that they would be familiar with narrative texts so that it would help them in writing narrative text. The result of it was the narrative texts indeed helped the students to understand the generic structure so that they were able to write texts with good generic structure. The following is the result

of the interview with the English Teacher regarding the implementation of the action.

3) Providing Grammar and Vocabulary Exercises

The next one was providing grammar and vocabulary exercises. After knowing the knowledge and also the generic structure of narrative text, they need to know the correct grammar and enough vocabulary in order to write ideal narrative texts. The vocabulary exercise was as the one in Cycle I, that was to find the verbs from the video they watched, after that they were required to find the present tense form and then searching the meanings of them. They did the task as told. The grammar exercises were arranged from the basic one to the complicated one from the sentence, the paragraph to the text. They were in the form of jumbled words, sentences and paragraph. The English teacher and the collaborator were agreed that those exercises would be effective to improve students' writing ability. The following is the result of the interview with the collaborator regarding the implementation of the actions. Researcher : "Menurut Ibu, bagaimana penggunaan grammar exercises dengan model seperti ini di Cycle II?" (What do you thing about the grammar exercises implemented in Cycle II?)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
Conclusion

After implementing the two cycles, the researcher found some good ways to improve the writing ability of VIII students of SMP GUPPI Palangka Raya by using short annimated stories and mind maping in the academic year of 2016/2017. The action on using a video of short animated stories and mind mapping could attract students' attention and motivation in the teaching and learning process. The use of animated stories and mind mapping also made the atmosphere in the classroom more relaxed and fun so that the students were interested in writing the story as their idea into a narrative text. This way was quite good to make them more confident. Second, the students could have better understanding about the story as there were also the visual effects that contained moving images. It could help the students comprehend what the content of the story was. Third, they also got many new words to add their vocabulary mastery.

Furthermore, they could understand the new words and how they were used in real context as what the videos had shown them. Those are very important in order to write good narrative texts. The feedbacks given

by the teacher and their friends were able to make them aware of their mistakes and they did not repeat them. As the result, their scores were going up significantly. The students who achieved KKM only 20% in the pre-test/pre-action, were able to increase their score up to 60% in the progress test in cycle I, and were able to increase 85% in the pos test in cyle II. It indicated that they made considerable improvement in some aspects of writing skills such as grammar, coherent, readability, diction, and communicative.
2) Based on the table result of changes of students during teaching and learning process in cycle I and cycle II, (table 4.4.1), animated stories and mind mapping strategy could made students interested in learning and teahing process. The students felt more enjoyable and made students under pressure.

Suggestion

Some suggestions are given to the participants who are closely related to this research. The suggestions are made based on the conclusions and implications of   this research. They are presented as follows:

1.For the Students

For Students, this study can make them easier in writing narrative texts, so that their ability in writing will be improved.

2. For the English teachers

The English teachers should consider the students' needs and interest before designing the writing materials. It is important for the teacher to make a variation of the activities and use the various media in the teaching and learning process of writing because it can reduce the students' boredom and monotonous in the teaching and learning process. Besides, the teacher is required to provide videos of short animated stories and mind mapping in the teaching and learning process because they can help the teacher deliver the materials easily and keep the students interested.

3.For the School Institution

The school can apply some efforts to improve the quality of the students'writing skill considering the problems that occur in the school, for example,they provide the relevant and appropriate media to support the teaching and learning process of writing. The school can provide many kinds of short animated stories to enrich the teaching media. Furthermore, the school can carry out a workshop among English teachers to create or find appropriate short animated stories and mind mapping.

4. For Other Researchers

The weakness of this study is its limited time in implementing the actions. Other researchers who are interested in the same field are recommended to implement the actions in a longer period of time to get more maximum results so that the improvement will be more significantly seen.

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