

The effect of using picture series to improve writing skills for third grade junior high school student's

Agus Riantono¹ | Setiawan Edi Wibowo¹ | Setya Raharja¹ | Nilma Zola^{2*}

¹ Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

² Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

Correspondence Email: nilmazola@fip.unp.ac.id

Keywords

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Abstract

Writing is one of the language skills that is considered difficult because students are required to express ideas in written English correctly. This study aims to investigate the effect of using picture series in improving students' writing skills. This study used experimental research in a junior high school. The results of this study indicate that the use of series of images has made a significant difference in improving students' writing skills. A series of images that are chosen appropriately can build students' interest and attention to the learning process. This will create an enthusiastic and lively learning atmosphere. Things that need to be considered are the selection of series of images that are easy and familiar to students to avoid irrelevant comments from students, series of images should not be funny images that will cause irrelevant comments and an uncontrolled classroom atmosphere. Giving students assignments individually can waste time in teaching writing using series of images. To avoid this, it is recommended to distribute copies of the picture series to students a week in advance, so that students can study the pictures early.

INTRODUCTION

The most important tool in communication is language. It is important for someone to master a language so they can express or share ideas with others, whether the communication is done orally or in writing. Perhaps for this reason the goal of language teaching is to provide certain materials that covers the four language competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Crestiani, 2019).

It is undeniable that learning a first language will be much easier than learning a second language, especially a foreign language. Learning a foreign language requires knowledge as a basic component of the language. Although knowledge of the basic components of the language is embedded in the learner's mind early on, the way to communicate in that language must also be practiced (Cahyanti & Ananda, 2021).

Writing instruction has been developing for thousands of years. However, until the early 20th century, writing instruction was rigid, focusing on rules and principles of proper writing. Students' essays were graded on their grammar, organization, and content that adhered to the rules of good writing. For example, in the Harvard University entrance requirements in 1874, students were asked to write compositions with proper punctuation, spelling, and grammar based on standard texts such as the works

of Shakespeare and Scott. In second language writing instruction, as in the mother tongue, the emphasis was more on compliance with rules rather than on creative expression. Students were more likely to imitate models than develop their own ideas, and writing ability was assessed based on grammatical accuracy and structure rather than originality or understanding of ideas (Nunan et al., 2003).

Writing is one of the four language skills considered difficult, as students are required to express ideas in written English accurately and correctly. According to Moses and Mohamad (2019), writing is considered the most difficult subject compared to other English subjects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling). The students must practice in expressing their ideas and feelings freely in written form. While expressing ideas in the mother tongue is not easy, expressing ideas in a foreign language is much harder. This presents a significant challenge for English teachers to improve students' writing skills. According to Nor Hani Misbah et al (2017), the overall, the findings show that there are three main themes that contribute to students' difficulties in learning English, namely lack of English vocabulary, the influence of the first language, and family socio-economic status. In using interactive learning methods, such as games, group activities, or the use of digital applications that integrate technology, can help students be more involved and motivated (Chitty & Hesp, 2024; Stocklassa et al., 2024; Uemi, 2024). This approach provides a more enjoyable learning experience, not just as a routine task that must be completed (Ang et al., 2017).

To build a conclusive learning environment, a teacher has important rules. He must be able to motivate students in such a way that the teaching and learning process can be livelier and more communicative. This must be attempted because student learning motivation determines the success of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Most importantly, teachers must create a warm climate in the classroom and choose the best techniques for teaching and creating student interest in writing (Alshakhi & Albalawi, 2024; Irwandi et al., 2024; Milton et al., 2024; Stocklassa et al., 2024).

Many techniques have been used in teaching writing as well as other subjects in English. Songs, games, pictures, and drama are media that are usually used as alternative techniques besides classical teaching, songs and drama are often used to teach speaking and listening while games and pictures are usually used to teach writing. According to Kuo Lee (2010) on Language Learning Strategies, it is explained that based on Rebecca Oxford's language learning strategies there are two main classifications, namely direct strategies, and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are specific ways that involve the use of language, divided into memory, cognitive and compensation strategies, while indirect strategies consist of metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. One implementation of direct strategies is the use of images and sounds as learning media (Collins, 2024; Ly & Trinh, 2024; Ngonkum & Deerajiset, 2024; Peng et al., 2024).

