

IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN NARRATIVE TEXT USING PICTURE SERIES

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Abstract

Writing is one of the language skills in learning English that is closely related to the text and must be mastered by high school students. One of the texts is a narrative text which focuses on entertaining the readers. This research aimed to analyze the improvements in students' writing ability to write narrative text by using picture series. The research method is categorized as classroom action research which was conducted in two cycles. The student's writing ability is examined by checking five aspects of writing which was contents, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. This study found that the use of picture series in learning narrative text has had a positive impact on improving students' writing ability. Regarding the analysis of students' work from pre-cycle until cycle II, the data indicated that the use of picture series has an impact to develop students' writing through the improvement of the mean score in contents, organizations, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

Keywords: Classroom Action Research; Writing Ability; Picture Series

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the language skills in learning English. Writing skill is needed by students in learning and interacting in the community. Nunan et al. (2003:88) stated that writing is a process of thinking to find ideas, thinking about how to express them in good writing, and organizing ideas into clear statements and paragraphs. According to Sholeh et al. (2021: 455) writing is a productive and expressive activity because the writer can convey ideas, ideas, opinions, thoughts, feelings in writing and improve intelligence, developing creativity, growing courage, stimulating the purpose, and gathering information. In addition, Nurani & Saputri (2020:145) explained that writing is beneficial to be learned by students to improve their skills in stating their ideas and building up social relationships in communicating with others. In the Kurikulum Merdeka, there are elements of Capaian Pembelajaran in English subject, namely menyimak (listening), membaca (reading), memirsra (viewing), berbicara (listening), menulis (writing), dan mempresentasikan (presenting). Writing is one of the elements that must be mastered by high school students. According to Martha & Situmorang (2018), writing skill is a skill that must be mastered by students because it is related to the complete ability to organize ideas in spoken and written form. In addition, Chemir & Kitila (2022) stated that students are assessed mostly on their written projects and they should comprehend the general academic standards and writing aspects to progress in higher education. In the process of writing, there are some problems with making good writing. According to Martha & Situmorang (2018), writing is a skill that needs special concern, requires attention and practice. In writing these ideas, several supporting aspects are needed such as the accuracy of the language used, diction, and grammatical aspects. There are several elements of writing such as grammatical function,

content, and vocabulary. Moreover, there are mechanics of writing which are necessary to make a good text. Those are punctuation, capitalization, spelling, cohesion, unity, and organization. In writing, there are some elements that should be mastered in order to make good writing. Jacobs (1981) argued that there are five components of creating good writing, those are contents, organizations, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

According to Meiningsih (2021:191), the skills involved in writing are complex in which the students must notice the spelling, punctuation, word choice, and effective use of sentences. For students, writing is complicated, it is not simply language written on paper and needs more practice to develop it (Sulistiyowati & Surachmi, 2020). As a result, they got stuck in the process of writing. Writing activities are closely related to the text. In Phase E of Kurikulum Merdeka, there are various types of texts such as narrative, description, procedure, exposition, recount, report and authentic text. Narrative text is a text which focuses on entertaining the readers. According to Rachmawati, E., & Rachmawati, M. S. (2018), narrative text is a text which tells a story and entertains or informs the readers or listeners. By writing narrative text, the students can also express their ideas, feelings, and opinions. Narrative text is one of the texts studied in learning English. It is a type of text in the form of fiction that has function to amuse the reader. Sulistiyowati & Surachmi (2020) said that this type of text tells an event that is passed down from time to time such as legends, folklore and myth which carry out the moral value. Narrative paragraphs describe a story or a series of events that represent what people or things did during a certain period (Mughtar et al., 2020, p. 146). In addition, Mulyana (2022:147) explained that narrative text aims to entertain or please the reader or listener which has a structure, namely orientation, complication, resolution, and reorientation. Apart from entertaining the readers, narrative texts also imply life lessons in each story where students are expected to be able to understand the text and capture the moral values contained in the text (Durratul Hikmah & Mohammad Sofyan Adi Pranata, 2020, p. 28). Wibowo (2013) argued that some writing problems occur in the learning process and students find it difficult to put their ideas into written form, especially in writing narrative texts where students have to express their ideas to make a story that can entertain readers. Therefore, in studying narrative text, students need to understand its structure, language functions, and social functions. Learning media has a very important role in the teaching and learning process. According to Ratnasari & Zubaidah (2019:269), media is a learning resource that can transmit knowledge from educators to learners where differences in learning styles, intelligence interests, sensory limitations, physical disabilities or time distance barriers and others can be assisted by the use of educational media. Besides being able to attract the attention of students, the learning media can also convey the message in each subject which can improve the students' outcomes. One of the indicators of accuracy in writing is the result of writing where students must follow the procedure for writing before, during and after writing's learning process from the teacher (Kristyanawati et al., 2019, p. 192). Thus, the teacher needs various media to solve the problems.

