

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL ON PICTURE AND PICTURE STRATEGY AT SMP YABES SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to: (1) analyze the classroom dynamics during the use of picture series in teaching writing, and (2) assess the improvement in students' skills in writing texts through the use of picture series. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing a classroom action research design conducted in two cycles. Data were gathered through observations, field notes, and interviews. The participants of this research were 34 tenth-grade students from SMP Yabes School, Tanjung Mulia, Medan. Findings revealed that the use of picture series enhanced students' ability to write recount texts, fostered an enjoyable learning environment, and increased their interest in writing. In the first cycle, 27% of students participated in learning activities, which rose to 83% in the second cycle, with students achieving good and excellent performance. These two cycles proved effective in improving students' skills in writing recount texts. The students demonstrated greater ability in developing story ideas and showed active participation and enthusiasm throughout the learning process. This indicates that the implementation of picture series as a teaching medium significantly improved the writing skills of Grade Ninth students at SMP Yabes School.*

**Keywords:** *Implementation Of Pictures Series, Writing Skill, Picture Strategy.*

### INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most widely taught languages worldwide. In Indonesia, it is a compulsory subject in senior high schools and the primary foreign language taught in schools and language courses. Among the four language skills taught in schools, writing is considered the most challenging. Writing involves expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions through written compositions, whether in the form of fiction or non-fiction (Putri, 2021). According to Hidayat (2019), writing requires cognitive processes such as reasoning, organizing ideas, applying grammar rules, selecting appropriate vocabulary, using proper punctuation, and structuring words into coherent phrases.

Additionally, Rahman (2023) emphasized that writing activities help students develop self-regulation and mastery of literacy skills. Through writing, students are encouraged to focus, think critically, plan, and articulate their thoughts effectively. Similarly, Yusuf et al. (2022) described writing as a productive skill essential to the learning experience, allowing students to express themselves creatively and systematically during their academic journey.

The importance of teaching writing skills to students is undeniable. As highlighted by Fitria & Nugraha (2023), teaching writing extends beyond teaching grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of alphabet usage; it also involves helping students understand text genres in a new language. The 2013 Indonesian Curriculum emphasizes that students must identify a text's social purpose, organizational structure, and linguistic features. They are also expected to produce brief oral and written texts. One of the text types included in the curriculum is the recount text, which serves to narrate past events (Mahendra et al., 2021). Writing activities are thus a critical component of English teaching, and teachers play a pivotal role in helping students enhance their writing abilities.

Preliminary observations revealed that many senior high school students perceive writing as the most difficult language skill to master. Common challenges include students' lack of interest in writing classes, limited vocabulary, and difficulty generating ideas.

Furthermore, these difficulties are often exacerbated by insufficient knowledge of writing techniques, leading to poorly structured compositions, monotonous writing, low enthusiasm, and limited understanding of grammar and punctuation rules. Consequently, writing remains a challenging skill for students to acquire.

To address these challenges, teachers must adopt innovative and engaging methods in writing instruction to help students overcome their difficulties. As highlighted by Hasanah (2024), the effectiveness of teaching is strongly linked to a teacher's ability to select appropriate and creative strategies. According to Rahim (2023), teachers who embrace their creativity are more likely to inspire creativity in their students, encouraging a more dynamic learning environment. In this study, the researcher utilized picture series as a tool for teaching recount text to enhance students' writing skills.

Several studies have explored the use of picture series in teaching writing. For example, Mulyani & Pratama (2022) developed a picture series specifically for junior high school students, concluding that the implementation significantly improved students' writing performance and engagement in the learning process. Similarly, Wijaya et al. (2022) found that picture series provided an engaging medium for teaching recount texts, offering students ample opportunities to practice writing while enhancing their writing proficiency. Kurniasari (2018) demonstrated that using picture series not only improved students' recount writing skills but also increased their classroom participation and created a more enjoyable learning experience. This is consistent with the findings of Firdaus (2023), who noted that picture series made learning more enjoyable and motivated students to participate actively in writing activities.

This research aligns with previous studies by focusing on the application of picture series as an effective medium for improving students' writing abilities. The approach aims to create an engaging and supportive learning environment that fosters interest and skill development in recount text writing.

