

## Using Picture Series to Improve Students' Writing Skill

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### Abstract

This research explores the effectiveness of using picture series to improve the writing skills of eleventh-grade students in procedure texts at SMK Harapan Baru, Bekasi, during the even semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The aim of the study is to improve students' ability to write procedure texts by incorporating visual aids. The research employs a qualitative approach using classroom action research (CAR), which consists of three cycles: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The results show a significant improvement in students' writing skills after implementing picture series media. In the first cycle, only 53% of students met the learning target, which increased to 80% in the second cycle and reached 100% in the third cycle. The average student writing score also improved from 72.33 in Cycle 1 to 81.67 in Cycle 3. The findings indicate that picture series effectively aid students in expressing their ideas more confidently and clearly. This research implies that using picture series can significantly improve students' writing skills, making the learning process more engaging and accessible.

Keywords: picture series, writing skill, procedure text.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In Vocational High Schools, teaching English requires understanding different materials, methods and strategies. The study program students are taught should receive more attention when teaching English in vocational high schools. The government regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 29 of 1990 concerning secondary education, chapter I general provisions, article 1 (3), Vocational secondary education is education at the secondary education level which prioritizes developing students' abilities to carry out certain types of work. Based on these regulations, it is clearly stated that vocational education must give priority to preparing vocational high school students to enter the world of work and develop professional behavior. Vocational high school should equip the students with particular skills or, in other words, promote them to have professional skills in a specific field so that they are ready to compete in the industry world.

The English teacher should make the teaching and learning process more effective for the students, teachers of English at vocational high school should focus on how to use an effective media are appropriate for the students. In this instance, using media is crucial to teaching writing so that the students can produce quality writing. The media should be interested in the activity, learner roles, content, and curriculum. By using media, teachers can develop material that can make the class for students.

A variety of media, and several methods can be applied including by Picture Media in learning writing. One of them is picture series for writing and learning. As such, the picture could be utilized as instructional material, impart educational concepts to the students, and help them learn efficiently. A teacher may use media such as pictures, maps, global, real things, dialog, and tables to present the materials (Paul Glasgow, 2014) more enjoyable and the students will be motivated to learn. Related to this case, the writer is going to

focus on the picture as media to learn English writing. Wening (2016) stated that series pictures can help students to express and develop their ideas according to the written theme. Furthermore, it is accurate to describe a picture as an effective tool for giving students other ideas. Picture media is used to help students to understand and comprehend something clearly and easily. Wright (2005) states pictures can play a key role in motivating students in the form of nonverbal stimulus for what was said or written. Research conducted by Listiyaningsih (2016) also proves that picture series can improve students' ability in writing procedure texts. However, there is limited knowledge regarding which specific writing component(s) are directly supported by the use of picture series

One of the four English language skills that students should be proficient in is writing. Writing is crucial because it allows students to express their ideas, strengthens their understanding of other skills, and promotes the deliberate development of language mastery. Rahmadhani S. (2021) Writing is a good support for the other skills and also the activity that can be usefully be prepared for by work. Writing gives students the ability to record students own ideas in writing especially in writing procedure text. According to (Fitria & Pratiwi, 2020) writing is one of the English language skills. Writing is a method of representing language in visual or tactile form. Writing systems use sets of symbols to represent speech sounds and may also have symbols for punctuation and numerals. In the opinion Orianda and Rosa (2013) writing is not merely the activity of writing down some words or sentences into the written language. As the aforementioned statement makes clear, writing is more than just putting words and sentences on paper. When engaging in a writing exercise, a writer should plan out what they will write and consider the best way to arrange words to form phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and books. The writer needs to adhere to structure and protocol when writing. As is common knowledge, if writers organize their thoughts well, the reader will be able to understand their intended message with ease. Words and sentences with grammatical connections should be combined by the writer. The writer needs to be made more explicit, relevant, and specific in relation to the content. It will also effectively convey the aim of their writing.

The researcher decided to use picture series to teach writing is that students will find it simpler to express their ideas through pictures. They will concentrate on it when they see the pictures. Students can write down their thoughts if they are able to express them, and this helps the teacher to know what the students are trying to achieve. Picture Series can not only help the students to get ideas more realistic in understanding the procedure text but also in constructing ideas to create it.

## **2 RESEARCH METHODS**

The design of the study of the research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Febriani E. (2014) classroom action research is a method of finding out what works best in your own classroom so that you can improve student learning. CAR is a method where teachers investigate their own teaching methods to discover what works best for their students. This approach allows educators to make data-driven decisions and implement strategies that enhance student learning. The action research is a study involving researchers and teachers, made systematically where the researchers find problems that occur in the learning process and then researchers will make an action to improve their learning process.

