

Practicing Cooperative Learning Model Using Picture Cube and Story Marker to Improve Writing Skills

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Abstract

Cooperative learning provides various activities in the form of individual and group works in teaching language skills. This research aims to improve the writing skills ability using cooperative learning model. This study was action research. The research was conducted in one cycle following the cyclical action research model consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The subjects of this research were 20 students in Class 8D. In this research, there was two types of data, it is qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data are analyzed following three stages of qualitative data analysis, namely data collection, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and final reporting. Meanwhile, the quantitative data cover students' writing achievement collected using writing tests. The findings of this research show that the students' writing skills are improved. They mastered key vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to compose sentences. The students kept on using writing strategies through cooperative learning model to understand a given text. The teaching and learning activities were interesting. Media used are Picture Cube and Story Marker to support cooperative learning activities. It is elaborated in discussion part of this article.

Keywords: writing instruction, cooperative learning, picture cube and story marker

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INTRODUCTION

The English teacher's purpose in middle schools is to develop the students' four language skills which are given to emphasis their capability in foreign language learning. One of the four language skills is writing which need to be developed in learning English as a foreign language in the level of middle schools (Sabarun, 2011). In secondary educational level, students learn different genres of writing like descriptive, expository, recount, and narrative (Haerazi & Irawan, 2019; Traga-philippakos & MacArthur, 2021). The mastery of the writing skills is crucial since constant evaluation either formative or summative is conducted to gauge students' acquisition of their writing skills based on their writing performances (Astarina, 2011). According to Istiqomah (2018), writing is a productive competence. In this competency, students are expected to communicate in writing to express thoughts and feelings specifically for the use of language are as a communication tool.

Writing proficiency plays a great role in conveying ideas accurately and effectively (Allen & Goodspeed, 2018; Han & Hiver, 2018). It is considered to be the most important and the most difficult skill because it needs a huge vocabulary, a good grammar and a

good awareness of the writing process (Samira, et al., 2016; Troyan, 2016). The aspects of writing especially to create 'the story', the results were often not in accordance with the expectations of teachers so that students can acquire these skills perfectly. Attention to these aspects are insufficient resulting in less students have the ability to convey ideas, opinions, and ideas in writing (Haerazi et al., 2020). Students choose not to do exercise and waiting the instructions from teachers.

Learning to write in English subject for Junior High School is one of the competencies to be taught in students. English learning syllabus for VIII Grade requires students to: revealing the meaning and rhetoric in their short simple essay by using a variety of a language write accurately, smoothly, and grateful to interact with the surrounding environment shaped recount and narrative (standards competence of writing, basic competence 12.2). The fact that students often complain and say it is hard when the teacher gives assignments to write. It is in line with what Troyan (2014) states that learners usually give up before they started to do the exercise. They did not look confident when given the task of writing. They feel fear that they cannot complete the task because they do not know what to write and how to start it and end it.

The existence of the problems fact faced by students, then the teacher was supposed to find ways so that students do not get discouraged when given the task of writing. Because of that reason the writer needs to figure out how to take advantage of 'Picture Cube' and 'Story Marker' as the media to interest the students in order to provide motivation for them to be able to write. In basic competency 12.2 one of competence to be achieved is write simple narrative text with rhetoric that is true, then the writer did some research about the use of 'Picture Cube' that contains fairy tales among other narrative such as Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Hansel and Gretel and others as a medium of learning and 'Story Marker' as a guide in writing a story draft before writing a complete story as a simple narrative.

Considering the indispensable aspects of writing to express thoughts, feelings, and opinions in writing, then the choice of strategies, models of learning and the learning technique is appropriate (Istiqomah, 2018). The learner's motivation has a significant effect on the learning results. On the other hand, cooperative learning claims to increase students' motivation. Subsequently, cooperative learning should enhance positive learning results (Milawati, 2015). Meanwhile, learning story writing objectives is to give the students skills to write a story in a simple narrative. The author was trying to choose the way that they want to participate actively in learning to write a story. It will make the students have a strong desire for learning English, a more relaxed atmosphere, more critical of meaning, and a greater amount of comprehensible input (Astarina, 2011).