One of the media is using picture series. According to Yuswanti (2013:192), the pictures that can be used as learning media are paintings, illustrations, advertisements, cartoons, portraits, caricatures, and picture series. Mughtar et al. (2020:146) said that pictures can be used as a media for an interesting story that encourages students to build up a story. Picture series is a series of activities or stories that are presented sequentially in the picture. These images are interconnected with each other so that they form a single unit or a series of stories (Putra, 2019, p. 233). Utami (2020:123) explained that picture as a media is a learning tool for delivering material from the teacher to students which aims to make it easier for students to understand the material, memorize the contents of the material explained by the teacher, increase the students' insights, help students interest in participating in learning, and as the facilitate activities in the learning process. The visual media is given in order for students to tell an event contained in the picture and build the imagination of students by seeing the picture. Pictures

basically can encourage students and raise their interest in the material that is being taught (Lukman Hakim et al., 2019). This picture series is used by the teacher to stimulate students to be creative to write the story. Magdalena et al (2021:337) stated that picture media can help students express the information contained in the problem so that the relationship between the components of the problem can be identified clearly. With picture series, students are trained to reveal the scenes and activities in the picture. Picture series that tell a whole story can be used as a flow of students' thoughts in composing a story (Sugiharti & Anggiani, 2022, p. 13). In addition, teaching with pictures is an excellent way for teaching writing to senior high school students and it is quite helpful to students in terms of producing and arranging their ideas in writing through the use of pictures (Sakkir, 2020, p. 2). Özdas & Batdi (2017) stated that students can modify, reuse, or even create new ideas or products and understand information obtained from different perspectives through creativity.

There are several studies conducted to analyze the use of picture as a media to improve students' writing ability (Ekarista, 2018; Gunantar & Transinata, 2019; Muchtar et al., 2020; Yusni, 2018). However, the research on the use of pictures in improving students' writing skill did not provide detailed information about the students' writing aspects such as contents, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. In particular, the researchers should go further to analyze the writing aspects to examine the students' writing ability instead of analyzing the final score or students' outcomes in students writing during the test.

Based on the result of the preliminary test and observation, the problems of students in learning narrative text are 1) students have difficulty in organizing paragraphs, 2) students are lack of ability to express their ideas in writing 3) there are many errors in spelling and punctuation. Therefore, this study intends to analyze the following research question: "How are the impacts of picture series in improving students' writing ability in writing narrative text?" This research aims to analyze the improvements of students' writing ability while studying narrative text by using picture series. The students' writing ability is examined by checking five aspects of writing. In order to make the learning activity more fun, interactive, and interesting, the researcher needs to do research to overcome student learning problems by using picture series as the visual media in learning narrative text.

METHOD

This research method is classroom action research. This study tries to examine a lesson plan, review learning activity, and reflect the interactions between teachers and students as well as interactions between students in the classroom. This classroom action research method emphasizes a true study of real situations in the classroom. According to Wardani & Wihardit (2016), classroom action research is research conducted by teachers in their own classes through self-reflection with the aim of improving their performance as teachers so that student learning outcomes can increase. The subjects in this study were students of class X-10 at SMAN 9 Malang in the 2022/2023 academic year. The class consists of 33 students. The English teacher was involved in this research as an observer. In addition, the observer also observes, evaluates, and provides direction to researchers in carrying out learning activities.

According to Arikunto (2007:9), classroom action research is conducted in two cycles in which the steps are a plan, action, observation, and reflection. This research was carried out in two cycles (two meetings in each cycles) with the following stages:

Cycle I

1. Plan

In the planning stage, things that need to be prepared include teaching modules consisting of teaching materials, learning media, learning methods, evaluation tools, student worksheets, and observation sheets.

2. Action and Observation

In the action stage, the activities are conveying the learning objectives, explaining the learning steps, and applying the media in the form of a picture series of the story of Malin Kundang in learning activities. The next activity is observation which is carried out simultaneously with the implementation of actions taken by observers using observation sheets. Observation activity includes observations of the situation of teaching and learning activities and the ability of students to understand lessons with selected media.