The cycle of this research may become a continuing or iterative process. The spiral of cycles can be stopped when the researcher has achieved a satisfactory outcome. The steps are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting through 3 cycles. The source of data in this research is the eleventh grade of SMK Harapan Baru Bekasi which consists of 15 students: 4 males, and 11 females. In this research, the researcher used some instruments to collect the data, they are: observation, test, and interview. To analysis the data from the classroom action research, the researcher used data reduction, data description, and data verification. To validate the data, the researcher applied triangulation method.

### 3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research involved multiple phases in order to address this issue. planning, observing, acting, and reflecting. This chapter will have a presentation of each stage. Pre-action descriptions were completed in 2024 between February and May. To identify problems emerging in the field, the researcher interviewed the English teacher about the obstacles and weaknesses related to the teaching and learning writing process in Class. Besides interviewing the English teacher, researcher also did preliminary and pre-test for the student.

#### 3.1 Result

This research was implemented to improve students' speaking skill in eleventh grade of SMK Harapan Baru Bekasi. The research was conducted in three cycles. Each cycle consists of four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Before cycle I began, pre-test was administered to identify the students' basic knowledge of writing skills.

Based on the interviewing the English teacher, it can be implied that the process of English teaching and learning did not run very well. The students were noisy during the lesson. Besides, the English teacher did not provide any interesting media to attract students' interest. In the teaching and learning process, the students paid less attention when the teacher explained the material. Moreover, they also had difficulties in mastering writing. It can also be seen from the result of the interview done after observing the teaching and learning process. The researcher held interviews with both the students and the teacher. The following are some interview transcripts which show students' difficulties.

From the preliminary observation and interview above, it was shown that there were some problems emerging in the field dealing with the English teaching and learning process, especially writing. To identify the students' skills in writing before actions. The researcher conducted the Pre-test to measure the initial abilities of subjects before an intervention. It provides baseline data, identifies aspects needing improvement, and helps researcher the intervention for effectiveness. The researcher gave the student worksheets to read the test instructions and directly worked on by the students individually. In this test, the students followed the test well. The students had to finish the test in 40 minutes.

Table 1. The result of the pre-test

Students' mean score in pre-test number of students	Total score of students	Average score KKM	Passed KKM	Not passed KKM
15	870	52,38	14,29%	85,71%

Based on result the pre-test, the students' writing were less organization. They also did not begin the instruction with the action verbs. Furthermore, the researcher found that many students used Indonesian words in their writing. It indicated that the result was not satisfactory.

#### 3.1.1 Result of Cycle I

##### 1) Planning

The researcher made a planning for action based on upon the problem faced by student' toward writing skill. In this case, the planning is lesson plan, material, and, posttest. The researcher prepared observation sheet for students' and teacher activities in teaching learning process. The materials of the procedure texts were taken from the Internet and some books. The text used at each meeting are different. The researcher also prepared posttest to collect the data, the posttest is writing procedure text by using picture series.

##### 2) Acting

The action aimed to help students develop their ideas. The researcher checked attendance, motivated the students, and introduced the lesson by presenting an image and discussing how to write procedure texts using picture series. Despite initial responses in Indonesian due to limited vocabulary, students became more enthusiastic as they worked with a recipe-based procedure text. They noted difficult words, asked questions, and engaged in discussions to ensure understanding. The session ended with students completing a worksheet individually within 45 minutes.

### 3) Observing

The researcher observed the test learning process through student observation sheets, namely observations about active students, cooperative students, and students being able to complete the test. From cycle 1 activities, Researcher and collaborator also observed and found several facts that the teaching and learning process did not go well with. According to observer, in the first cycle some students did not pay attention to the teacher's effective explanation of the writing material.

Table 2. The result of the test in cycle I

Students' mean score in test of cycle I number of students	Total score of students	Average score KKM	Passed KKM	Not passed KKM
15	1085	72,33	53,33%	46,67%

Based on the table 4.2 above, the average score was 72,33. in this test, the highest was 85 and the lowest score was 55. There were 8 students (53,33%) who passed KKM score and there were 7 student (46,67%) who did not pass KKM score.

### 4) Reflecting

The researcher and collaborator identified several issues in Cycle 1, including students' limited vocabulary, which hindered their ability to express ideas and write procedure texts in English. According to Gendroyono (2021) The use of picture series in cycle 1 from the first meeting until the two meetings successfully improved the students' ability to find the ideas by finding detailed information about the picture. To address this, students were encouraged to note and memorize difficult words. In response, the action was modified in Cycle 2 by improving the clarity of explanations, providing better examples of procedure texts, and offering relevant materials like matching exercises. Additionally, the teacher was advised to motivate students to enhance their focus during the learning process.