Pictures used in writing instruction can encourage students to study diligently. These pictures not only attract students' interest and motivate them to write, but they can also eliminate students' boredom (Antila et al., 2024; Félix Estrella, 2024; Goelzer & Marczak, 2024; Goshu & Gebremariam, 2024). In previous research, it was concluded that students' speaking skills increased significantly from the first cycle to the third cycle in high school students (La Ode, 2014). Another research findings also concluded that the results of their research showed the effect of applying serial image media on the Indonesian language skills of elementary school students (Mbasi et al., 2023). This study was focused on teaching writing for Junior High School students.

METHODS

The research conducted by the author employed an experimental design following Sugiyono's (2013) guidelines for experimental research in quantitative studies. The study utilized a pretest-posttest control group design to investigate the impact of using a series of pictures on students' writing abilities.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Sorong with a sample size adhering to Roscoe's principle, involving class 3A (30 students) and class 3B (30 students). Data collection included pre-test and post-test assessments to measure the effectiveness of the treatment, analyzed using a t-test to determine significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study is quantitative research with an experimental design to determine the effect of using picture series for teaching writing to students of SMP N 13 Sorong. The subjects were 60 students in class 3A and class 3B. The subjects were divided into 2 groups as the experimental group and the control group. Both groups were given a pretest before the treatment was given. After that, the experimental group was given treatment in the form of teaching writing using picture series during the lesson. While the control group was given instruction using the conventional method. After that, both groups were given a post-test. The data from the pre-test and post-test can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Results

	Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Experimental	N	30	30	0
	Mean	57.67	66.50	8.83
	Std. Deviation	5.208	6.715	1.507
	Median	60.00	65.00	5.00
	Minimum	50	50	0
	Maximum	65	80	15
Control	N	30	30	0
	Mean	54.67	56.33	1.66
	Std. Deviation	3.457	5.862	2.405
	Median	55.00	55.00	0
	Minimum	50	50	0
	Maximum	60	80	20
Total	N	60	60	0
	Mean	56.17	61.42	5.25
	Std. Deviation	4.637	8.083	3.446
	Median	55.00	60.00	5.00
	Minimum	50	50	0
	Maximum	65	80	15

Based on the table above, the average pre-test result of the experimental group is 57.67 and the average pre-test of the control group is 54.67. meanwhile the average post-test of the experimental group is 66.50 and the average post-test of the control group is 56.33.

From the results of the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk test, it was found that the pre-Writing Skill, post-Writing Skill, and the difference in Writing Skill were not normally distributed, so that the unpaired difference test used the Mann-Whitney test, and the difference in experimental and control Writing Skills was not normally distributed so that the paired difference test used the Wilcoxon test.

From the results of the difference test of Writing Skills on the results of the paired difference test between Writing Skills pre and Writing Skills post in the experimental group, a p value of <0.001 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained so that it can be concluded that there is a significant difference, in the control group a p value of 0.053 ($p > 0.05$) was obtained so that it can be concluded that there is no significant difference. In the results of the unpaired difference test between the experimental group and the control group on

Writing Skills pre, a p value of 0.018 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained so that it can be concluded that there is a significant difference, on Writing Skills post, a p value of < 0.001 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained so that it can be concluded that there is a significant difference, and on the difference in Writing Skills, a p value of < 0.001 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained so that it can be concluded that there is a significant difference (Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive statistic and normality Writing Skills