Teachers as the key in the effort to improved quality of education are expected to increase its capabilities because of the rapid science and technology development. To treat the condition, it is expected teachers continually to improve models of the lesson. Active learning, creative, effective, and fun is an innovative learning model to increase the participation of students in following the learning in class (Haerazi et al., 2020). Using cooperative learning promotes better learning because of some advantages such as it has a greater motivation for learning, a more relaxed atmosphere, more negotiation of meaning, and a greater amount of comprehensible input (Istiqomah, 2018). Cooperative learning is also supported by recent research inspired by process oriented models of Second Language Acquisition as English language as a Foreign Language. The development of cooperative learning techniques as an important element in successful classroom management has positive effect of cooperative learning which is to capture the power of the peer group to motivate students to perform in the classroom activities (Adapted from Slavin: 2011).

For this purpose, it is important to have a discussion about how to train and increase the students' ability in writing simple narrative texts through cooperative learning model

using “Picture Cube” and “Story Marker” media on the VIII grade students of Junior High School. Perez (2013:35) states that Cubing is a model designed to help students think about some topics or ideas from many different perspectives (in Masril, 2014).

METHOD

Research Design

This research aims at using cooperative learning model with picture cube and story marker in teaching English writing skill of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Labuapi. Therefore, it is categorized as action research. Burns (2010) defines action research as a type of research in which a teacher serves as a researcher exploring his/her own teaching context through a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to identify a problematic situation considered worth looking and to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation to bring about changes and better improvement in practice.

This study adopt the cyclical AR model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010). Based on the model, each cycle of action research consists of planning, acting and observing as well as reflecting. The following figure illustrates the cyclical phases of action research.

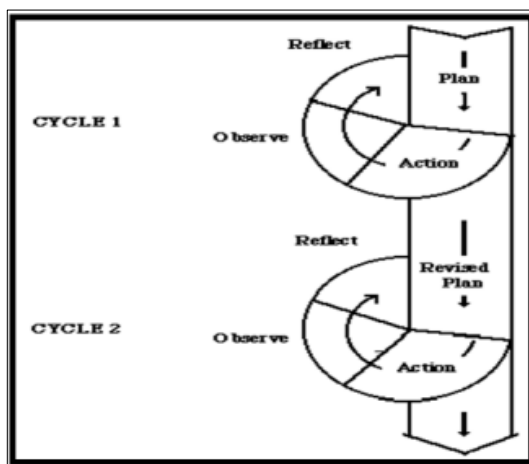


Figure 1. CAR Model Proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart Cited in Burns (2010)

Applying action research require the teacher to design a study in an area of interest and do it in the classroom. According to Kemis and McTaggart mentioned in Rosada et al. (2015) states that action research is a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practiced are carried out. The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members. This research is conduct at the middle schools. According to the schedule, English subject was taught four hours a week, 40 minutes/hour each, every Tuesday and Wednesday. The following table presents details of the schedule for the research implementation.

This action research adopt the cyclical model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010). Each cycle of this action research consists of four stages namely planning, action and observation as well as reflection. The elaboration of each stage is briefly summarized in Figure 3.5.

Table 1. Procedure of the action research

PROCEDURE	PURPOSE	ACTIVITY
Planning	Identifying problems related to teaching English in Junior High School, selecting the most feasible	1. Identifying and sorting problems related to writing comprehension based on the degree of importance.

PROCEDURE	PURPOSE	ACTIVITY
	problems to solve, and developing a set of action plans in lieu of the selected problems.	2. Planning a set of action. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding the appropriate action to implement. Making lesson plans. Preparing three research instruments including trying out tests.
Action and Observation	Taking into action some deliberate interventions arranged in the planning stage into classroom teaching-learning situations over an agreed period of time. Collecting data by observing systematically the effects of the action implementation and documenting the action implementation and the opinions of those parties involved in this research.	1. Administering pre-test at the beginning of Cycle I. 2. Implementing DR-TA in the class. 3. Administering post-tests at the end of Cycle I and Cycle II of the research. 4. Distributing observation sheets to the observer to be filled. 5. Conducting interviews to the other research members. 6. Taking photographs of the research process.
Reflection	Reflecting on, evaluating, and describing the effects of the action implemented in order to assign meaning to what has happened and to understand the issue explored more clearly as well as to improve the actions to be implemented in the next cycle.	1. Conducting qualitative and quantitative data analyses. 2. Planning the next action.

