

BUILDING STUDENT'S INTEREST IN WRITING BY *DESCRIBE AND IDENTIFY GAME*

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Abstract: The classroom action research of building students' interest aims to reveal the problem of students writing and their involvement in learning activities. Triangulation approach was administered as the technique of data analysis. The use of student and teacher observation sheet, field note, focus group interviews and questionnaire are instruments of data collection. By conducting three cycles of action research, the researcher found out that the improvement from cycle to cycle did not only occur to the teaching practice but also to the students' involvement and the increasing students' interest. *Describe* and *Identify* game facilitated students to be interest in learning writing. The activities of the game did not only encourage the students to write the descriptive text but also changed the students' perception of learning writing.

Keywords: Interest, *Describe and Identify Game*.

Abstrak: Penelitian tindakan kelas membangun minat siswa bertujuan untuk mengatasi masalah siswa dalam menulis dan keterlibatan siswa dalam belajar. Pendekatan Triangulasi digunakan sebagai teknik analisis data. Lembar observasi siswa dan guru, catatan lapangan, wawancara kelompok dan kuisioner adalah instrumen yang digunakan sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Setelah melakukan penelitian tindakan dalam 3 siklus, ditemukan bahwa terjadi peningkatan dari siklus satu ke siklus lainnya tidak hanya pada kegiatan mengajar tetapi juga pada keterlibatan dan peningkatan minat siswa dalam belajar menulis. Permainan *Mendiskripsikan dan Mengidentifikasi* membuat siswa tertarik dalam pelajaran menulis. Aktifitas daripada permainan itu tidak hanya mendorong siswa untuk menulis teks diskriptif tetapi juga mengubah persepsi siswa terhadap pelajaran menulis.

Kata Kunci: Minat, Permainan *Mendiskripsikan dan Mengidentifikasi*.

As a foreign language, English is considered having many difficulties for the students. English has different system compared to Indonesian. English recognizes many tenses including some aspects such as the sentence structure, types of clause, and change of verbs (regular and irregular verb). Therefore the Indonesian students face the problems to learn English, especially in learning writing.

In this study, it is found that the students prefers reading or listening to writing. Writing is considered more difficult than other skill. The students feel too

deliberate to write. According to Brookes & Grundy (2005:1), writing is more 'attended to' than speech. Writing, in this case, is more conscious of what we are doing and tend to stick more importance to correctness of every kind. However the reader do not present with the writer, so he or she cannot easily rectify misunderstanding on the part of the reader.

Although writing has the same importance with other skills, however, the students are not interest in it. The students are reluctant to do teacher's instruction in doing writing task. There are some reasons why the students of the writer's classroom are not interested in writing, such as: they are (1) difficult to express their idea, (2) not self confident, (3) inadequate linguistic competence, such as lack vocabulary, spelling, and grammar. Students, who are not interested in writing, will be reluctant to participate in learning activity. When they were given the writing test, most of them got low scores.

Writing, whatever the reasons, must be taught to the students as one of the skill in teaching language. In relevance with the curriculum (KTSP) applied at school, the purpose of teaching writing at junior high school is to make the students can reveal meaning and rhetorical steps in simple short essays using a variety of written language accurately, fluently and appropriately to interact with their surroundings in the form of descriptive and recount text.

However, to achieve the purpose of teaching writing, the teacher found the better strategy. Writing needs separate attention for how to teach and to make it to be interesting for the students. Making the learning enjoyable must be done by the teacher. It can done by breaking the monotony of learning process, making the tasks more interesting, and increasing involvement of the students (Donrey, 2001).

There are many method can be used by the teacher in teaching writing. However, the teacher should think which the method can build up the students' interest in the activity. If the method is interesting, the students will give their attention to the learning. According to the Hidi & Bascolo (2008:145), interest has been defined as motivational variable, as well as a psychological state that occurs during interaction between person and their environment and characterized by increased attention, concentration and affect. Then, Ainley, Hidi & Berndorf (2002:1) explained that if interest is connected to the learning, it is divided into three types of interest: individual, situational, and topic interest.

