# THE USE OF PICTURE SERIES IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT ABILITY

**Oleh**

**Ferdian Achmad, Ujang Suparman, Tuntun Sinaga**

**FKIP Universitas Lampung, Jl. Prof. Dr. Sumantri Brojonegoro No. 1**

**Email: (ferdianachmad71@yahoo.co.id)**

**University of Lampung**

**Abstract:** This research is aimed to describe how picture series are best implemented in the English teaching and learning process to enhance students' writing in learning English and to describe the problems encountered during the process of learning using picture series in the class. The data were collected by observing the teaching and learning process during the implementation of the action, interviewing the students and the English teacher and and conducting discussions with the English teacher as collaborator. The result of the two cycles showed that the use of picture series was effective to improve the teaching learning process and the students' ability to write narrative texts. Picture series were really useful in terms of directing students to write in the correct organisation, generate students' ideas and enrich students' vocabulary.

**Keywords : writing, teaching writing, picture series**

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana rangkaian gambar paling baik diimplementasikan dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan tulisan siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris dan untuk menggambarkan masalah yang dihadapi selama proses pembelajaran menggunakan seri gambar di kelas. Data dikumpulkan dengan mengamati proses belajar mengajar selama pelaksanaan tindakan, mewawancarai siswa dan guru bahasa Inggris dan dan melakukan diskusi dengan guru bahasa Inggris sebagai kolaborator. Hasil dari dua siklus menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan seri gambar efektif untuk meningkatkan proses belajar mengajar dan kemampuan siswa untuk menulis teks naratif. Serial gambar sangat berguna dalam mengarahkan siswa untuk menulis di organisasi yang benar, menghasilkan ide-ide siswa dan memperkaya kosa kata siswa.

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of production skills to communicate or convey writer's ideas, opinions, imaginations, thoughts, knowledge, etc in written form by Khotimah et al., (2017). This is reasonable because writing involves fives aspects that should be considered; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. *Content* is an aspect of writing that refers to unity of the paragraph.

*Organization* is important in effective writing because it provides readers with a framework to help them fulfill their expectations for the text. A well-organized piece of writing supports readers by making it easy for them to follow, while a poorly organized piece leads readers through a maze of confusion and confounded or unmet expectations.). *Vocabulary* deals with word selection. *Language use* focuses on grammar, and *Mechanics* refers to punctuation and capitalization, mechanics is the conventions of print that do not exist in oral language, including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphs.

Because they do not exist in oral language, students have to consciously learn how mechanics function in written language. For example, while speakers do not have to be conscious of the spellings of words, writers not only have to use standard spelling for each word but may even have to use different spellings for words that sound the same but have different meanings. The same holds true for punctuation: speakers do not have to think consciously about intonation and pauses, but writers have to decide where to use a period instead of a comma and how to indicate that they are quoting someone's exact words.

Standard of competence at SMK, esepecially in writing, the students should be able to express the meaning in written short functional texts and short essays in the form of narrative text to interact with their environment.

Basic of competence at SMK, the students are able to express meaning and rhetoric step in the form of narrative text to interact with their environment accurately, fluently and appropriately in the context of daily life.

Based on the background of the study above, this study is conducted to answer the questions : how do the students learn to write a narrative text since the implementation of picture series? And what are the problems encountered the students' during the process of learning using picture series in the class?

Writing is a process of communication that uses conventional graphic system to convey a message to readers Linderman (1983). It deals with the ability to arrange the graphic system, like letter, words, and sentences of certain language being used in written communication, so the readers can understand the message or information. In other words, writing is used for communicating ones idea in written form to readers.

Then the researcher explored some information based on the picture series and discussed it together with the students. It makes students feel very comfortable when they answer the teacher's question. The pictures help them in imagining some stories in their mind. So, they answered teacher's question easily.

The last, the teacher helped the students in producing narrative writing. He gave them some pictures. He also controlled them, whenever they got difficulties in composing narrative text. The students enjoyed their imagination in creating story.

From the process above, we can see that picture series are one of the media that can be used to teach narrative writing text. Picture series have some advateges in teaching writing. One of them stated by Latuheru (1988) that picture series have several functions in the teaching and learning processes. First, picture series can translate abstract ideas into more realistic forms. Second, picture series are easily obtained, for examples, from schoolbooks, newspapers, and magazines. Third, picture series are usable in different kinds of academic levels. Fourth, picture series can save the teachers time and energy.

In supporting the above statement, Subhan (2011) the importance of pictures in language teaching. First, pictures talk more than words. Second, pictures can be used to teach vocabulary and grammar. Third, about

10 new words can be introduced throuh pictures.

Teaching writing is teaching the students how to express the idea or imagination in written form. In order to be successful in writing, the teacher has to guide the students carefully because they are creative in expressing their ideas, thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Besides, the material presented should also be relevant to their needs, interest, capacities, and ages until they are able to make composition with view or even no errors Finnochiaro (1964). Therefore, the teacher should select the suitable materials which fulfill their needs and guide them to write and express the ideas coherently in written form. In practicing their writing, they have to follow the steps to make their writing more effective.

