

## THE USE OF PICTURE SERIES TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILL OF EFL LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

The study aimed at figuring out the improvement of the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud through Picture Series. Picture Series is a technique of teaching writing in this present study. The undertaking of the research was mainly based on the preliminary study. The subjects were the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud in the academic year 2019/2020. There were 30 subjects which consisted of 17 males and 13 females. The design was a classroom action research design. The research was carried out through implementing Picture Series in two cycles and obtained data were analyzed quantitatively from the pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2; then qualitatively from the questionnaire. The result showed that there was a significant improvement of the subjects' skill in writing narrative text, pre-cycle (58,10) up to cycle I then, it improved in cycle II (80,40). In addition, the questionnaire proved that the subjects' responses toward the implementation of the Picture Series were positive during the teaching-learning process. In short, the study showed that the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud in the academic year 2019/2020 could be improved through Picture Series.

**Keywords** : *Improving writing skill, picture series*

### Introduction

Writing is one of the four skills of learning English that should be mastered by English learners. By writing effectively in the English language, in the context of education, students are writing profanely becomes an important thing to measure their ability in a certain subject. Knapp and Watkins (2005:82) stated that writing is a relatively disciplined activity that relates to the discussion and working with peers. Discussing together with peers about what would they have to write is important. Moreover, Oshima and Hogue (2007:15) assert that writing was not a step action, it is an ongoing creative act. Writing is a language skill that takes long processes and needs creativity. Should through steps of finding the ideas into sentences, organizing the sentences into paragraphs, and revising the paragraph. All the steps are the way to get good writing results by doing continuous practices and exercises.

Zemach and Islam (2005:9) state that a paragraph is a group of about six until twelve sentences in one topic. To do it well, writers often have to recall their experiences on what they have ever read, listen, see, or done. Moreover, Writing is used to communicated

writers is ideas to the readers in the academic field as well as in our daily life. Based on the elaboration above, the English teacher focused on writing as the main focus of the teaching activities. the English teacher is expected to use an appropriate technique to improve students' writing skills especially in writing narrative text. The purpose of using an appropriate technique to improve their writing skill and to make them be able to express their ideas and their feelings in writing form correctly. However, it is important to view writing not only as a product of an individual but also as a social and cultural activity.

In academic learning, the ability to write well is one of the measurements of the students' success in learning a language. Hyland (2003:9) states that writing is a way of sharing personal meanings and writing courses emphasize the power of the individual to construct his or her own views on a topic. In addition, Patel and Jain (2008:125) argue that writing is an essential feature of learning a language because it provides a very good means of foxing vocabulary, spelling, and sentence pattern. Writing is not only about sharing ideas or developing messages. Writing skill can help the

writer to have a chance to communicate internationally, being a translator, or being an English novelist. Thus, since writing is highly important, English teachers must pay more attention to writing. It is necessary for the English teachers in helping learners to improve their thinking process of composing a well-written text. Besides, the teachers are expecting to offer a good technique that involves students' creativity and activity in the teaching-learning process.

English teachers would pay more attention to writing. It is necessary for the English teachers in helping learners to improve their thinking process of composing a well-written text. Besides, the teachers are expected to offer a good technique that involves students is creativity and activity in the teaching-learning process. In the present study, during the interview conducted at SMKN 1 Mas Ubud in the academic year 2019/2020 especially the students of X Ap2 class. It was found that most of the tenth-grade students had low proficiency in writing. Based on the interview with their English teacher, there is no specific technique that is used to improve the students writing skills. During the teaching-learning process in the class, the students were taught by lecturing methods in which the teaching-learning process concern on the teacher center learning.