Research Subject

This research involves the researcher herself serving as the English teacher, a female English teacher of SMPN 1 Labuapi serving as the teacher collaborator who observed the research conduct in the class, and 22 students of Class 8C. There are some considerations why the researcher and the teacher collaborator finally decide to involve grade VIII students instead of grade VII students and grade IX students. First, the researcher could not involve grade VII students due to the implementation of a new curriculum named Kurikulum 2013 to this grade which is different from the one applied to grade VIII and grade IX which remain implementing the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP). Students of Class 8C were then selected based on the result of the discussion between the researcher and the English teacher. The subject of this classroom action research will be conducted on students in VIII grade of Junior High School. Students in this class amounted to 22 students as the subject of this research. The average achievement of English language, especially the aspect of writing in this class is still minimal even though they have one year studying English since at VII grade.

Instruments

The data of this study are qualitative data support by quantitative data. The qualitative data describe findings obtain during the processes of the action implementation. The data consist of observation sheets report in the form of field notes and interview transcripts, which are gains by conducting observation and interviews, respectively. In relation to the quantitative data, the data quantify improvements in students' reading comprehension ability. The data are present in the form of students' reading comprehension scores obtained by conducting reading-comprehension tests. In relation to these two types of data, a camera was also utilize to document the research

process through photographs in order to provide a clearer picture of the research process. Table below presents the data collection techniques and instruments that the researcher utilized to obtain those data above. Table 3.1: Data, Data Collection Techniques and Instruments.

Table 2. Instruments and collection technique

No.	Data	Technique	Instrument
a. Qualitative Data			
1.	Field notes reporting the teaching and learning process which focused on teacher's activities and student's activities.	Observation	Observation Sheet
b. Quantitative Data			
1.	Student's writing scores for the pre-test and the post-test.	Tests	Writing Tests (pre-test and post-test)

Observation is conduct in order to examine what happen in the classroom during the implementation of the action in the action stage. To do this, the teacher collaborator sit at the back, observing, and completing observation sheets on teaching-learning activities each meeting during the agreed period of the action implementation in class. There are two types of observation sheets, each to observe the teacher's activities and the students' activities. The results of the observation are report in the form of field notes.

Data Analysis Technique

The researcher conduct data analysis in order to get the answer to the research question proposed in the formulation of the problem, that is whether the cooperative learning can improve students' writing comprehension or not, as well as to find evidence to claim such improvements. As mentioned earlier, there are two types of data in this research. Consequently, two types of data analysis techniques must be employ, those are the qualitative data analysis technique and the quantitative data analysis technique. Each data analysis technique is explain as follows.

The qualitative data consist of interview transcripts and observation sheets report in the form of field notes. These data will analyze following three stages of qualitative data analysis suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) stated in Novita (2014), namely reducing data, displaying data, as well as drawing and verifying conclusions. In data reduction stage, the researcher will process raw data by sorting out important and relevant data from the unimportant one and using coding to label the important and relevant data. After that, the researcher will display the data. To help make the data understandable, charts and tables will be use. Then, conclusions to answer the research question will be made. To validate the research findings, the researcher will crosscheck the data found from observation with the ones gather from interviews. The following figure illustrates how each components of this qualitative data analysis relates one another.

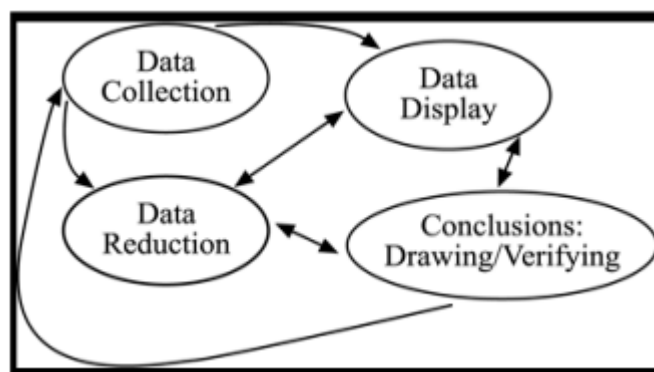


Figure 2. Qualitative Data Analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

The quantitative data are obtained from tests (pre-test and post-tests). The data are presents in the form of students' writing comprehension scores on simple narrative texts. To analyze them, the researcher employ descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to examine any improvement in relation to students' reading comprehension ability or not. In the research, researcher use measure of central tendency represent by the means of students' writing-comprehension test scores obtain from the pre-test and the post-tests. Then, inferential statistics in the form of pair-samples t-test will employ to assign meaning to the difference in those means.

