

USING SEQUENCES PICTURES TO INCREASE MIDDLE-SCHOOL STUDENTS' ABILITY IN NARRATIVE TEXT

Amilah

Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Sampaga, Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received September 25, 2024

Revised December 01, 2024

Accepted December 20, 2024

Keywords:

Media;

Narrative Text;

Middle-School Students;

Sequence Picture;

Writing Ability.

ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research are to describe the improvement of students' ability in writing narrative text through sequence pictures as a learning media. This research focuses on two problem statements: how does the use of sequence pictures as a learning medium enhance students' ability to write narrative texts? What is the reaction of the third-year students at Public Middle School 1 Sampaga to the use of sequence pictures as a learning medium? The study also seeks to understand the students' reactions to the use of sequence pictures as a learning tool. The researcher conducted a classroom action research study that consists of two cycles. The research findings revealed that the students' proficiency in narrative writing remained low. The students' class mean score in the pre-cycle is 43.24. After giving sequence pictures as a learning media in the first cycle, the class mean score improved to 59.68. Then, in the second cycle, the class mean score improved to 76.96. It could be concluded that the third-year students at Public Middle School 1 Sampaga, especially in class IX D, have a skill to make excellent content, organization, and vocabulary using writing narrative text after applying sequence pictures as a teaching media.

Copyright © 2024 ETDCI.

All rights reserved.

Corresponding Author:

Amilah,

Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Sampaga, Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia

Email: mila.emely86@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the English language skills, which has an important role in communication and the learning process (Punar Özçelik & Yangın Ekşi, 2024; Tao & Yu, 2024). Writing is also a medium of communication. Sometimes people cannot verbalize their opinions, ideas, or feelings orally, but they can express them through writing. When the idea is written down, it can be examined, reconsidered, added to, rearranged, and changed for the next improvement. The other reason people need to write is to sort and organize, clarify their thoughts, and develop their ideas to make them easier for others to understand (Bean & Melzer, 2021). The researcher surveyed the classroom and found that students still struggle to create a "narrative writing text" because they don't know how to start writing or sequence the event. It can be caused by

many factors, such as students' inability to organize their thoughts, uninteresting learning media, and a lack of motivation in English class ([Grenner et al., 2020](#); [Nuraini et al., 2023](#)).

In the teaching and learning process, teachers should be creative in using media to teach narrative text ([Yilmaz & Goktas, 2017](#); [Yusuf et al., 2018](#)). To enhance students' ability to write narrative texts, teachers must implement effective strategies and utilize appropriate media to assist students in solving their problems. So, the researcher recommends using picture media, namely sequence pictures, to help the student develop their idea for narrative writing text. The sequence picture can represent a series of events and not only objects or static situations ([Wulandari et al., 2023](#)).

An image conveys a concept or feeling more effectively than words, paintings, drawings, or photographs of individuals or objects. [Nassaji & Fotos \(2011\)](#); [Liando et al. \(2022\)](#) categorizes pictures as a tool in language instruction. Visual aids are situations in which the student can see the object associated with the term under study. The image serves as a fundamental medium for conveying concepts. External hardware devices, like a digital camera or scanner, generate images instead of the computer itself. For various reasons, educators regard an image as an instrument. The notion that an image can communicate what may require extensive verbal explanation was articulated by a character; their understanding of an experience, coupled with the emergence of painting as a pedagogical technique, enhances students' proficiency in composing narrative texts. Secondly, they possess the opportunity to engage in linguistic exploration. Ultimately, the kids become deeply engaged with the new language. [Apsari \(2017\)](#) asserts that images are crucial for aiding students in recounting events or comprehending concepts, as they can depict locations, objects, and individuals. Images assist pupils in comprehending a broader context, which may consist of visuals, the activities of teachers, the responses of students, auditory impacts, and verbal communication ([Herrlinger et al., 2017](#); [Namaziandost, 2018](#)). The overarching context of the new language will be significant to the students.

Analyzing the efficacy of utilizing images to enhance students' writing skills and foster their creativity ([Fu et al., 2019](#)). Employing images to enhance pupils' writing ideas for various reasons: (a) Provide insights, (b) engaging elements to augment perspectives, (c) authentic items, (d) accessible comprehension, and (f) foster creativity.