3. Reflection

Reflection is an analysis activity after the implementation of the planning, implementation, and observation stages is complete. The data obtained is data that must be processed so that it can be decided what actions will be taken next. The data obtained from the observations is used as material for study in reflection activities. The results of tests and observations of student activities are used as the basis for improvements and changes in the second cycle.

Cycle II

1. Plan

The planning stage in cycle II includes improving the reflection results of cycle I. The researcher plans several changes that must be implemented in cycle II and also prepares administrative needs such as teaching modules, learning scenarios, student worksheets, materials, and questions. The difference is in the presentation of material and assignments. The material is given with concrete examples of text and assignments with different picture series.

2. Action and Observation

At the action stage, the teacher provides narrative text material on picture series media about the legend of Roro Jonggrang. Observation of student activities and what has changed from cycle I.

3. Reflection

Reflection in cycle II is in the form of reflecting on the creativity and learning outcomes of students in learning English and conducting an analysis of student assignments.

In analyzing the writing ability, the researcher uses Jacobs, (1981) writing's aspects and scoring rubrics. The data is the students assignment in writing narrative text based on the given picture series. Jacobs (1981) stated that the scoring rubrics for contents, organizations, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics are categorized as excellent to very good, good to average, fair to poor, and very poor. He added that content is valued 30 points, language use is 25 points, organization and vocabulary are valued 20 points, and mechanics is weighed 5 points.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Pre-Cycle

Before conducting classroom action research, the researcher did the preliminary test to examine students' writing ability. The initial condition of students in X-10 during the learning process tended to be passive. The students lack motivation in learning English with text-based materials because the media is only the text of narrative.

Table 1. The Mean Score of Writing Aspects in Pre-Cycle

| Writing Aspects | The Mean Score |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Contents | 17,2 |
| Organization | 10,3 |
| Vocabulary | 12,5 |
| Language Use | 13,4 |
| Mechanics | 3,2 |

Based on the data above, the preliminary data of the students' ability to write narrative text is low. The class average in developing the content is 17,2. The average score of organization is 10,3 of 20 because the students' contents were less organized. The students struggle to use the certain or specific so the mean score is 12,5 of 25. The average score of language use is 13,4 of 20. It is because the students used the verb 1 instead of verb 2 in writing a narrative text. The score of mechanics is 3,2. The students have some errors of punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and paragraphing.

Cycle I

After data about writing abilities and student participation during the learning process are obtained from the pre-cycle stage, the data was proceed to the first cycle stage. Based on the problems that have been identified at the pre-cycle stage, the researcher planned a learning media of narrative text using a picture series with the material The Legend of Malin Kundang. In the implementation stage, two meetings were held on 8 November 2022 with the presence of 32 students and 15 November 2022 with 30 students present. The learning activity was conducted in 90 minutes in each meeting. The implementation of this learning refers to the teaching modules that have been prepared. The results of students' scores are presented in the following table:

Table 2. The Mean Score of Writing Aspects in Cycle I

| Writing Aspects | The Mean Score |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Contents | 23,4 |
| Organization | 14,8 |
| Vocabulary | 15,2 |
| Language Use | 17,8 |
| Mechanics | 3,7 |

The table above is the results of the average score of students' writing ability in cycle I which contains five aspects of writing. The content's score is 23,4 of 30. The students are more concerned with the theme or subject of the text and focused on developing their ideas. The organization's score is 14,8 which is categorized as average. The students still have difficulties in sequencing the coherence of each idea. The average score of vocabulary is 15,2. The words chosen by students are related to the topics or ideas even though some words may lack precession. The score of language use is 17,8 out of 20 which is categorized as good. The

language use is focused on structures of the sentences, the students are able to use suitable pronouns, articles, and prepositions but still get errors in using the verb 2 for writing narrative text. The mechanics' score is 3,7 out of 5. There are a few errors in paragraphing, spelling, and capitalization.