Using appropriate techniques can motivate students' interest in the subject matter. To comply with the problems, therefore, it would urgently need an appropriate technique. The researcher carries out picture series in teaching techniques. Nunan (2004:58) states that many communication activities can be stimulated through the use of pictures. Moreover, picture series gives some inspiration to students when begins to write. Harmer (2007:182) argues picture could also be used to create a situation or context in the classroom. In the teaching and learning process, picture series can provide many benefits and given a real impression to the students. Picture series can help the students to ease them in comprehending the meaning of a word, a sentence, a text or a text. By using picture series, the students can imagine the objects or the situations. Therefore, in the present study, picture series would be applying as the technique to improve the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud.

Picture Series is proposing as a solution to help the students in preparing their planning in writing their ideas orderly and systematically. It is supported by Pratiwi (2016) stated that there was an improvement os the students' writing skills after being taught by using picture series. This technique would help students in developing their thinking processes. Therefore, the students would easily arrange their ideas into a unified and coherent written text. Thus, the researcher is interested to carry out research entitled "The Use of Pictures Series to Improve Writing Skill of Tenth Grade Students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud Academic Year 2019/2020

### **Research Method**

This present study used a classroom action research. Classroom action research is the study which concerns on the progression of the students' achievement in a particular subject based on the implementation of a certain technique. There is some expert is an opinion about classroom action research to support this research. According to Ary et al. (2010:513), in education, action research can be applied to such areas as curriculum development, teaching strategies, and school reform. Also, the goal of action research in education is to create an inquiry stance toward teaching where questioning one's practice becomes part of the work and teaching culture.

Meanwhile, Ferrance (2000:1) states that classroom action research is a process in which participants examine their educational practice systematically and carefully using the technique of research. According to Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010:8), classroom action research involves four steps in the cycle of research. The first step is called "planning", in which the step of identifying a problem or issue and developing a plan of action to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. The second step is called "action", where the researcher researches by doing the teaching-learning process in the classroom. The third step is called "observation", which involves the researcher to observe the effects of the action. The fourth step is called "reflection", where the researcher evaluates the effect of the action.

The tenth-grade students and would take X AP2 class were chosen. They consisted of 30 students as the subjects of this study. There were

two instruments used for collecting the data. The instruments were tests and questionnaires. The tests administered in this study were in the form of pre-test and post-test. The pre-test is designed to know the students' pre-existing ability before using picture series; furthermore, it is given before the teaching and learning process. The post-test is conducted by the end of each cycle to measure the student's progress after the researcher teaches the students through picture series. The result of the post-test is used as feedback and basic information to plan and carry out the action. the researcher would score the narrative text of the subject by using a scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is adapting by the researcher from Oshima and Hogue (2007: 196). The scoring rubric consists of five components, such as; format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and the last grammar and sentence structure. The other instrument used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is administering at the end of the last cycle to find out the subjects' responses.

Thus, there were considerably three kinds of data for the present classroom action research that is described as follows (1) data indicating the subject is pre-existing writing skill, (2) data showing the subject is progress of writing skill in form of descriptive text about a place and (3) Data showing the subject is responses in the implementation of picture series in teaching writing.

## Results And Discussion

The primary data were taken by using pre-test and post-test which were calculated in the form of mean scores. In addition, the research findings were gathered through collecting data in the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II.:

### Pre-cycle

From the result of the pre-test, it was found that the mean score of the subjects was 58,10. Furthermore, there were only 1 of 30 subjects who could achieve the minimum passing grade. It indicated that their writing skill was still low especially in writing narrative text. According to the result of the pre-test, the researcher found some problems with the subjects' writing. Most of the subjects could not develop their ideas into well-structured sentences. Moreover, they could not arrange their sentences into a well-organized narrative

text; Therefore, they were difficult to compose unified and coherent writing. Thus, the researcher conducted a cycle I and implemented Picture Series to improve the subjects' writing skills.

From the scoring rubric of the subjects' narrative texts, it showed clearly that they had problems in writing narrative text. They could not develop and arrange ideas to write stories vividly so their writings were less unified and coherent. Furthermore, they could not organize their sentences into well-structured writing. Moreover, most of them did not write the identification and conclusion in their narrative text. It meant that they could not fulfill the generic structure of narrative text completely. By seeing the results of the pre-cycle, the researcher conducted the first cycle to get a better improvement of the subjects' writing skills in writing narrative text.