Those problems were the major causes of the research to increase students' abilities in writing narrative text by utilizing pictures—the obstacles that are typically faced by the students, such as lack of proper word usage, grammatical structure, and vocabulary. These challenges inhibit pupils' creativity in English writing ([Derakhshan et al., 2020](#); [Farooq et al., 2020](#)). During instructional activities, educators predominantly employ traditional approaches and a restricted range of texts. The study aimed to use images in the writing process to enhance student interest and motivation in learning. Providing images will alleviate student boredom with writing, enabling them to explore and articulate their thoughts in written form ([Danker et al., 2019](#)). It also provides students with contextual understanding of a language, as writing necessitates the mastery of an extensive vocabulary. It provides a distinct point or stimulation for students during the

writing process, allowing them to articulate their views and enhance the book's content (Podobnik, 2017).

Additionally, a preliminary study was conducted by the author. In fact, many students struggled to write narratives because they didn't know how to say what they wanted to say or how to develop their ideas. So, they were not interested in writing a narrative. Classroom Action Research is carried out to improve the ability of students in the classroom that the teacher or the researcher assumes are still low, and it can cause a problem if it is not solved.

That is why using pictures is expected to motivate and increase the students' excitement in public middle school and also guide them to increase their ability in writing skills, especially to make a compelling narrative text.

2. METHOD

The researcher employed Classroom Action Research to address the students' challenges in developing ideas, initiating writing, and engaging with uninteresting media. Classroom Action Research is also known as teacher research. A teacher uses it to improve their practice and students' learning outcomes. We conducted this research at public middle school 1 Sampaga, specifically focusing on the 25 students from IX D. The researcher selected this class due to the students' persistent low grades, particularly around narrative text writing.

There were many designs of classroom action research that could be used to do the research, but the researcher decided to use a design that was developed by Stephen Kemmis and McTegart, considering that it is a simple model of the cyclical nature of the typical action research process and the steps were easy to understand and easy to do. It has four steps that can be described as follows:

1. Planning was the first step in this model. In this step, the researcher organized all the research activities. The researcher began by assessing the students' abilities prior to the action to gauge the extent of their improvement. Then, the researcher prepared the material that was given to the students while listing the meeting schedule for the action in two or three cycles.

2. Action. This step was time for the researcher to apply the material. It had two cycles. The researcher reached its target in the second cycle. So, the research has ended in the second cycle. At the end of each cycle, the researcher gave a test.

3. Observe. In this step, the researcher analyzed the fact or evidence that was found in the learning or teaching process. Then, the researcher collated the evidence to know the improvement, and the researcher shared or discussed it with the participant and the collaborator to make a better narrative writing in the next cycles. The researcher observed the activities and recorded them on the observation form.

4. Reflect. In the Reflecting step, the researcher evaluated the result of the cycles. Did the research have a significant improvement after the action of the cycles? The researcher ended because the result was gratifying; the researcher was implementing or applying the sequence picture in the other way to get a better result.

The researcher used a test and observation checklist in this research as the instrument for collecting data while considering that this method measured the students' ability to develop ideas to make excellent content, organization, and vocabulary and to know the students' response with the sequence pictures as a media. The kind of test that was given was a writing test. We asked the students to write a narrative based on sequential pictures. The observation checklist encompassed numerous aspects of the students' response, including participation, action, and reaction, which the researcher was interested in understanding.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Before beginning this action research, we administered a pre-cycle test. The purpose of the pre-cycle was to assess the students' ability to write narrative texts. The first meeting included a pre-test. In this meeting, the teacher did not teach as usual but just checked the attendance list and gave the test to the students. The teacher asked the students to create a narrative or story using their imagination, providing them with an opportunity to showcase their creativity. Finally, at the end of the meeting, the students finished their narrative writing and collected it from the researcher. The researchers found that the students' score on the pre-cycle was low. The pre-cycle class mean score proved to be 43.24. It means that the students' ability to write narrative text is still low, and they have difficulties writing it. Therefore, the researcher applied a sequence of pictures as a medium in teaching English, especially writing narrative text, to overcome the students' problems and improve the students' ability in writing narrative text. The following are the results of the achievement test from the pre-cycle until the second cycle, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Result of Achievement Test from the Pre-Cycle until the Second Cycle

No	Description	Pre-Cycle	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
1.	Mean score	43.24	59.68	76.98

Table 1 above showed the researcher compared the cycle 1 achievement with the cycle 2. The data showed that there was a substantial improvement from the cycle 1 mean score (59.68) to the cycle 2 mean score (76.96). And the result of the observation, which was done until the second cycle, showed an improvement in the students' positive responses in the classroom. It was found that almost all the students paid attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction about the sequence pictures, and they also got involved in making comments or asking questions about the explanation of the sequence pictures to either the teacher or their classmates.

