

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on using the braindancing-and-downhillling technique of teaching English as a foreign language at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso. The technique is used to improve students' active participation and descriptive text writing achievement.

This chapter discusses some issues related to the topic of the research, such as the background of the research, the problem of the research, the objective of the research, operational definition of the terms and the significance of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Language is a cultural tool developed so that individuals can communicate with each other (Garcia, 1991:71). Language is not a mental phenomenon: it is behavior. Like other forms of human behavior, it is learnt by a process of habit-information (Littlewood, 1984:5). Nowadays, people learn many languages to communicate with people from other countries. By language, people can show their points of view to others. It is in line with Klein (1995:6) stated that language enables the child to express feelings, ideas, and wishes in a socially accepted manner.

There are two productive skills which are used as communication, those are speaking and writing. In addition, "writing is still considered a difficult skill

because it involves more mental and physical effort than speaking”(Fairbairn and Winch, 2011:71). Producing a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing is probably the most difficult thing there is to do in language (Nunan, 1999:271). It is because there are some aspects that should be involved in writing, they are, grammar, vocabulary, organization, mechanic, and content. Writing is difficult and very few people have ability to write an essay at one sitting in a form that is adequate (Fairbairn and Winch, 1996:62). In the physical aspect, writing needs longer time. A writer can not write well in a moment because writing is a process. Langan (2008b:8) said: “Writing is, in fact, a process. It is done not in one easy step but in a series of steps, and seldom at one sitting”. In line with this statement, Richards mentions the importance of writing to be learnt and taught. Richards (1990:100) states that yet good writing skills are essential to academic success and a requirement for many occupations and professions. It means that the students can use their writing ability to support their success in their daily life. They can apply for the occupations, document the important event through writing, and communicate through writing with people over distance. Writing is used either as evidence of successful learning or as a means of learning (Richards, 1990:100). It is because, in the written form a product can be seen, examined, and reviewed immediately. Although writing is difficult and is needed in almost any career today, but it can be mastered. Writing is a skill that anyone can learn with practice. It is like driving or cooking, that you can master with hard work (Langan, 2008:8). Based on curriculum 2006, the teaching English aims at communication in spoken or written form. In this research, the researcher emphasizes on writing due to two reasons. The first reason is writing is considered

more difficult than speaking because it involves mental and physical effort. In other hands, writing is needed in almost any career. The second reason is the researcher found that the students have problems in writing.

The preliminary study was conducted in the form of interview and pre-test. The interview was done on March 23, 2015 (see appendix 2). It was found that when the English teacher taught writing to the class, mostly she just explained the generic structure and the language features of the text and then asked the students to construct a text by imitating the sample text. Moreover, in doing the writing tasks, mostly the students were confused with the idea. They often said “what will I write about?”. In other words the main problem faced by the tenth- A grade students at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso were how to develop the idea and how to start.

Besides doing interview with the English teacher, pre- test and interviewing the students were also done to know the real problem. Pre- test was held on March 23, 2015. In the test, the students were asked to write descriptive text especially about animals. Based on the result of the test, it was known that the students’ problems were dominated by how to develop the idea and make good sentences (grammar). Other problems were about language use, vocabulary, and spelling. There were 68.75% students who achieved score below passing grade and only 31.25% who achieved the passing grade which is 75 (see appendix 4). After doing the test, the researcher interviewed the students. Mostly, the students said that they got difficulties in developing the idea. In addition, they also got difficulties in grammar and vocabulary.

To cope with these problems, braindancing-and-downhilling technique is used to improve the students' writing achievement and their active participation in teaching learning process. The technique is chosen due to two reasons. The first is because the main problem of the students are constructing the idea and getting start. They couldn't record they thought so that they loose their idea while writing the text. The students' problem is same with those of almost people. Fairbairn and Winch (2011:58) said that the most significant hurdle in writing, as with many other tasks – academic or otherwise – is getting started. Further, Fairbairn and Winch (2011:60) said that the hardest part of writing for the most people is the production of text. In addition, it is possible to cope with all those problems by using braindancing-and-downhilling technique. Means and Lindner (1998: 77) said “Braindancing helps you remember your thoughts; downhillling helps you get them down on paper”. The second reason is because the English teacher of that class suggested the researcher to use this technique. Actually this technique had been applied in the eleventh grade, but the teacher said that the result didn't achieve the criteria. The teacher wants to know whether there were some missing activities when she applied the technique.

Related to some theories, it is revealed that the use of braindancing-and-downhilling technique can improve the students' writing. Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted an action research entitled “Improving the tenth Grade Students' Descriptive Text Writing Achievement by Using Braindancing-and-Downhillling Technique at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso In the 2014 / 2015 academic year”.

1.2 Problems of the Research

Based on the research background above, the research problems can be formulated as follows :

1. How can the use of braindancing-and-downhillling technique improve the tenth grade students' descriptive text writing achievementat MA Darul Huda Bondowoso In the 2014 / 2015 academic year?
2. How can the use of braindancing-and-downhillling technique can improve the tenth grade students' active participation in the teaching learning process of writing descriptive text at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso In the 2014 / 2015 academic year?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

According to the research problems, the objectives of this classroom action research are to improve :

1. Students' descriptive text writing achievement by using braindancing-and-downhillling technique at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso in the 2014 /2015 academic year.
2. Students' active participation in the teaching learning process of writing descriptive text by using braindancing-and-downhillling technique at MA Darul Huda Bondowoso in the 2014 / 2015 academic year.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Terms

It will provide a guideline to understand the variable of the research to operational form. In this research, the variables are:

1. Braindancing-and-downhilling technique

Braindancing-and-downhilling technique is a technique where the students are asked to make a concept (spiderweb) and then they have to develop the spiderweb into a text.

2. Descriptive text writing achievement

Descriptive text writing achievement is the students' successful in constructing a descriptive text about animal by using braindancing-and-downhilling technique. To know the students' successful, the researcher analyzed the students' writing score. In addition, to get the score, the researcher conducted a writing test.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The results of this research are expected to be beneficial for the following people:

1.5.1 For the English teacher

The results of the research are useful for English teacher as information and input in teaching writing using braindancing-and-downhilling technique. In teaching learning process, he/she can try to improve the students' writing achievement by using this technique.

1.5.2 For the future researchers

The research results can be useful for other researcher as a reference to conduct a further research by applying different research design for teaching writing for example, using experimental research.