In relation to the qualitative data, the validity is based on the five criteria proposed by Anderson et al. in Burns (1999) mentioned in Novita (2014), i.e. democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity and dialogic validity. However, in this research will only focus to the process validity. The process validity raises questions concerning dependability and competency of the research itself. They have something to do with the believability of the research findings. To meet this criterion, the research employed a type of qualitative data collection techniques which is observation to gather accounts of a teaching situation from three different points of views; the researcher herself, the teacher collaborator, and the students. In addition, the findings will gain from those qualitative data will also compare to the ones gain from the quantitative data. To ensure the data validity, each data collection instruments (both qualitative and quantitative data) will consult first with expert judgment.

In relation to reliability of the qualitative data, the researcher employs triangulation to obtain the trustworthy of the data collected. Burns (1999) suggests four types of triangulation, i.e. time triangulation, space triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. However, since this study only collects data in one class, therefore the time and theoretical triangulations will apply here. Time triangulation is employed by collecting the data over certain period of time. Using three data collection instruments, this study collected data in the planning, action, and observing stages of the research. Theoretical triangulation is apply by having the data collected during the research analyzed by more than one theoretical perspectives.

Regarding the quantitative data, the only instrument employed to collect the data was writing tests. As with the qualitative data, this research also ensured validity and reliability of the quantitative data by ensuring those of the instrument employed to collect the data. According to Novita (2014) the validity of the quantitative data was obtained from logical validity through content validity. Based on Brown (2004: 22) stated in Novita, content validity is defined as "the extent to which the assessment requires students to perform tasks that were included in the previous classroom lessons and that directly represent the objectives of the unit on which the assessment is based".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

This study applied classroom action research. Each cycle of action research consists of planning, acting and observing as well as reflecting. During the research, the researcher acted as the teacher while the English teacher served as the research collaborator. Based on the results of the test and interview, the researcher found some problems relating to students' writing skills. It can be presented in Table 2.

Table 3. Students' Learning and Writing Problems

No.	Category	Problems	Sources
1.	Students' Writing Skills	a. There were many students who did not pass the minimum criteria of achievement by 70 for English subject. b. The students had difficulties in writing English texts. c. They lacked vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, diction and spelling words. d. They hard to bring the idea into a sentence. From sentence into paragraph.	Interview and Pre-Test
2.	Teaching and Learning Activities of Writing	a. The teaching and learning activities were less interesting. b. The teaching and learning activities did not use sufficient media to facilitate the students. c. Some students had low motivation in learning writing.	Interview and Pre-Test

Those problems are identified in the previous section in which students need a way to improve their writing skills. Thus, the researcher and the English teacher agreed to use cooperative learning model with picture cube and story marker. The way this learning model solves the students' learning and writing problems can be illustrated in Table 4. It is decided along with the English teachers as real actions at the middle school.

Table 4. Teacher's actions to solve students' problems

No.	Selected Problems	Actions
1.	Some students had difficulties in writing English texts.	Applied the Picture Cube and Story Marker.
2.	They lacked vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, diction and spelling words.	Applied the Picture Cube and Story Marker.
3.	During the discussion activity, some students remained passive and still have no idea on what to write.	Using Cooperative Learning Model.
4.	The teaching and learning activities were less interesting.	Using Cooperative Learning Model.

Hasmyati and Suwardi (2018) reported that cooperative learning is a teaching strategy that involves students working in collaboration to achieve common goals. There have been many studies proving that cooperative learning could improve the quality of the learning process. According to Iskandar (2017), Picture cubes can also train students' ability for their imagination into the form of writing. The more sharply the power of imagination of the students, the more students developed in the view and draws an object. According to Novita (2014) on how to meet the first criterion of validity, the researcher gave opportunity to the students and the English teacher to express their opinions related to the writing skills. Then, the latter criterion of validity was met by working collaboratively with the English teacher as the collaborator to determine problems with the English instruction for writing skills and to find solutions to the problems.