The students' responses also showed improvement. The researcher checked it by finding that all students used various learning aids to understand the instruction and accomplish their task that was given by the teacher. Most students actively observe pictures to elicit ideas and write down what they deem important. Moreover, half of the

students actively formed small groups to engage in discussions with their teacher and peers. The shows the observation data in the following Table 2.

Tabel 2. Result of observation the Cycle 1 and the Cycle 2

No	Aspect	Cycle 1			Cycle 2		
		High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
1	Students' Attention		√		√		
2	Students' Reaction			√		√	
3	Students' Participation		√		√		

Discussion

The process of writing is a more complicated intellectual undertaking than others. In writing, the students need to be creative enough to generate ideas and goal-directed enough to organize those ideas into meaningful text in writing. So, most students think that writing is difficult. Using sequence pictures in teaching writing, especially narrative text used in this research, to help students to solve its difficulties in generating their ideas into meaningful text in written form.

1. The improvement of students' writing ability

When sequence pictures were incorporated into narrative writing, the data revealed an improvement in the students' achievement scores with each cycle. In line with the statement of [Lim & Childs \(2020\)](#); [Rahiem \(2021\)](#), pictures can stimulate and provide information that can be referred to in conversation, discussion, and storytelling. The statement by [Zull \(2023\)](#) that neurologists say 90% of the information the brain receives comes from seeing things backs this up. The brain understands symbols, icons, and strong, simple pictures quickly and naturally. Therefore, we can assert that our brain processes information more effectively when presented in visual form, such as pictures or images, than when presented in non-visual or verbal language. The results indicated that while students' scores in writing narrative text did not improve in the first cycle, they did improve in the second cycle. So, the researcher concluded that using sequence pictures as a learning media could improve the student's ability in writing narrative text. It can be proved by checking Table 1; it showed that there was significant improvement, whereas in the pre-cycle, the class mean score was 43.24. While the class mean score in the first cycle was 59.68, in the second cycle, it was 76.96. It had passed the target that had been determined by the researcher.

2. Students' responses to the use of sequence pictures as a learning medium

This research also analyzed the students' response toward the use of sequence pictures as a medium in writing narrative text. The students' responses in this case were attention, reaction, and participation. Based on the result of observation checklists, the data has shown and analyzed that there was a positive response of students toward the teaching and learning process. This aligns with [Ramdani et al. \(2021\)](#) assertion that visual aids can motivate students, encouraging them to pay attention and participate

actively. Pateşan et al. (2018) statement aligns with those who assert that visual aids hold students' attention and enhance the interest of the teaching-learning process. It indicated that teaching and learning activity became more captivating when the sequence pictures were presented.

In the first cycle, the students were still less attentive during the learning process, related to making comments or asking questions about the explanation and instructions about sequence pictures. The students also did not note whatever they thought was important; moreover, they made a small group to discuss. When they were asked to observe the pictures to elicit ideas, they did not do it actively.

The second cycle reported the contradictory data with the first cycle. The researcher presented more intriguing sequence pictures in the teaching process. The students gave more attention to it. So, the students' response toward the use of sequence pictures as a media increased positively. More than half the class participated in making comments or asking questions about the instruction or explanation about sequence pictures, whether to the teacher or to their classmates. Based on these data, it can be inferred that their positive attention, reaction, and participation created a good class atmosphere.

4. CONCLUSION

Using sequence pictures as a teaching medium can improve students' ability in writing narrative text, especially in content, organization, and vocabulary aspects. The data from the achievement test supported this. There were significant improvements in students' achievement in the first and second cycles. The first cycle showed that the students' mean score was 59.68, while their mean score in the second cycle was 76.96. Sequence pictures are an effective teaching tool, particularly when used in narrative text to increase students' engagement with the learning process. The application of this media yielded a positive response from the students. This statement was based on the data in the observation sheet that showed the students' excellent attention, reaction, and participation during the teaching and learning process. More than half of the students posed questions and utilized their various aids to comprehend the presented learning material.

As a suggestion, the results of this study can be a reference for teachers in improving student learning outcomes by using media. Further research suggests developing more interactive media to improve student learning outcomes and motivation, especially in English learning.