Writing Skills	Group	Mean \pm SD	Median (min – max)	p [£]
Pre	Experimental	57.67 \pm 5.21	60 (50 – 65)	0.002
	Control	54.67 \pm 3.46	55 (50 – 60)	< 0.001
Post	Experimental	66.50 \pm 6.72	65 (50 – 80)	0.101*
	Control	56.33 \pm 5.86	55 (50 – 70)	0.001
Difference	Experimental	8.83 \pm 5.52	10 (0 – 20)	0.003
	Control	1.67 \pm 4.42	0 (-10 – 15)	< 0.001

Description: * Normal ($p > 0.05$); [£] Shapiro-wilk

Table 3. Writing Skill Difference Table

Writing Skills	Group		P
	Experimental	Control	
Pre	57.67 \pm 5.21	54.67 \pm 3.46	0.018 [‡] *
Post	66.50 \pm 6.72	56.33 \pm 5.86	< 0.001 [‡] *
P	< 0.001 [†] *	0.053 [†]	
Difference	8.83 \pm 5.52	1.67 \pm 4.42	< 0.001 [‡] *

Description: * Significant ($p < 0.05$); [‡] Mann-Whitney; [†] Wilcoxon

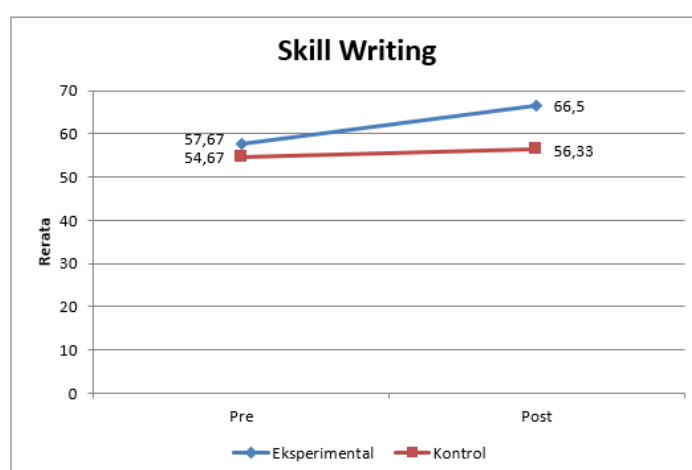


Figure 1. Differences in Pre-test and Post-test Writing Skills.

The application of learning using series of pictures has a positive impact on improving students' writing skills in English. Writing is one of the four languages considered difficult because students are required to express ideas in written English precisely and correctly. According to *Cowan*, writing is an activity with several stages or steps. The first is having an idea to start a writing. The second is the skill of composing words to form sentences and paragraphs in larger units so that ideas, facts, and impressions can be communicated to others. Therefore, even though someone has an idea, if he cannot compose words to make sentences and compose sentences to form paragraphs, he will not be able to write good writing. Steps grow and sharpen power creativity student consists of from stage prewriting where step this for detailing and describing the ideas to be become written form ([Suharti, 2021](#)).

From writing activities, it turns out have that writing is an important activity for student in developing thinking skills and deepening materials. Therefore, it is appropriate if writing becomes an important activity in every learning activity in school. That means, it is necessary to develop cross-curriculum writing activities considering: (1) writing, besides reading and listening, useful for learn, (2) write can help student learn information new in eye the lesson in progress studied, (3) writing facilitating problem solving strategies problem student for 1n.ngo.gunaisasi old and new information, (4) writing can teach student about awareness will partners (written) and develop important processes to be able to communicate in a successful way, (5) writing can teach student evaluate its criticality to the information they have learn, and (6) write can teach to student how they accept or analyze their personal experiences alone (Suyono, 2019).

Written language is also one of the language skills that must be mastered by someone. Everything that is in our minds can be expressed in the form of writing. Language is the knowledge that is in our heads, while writing is the manifestation of that knowledge in behavior. When someone writes, he can communicate with others. Communication still occurs even though there is a distance between them. However, there are rules that must be applied in writing to create the same understanding and perception among those who communicate. Writing is not only arranging words into sentences, but also must contain words that are meaningful and understandable. The reader must receive the exact same message as the author's purpose in writing the message even though they can't see each other. The message must be able to represent the presence of the author (Alrashdan et al., 2024; Birkenmaier et al., 2024; Hatchett, 2024; Isnin, 2024; Natafqi et al., 2024).