Teaching by media is intended to make the learning more interesting and help the students easier to understand about teaching material. Many media can be used in teaching, such as pictures, objects, tape recorder, computer, DVD, face book, you tube, game, and et. Therefore, game is introduced as one of an alternative solution to make the learning interesting. "Game" to mean an activity which is the learners play and usually interact with others (Wright, et al, 2006:1). Although a great deal has been written in the past about teaching writing strategies, describing their components and how these influence the learning, games offer a strategy to fulfill students' need for having an interesting learning.

Describe and identify game is intended to build the students' interest. It helps and encourages many learners to sustain their interest and work, and make the learning meaningful. According to Wright, et al (2006:2), games help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. *Describe and Identify* game is done refers to cooperative learning to reach some advantages, in which provide face to face interactive. According to Jones, et al. (1994:1), cooperative learning has special purpose. Some of them are: (1). Learners learn from one another, (2). Learners learn valuable social skills, (3). Learners usually enjoy working together.

METHOD

The form of the research is Action Research. The considerations to conduct Action Research because of the problems have been faced by the teacher-writer in teaching-learning process. This research is an attempt to solve the problems in the field of teaching in the classroom. It is hoped that this study brings benefit to both the teacher-writer and the students by providing them with new understandings that could help change the both a teaching and a learning perspective (Creswell, (2002:619). Furthermore, Mertler (2009:4) explained Action Research enables the teachers to observe their own classroom, for example, their own instructional methods, their own students, and their own assessment, in order to better understand them and be able to improve their teaching quality or effectiveness. The Classroom Action Research will be conducted in four main cycles. Its design follows Kemmis and Mc Taggart model, cited in Burn (2010:9). Then Burn (2010) explained in first cycle is developed in four steps that consist of planning, action, observation and reflection.

The subjects of this research were the students of grade VIII/F of SMPN 2 Sintang. There are 37 students were observed in this research. They consisted of 18 boys and 20 girls. This research was conducted at one of the classroom of SMPN 2 Sintang where the teacher-writer teaches the English subject. The classroom was chosen based on the sampling of the problem occurred when the teaching learning process. Research will be conducted in the second semester in academic year of 2014/2015, on August 2014. The first semester lasts from July to December 2014.

Tools for data collection were students observation sheet, teacher observation sheet, field note, questionnaire and interview of focus group discussion.

Triangulation technique of data analysis was used in this research to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. In order to describe the application of *Describe and Identify* game, the teacher designed the teaching procedures then applied them in cycles. Some pedagogical aspects of teaching skill were listed to enhance the teaching practice. The changing of procedures in cycles was reported. Furthermore, to see the students' involvement in learning process, the teacher-researcher used students observation sheet. A list of behaviors was set out and events were recorded as they occurred. The observers used a particular of time to note the behaviors and to count

them in number. Then, to know the progression of student's interest in writing from cycle to cycles, the teacher-researcher calculated the number of students from every item of the questionnaires. In order to analyze the data from questionnaire, the teacher researcher formulates a sets of questions or statements and provides 5-point scale. They are 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Additionally, the teacher-researcher used interview of focus group discussion. The interview revealed detailed information from participant about feeling of the topic discussed during the learning process. The information from selected participants was recorded and transcribed for further analysis.

The teaching Procedure of *Describe and Identify* game is described as follow: (1). The groups observe the objects, (2). The group write description of the objects, (3). The groups exchange their texts, (4). After reading texts, groups identify the objects, (5),The groups announce their findings, (6). The groups present the description in front of the class, (7). Celebrating the groups' success.

RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

Result

Before action research is done, the process of teaching writing in Eighth Grade Students of VIII F of SMP Negeri 2 was not interesting. The students did not show their attention to the learning. Some of them kept silent and another pretended doing writing activity. When the teacher controlled them, they shut their books. When the teacher checked their work, they could not write anything. It looked so difficult for them to write the sentences. The teacher gave the instruction to make descriptive texts individually by allowing them to use the dictionary. The topic is chosen by the teacher, and the teacher did not give the vocabularies related to the topic.