REFERENCES

- Apsari, Y. (2017). The use of picture series in teaching writing recount text. *Eltin Journal: Journal of English Language Teaching in Indonesia*, 5(2), 51-56.
- Bean, J. C., & Melzer, D. (2021). *Engaging ideas: The professor's guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Danker, J., Strnadová, I., & Cumming, T. M. (2019). Picture my well-being: Listening to the voices of students with autism spectrum disorder. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 89, 130-140.
- Derakhshan, A., & Karimian Shirejini, R. (2020). An investigation of the Iranian EFL

- learners' perceptions towards the most common writing problems. *Sage Open*, 10(2), 2158244020919523.
- Farooq, M. S., Uzair-Ul-Hassan, M., & Wahid, S. (2020). Opinion of second language learners about writing difficulties in English language. *South Asian Studies*, 27(1).
- Fu, Q. K., Lin, C. J., Hwang, G. J., & Zhang, L. (2019). Impacts of a mind mapping-based contextual gaming approach on EFL students' writing performance, learning perceptions and generative uses in an English course. *Computers & Education*, 137, 59-77.
- Grenner, E., Åkerlund, V., Asker-Árnason, L., van de Weijer, J., Johansson, V., & Sahlén, B. (2020). Improving narrative writing skills through observational learning: a study of Swedish 5th-grade students. *Educational Review*, 72(6), 691-710.
- Herrlinger, S., Höffler, T. N., Opfermann, M., & Leutner, D. (2017). When do pictures help learning from expository text? Multimedia and modality effects in primary schools. *Research in Science Education*, 47, 685-704.
- Liando, N. V. F., Tatipang, D. P., Tamboto, G., Poluan, M., & Manuas, M. (2022). Pictures as a learning media in teaching vocabulary. *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi*, 22(3), 1944-1949.
- Lim, H., & Childs, M. (2020). Visual storytelling on Instagram: branded photo narrative and the role of telepresence. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 14(1), 33-50.
- Namazandost, E., Esfahani, F. R., Nasri, M., & Mirshekaran, R. (2018). The effect of gallery walk technique on pre-intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 8, 1-15.
- Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. S. (2011). *Teaching grammar in second language classrooms: Integrating form-focused instruction in communicative context*. Routledge.
- Nuraini, A., Nurani, A., & Pratama, V. (2023). An Analysis of Student Difficulties In Writing Narrative Text: A Case Study At Tenth Grade Students Of SMAN 7 Kota Serang. *Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan (JKIP)*, 4(1), 20-27.
- Pateşan, M., Balagiu, A., & Alibec, C. (2018). Visual aids in language education. In *International conference Knowledge-based Organization* (Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 356-361).
- Podobnik, U. (2017). Stimulating prewriting skills with the help of pictorial images. *Teaching Artist Journal*, 15(2), 51-63.
- Punar Özçelik, N., & Yangın Ekşi, G. (2024). Cultivating writing skills: the role of ChatGPT as a learning assistant—a case study. *Smart Learning Environments*, 11(1), 10.
- Rahiem, M. D. (2021). Storytelling in early childhood education: Time to go digital. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 15(1), 4.
- Ramdani, A., Jufri, A. W., Gunawan, G., Fahrurrozi, M., & Yustiqvar, M. (2021). Analysis of students' critical thinking skills in terms of gender using science teaching materials based on the 5E learning cycle integrated with local wisdom. *Jurnal Pendidikan IPA Indonesia*, 10(2), 187-199.
- Tao, Y., & Yu, J. (2024). Cultural threads in writing mastery: A structural analysis of perfectionism, learning self-efficacy, and motivation as mediated by self-reflection in Chinese EFL learners. *BMC psychology*, 12(1), 80.
- Wulandari, D., Handayani, C., & Amanda, S. (2023). The Use of Sequence Picture to Improve the Students' Speaking Skill at SMK Negeri 1 Sei Kepayang. *Riwayat: Educational Journal of History and Humanities*, 6(1), 152-161.
- Yilmaz, R. M., & Goktas, Y. (2017). Using augmented reality technology in storytelling activities: examining elementary students' narrative skill and creativity. *Virtual reality*, 21, 75-89.
- Yusuf, Q., Yusuf, Y. Q., Erdiana, N., & Pratama, A. R. (2018). Engaging with Edmodo to

teach English writing of narrative texts to EFL students. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 76(3), 333.

Zull, J. E. (2023). The brain, learning, and study abroad. In *Student learning abroad* (pp. 162-187). Routledge.