Visual aids, particularly pictures, play a vital role in enhancing teaching and learning processes. A series of pictures refers to a sequence of images that narrate a story in a structured manner. These visual tools offer numerous advantages, such as enriching students' creativity and improving their writing skills (Ramadhanty et al., 2021). Rohaniyah and Mari (2022) emphasize that pictures can depict various elements, including places, objects, and individuals, thereby aiding students in recounting events or understanding information. Additionally, Setiati and Gemilang (2019) highlight that pictures provide a platform for students to interpret and expand their knowledge. This suggests that pictures not only help students grasp broader contextual meanings but also facilitate their learning of new linguistic contexts.

Writing, as a productive skill, holds significant importance in language acquisition. According to Apsari (2017), writing serves as a medium for communication, enabling individuals to convey thoughts, experiences, and ideas effectively. Ghazali (2010, as cited in Metaliana et al., 2022) further states that mastering writing skills involves integrating various linguistic components, such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, text structure, and genre, to produce coherent texts. Based on these definitions, writing proficiency entails the ability to construct meaningful written messages that readers can comprehend. At the senior high school level, writing encompasses diverse text types, such as recounts, narratives, descriptions, procedures, and reports. Anderson (1997) defines a recount text as a written account of past events or personal experiences, presented in chronological order.

Incorporating pictures as visual media aims to enhance the effectiveness and

efficiency of the teaching-learning process while improving the quality of learning outcomes (Rohaniyah & Mari, 2022). One key reason for utilizing pictures in the classroom is their ability to capture and maintain students' attention. Pictures often consist of engaging and interactive visuals that convey specific explanations or narratives (Raharjo, 2018). As such, this study employs picture series to motivate students in writing tasks and to offer structured guidance, assisting, stimulating, and supporting them in constructing paragraphs.

Based on the problem above, this research has the objective to prove whether pictures can improve students' writing skill and picture strategy. The title at this research is "Improving Students Writing Skill on Picture and Picture Strategy at Grade 9th of SMP Yabes School".

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopts a qualitative approach aimed at exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. Fraenkel et al. (2012) define qualitative research as an investigation into the nature of relationships, activities, contexts, or materials. The methodology employed in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR), which focuses on teaching writing to students through the use of pictures. As explained by Arikunto (2015), CAR involves identifying the causes and effects of a particular intervention and documenting the entire process, from initiation to the resulting impact. Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited in Leonardo & Silaen, 2022) describe CAR as a method that helps educators identify and address issues by implementing targeted actions using a teaching cycle.

Consequently, CAR examines both the process and outcomes within the classroom to enhance learning quality. Data collection in this study utilized four instruments: observation, field notes, interview questions, and document analysis. Creswell and John (2013) explain that observation involves gathering data by directly examining people and settings, typically recorded using an observation checklist. Field notes, according to Fraenkel et al. (2012), are detailed descriptions compiled during observations or interviews.

For interviews, the study employs an open-ended format to encourage in-depth responses. Fraenkel et al. (2012) also state that interviews consist of questions tailored to elicit specific information from participants. To ensure data validity, the study applies triangulation, which Fraenkel et al. (2012) describe as a method of verifying observations by cross-checking information from multiple sources.

The data in this study were analyzed using a descriptive approach. Qualitative data were employed to evaluate students' scores and describe the classroom environment during the teaching process. This approach aligns with the concept developed by Kemmis et al. (2014), and the research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle involved four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. These iterative cycles aimed to address and resolve the issues identified during the study. Prior to initiating the first cycle, an orientation phase was conducted to assess students' baseline knowledge of writing skills. After the completion of the first cycle, any new or unresolved issues were identified, necessitating the implementation of a second cycle, following the same procedure and incorporating picture series as a teaching tool.

The participants in this study were ninth-grade students at SMP Yabes School, Medan, consisting of 30 individuals. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select the participants. As noted by Patton (2015), purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific criteria determined by the researcher, ensuring that they are knowledgeable and reliable sources of data. This approach enabled the study to gather

accurate and relevant information from participants who met the predefined criteria.

## RESULT AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of data gathered from observations, field notes, and interviews revealed that: (1) Picture series were an effective tool in enhancing students' ability to write recount texts; (2) Students demonstrated progress in their writing skills; (3) The use of picture series fostered an engaging and enjoyable learning environment; and (4) Students showed increased motivation to write. The researcher analyzed individual student scores and monitored their behavior throughout the teaching and learning process. The findings from the Classroom Action Research were derived from the Pre-test, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2.