The students' interest has improved from one cycle to cycle. The improvement can be seen from the students' behavior that is including their attention, participation, and involvement in learning process. The increasing number of the change of students' behavior in every part of learning activity can be noted as the improvement of their interest in it. The enthusiastic behavior to finish their work is also as the indicator to show the students' interest in the activity. This idea is connected to Lipstein & Renniger (2007), clarified that an interest in writing is associated with the values of behavior that teacher notes when the students in the writing task.

Based on the questionnaire, it is known that the students' interest in writing activity increased from cycle to cycle. It is can be seen from the data in : Students' interest in writing and awareness of studying writing skills, Students' Opinions toward Writing Activities, and Students' Opinions toward Process Writing Materials.

In the first cycle, the students had shown their interest in writing by *Describe and Identify* game. From Students' interest in writing and awareness of studying writing skills, there were 9 students strong agree of it, 7 were agree, 5 were neither

agree nor disagree, 6 were disagree, and 5 were strong disagree (no one was strong disagree with the statement of “I think the learning writing is essential and useful”). Most students considered that writing activity is essential and useful, although many of them said that writing is not simple. The anxiety of the students reduced because of activities in the writing materials are interesting and persuasive for students to conduct. The data from average of Students’ Opinions toward Writing Activities, there were 10 students strong agree, 8 were neither agree nor disagree, and only 4 of them were strong disagree. While from Students’ Opinions toward Process Writing Materials, there were 14 students strong agree, however, only 1 strong was disagree.

Table 1
Students’ Interest in Cycle 1

Item	Category (in students)					Total (in students)
	5 Strong agree	4 Agree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	2 Disagree	1 Strong disagree	
I. Students’ interest in writing and awareness of studying skills						
1	6	8	10	6	6	36
2	12	8	8	6	2	36
3	5	5	7	7	12	36
4	7	5	8	6	10	36
5	13	9	7	7	-	36
Total	43	35	40	32	30	180

II. Students’ Opinions toward Writing Activities

1	10	12	10	4	-	36
2	12	14	7	3	-	36
3	7	10	10	5	4	36
4	14	12	6	4	-	36

5	7	6	9	6	8	36
6	7	4	5	10	10	36
7	7	10	10	5	4	36
8	14	9	7	5	2	36
Total	78	77	64	42	28	288

III. Students' Opinions toward Process Writing Materials

1	10	12	8	5	1	36
2	10	8	8	6	4	36
3	15	10	5	4	2	36
4	17	8	6	5	-	36
5	17	8	6	5	-	36
6	15	8	8	5	-	36
Total	84	54	41	30	7	216

In the second cycle, there were a significant increasing number of students' interests. From students' interest in writing and awareness of studying writing skills, most students showed that they like writing activity and aware on the writing activity was essential and useful. From 36 students, there were 17 students who were strong agree, 5 students were neither agree nor disagree, and only one of them was strong disagree. On Students' Opinions toward Writing Activities was known that most students liked doing writing activity in group, planning, discussing and choosing the topic, and sharing about the ideas will be written. From Students' Opinions toward Process Writing Materials item, it was known that most students had high interest because they liked the process of learning writing.

Table 2
Students' Interest in Cycle 2

Item	Category (in students)					Total (in students)
	5 Strong	4 agree	3 Neither	2 Disagree	1 Strong	

	agree	agree nor disagree	disagree			
I. Students' interest in writing and awareness of studying writing skills						
1	20	8	6	2	-	36
2	18	10	6	2	-	36
3	15	10	4	4	3	36
4	12	15	5	2	3	36
5	20	12	4	-	-	36
Total	85	55	25	10	6	180
II. Students' opinions toward writing activities						
1	25	5	6	-	-	36
2	25	5	6	-	-	36
3	25	5	4	2	-	36
4	22	8	6	-	-	36
5	16	8	6	4	2	36
6	11	8	7	6	2	36
7	23	10	3	2	-	36
8	20	8	2	3	-	36
Total	167	49	40	17	4	288
III. Students' Opinions toward Process Writing Materials						
1	15	10	7	3	1	36
2	7	10	5	8	6	36
3	25	8	3	-	-	36
4	28	6	2	-	-	36
5	28	6	2	-	-	36
6	23	8	4	1	-	36
Total	126	48	23	12	7	216

In the third cycle, the teacher-writer got an expected behavior of the students' interest. Based on the questionnaire of Students' Interest in Writing and Awareness of Studying Writing Skills, there were 32 students strong agreeing with the statement "I think, a writing activity is essential and useful". No one disagreed with it. From Students' Opinions toward Writing Activities, all students were strong agreeing with the statement of "I like doing writing task in group". No one disagreed with it and the statement "I like writing-process and I enjoyed with writing classes".

