Designing Caricature in Teaching Writing for EFL learners

Putri Ayu*1,2

1Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh
2SMP Negeri 1, Banda Aceh

*Corresponding author: ramadhanip037@gmail.com

Abstract

This study intended to examine the use of caricature to improve students’ descriptive text writing by a quantitative approach of pretest-posttest group design. Fulya & Yegen study revealed that the caricature can facilitate the students in learning English since it can help the students understand or access the concept information about the subjects. It is obvious that caricature can be one of alternative media used by the teacher in teaching English particularly teaching writing in EFL class. It is supported by Smaldino et al. who believed students can use caricature for attaining detail information and as useful resources for learning the subject. The researcher used caricature picture test as the instrument. The result showed that the mean score of the pretest was 50.25; meanwhile, the posttest was 79.03. It meant that there was an improvement on students’ ability in writing descriptive text after caricature was used. Therefore, it is essential for English teachers to give and provide the effective media that help the students elaborate and construct the idea for improving writing skill such as caricature.

Keywords: Caricature, writing skill, descriptive text

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of four basic skills that are very important in teaching and learning English. It is an important language skill because through writing, people can show their idea through composition such as textbooks, novels, newspaper, magazines, and so forth. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010) writing is expressing idea, concept, feeling, opinion and experience in certain place, time and situation in written form. Therefore, writing skill needs to be taught to the students in teaching and learning process. Harmer (2011) proposed that almost every aspects of common people’s life are carried out orally and refer to the ability to produce sentences grammatically appropriate.
Writing in English is not a simple matter because when students write something, they demonstrate not only their grammatical competence in English, but also their knowledge in rhetoric and communicative aspects. Therefore, most students find it is difficult to write in English because they are required to write on their own ways without any interaction or feedback.

It was found that there were many difficulties faced by the students in writing a text (Fata, et al. 2015). The first problem of students’ writing was the content of their composition; it was not relevant to the topic. The second problem was the students did many errors in content, vocabulary, and grammar. Mustafa and Samad (2015) mentioned that another problem that students had was their lack of motivation and they are not interested in doing writing activities. The students were usually asked to write sentences and paragraphs without being given some clues (Ningsih & Fata, 2015). It can be obstacles for them to express their ideas on well-organized writing. On the other hand, the students have difficulties in telling their experience.

In reference to the above explanations and the strong desire of finding the solution of these problems, the writer would like to offer caricature as a media in learning process in order to help students in English writing. Caricature is sequences of certain circumstances. Caricatures can create the learning process become interesting, enjoyable, and motivated the students in English. Another reason of using caricatures as media in teaching is caricature shows some situations of life that ease the student in writing. It can help the students to express their ideas by looking at the situation in the caricatures. Ozer (2007) explains that through caricature, the students are supposed to create their own way of thinking although the help of caricatures can ease the students in writing. Kete et al. (2009) also elaborate that caricatures can be designed as classroom materials which help learners in grasping the concepts in an entertaining and effective way.

Many pieces of research had been conducted related to the use of caricature in English learning. Fulya and Yegen (2013) revealed that the caricature can facilitate the students in learning English. It also can help the students easy to understand or access the concept information about the subjects. Then, this caricature helps students to understand the concepts better. It can make students fun and enjoyable in finding information through the interesting elements in different situation and it can increase students’ creativity. They further found that teaching and learning process was running well by applying the caricature because it was effective and meaningful students-centered education that can ease them to comprehend the sequences of circumstances on the caricature presented.

In addition, a study conducted by Ozer (2007) revealed that caricature improved students vocabulary and developed thinking skills. Another study carried out by the other researcher by Rofiqi (2013) showed that the use of caricature in teaching writing made students improved their abilities in writing skill because it could give students the strength to memorize the concept and situation on it. However, there is no research under framework of Fulya and Yegen (2013) of caricature in the EFL context in Aceh, thus this study would fill in this gap.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Writing

Writing skill can be defined as an ability to communicate all the ideas or imaginations into the form of structured pattern so that the readers may understand what the writers mean in their writing. Nunan (2003) highlighted that writing is the process of thinking to invent ideas, thinking about how to express into good writing, and arranging the ideas into statement and paragraph clearly.

Writing activity is essential in transferring thoughts or feelings in the form of symbol of language. According to Tarigan (2009) writing depicts symbols that describe a language that is understood by a person, so that others can read such symbols if they understand the language and the images. Students can express what they feel, and experience through writing. Meanwhile, Brown (2010) states that writing is a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words, to sharpen main ideas, and to give them structure and coherent organization.

In addition, Ismed (2013) revealed that writing is as a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words. As a process, Harmer (2010) offers that writing consists of the various stages of drafting, reviewing, redrafting and writing. Briefly, if a student is willing to be able to express his ideas in the written form, he needs someone else to guide and teaches him how to do so well and appropriately.

Writing is a complex process. It is a continuous activity that has more than one step, but it needs steps. Richards & Schmidt (2010) states that writing is viewed as the result of complex processes of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising and some approaches to the teaching of first and second language writing teach students to use these processes. Maxwell & Meiser (2011) say that writing is a complex skill. Writing skill needs a process which has four stages, they are pre-writing, planning, writing and revising draft, and writing the final copy to hand in (Fata, et al. 2015).