Based on those steps, it was revealed that before this action research was conducted, the Class 8D students of SMPN 1 Labuapi remained having difficulties in writing English narrative texts. They lacked vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, diction and

spelling words. They also tended hard to generating ideas and giving connection between sentences into paragraph, lack of understanding the point of view from each character in the story. Those problems make writing frustrating for them which in turn may make them discouraged. In addition, the teaching and learning activities had not provided the students with enough opportunities to show and check their skill. Also, the use of media remained inadequate.

To solve the problems, Cooperative Learning model along with its accompanying actions such as using Picture Cube and Story Marker were then proposed to overcome the problems. Those actions were applied in one research cycle within two meetings starting from 18 – 20 February 2020. After implementing Cooperative Learning model along with its accompanying actions such as using Picture Cube and Story Marker, the researcher and the collaborator found changes both in the teaching and learning process of writing and in the students' writing skill ability. The findings of this research are discussed below.

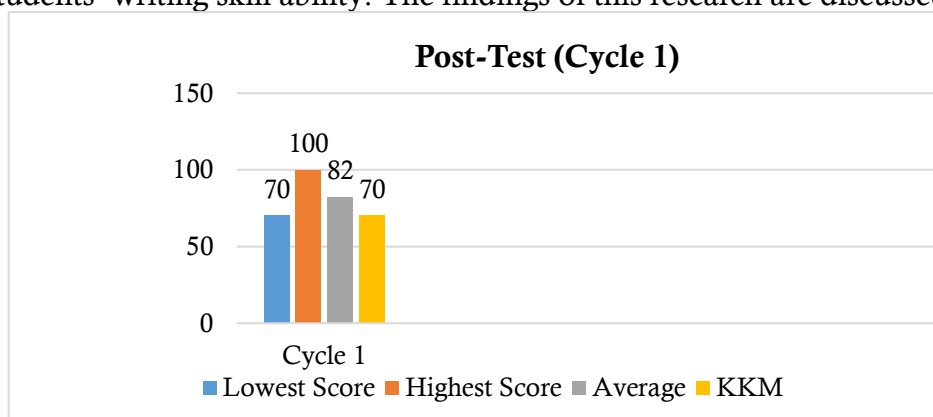


Figure 3. Results of a post-test on the writing skill

In general, the results of classroom action research relating to student participation include elements of attendance, cooperation, active learning using the Picture Cube and Story Marker to develop short and simple narrative text writing skills is successful. From the implementation of Cycle I actions that have been performed on the students, apparently resulted in an increase in the value of learning outcomes. This is proven after the score of student learning is compared between the initial conditions before the teacher utilizes the Picture Cube and Story Marker media with an average student writing value at 67. Then increased in Cycle I with a student's average value of 82 after the teacher applied the media.

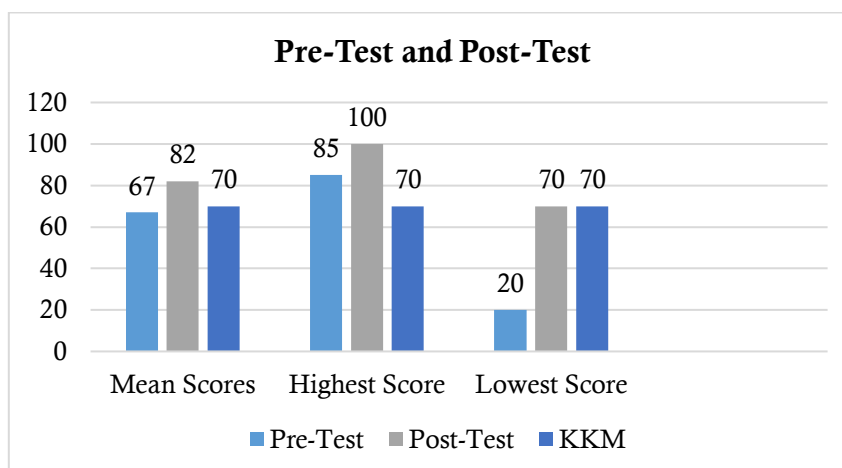


Figure 4. Result of pre-test and post-test for writing skills

In the diagram above, it illustrates that there is an increase not only on the average value but also on the acquisition of the highest grades of students. At the initial condition (Pre-Test) the highest value is 85, increased in the final condition (cycle I) of the highest value to 100. On the cycle I, all of the students are having optimal score on the KKM in class VIII D and there are only 3 students who still have an average score for standard KKM.