Table 3

Students' interest in cycle 3						
Category (in students)						
Item	5 Strong agree	4 Agree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	2 Disagree	1 Strong disagree	Total (in students)
I. Students' interest in writing and awareness of studying writing skills						
1	29	5	2	-	-	36
2	26	8	2	-	-	36
3	20	9	5	2	-	36
4	27	7	2	-	-	36
5	32	3	1	-	-	36
Total	134	32	12	2		180
II. Students' opinions toward writing activities						
1	36	-	-	-	-	36
2	30	3	3	-	-	36
3	29	6	1	-	-	36
4	33	3	-	-	-	36
5	15	17	4	-	-	36
6	20	6	5	4	1	36
7	26	8	2	-	-	36
8	25	9	3	-	-	36
Total	244	52	18	4	1	288
III. Students' Opinions toward Process Writing Materials						
1	24	9	-	3	-	36
2	5	7	7	7	10	36
3	30	4	2	-	-	36
4	28	5	3	-	-	36
5	31	4	1	-	-	36
6	31	4	1	-	-	36
Total	149	33	14	10	10	216

Based on the students' answers from the questions of interview number 1,2, and 5, the students had interest in writing by *Describe* and *Identify* game. From the interview number 1, it was known that the students did not like to learn writing without using game. On interview number 2, exactly showed that the students were interest in writing because of the writing activity was done by game. When the teacher asked whether they like learn writing by game. They answered," Like,

because it is fun”, “Like, because it is like playing”, “Yes, we like it because it is entertain us”. Their interest has improved from cycle to cycle. In the first cycle, it was not as good as on the second cycle. Moreover, the highest interest was occurred on third cycle. This condition was related to the topic or object for the learning activity. The students were not so interested when the teacher chose the books as the object to describe. On the second cycle, when the object was changed with pictures of famous people, such as the pictures of artist, the students looked more interested in writing activity. More students said they like doing the game because the topic was chosen make it more interesting. Furthermore, on the third cycle, the students looked very enthusiastic to describe the objects. In this case, the objects to describe were their own friends who wore various clothes. In this cycle, most students said “very like” Describe and Identify Game. They said the reasons, “karena lebih lucu”, “karena lebih menarik”, “karena lebih enjoy, mom”, “karena serasa sedang bermain”, “karena terasa asyik”, “karena sangat menghibur”. They were very satisfied when they could identify the objects had been described by other group. They were eager to present to the class. They all looked very happy during the learning on this cycle.

The students’ involvement has increased from one cycle to cycle. The increasing of involvement can be seen from the students’ behavior in learning process. The increasing number of students involved actively in every part of the activity indicated their interest in learning.

Based on the data from students’ involvement observation sheet, in the first cycle, the students had showed their interest in learning writing by game. Most of students paid attention to the teacher’s explanation and instruction, and soon joined to the group. They were also enjoyed observing the objects would be described. However, only a little number of students was very active in certain activity, such as: 7 students wrote the sentences that mean only one student in a group, 14 students read the text and tried to identify the object.

There are significant increasing numbers of students’ involvement in the second cycle. The teacher offered some objects to be described, such as the plans at schoolyard, the apparatus in laboratory, the books in library, or the pictures of famous people. The students were very happy when they had opportunity to choose the interesting object based on their discussion. They chose the picture of famous people, such as: picture of artists, athletes, and pictures of president from some countries. They looked more interested in the writing activity than the first cycle. Almost all of students were very cheerily responding teacher greeting, then they seriously listened the explanation and instruction given by the teacher. They were very enthusiastic to join in the activity, observed the pictures, opened dictionaries, shared the ideas, wrote the sentences, and identified the objects. Most of them wanted to have presentation to the class. However, the teacher pleased 2 students of each group doing on it because it needed 2 students only.

