

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

The fields of language skills are not only speaking, reading and listening, but also writing. In learning a language, especially learning English as a foreign language, it is important to consider those language skills. The learners should be able to master those skills, especially writing skill that is important and that plays a major role in our life, as what Lorch (1984:4) says that the benefits of writing well extend beyond simply getting the degree that lands the job. Skillful writing, Lorch (1984:4) goes on saying, enhances the possibility of promotion. Businesses depend on communication; clear, concise report provides tangible evidence that a person is a successful communicator.

In fact, learning how to write is not as easy as people have imagined before. As what Crabbe (1982:41) says that the students often face some problems when they are asked to write in the language classrooms. The most common problem that may arise is that the students do not know what to write about and for whom. This fact is mainly because they have difficulties in finding what ideas to be written.

The English Department students of Widya Mandala University seems to face such problems in carrying out their writing lesson. As a matter of fact, writing well is a skill that almost everyone has the capacity to develop. The ideas produced must be meaningful and communicative to the readers.

So far, many teachers and lecturers provide picture series with oral questions to help the students to write narrative composition. Actually, this technique is good because it can help the students to stimulate their ideas in writing composition. To maintain this, the writer wants to add a new technique, that is the technique of picture series with group work discussion. In addition, according to Brown (1982:10), this technique can increase the students' performance in getting a lot of ideas because the students can share their experiences and information. The ideas are not limited only from one student but they can share their ideas about the pictures. As a result, the ideas become more interesting.

Picture series can be used as the teaching media because this aid is attractive and helpful for the students in getting ideas and organizing them well. To this point, Underhill (1976:65) states that "well chosen pictures that have a story to tell will help the students to get ideas..." The technique of oral questions is chosen to support the picture series, so the students will not misinterpret the picture series itself.

Garcia and Myers (1974:248) define narrative as an act of explaining an idea by telling a story. It is everybody's favorite method. Narrative writing has been introduced to the students since they were in Senior High School. Eventhough this type of writing is the simplest and the easiest type of writing compared to the other types of writing, the writer observes that a lot of second semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University still have difficulties to write a narration.

The simplest organization to help the students get ideas and also to make more and more frequent use of student to student communication is to divide the class into groups (Read, 1982:1). Group work discussion can avoid or overcome such difficulties or obstacles in getting ideas. The task of knowing what to write about is tackled by several individuals, each providing support and stimulus for each other (Crabe, 1982:44). Besides, group work can help the students to find a lot of ideas from other students. Furthermore, McGreal (1989:17) says that “group work enables students to participate more freely in discussion without fear or ridicule from the class or chastisement from the teacher.”

To prove the effectiveness of picture series with group work discussion technique in the narrative writing teaching, the writer in this present study would like to conduct an experimental study. She wants to find out whether the technique, by using picture series with group work discussion, really influences the students' writing achievement.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are two writing techniques that can be employed. They are picture series with group work discussion and picture series with oral questions. In this study, the writer would like to make comparison of both techniques on their effectiveness in teaching narrative writing.

Based on this, the statement of the problem can be stated as follows: “Is there a significant difference between the use of picture series with group work discussion and the use of picture series with oral questions as the techniques in teaching narrative writing on the narrative writing achievement of the students?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find out whether there is a significant difference between the use of picture series with group work discussion and the use of picture series with oral questions as the techniques in teaching narrative writing on the narrative writing achievement of the students.

1.4 Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between the narrative writing achievement of the students who are taught by using picture series with group work discussion technique and the one of the students who are taught by using picture series with oral questions technique.

Ha: There is a significant difference between the narrative writing achievement of the students who are taught by using picture series with group work discussion technique and the one of the students who are taught by using picture series with oral questions technique.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be a useful contribution and a new variation for writing teachers to teach narrative writing so that it can improve the students' narrative writing performance.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1. The subject of the study is limited to the second semester students of the academic year of 2001-2002 at the English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya.
2. This study only deals with writing skill that can be specified into narrative writing.
3. The writer focuses on a media namely picture series, which consist of 4 – 6 pictures.
4. The writer focuses on the group work discussion in which each group consists of 4 students.
5. The writer focuses on the effectiveness of using picture series with group work discussion on the students' narrative achievement. The students' narrative achievement covers the total of two component namely content and organization in the ESL composition profile.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misinterpretation, the writer thinks that it is important to define some terms used in this study before the writer goes on to the next chapter.

1. Group work

Group work means “a number of people who interact with one another, who are psychologically aware of one another, and who perceive themselves to be a group” (Brumfit, 1987:72).

2. Picture series

Picture series can be defined as “a series of three to nine picture, normally expressing continuous actions, events, thoughts in the form of drawings” (Breitkreuz, 1972:145).

3. Oral questions

Oral questions are “Questions that are not written down” (Warriner, 1977:892).

4. Writing.

Writing is “a means of written communication to allow us to share our knowledge, ideas and feelings” (Samelson, 1982:2)

5. Narrative writing

Narrative writing is a type of essay that tells a story or a series of events in which they occur. Its purpose is to give meaning to an event or a series of events by telling a story (Percy, 1981:56).

6. Achievement

Achievement is the extent to which an individual has mastered the specific skills or body of information acquired in formal learning situation (Harris, 1984:3). In this study, the evaluation of writing achievement covers the total of content and organization component of the ESL composition profile.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background of the writer's thesis. Chapter two presents the theoretical background which is used to support the writer's study. Chapter three talks about the methodology of the research. Chapter four discusses the interpretation of the findings. Finally, chapter five covers the conclusions of the study and the suggestion for further research.