On the process of student learning activities in class VIII D before done the cycle I students tend to be passive (teacher center), then after giving treatment on cycle I become more conducive and active in learning activities at the classroom. Based on the student learning results seen that there are no more students who are afraid of writing, students are very happy and eager to do writing activities. Besides, there is significant increase in student participation in learning activities. At the beginning of initial condition the student participation rate starts at 55% which is the student's adjustment phase with the past learning model used to do by the teacher. Then in cycle I students' participation rate reaches 91% and students already adapt to the new learning model that teachers use and have achieved the success indicators of this action research. In reference to this discussion, Table 4 presented the summary of changes related to the implementation of the actions.

Table 5. Selected Learning Activities to Solve Writing Problems

No	Pre-Condition (Selected Problems)	Cycle 1
1	Some students had difficulties in writing English texts.	The students' writing skills ability continue to improve. They mastered arranging sentences into paragraph to write narrative text. Also, their mean score of the second writing skills post-test and the number of the students passing KKM continued to increase.
2	They lacked vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, diction and spelling words.	The students kept on using writing skills through Cooperative Learning model in writing narrative text. As their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge improved, they became more capable of using these writing strategies.
3	During the discussion activity, some students remained passive and still have no idea on what to write.	The students began to voluntarily participate in the discussion activity. The researcher did not need to call their name for their active participation.
4	The teaching and learning activities were less interesting.	The teaching and learning activities were interesting. Media of Picture Cube and Story Marker and Cooperative Learning model used in Cycle 1.

Based on the above explanation and with regard to the review of previous studies in Chapter II, this research goes along with the research by Slavin (2013), Gillies (2016), Iskandar (2017), and Hasmyati and Suwardi (2018) and that the use of Cooperative Learning Model Using Picture Cube and Story Marker can improve students' writing skills. In this research, the writing skills ability of Class 8D students of SMPN 1 Labuapi improved after the implementation of Cooperative Learning model. Likewise, improvements in the teaching and learning activities of writing also could be found.

CONCLUSION

This research on improving students' writing skills ability using Cooperative Learning model generates some essential findings. The findings consist of both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data deal with findings obtained during action implementation while the quantitative data quantify improvements in students' writing skills ability in the form of writing narrative text scores obtained from Pre-Test, and Post-Test. The students' writing skills ability continue to improve. They mastered arranging

sentences into paragraph to write narrative text. Also, their mean score of the second writing skills post-test and the number of the students passing KKM continued to increase. The students kept on using writing skills through Cooperative Learning model in writing narrative text.

As their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge improved, they became more capable of using these writing strategies. The students began to voluntarily participate in the discussion activity. The researcher did not need to call their name for their active participation. The teaching and learning activities were interesting. Media of Picture Cube and Story Marker and Cooperative Learning model used in Cycle 1. In terms of the quantitative data, the students' reading comprehension ability continued to improve. The mean scores obtained by the students in the pre-test and in the post-test were 67 and 82, respectively. The analysis results also suggested a significant improvement. In addition, the number of students meeting the minimum criteria of achievement (KKM) by 70 also kept on increasing. In the pre-test, there were only 12 students (60%) achieving the minimum criteria of achievement, in the post-test, 20 students (100%) met the minimum criteria of achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

the implementation of Cooperative Learning model supported with the use of Picture Cube and Story Marker is believed to improve not only the teaching and learning process of writing but also the writing skills ability of Class 8D students of SMPN 1 Labuapi. Cooperative Learning model supported with the use of Picture Cube and Story Marker could improve the favorable learning conditions that later improved the students' writing skills ability. Therefore, it is highly suggested that English teachers should use Cooperative Learning model in the teaching and learning process of reading. Furthermore, for the Cooperative Learning model to be effective, the teacher should stimulate students' thinking and engage them in discussing what they predict without dominating the discussion. Lastly, other researchers are in need to explore other language learning models to underpin the cooperative learning in teaching other language skills (speaking, reading, and listening skills).

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