## 3.1.2 Result of Cycle II

### 1) Planning

Based on the reflection from Cycle I, some problems remained unresolved. Therefore, the researcher and the English teacher decided to continue with similar activities as in the first cycle. However, the focus was shifted more towards helping students expand their vocabulary to better develop ideas when writing procedure texts using picture series. The researcher planned accordingly, preparing a lesson plan, materials, a post-test, and an observation sheet. The materials involved presenting a procedure text example and asking students to note down difficult words, still utilizing picture series as the core media. The post-test remained the same as in Cycle I.

### 2) Acting

In the second cycle, the researcher began by greeting the students, checking attendance, and reviewing the previous lesson. The focus remained on using picture series to improve students' writing skills. Students were engaged and participated actively, showing improvement in generating ideas and writing imperative sentences, though some still struggled with the latter. The researcher ensured better classroom management and instructed students to observe the picture series, note difficult words, and complete a

worksheet on writing procedure texts individually. The session ended with motivation and a closing prayer.

### 3) Observing

The cycle II, the classroom situation in the general learning process was better than before. This can be seen from the results. Students who can pay attention to teacher explanations and enjoy writing exercises while taking writing tests. However, some students still need a lot of time to practice writing because they like to practice writing tests. The result of cycle II is only 18 students on criteria or about 85.71 % with an average of 78.33. This means that there is an increase from 13 students to 18 students or from 61.90% to 85.71% but still below the target.

Table 3. The result of the test in cycle II

Students' mean score in test of cycle II number of students	Total score of students	Average score KKM	Passed KKM	Not passed KKM
15	1180	78.67	80%	20%

Based on the table 4.2 above, the average score was 78,67. in this test, the highest was 85 and the lowest score was 70 There were 12 students (80%) who passed KKM score and there were 3 student (20%) who did not passed KKM score.

### 4) Reflecting

After analyzing the writing test results and observation sheets from Cycle 2, it was noted that students showed improvement in understanding texts and participating in discussions. Listing difficult words enriched their vocabulary, though some issues persisted, including classroom noise and errors in simple present tense, spelling, and word order. In line with Gendroyono (2021) the use of picture series in teaching writing procedure text in Cycle II from the third meeting until the fourth meeting was successful to improve the students' ability in finding the ideas by analyzing detailed information of the picture. The students had a better understanding of how they found the ideas from detailed information in the picture. The researcher advised by an English teacher, improved classroom management and used simpler instructions to reduce confusion. While students were highly engaged and enthusiastic with the picture series, some confusion remained due to unclear instructions, indicating the need for further refinement in future cycles.

### 3.1.3 Result of Cycle III

#### 1) Planning

The researchers make research plans, the planning includes lesson plans, post-tests, observation sheets. The researcher also prepared a good picture series to stimulate students. The writing material is still about tourist attractions. The post-test is still the same as in cycles I and II, the post-test is to write procedure text about recipe based on picture series media.

#### 2) Acting

In the third cycle, the researcher began by greeting the students, checking attendance, and engaging them with a brainstorming session about tourist attractions. The researcher motivated the students and provided encouragement before continuing with the lesson. The students were shown a picture of chocolate brownies, which sparked their interest, and they responded enthusiastically to related questions. The researcher provided a procedural text titled "How to Make Chocolate Brownies" and asked students to note difficult words. After a review of imperative sentences, the students successfully answered questions and demonstrated understanding. The session concluded with a written test on how to make an omelet using picture series, where students, with the help of dictionaries, performed well and completed the test within 40 minutes.

#### 3) Observing

Based on the action of cycle III, the writer and observer found some facts, such as the students were more interested and enthusiastic to do writing activity in classroom, the condition of class was well, the research explained the material and technique clearly and gave the good motivation, advice, stimulus and most of students had their own responsibilities to practice writing test.

Table 4. The result of the test in cycle III

Students' mean score in test of cycle III number of students	Total score of students	Average score KKM	Passed KKM	Not passed KKM
15	1225	81.67	100%	0%

Based on the table above, the average score was 80. In this test, the highest was 90 and the lowest score was 75. 15 students (100%) passed the KKM score.

#### 4) Reflecting

The result of writing teaching learning activity from cycle III. The researcher and collaborator felt satisfied in as much their effort to improve the student's writing skill had been realized. The result showed that 100% of the student got the score on criteria or KKM. According to the result of evaluation between the researcher and collaborator, it could be assumed that the implementing of classroom action research in improving student writing skill using picture series had succeeded. In learning teaching process, the teacher should control the condition of class, give motivation, advice, stimulus and the clear explanation about material of learning so that go well, and teacher should use the good example for students.