Cycle II

The stages in cycle II were made based on the learning improvement plan from cycle I. In this second cycle, the media used is a picture series with images of the legend of Roro Jonggrang. This cycle was carried out on 22 November 2022 with the presence of 29 students and 29 November 2022 with 30 students present. The results of students' score are presented in the following table:

Table 3. The Mean Score of Writing Aspects in Cycle II

| Writing Aspects | The Mean Score |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Contents | 27,2 |
| Organization | 17,6 |
| Vocabulary | 18,3 |
| Language Use | 18,8 |
| Mechanics | 4,2 |

In the data above, the overall data of students' writing ability are categorized as good to very good. The contents score is 27,2 out of 30. The students are able to develop the main ideas into the detailed paragraphs. The average score of organizations is 17,6. The students can organize the text based on the structure of narrative text. The vocabulary's score is 18,3 out of 20. The students are able to use effective words, do not use too many repetitive words, and can use specific vocabularies. The score of language use is 18,8 of 20. It indicates that the students already use the verb 2 in writing narrative text. The students also use the right pronouns and prepositions. The mechanics' score is 4,2 out of 5. The students are more careful in writing so there were only a few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing.

Discussion

Based on the findings, there are improvements in students' writing. The improvement of students' writing ability can be seen from the following table

Table 4. The Mean Score of Writing Aspects

| Writing Aspects | The Mean Score | | |
|---------------------|----------------|---------|----------|
| | Pre-Cycle | Cycle I | Cycle II |
| Contents | 17,2 | 23,4 | 27,2 |
| Organization | 10,3 | 14,8 | 17,6 |
| Vocabulary | 12,5 | 15,2 | 18,3 |
| Language Use | 13,4 | 17,8 | 18,8 |
| Mechanics | 3,2 | 3,7 | 4,2 |

In the pre-cycle stage, there were many errors in vocabulary, organization, language use, punctuation, and mechanics in students' writing. After the first cycle was carried out using picture series media for teaching narrative text, there were still some mistakes in the writing aspect. The most common errors are in the organization and language use of the text. Students

still have difficulties organizing ideas in each paragraph. In addition, students also use a lot of verb 1 compared to verb 2, even though writing narrative text should use the verb 2. In cycle II, the errors in writing aspects of narrative text have decreased. Based on the table above, there are the improvements in students' writing abilities. It can be seen in the students' average score of writing aspects. The students can organize the idea of the text, make good sentences related to the story, the story contains more detailed information such as where the story happens and how some things end up, the students can change the verb 1 into verb 2, use the suitable vocabulary better and be more careful in using mechanics.

There are several previous studies regarding the use of picture series and improving students' writing skills. According to Ekarista (2018), there are improvements of the students by using picture series of recount text in learning activities. In her research, the improvements are in students' attitude and students' writing skills after conducting the pre and post-test. Similar to his research, this study also found the improvement of students' writing ability. In Gunantar & Transinata (2019) research, the use of pictures also can improve students' writing skills and students' motivation in learning English. In their research, the photos in Instagram are used as learning media. The improvement can be seen from the score of tests conducted in the pre-cycle, until the second cycle. Yusni (2018) explained that the use of pictures enhances the students' writing ability in learning English. His research also found improvement in students' writing skill by seeing the results of students' ability to write narrative text in the initial data with an average of 65.4, in the first cycle with an average of 75, and in the second cycle an average of 90. Similar to their research, this research focuses on the improvement of students' writing skills through picture media by analyzing five aspects of writing. In Muchtar et al. (2020) research, the use of visual media help the students see the image of a story when they write narrative text. They use Picture and Picture Learning Model (PPLM) as a type of cooperative model that affect the results of students' narrative essays and writing skill. The result shows that the students can develop students narrative writing skills, students can express their ideas, explore and develop their abilities independently, and become more active in the learning process. In this research, the writer used serial pictures about the legend of Malin Kundang and Roro Jongrang. This is because the story is well known among students and the teacher hopes that this will make it easier for students to write down their ideas. In teaching writing, the teacher can use cognitive strategies and background knowledge related to the target culture in teaching various components to students so the student's writing can be clear, informative and understandable (Yüce & Ataç, 2019). Based on those findings, it can be shown that there was increasing in students writing aspects. Therefore the picture series can help students improve their narrative writing abilities.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the use of picture series in learning narrative text has had a positive impact on improving students' writing ability. Regarding the analysis of students' work from pre-cycle until cycle II, the data indicate that the use of picture series has the impact to improve students' writing by examining five aspects of writing. The media makes students focused on learning material, helping students develop their ideas, increasing student vocabulary, and picture series can attract students' attention. In addition, the students can organize the text based on the structure of narrative text, they are able to use effective words, use the right pronouns and prepositions, and are more careful in writing so they can write spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing correctly.

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