2.2 The Importance of Teaching Writing in EFL Context

Maxwell & Meiser (2011) said that teaching writing is a process not a product. It means that writing is an act through process in getting idea, proper vocabulary, good grammar and mechanic that produce something in a good writing. Unlike other skills, writing is a difficult skill for English Foreign Language (EFL) students. Rass (2010) stated that writing is not an easy skill to be mastered. In addition, Swales and Feak (2012) state that writing is not an innate natural ability but it has to be acquired through years of training or schooling because the writing skill involves acquiring a writing system, selecting the appropriate grammar vocabulary, thinking about the purpose of the text to be composed, and choosing of suitable styles.

2.3 The Use of Caricature as Media in Teaching Writing

Teaching writing is one of some difficult skills to be taught by many teachers in the classroom. Harmer (2011) adds that teaching writing is used as a practice tool to help students practice and work with language they have been studying. Kleeman (2006) points out caricature as media focusing on using pictures in teaching writing. Furthermore, he supposes that the teacher creates a new model of
the writing process to teach student to be more successful in writing, and it is caricature. Caricature is defined as media in teaching writing, which teacher brings caricature to students and distributes to students and then assigns them to write a short descriptive text in accordance with caricature to describe the contents the pictures.

In this regard, Keogh & Naylor (2010) also states that caricatures are effective tools which enable students to focus on the topic and participate actively in class discussions. They can write the inner thought of the characters that can be seen in the pictures. The aim of this activity is to get the students writing freely in an engaging way.

Caricature is one visual media that can be used in teaching of writing. In addition, Michael (2011) highlighted that caricature picture can translate abstract ideas into a more realistic form, can be easily obtained, can be used in different academic levels, can save teacher's time and energy, and can attract students’ interest. Fulya and Yegen (2013) stated that the use of caricature picture in the classroom provides a stimulating focus for students’ attentions and enjoy participating in caricatures. In short, students are motivated if the teachers use caricatures as media.

2.4 Teaching Descriptive Text Writing

Hammond (2010) stated that descriptive text is a text which says what a person or a thing in such a way that the picture is formed in the readers’ mind. It does not tell the readers that the flower beautiful; it shows them that the flower is beautiful. The reader feels that he is a part of the writers’ experience of the subject.

According to Zemach and Rumisek (2010), descriptive text explains how someone or something looks or feels and a process to explain how something is done. In addition, Oshima and Houge (2007) analyze that a good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place or person in his or her mind. Making a good descriptive paragraph, we have to describe the object more details so that the reader will be able to imagine our descriptions.
3. METHODS

In this research, the writer used quantitative research with experimental design. Gay et al. (2006) explains that experimental research is kinds of research that can test hypotheses to establish cause-effect relationship. Then, Mackey and Gass (2005) explain experimental study is a study in which researcher deliberately manipulates one or more variables (independent variables) to determine the effect on another variable (dependent variable).

In such a design, a single test group is selected and the dependent variable is measured before the introduction of the treatment. The treatment is then introduced and the dependent variable is measured again after the treatment has been introduced. In different statement, Mackey and Gass (ibid) point out that in an experimental study conducted upon one single studied group without a comparative group, participants are given a pre-test to ensure comparability of the participant groups prior to their treatment, and a post-test to measure the effects of treatment.

The writer designed two types of test after doing experiments namely O₁ as pre-test that is done before experiment and O₂ as post-test in which used after experiment. ‘X’ is symbolized as the treatment of pre-experimental research. It is suggested by Kothari (2004) while the difference between O₁ and O₂ (O₂ – O₁) was assumed as effect of the treatment.

In this research, population is the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Banda Aceh. As the sample of the experimental research, the writer chose only one class of the seventh grade students. In order to analyze the test result, the writer used some formulas. First, the writer analyzed the data which were collected from the test result. Here she used the certain statistical formula. The aim was get the range of the mean score, standard deviation and T-score by Ary et al. (2006).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

The result of the study showed that the use of caricature improves students’ writing skill in writing descriptive text particularly in content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanism. The results of this research were presented in the form of data. The data were collected from the students.

In order to obtain the required data properly, this study was conducted in three steps of activities. Firstly, the writer gave pre-test to 30 students. Then, the treatment was given for three times. In the end, the writer gave post-test. After all the data were collected, the writer used statistics formula to analyze the data systematically by tabulating them. To get clear description of data, the researcher conducted these following steps.

The writer gave pre-test for the student before teaching the students by using caricature. The pre-test was administered to the subjects under study in order to measure their pre-existing ability in writing skill. The score of pre-test was used to compare with the post test score in order to know whether or not the students have improvement in writing a descriptive text.

The highest score of pre-test was 62, there were two students was able to achieve it. The lowest score was 38 and there were three students who got that
score. The result of pre-test indicated that the students’ writing performance was under the expectation of the minimum passing grade (KKM); 75 points. All 30 students did not reach the KKM score. The mean score of students’ pre-test result was 50.25.