**The result will be explained as follows:**

**Table 1. The Result of the Student's Work in A Preliminary Test**

The score Range	Amount of Students	Percentages	Category
85 – 100	-	-	Excellent
70 – 84	1	3%	Good
59 – 69	2	7%	Fair
40 – 58	12	40%	Bad
20 – 39	15	50%	Fail
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>30</b>		

Based on the table above, the overall writing performance in the recount text pre-test indicates that only 1 students (3%) achieved a good score, while 2 student2 (7%) fell into the appropriate category. Meanwhile, 12 students (40%) received low scores, and 15 students (50%) failed. This means that 90% of the students scored poorly. Their written work revealed challenges in generating ideas, as well as difficulties with mechanics and language use. Consequently, the researcher recognized the need for better preparation in conducting the classroom action research.

**Table 2. The Result of the Student's Work in Cycle 1**

The score Range	Amount of Students	Percentages	Category
85 – 100	2	7%	Excellent
70 – 84	6	20%	Good
59 – 69	13	43%	Fair
40 – 58	9	30%	Bad
20 – 39	0	0%	Fail
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>30</b>		

**Table 3. The Result of the Student's Work in Cycle 2**

The score Range	Amount of Students	Percentages	Category
85 – 100	15	50%	Excellent
70 – 84	10	33%	Good
59 – 69	5	17%	Fair
40 – 58	0	0%	Bad
20 – 39	0	0%	Fail
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>30</b>		

**Table 4. Summary of Mean Scores**

Test	Total Scores	Mean Score
Pre-Test	1134	37,8
Cycle 1	1917	63,9
Cycle 2	2532	84,4

## CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from this study address two primary research objectives: (1) examining the classroom dynamics during the implementation of picture series in teaching writing, and (2) assessing the improvement in students' ability to write recount texts using picture series. In the first cycle, the researcher observed that some key indicators, particularly language features, were not fully achieved. However, there was notable progress in students' ability to develop ideas for writing. The use of picture series proved effective in helping students organize their thoughts and structure a recount text.

In the second cycle, the picture series method significantly enhanced students' ability to generate ideas and improve their writing skills. The students not only developed their narratives more effectively but also showed improvement in using appropriate language features. Additionally, they became more engaged and enthusiastic throughout the teaching and learning process, actively participating in the activities.

The use of picture series in teaching recount text writing has proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing students' writing skills. One of its key advantages is that it helps students develop and organize their ideas chronologically, making it easier for them to construct a coherent narrative. Moreover, students responded positively to the learning activities, demonstrating enthusiasm and engagement throughout the process. Additionally, picture series created an enjoyable learning atmosphere and served as a strong motivator for students to write recount texts.

Based on these findings, the researcher offers several recommendations for teachers and future researchers to consider in improving students' writing abilities. In teaching writing, educators should carefully select appropriate strategies, engaging media, and methods that align with both the lesson material and students' needs. Picture series, as demonstrated in this study, is an effective tool for teaching writing.

For future research, it is important to address the study's limitations. Researchers should carefully manage time allocation in the teaching and learning process and ensure thorough preparation before implementing instructional activities. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will contribute valuable insights and serve as a practical reference for educators, particularly in utilizing picture series as an effective approach to teaching writing.

The findings of this research demonstrated that the improvement from the pre-test to Cycle 2 highlights the effectiveness of picture series in enhancing students' writing skills. This aligns with Yustika et al. (2021), who recommend picture series as a valuable tool for teaching and learning writing due to its various benefits in the writing process. The researcher incorporated a fun learning approach by using picture series to engage students in the classroom. The results indicated a consistent improvement in students' writing abilities across each cycle.

This conclusion summarizes the research process from its initial stages to the final data collection during the teaching-learning process. The researcher conducted classroom observations and student interviews with students' at grade IX SMP Yabes School, leading to the following key conclusions:

- 1) Implementing picture series as a teaching strategy effectively enhances students' writing skills.
- 2) Selecting appropriate picture series significantly improves students' writing performance.
- 3) Adjustments in the use of picture series can influence the overall writing outcomes

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