In the third cycle, the expected involvement of the students in writing activity was occurred. It can be shown from the increasing number of students who were very enthusiastic did every part of learning activity from the beginning until the end of the

lesson. They were very attentive and responsive to the teacher's instruction and explanation. They were also enthusiastic to finish their tasks. The objects they described were one of person in their own group. It was really close to their experience. When the activity took place, all students wore the other clothes. They enjoyed describing their friends with different clothes. Everyone was busy look up the dictionary and eager to give ideas and write the sentence. When they finished, the teacher asked them to present in front of the classroom, all groups were enthusiastic raised their hands to present first. All students of every group had presentation. They clapped cheerily for the group who had presentation successfully. At the end of the lesson, some students said spontaneously that they like to the learning. Some others said that the learning was very interesting and asked the teacher to do learning by that game again.

From the answers of the question number 3 and 4 on interview, it was known that they like involved in group work. The number of the students actively involved in the activity increased from cycle to cycle. They were more self-confident doing the activity. On the first cycle, they were still little reluctant to write the sentence and to present their work.

However, on the second cycle, they were more active. All the students observed the objects carefully. When the activity was on identifying phase, all students walked around to identify the pictures had been stuck on the wall. Furthermore, on the third cycle, when the objects would be described were their own friends, all of them write their own sentences, and then joined them becoming the descriptive text. When they were on the identifying phase, all group members stood up in turn. Moreover, when they were in the presenting phase, all students in each group went to the front to have presentation.

Based on the observation for the teacher, the implementation *Describe* and *Identify* game could be done well. Every cycle was evaluated and then the procedure was improved which shown in the table of implementation. In order to run the learning by *Describe* and *Identify* game, the teacher writer should be skill to organize the class well. in this case, the teacher should take role as an organizer. The teacher should consider how to start and how to demonstrate the game by giving the clear instruction. This idea is also consistent with the concept from Harmer (2012:146) who claim "when we are acting as organizers in order to set up and start an activity, we should engage the students in task, give instruction clearly, and how demonstrate the activity".

In implementing *Describe* and *Identify* game, the teacher writer always conducted the teaching by preparing lesson plan, observation sheet, and media. Every cycle was used different media. The procedures of teaching learning in the second cycle had few changes from the first ones. If the first cycle used books as the objects to be described, in the second cycle, the teacher used the media based on students' choice. Then, the teacher also changes the object as the media of the teaching for the third cycle. It was intended to encourage them to learn writing.

Discussion

The data shows that the *Describe* and *Identify* game can build students' interest in writing. In applying the game, the teacher tries to minimize competition, with the winners and losers, to avoid the students' feeling of pressure, but maximize challenge so that they do their best. According to Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (2006:1), competition may be stimulating for some, but it can also be destructive, making players anxious, with losers categorizing as 'no good' and the winners categorizing themselves as 'very good'. The students were very active and full attention to the activity because they do not feel merely study but they do and get something. Furthermore, Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (2006:2), clarify that games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it. The game really encourages the students to involve actively in writing when they are in the describe phase. Furthermore, during the activity, the students do not only learn writing, but also they do reading, listening, and speaking in presentation. They are enthusiastic to write to describe the object and very satisfied when they can identify the objects that have been described by other groups.

From the students' interview can strengthen perception that the students are interested in writing when the task is done by *Describe* and *Identify* game. Phase by phase of the activity can be done well. Moreover, the teacher runs the learning process in a relaxed situation. The relaxed situation is important to make them enjoyable in studying, which is stated in Lewis and Hill (1992:20), that the teachers should try to generate a relaxed atmosphere, inviting rather than demanding. Furthermore, the teacher is able to create a positive classroom climate, which is important to give a stimulant in building the students' interest in the activity. One of the positive classroom climates is the ability to establish rapport. This idea is relevant with Brown (2007:253) who claims, "Rapport is the relationship or connection you establish with your students, a relationship built on trust and respect that leads to students' feeling capable, competent, and creative". The students compare when they learn writing before using the game which is boring for them. They feel as if they get the pressure. The other students' answers on interview indicate that the students enjoy working in a group. Working in a group facilitates the students to solve the problem and encourages them to share ideas. The activities in the language classroom are very possibly performed in working groups, so that more students are directly involved in discussing, they can help each other, and create the good language learning with a relaxed and conducive situation (Lewis & Hill, 1992).