Meanwhile, the mean of each aspect of writing in pretest can be seen in table below.

**Table 1. Mean of Each Aspect of Writing Score in Pre-Test.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Writing Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>13.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>14.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>8.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanism</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evidenced that the mean of content was 13.71, the mean of organization was 14.46, the mean of grammar was 8.46, the mean of vocabulary was 8.15, and the mean of mechanism was 5.46. As the treatment process, the writer began the teaching by greeting the students. At the beginning of the teaching learning process, she introduced one example of descriptive text to the students. Then she explained the task to write descriptive text using caricature.

In next meeting, the writer reviewed the lesson of previous meeting about writing descriptive text. Then, she handed the students’ works to the students and had them ask if they still had a little understanding about the lesson. The writer gave one example of the text. The writer asked the students to discuss it about generic structure, language feature, and tenses of descriptive text. Afterwards, the teaching-learning process was continued with practicing to write descriptive text again using caricature.

The last of the meetings, the students edited the result of their writing practices at previous meeting if there were things that could not be understood. After the students fully understood the lesson, the writer got one student to give the other students’ previous writing that had been edited to the owners. Then, she chose student in group to write a text on the whiteboard to be discussed together.

The post-test was a final test that was given to the students to measure their ability in writing after applying caricature. It was conducted to know the improvement of students’ writing achievement in writing a descriptive text. The post-test score showed that the mean of post-test was 79.03. Based on the mean, there was a significant improvement compared to the pre-test mean. For mean of each aspect of writing score in post-test can be seen in the table below.

**Table 2. Mean of Each Aspect of Writing Score in Post-test.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Writing Score</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>19.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>14.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>14.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanism</td>
<td>7.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the table above, there was a great improvement on the students’ writing performance that 32 students reached the minimum passing grade (KKM) compared with the pre-test, this meant that 96% students succeed achieving the KKM score. This great achievement probably happened because the treatments or the processes of trainings were done properly. The highest score obtained by student in post-test was 87 and the lowest one was 72. It shows that the students got such a great improvement in writing descriptive text after being taught by using caricature. The differences of each aspect of writing score between pre-test and post-test could be seen in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Writing Score</th>
<th>Mean Pre test</th>
<th>Mean Post test</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>13.71</td>
<td>19.81</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>8.46</td>
<td>14.87</td>
<td>6.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanism</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evidenced that all aspects of writing score increased after the treatment and the most significant improvement was the organization aspect meanwhile the mechanism aspect is the lowest improvement, it is argued since mechanism put in 5% amongst another aspect categorization.

4.2 Discussion
After analyzing all the data collected by using statistical formula, the writer found that the poor achievement in terms of writing ability prior to the use of caricature. Based on the data calculated from both pre-test and posttest, the writer found that the degree of freedom (df) is 31. It was obtained by using the formula \((n-1)\) which is 32-1= 31. The critical value for \(df\) 31 at a particular significance (0.05) is 2.04. From the result of study, the \(t\)-test calculated is 12.72. It must be compared with \(t\)-table score (2.04). Then, \(t\)-score value is higher than critical value of \(t\)-table (12.72 > 2.04).

It is evidenced that it was obvious that there were differences between pre-test and post-test result. The mean score of pre-test was 50.25; conversely, the mean score of post-test was 79.03. The data were analyzed by using \(t\)-test formula. The result of \(t\)-test was 12.72 and \(t\)-table was 2.04. It can be summarized that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) of the research was accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. It indicated that the use of caricature improved students’ writing ability of junior high school.

The result of data analysis revealed that every aspect of students’ writing improved after being taught by using caricature. Students seemed to understand how to develop the ideas well. As stated by Sadiman (2009), caricatures can be such an important teaching aid that is helpful to give students a concentrated vision to the problem and to enable them to catch the ideas and information easily.

The three times treatments really gave positive effect toward the students’ performance. Based on all research findings, it was evident that teaching writing descriptive text by using caricature was really helpful. However, aside from those, it
A Discussion on Caricature in Teaching Writing by Putri Ayu

was also discovered the shortcoming of using caricature. It took more times and teacher patience. The students also might more focus on the picture instead of the subject matter.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The writer concludes that the use of caricature can improve students’ performance in writing descriptive text. This is proven by the progress of students’ learning outcomes in which before the being taught by using caricature, the mean score of students was 50.25; however, after being taught by caricature the mean score was 79.03. It is obviously appeared that mean score of post-test is higher than of the pre-test. The result of writing aspects found that the low level improvement of mean score in post-test is mechanism with percentage is 7.40, and the highest is organization with percentage is 22. This indicates that there is a significant difference in score between two means. It can be concluded that the improvement of the learning outcomes is due to the use of caricature.

It is merely essential that the English teachers should have faith to students during the teaching and learning English. In the context of teaching and learning writing, the teachers are suggested not only asking the students to write a text in English directly but also giving and providing the media that helps the students elaborate and construct the idea for writing such as caricature. Besides it is effective to improve students writing skill particularly in writing descriptive text.

REFERENCES