The use of learning media is anything that can be used to convey messages (learning materials) so that it can stimulate the attention, interest, thoughts, and feelings of learners (students) in learning activities to achieve certain learning goals (Sudatha & Tegeh, 2009). Using pictures can be a good starting point to help students develop their reading skills. Through pictures, students can get information that will help them predict what the text is telling. It makes students recognize the meaning of the text faster than they should know and sort it out from what they hear or read. He also states that there are many types of pictures that can be used in teaching and learning activities such as individual pictures, series pictures, and composite pictures (Hendra et al., 2017).

One of the uses of learning media that can be used to arouse students' interest in writing is through visual learning. Images are visual media that have been proven to provide a pleasant experience for students. As a visual media, images are considered an effective tool because they visualize something that is described. Images can trigger students' imagination and creativity as well as can used as a writing guide and to sharpen students' sensory details. The pictures are divided into individual pictures and series of pictures. Individual Pictures usually called portrait that is a detailed image of a person or a single object. While a series of images refers to "a collection of images depicting ongoing events and a story with the aim of " Consists of three or more images showing some actions or events in chronological order (Erniwati et al., 2019). In this study, the author only took a series of images that were truly familiar to students and had entertainment value. Thus, when this study was conducted, students could respond to the images presented automatically.

Usually, students are interested in new things. It will encourage them to learn more. Therefore, a new atmosphere must be presented in the writing class to eliminate students' interest and motivation in learning to write. There are several things that teachers must do in providing lesson using series of pictures so that that illustrations can be easily understood by students, including giving title and image captions with writing large enough to read, or omit it altogether and do the description verbally; the selected image There should be continuity of characterization, setting, and subject from image to image, with figures of uniform size and if the image taken from magazine or book, the illustrations should be simplified and parts that are not important for teaching purposes should be removed; the pictures themselves should be the

same size and installed in the same way to create a series (Zainatuddar, 2015). The results of this study obtained significant differences between classes that were given teaching treatment using picture series during writing learning in class. Picture series can help students generate ideas and build sentences in writing a paragraph. The use of picture series in teaching writing reduces teacher dominance in the teaching and learning process. Picture series give rise to different interpretations in students, so that they can provide opportunities for students to be actively involved in the learning process. Therefore, this will create an enthusiastic and lively learning atmosphere in learning.

Picture series that are chosen appropriately can build students' interest and attention to the learning process. Things that need to be considered are the selection of picture series that are easy and familiar to students to avoid irrelevant comments from students, picture series should not be funny pictures (Ambinintsoa & Castro, 2024; Felix Estrella, 2024; Lin & Crosthwaite, 2024; Wan et al., 2024). Giving students assignments individually can waste time in teaching writing using picture series; time may not be enough to complete the lesson (Biju et al., 2024; Kamyra et al., 2024). To avoid this, it is advisable to distribute a copy of the series of pictures to students a week in advance, so that students can study the pictures in advance. They can also identify difficult vocabulary and look them up in the dictionary. This way, time can be saved, and more time can be used for other purposes, such as improving sentence structure in English.

CONCLUSIONS

The use of appropriately selected picture series can significantly improve students' writing abilities at the junior high school level. An engaging and relevant series of images not only builds students' interest and attention to the learning process, but also creates an enthusiastic and dynamic learning atmosphere. With good planning, such as providing students with a series of pictures before lessons, this method can be an effective strategy in overcoming the challenges of learning to write.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Study concept and design: Agus Riantono. Acquisition of data: Setiawan Edi Wibowo. Analysis and interpretation of data: Setya Raharja. Drafting the manuscript: Agus Riantono. Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content: Nilma Zola. Statistical analysis: Agus Riantono.

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