Furthermore, exchanging their works among the groups makes them more motivational and responsible to do their tasks well. They are encouraged to write as well as possible when they know their writing will be read by other groups. Responsibility for learning should be built to sustain students' motivation. As Harmer (2007:21) clarified that a key component in sustaining motivation is not only giving students more decision-making power but also encouraging them to take more responsibility for their own learning. Based on the interview, the students are more

interested to describe the real objects. Describing the real objects is easier for them than imaging unreal ones. Then, the students are proud when their writings are read by other groups. They also enjoy when they have presentation.

The students' interest in writing can be seen from questionnaire. The students like the writing activity. They are aware that learning writing is essential and useful. They give opinion about writing activity that they strong agree with writing in work group because their partners provide suggestions and information about idea what to write. The students feel happy when the learning process is a learner-centered approach. The clear instruction is important to make them understand to conduct the activity.

The teacher's pedagogical skill and classroom management is also one of the factors that give more support to improve the students' interest. The pedagogical skill includes the teacher's ability in designing the lesson, choosing the strategy, motivating the students, and maintaining fun situation when conducting the teaching. According to Richards cited in Richards & Renandya (2002:30) claimed that a success of the teacher in conducting the lesson aids depend on the effectiveness of lesson design. Then the affective is needed to consider in determining learning strategy. Richards & Renandya (2002) clarified that Learning strategy is including the affective strategy are those that provide to control emotions, attitudes, and motivation to develop a positive attitude toward learning material. Based on the observation, it is known that there is relationship between teaching practice, material, motivation, and students' interest in learning. The material or topic is selected to generate students' interest. As Ricards & Renandya (2002:311) clarified that the topic should engage the students' interest, based on their experience, and relevant with their life and engaging. When teacher improve pedagogical skill, there is the improvement of the learning from cycle to cycle, the number of students' expected behavior increase well.

On the contrary, the students still often make mistakes, especially in grammar. In this case, the grammatical mistake is not the focus of this research, even though the teacher also gives correction. It is just a part of the activity in giving reflection. The teacher is carefully in correcting the mistake not to make a demotivating effect. This statement is relevant with Harmer (2007:120) who claimed that most students will be very dispiriting if their written work full of red ink correction, because over correction can have a very demotivating effect.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The classroom action research on building students' interest in writing at the VIII F students of Junior High School of SMP Negeri 2 Sintang could be done successfully by *Describe* and *Identify* game. The students interested in every activity of writing class. The activities encouraged the student to be more active. The

increasing numbers of students' involvement is very significant from cycle to cycle. The classroom action research is conducted in three cycles can improve the teaching in the classroom, especially the teacher's pedagogical skill and classroom management. The teacher' pedagogical skill and classroom management play important role to make the success of teaching learning.

The use of *Describe* and *Identify* game can change the students' perception of learning writing. The use of *Describe* and *Identify* game in this research make the exciting learning. The students enjoyed the learning, they felt relax and fun, because the learning is designed in relax situation. It encouraged the students to cooperative learning. By working in group, they have become accustomed to discuss and share the ideas. *Describe and Identify* game in this research can make the students responsible to finish their writing, and self confident to have presentation to the class.

Suggestion

Describe and *Identify* game is recommended for the teacher as an alternative strategy to make teaching writing interesting. In order to make the material is easier to understand, the teacher is suggested to choose the material close related to the students' real life. The teacher has to give the rule and clear instruction how to do the game. The role of teacher is not to be a director but a facilitator, which is not always sitting in front of the class, but often walk around among the students and involve in their activity. In order to make the students enjoyable in learning, the teachers should maintain good atmosphere during the learning, including should have good attitude to the students.

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