**METHOD**

This research is classroom action research. According to Burns (2009) the main aim of Action Reseacrh is to identify a problematic situation or issue that the reserach participants face. The reseacrh participant was X Office Administration One at SMKN

1 Kotabumi 2016/2017 academic year consisted of 33 students as the subject of the research.

In collecting the data, the researcher employed two types of qualitative-based instruments as the major tools for collecting the data: observation and interview. Interview was conducted to the students after each cycle. It was an in-depth interview and was done by the researcher and the collaborator using an open-ended interview guideline.

During process of collecting the data, mainly by observation and interview, the researcher prepared a digital audio recorder and a digital camera for documenting the actions implementation.

Data analysis, according to Suparman (2009), there were four basic types of information to be collected in qualitative research: *observation* (either non-participant or participant), *interview* (ranging from semi structured to open-ended), *documents* (ranging for private to public), *audio-visual materials* (involving materials such as photographs, compact disks, and videotapes). But in this research

the researcher used the qualitative data through interviews and observation. It was used to meet the process of determining validity.

The collaborator and the researcher recorded all of the information in the process of teaching and learning during the actions by using interview guidelines and observation checklists. Everything related to the students' behaviour, progress and problems related to the teaching and learning process were noted. The researcher interviewed the students and the English teacher to get the data related to their perspectives in writing before, during and after the implemention of the actions research.

In addition, to analyze the quantitative data which were in the form of students' writing performance task scores, the researcher used a writing rubric score adapted from Jacobs et al (1981). The rubric rovides four aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics in which each of them was scaled from 1 to 4. Hence, the maximum score is 20, while the minimum score   is 5.

**RESULTS**

The research findings are sorted out based on the main focuses of the research including how this media improved students' writing skill in narrative text. The four stages are also described to show the process of achieving the purpose of conducting this research. Furthermore, the findings and discussion are described based on the result of analysis on the data collected from observation, interview, and students' work sample.

The first cycle was conducted three meetings on Friday, May 6, Thursday 12, Thursday 19, 2017. In the first cycle the researcher explained about the the generic structure of narrative text (orientation, complication and resolution). The researcher also explained about narrative and language features to the students. The researcher then gave examples to the students some sentences of past tense as a language used in writing narrative text in front of the class.

The researcher and the collaborator were discussing about the data collected in the first cycle. The researcher and the collaborator

discussed if the purpose of doing the research had been achieved or not after implementing the picture series activities. The researcher found some problems that had to be corrected as follow: the first, the students did not understand about the story because they did not want to analyze the picture series. They only got the story instantly without imagining what the story was about through asking the teacher what the events in the story were.

And the second, Picture series guiding writing narrative activity had not succeeded in making the students write good content of story appropriate with the generic structure chronologically.

After the first cycle had already been conducted, the researcher reflected the activity of process teaching and learning. The researcher found that many students were confused to imagine the contents of picture series. Otherwise, most of students still face difficulties in writing narrative text related to the language features of narrative text.

In conclusion, the first cycle was not perfect as expected. It needed to be revised, corrected, and improved in order to get the better result or improvement from the first cycle. Therefore, the researcher conducted the next cycle to revise and improve the shortages and weaknesses in the first cycle. The researcher had also prepared the technique as follow: the first, the picture series were added with some information so that students could learn more about which picture showed orientation, which picture showed complication, and which picture showed resolution with some word in the picture. The second, The researcher guided the students to analyze the picture series and gave some clues to conclude the story based on the picture series.

The second cycle was conducted in three meetings. All of the students were present. The students worked in group with guided picture series. Some students asked to the teacher if there were things that were not clear. Some students asked for the teacher's help only to make sure about something they wrote. It proved that the picture series improved the

students' skill in writing narrative text.

## DISCUSSION

### How do the students learn to write a narrative text since the implementation of picture series?

some student respond about the process of teaching English writing through picture series. It can be seen in the first question that there are 7 students (100%) who are interested in learning English writing through picture series. Then, in the second question there are 2 students (29%) who feel difficult when the process of teaching English writing through picture series and 5 students (71%) do not feel difficult.

Then, in the third question there are 7 students (100%) who answer yes about their teacher explain the concept and the roles of using picture series. In the fourth question of observation checklist, there are 7 students (100%) say yes their teacher help them when they have problems in writing process. In fifth question, there are 5 students (71%) who can make the narrative text easier when they use picture series in the writing narrative process and 2 students (29%) say they still have difficult in process of writing through picture series. In the sixth question, that there are 5 students (71%) who answer can improve their writing throough picture series and 2 studens (29%) who answer still have difficult and problems in writing through picture series. In the last question of observation checklist, that there are 7 students ( 100%) who feel happy when the learning process of writing through picture series.