### Cycle 1

In cycle I, it was found that the subjects' writing skills sufficiently improved since picture series was implemented. The mean score of post-test I was 72,70 and there were 14 of 30 subjects who could reach the minimum passing grade. In addition, a few of the subjects had been able to write a good narrative text. Furthermore, a few of them were able to write their ideas into unified writing where their ideas were in accordance with the topic chosen.

However, some of the subjects were still difficult to arrange their ideas in writing the story coherently. Moreover, some of them also did many grammar mistakes. Besides, their narrative texts used the same ideas with their friends' text; therefore, the ideas were not originally from them. Therefore, it could be concluded that the study did not yet reach the success indicator. Thus, in order to maximize the improvement of the subjects' writing skills, the present study continued to cycle II.

### Cycle II

In cycle II, the researcher revised over the weaknesses. The researcher provided a picture of a person to the subjects and also more vocabularies which were useful as narrative words. The results showed that the mean score of post-test II that was conducted in this phase was 80,40 and there were 27 of 30 the subjects who had reached the minimum passing grade. It

meant that there was a very significant improvement in the subjects' writing skills.

Almost all of the subjects had been able to write the narrative text based on the criteria. Most of them could write a folklore story in such vivid detail with various vocabularies. Moreover, most of the subjects were able to organize their narrative text in complete generic structure so their texts looked unified. However, a few subjects were still difficult to arrange sentences incorrectly. By seeing the result of post-test 2, it clearly showed that the research has successfully achieved the success indicator of the study. Thus, it meant that the study could be stopped.

As the supporting data, the questionnaire was delivered to know the subjects' responses toward the technique. From the obtained results, it was found that the subjects' responses toward Picture series were considered as positive as the data. It showed that more than 90% of the responses showed that the subjects responded that picture series was effective to improve their writing skill. Besides, most of the subjects felt comfortable in the teaching-learning process through picture series. In addition, the subjects' responses proved that picture series could make them arrange ideas more easily in which they could write their ideas from general to more specific detail. It had been proven that the subjects could practice more actively rather than asking them to receive more theories of writing. It was supported by Muhibbudin (2016) found that the students taught by using the picture series technique gave a significantly better writing performance than those who were taught by the traditional technique. Thus, it can be found that the teaching-learning process through picture series was more fun and it gave a significant contribution to improving their writing skill.

Based on the data and the elaboration above, the present classroom action research was regarded as successful to reach the success indicator. It noticeably indicated that there were significant improvements to the subjects writing skills from pre-test to post-test. The data were also highly supported by the result of the questionnaire which showed that the subjects' responses were positive through the application of Picture Series to improve their writing skills. In other words, the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud in the

academic year 2019/2020 can be improved through Picture Series.

### **Conclusion**

The present research design was in the form of classroom action research. It was conducted through two cycles which in every cycle had four interconnected activities such as planning, action, observation, and reflection. However, before the teaching-learning processes were taken, it was important to do the initial reflection to gain the pre-existing information the subjects' prior knowledge in writing in the pre-cycle. The objective of the present study was to figure out whether or not writing skills of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud could be improved through Picture Series with. Therefore, to get the data of the subjects' progress in writing narrative text, the researcher used instruments.

In conclusion, according to the crystal clear description of the data from pre-test to post-test and the questionnaire which have been elaborated, it showed that the significant Picture Series. Based on the result of the questionnaire, it showed the positive Responses of the subjects after applying Picture Series in the teaching-learning process. It also showed that the subjects more active after the implementation of the picture series. As a result, it could be conducted that the writing skill of the tenth-grade students of SMKN 1 Mas Ubud in the academic year 2019/2020 could be improved through Picture Series.

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