

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This report reveals the findings of a study carried out to improve students' descriptive paragraph writing skills by using Word Map. This chapter provides overall introduction to the study. It consists of six sections, i.e. the background of the study as well as its limitation, research questions, objectives, scope of the study, and significances of the study.

A. Research Background

Language is viewed as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages. Brown (2001, p. 34) stated that the theory of language in communication language teaching is a system for the expression of meaning primary function interaction and communication. By using language, people can transmit knowledge, give opinions, get information, and express their feelings. But basically, the main function of language is sending message or meaning by one person to another.

By the end of the twentieth century English was already well on its way to becoming a genuine lingua franca, that is a language used widely for communication between people who do not share the same first (or even second language). Around the world English is taught in a bewildering variety of situations. In many countries it first appears in the primary curriculum.

Writing is part of basic language skills that students have to master. Based on 2013 curriculum of education at school, the scope of teaching English at Senior High School includes four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing. They correlate with each other in the process of learning English. Zhang and Chen (1989) defined writing as “a comprehensive ability involving grammar, vocabulary, conceptions, rhetoric, and other elements; it has everything to do with listening, speaking, and reading”. So, in writing students not only able to write but also they should be able to master other elements.

Writing is another ways of communication. Leki (1988, p. 5) stated “writing is communicating”. As a communication writing is a way used by people to deliver news, words, thoughts, and feelings to other people. Writing is like speaking, It is an important means of communication. In fact, sometimes writing is the only way to communicate. Writing allows us to communicate at a distance, either at a distant place or at a distant time. In brief, there are two communication can be done, speaking and writing.

Moreover, writing is the productive skills and it needs process. Robinson (2000, p. 84) says “Writing is process. Although writing is a product but it is not accomplished activity in one sitting. Writing a part in English Language Curriculum used at SMA Widya Nusantara Bekasi. Based on researcher’s personal small scale observation which has done in class 10.1 at SMA Widya Nusantara Bekasi, there are some factors in their writing descriptive paragraph. Most students face difficulties when they write descriptive paragraph in English

because they lack of motivation and idea in writing. To help these students, it was significant to explore deeper on these difficulties as well as provide innovative ideas in order to improve the teaching and learning of writing using Word Map.

Word Map is a technique that appropriate with problem in writing descriptive paragraph. Word Map is another way to get ideas to write about. It can stimulates their brain to develop ideas in writing. Like an athlete prepares himself by doing stretching or warm-up exercise, for the same reason writers also need “stretching” to write.

Writing is clearly a complex process, and competent writing is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired. The researcher presents that they felt the way of teaching is monotonous and boring. So, it is important to change the way of teaching writing decriptive paragraph using Word Map. If we do not solve the problems, the students will never have spirit to learn writing.

In this research, as a student of English teaching study program, I tried to investigate the students’ interest in writing descriptive paragraph because it will help the English teachers, especially those who teach at SMA Widya Nusantara Bekasi to understand students’ skills in writing descriptive paragraph.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study above, thus this research aims to answer the following question:

1. Does the students' writing skills improved if it is taught using Word Map technique?
2. How does Word Map used to improve students' skills in writing a descriptive paragraph?

C. Research Objectives

Based of the problem of the research above, so the objectives of this research are:

1. To see whether the Word Map technique improve students' writing skills.
2. To investigate how Word Map improve descriptive paragraph writing skills.

D. Research Significances

The result of this research can contribute some benefits to the researcher, students, teachers, and school. Here are the benefits for each factor:

1. The researcher: Provide input on the importance of Word Map as an aid in learning process.
2. To students: Increase activity, interest and enthusiasm in improving students' writing descriptive interest using Word Map.
3. To teachers: Provide a better alternative way to improve writing descriptive using Word Map. It would give them a description about how to teach the students to learn about English especially in writing learning, they would not be stuck only in some particular teaching strategies.

4. To school: It enhances students' knowledge in education, especially in English lesson.

E. Research Scope

This research focused on the using of Word Map to improve descriptive paragraph writing. The subject was tenth graders' at SMA Widya Nusantara Bekasi second semester. The action research was held on April-June 2014. The subject of this research is class 10.1 consists of 21 students at SMA Widya Nusantara Bekasi. In addition, the data will be collected through a questionnaire and test.

F. Operational Definitions

As an effort to clarify understanding in avoiding error drafting the study by research, the following points are explanations of operational definition that writer used.

1. Writing skills is a students' ability to write descriptive paragraph in a good grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling.
2. Descriptive is a description of the parts, qualities, characteristics of the topics in a paragraph.
3. A Word Map is a technique brainstorming to help students in stimulating, visualizing, forming, developing, organizing students' ideas in writing descriptive paragraph.