### What are the problems encountered by students during the process of learning using picture series in the class?

• Problem 1: Technical Problem

This first category of the Problem happened during the process of learning using picture series. At that time, the teacher was going use the multimedia room to facilitate the process of learning. Then he had prepared LCD projector, laptop. In the execution, unfortunately the battery of the laptop was low then off. It would needed a long time to look for charger because the researcher forgot to bring his charger. Finally the researcher borrow another teacher who has same charger at that time. This drawback

had been reflected at the end of cycle II.

*Hasil dari implementasi picture series menjadi kurang maksimal juga dikeranakan dukungan laptop yang kurang mumpuni. Jadi menghabiskan waktu dalam mecari charger.*

(Results of the impementation of picture series was less maximum duo to the inadequate quality of the laptop. So the researcher lived out time to got charger)

• Problem 2: Time Management

There are found three items of Problem included into this second category. They are described in the reflections as follows.

Reflection of cycle I:

*Penggunaan picture series cukup bagus diterapkan untuk membuat siswa lebih fokus, namun ketika siswa diajak berpindah ruangan dari kelas mereka menuju multimedia room membutuhkan waktu.*

(The use of the picture series is pretty good applied to make students more focused, but when students were invited to move from the classroom to the multimedia room takes time.)

Refelction of cycle I:

*Antara gambar dengan gambar berikutnya membuat siswa menghabiskan waktu untuk menyatukan gambar menjadi sebuah cerita, sehingga proses ini membutuhkan waktu.*

(Between the image with the next image make students spend time to unify the image into a story, so that this process takes time. The techniques should be redesigned to be more effective and efficient.)

In those items of reflection, it can be known that time management is actually one of factors to be planned accurately. Some of the use picture series spend much time; therefore, accurate time management and appropriate selection of media and its models will surely make the time allocation more efficient.

• Problem 3: Environmental Disturbance

Environment is another significant factor affecting the success of the use picture series. There had been found one session in which enviromental disturbance hindered the use of picture series in the classroom while it was being performed. At that time some students were walking around the class repeatedly and speaking loudly. Based on the problem obove the students can not focus for their writing.

*Kondisi lingkungan sekitar juga berpengaruh terhadap hasil implementasi picture series. Di mana kebisingan dan gangguan suara-suara SS kelas lain dapat memecah konsentrasi SS dan mengganggu kejelasan kelimat-kalimat induksi yang diucapkan oleh G.*

(Environmental condition also affected the results of implemetation of picture series. Noise and interference from other students of another class outside could break the students' concentration and disturbed clarity of the induction sentences from the audio researcher.)

**CONCLUSION**

This action research aimed at improving students' narrative writing ability through the use of picture series. The actions were conducted from May to June 2017. Two cycles were done in six meetings. Each meeting ran for 90 minutes.

Students ability in writing narrative texts showed an improvement after the researcher implemented picture series to improve students' ability in the related topic. Picture series simplified the description of the generic structure of a narrative text. Pictures showed the differences between orientation, complication, and resolution clearly.

Besides, students were getting more motivated by learning through picture series. Their were also improved in terms of their ability in gaining ideas through picture series. At first, students might not pay attention to the details on the pictures. Then the researcher started to ask some question about details on pictures. As time goes by, students were accustomed to gain ideas in writing a narrativet text by using every details on the pictures as they can as possible.

Picture series could also help students to understand the plot of the story easily. Sequence of complication were also described obviously so that students did not find any meaningful difficulties in writing a narrative text.

The researcher would like to propose some suggestions to improve teaching learning process especially about teaching learning narrative text using picture series activity. The suggestions are explained as follow: the researcher suggests the English teacher to use media as often as possible in the instructional process.

One of media which can support the teaching learning activities well is picture series.

Picture series help to simplify information, give details, attract the students' interest, and interesting. Picture series is a kind of interesting medium. The media can be used to teach writing, speaking, vocabulary, and other skills. Therefore, it is better for considering to use picture series as media in teaching. However, other things should also be taken into account, such as the clarity, the size, the function, and the color of the pictures.

A successful teaching learning process should be supported by the students' active participation. Thus, students are suggested to be active in every activity so that they can completely get involved in the lesson

**REFERENCES**

Burns, A. 2009. *Collaborative action eesearch for English language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Finocchiaro, M. 1964. *English as a second language: From theory to practice*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Jacobs, H. D., Zinkgraf, S. A., Wormuth, D. R., Hartfiel V. F., and Hughey J. B. 1981. *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Massachusetts: Newbury House Publisher, Inc.

Latuheru, J. D. 1988. *Media pembelajaran dalan proses belajar mengajar masa kini*. Jakarta: P3G Longman Group UK Limited, 1993. ISBN 0582 74606 X.

Linderman, E. 1983. *A Rhetoric for writing teachers*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rachmawati, W., Zuhri, F., and Kurniasih, E. 2013. The implementation of picture series in teaching narrative for the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Ponorogo. *Ejounal Unesa*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

Subhan, B. 2011. *Practical theories of English language teaching and learning*. Yogyakarta: Debut Press.

Suparman, U. 2009. *Qualitative research for language teaching and learning*. Bandung: Arfino Raya Publisher.