### 3.2 Scoring System

Writing assessment is a critical area of study that encompasses theories and practices guiding the evaluation of students' writing performance through specific tasks. Its primary purpose is to assess students' writing skills based on established theories and guidelines, ultimately improving their writing abilities across five key components: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. These components are closely interconnected; the absence of any one factor can hinder the effectiveness and meaning of a written piece. Researchers have concluded that writing and writing skills are distinct concepts. Writing itself is the process of communicating ideas, thoughts, or opinions in a manner that the reader can understand, while literacy refers to the ability to write accurately and effectively.

Proficiency in writing involves mastering vocabulary, writing mechanics, content, structure, and language use. To effectively evaluate writing performance, a rubric adapted from Weigle S.C. (2002) focuses on five key criteria: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Content assesses the clarity and relevance of the topic, with scores ranging from 1 (Very Poor) for unclear topics to 4 (Excellent) for topics that are clear and complete with relevant details. Organization evaluates the structure and flow of the writing, with a score of 4 indicating complete materials and clear steps, while lower scores reflect increasing levels of incompleteness and unclear transitions. Vocabulary looks at word choice, where a score of 4 reflects effective language use and a score of 1 indicates poor vocabulary knowledge. Language use examines sentence complexity, with higher scores showing effective structures, while lower scores reveal significant problems. Mechanics evaluates spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, essential for maintaining professionalism and readability in writing.

This rubric serves as a comprehensive framework for assessing writing skills, allowing educators to identify areas for improvement and guiding students toward more effective writing practices. By emphasizing the interconnectedness of these criteria, the rubric helps

foster students' overall writing development, enabling them to enhance their communication abilities and express their ideas more clearly and effectively.

### 3.3 Discussion

In Cycle I, students struggled with writing as many had no clear idea of what to write. The researcher's explanations were unclear, leading to confusion about words and sentence structures. Some students wrote parts in the wrong order and failed to use imperative verbs correctly. The lack of engagement resulted in boredom and distractions, leading to poor outcomes, with 53.33% of students scoring below the KKM and an average score of 72.33. To address these issues, the researcher and collaborator planned to emphasize the use of dictionaries, provide clearer explanations, and increase student motivation and focus.

In Cycle II, improvements were made based on the issues identified in Cycle I. The lesson plan, writing materials, and instructional strategies were refined. Students showed better understanding and were able to develop topics and write procedure texts correctly using the picture series. However, some students still lacked attention due to less responsive classroom management. Despite this, 80% of students met the criteria, showing progress.

In Cycle III, further improvements were implemented, including better classroom management, increased attention, motivation, and positive reinforcement. These adjustments led to a significant increase in student engagement and performance, with all 15 students (100%) meeting the criteria and showing full understanding and enthusiasm in their learning.

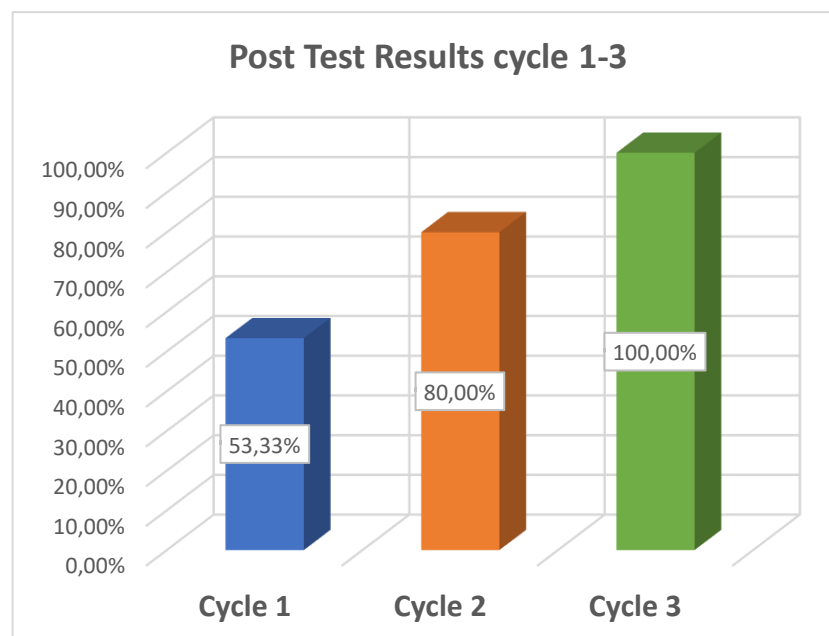


Figure 1. Diagram of post test results cycle 1, cycle 2, cycle 3

Based on Gendroyono (2021) research findings the use of picture series promotes the improvement of students' ability in writing procedure text and can elevate the students' interest or motivation in the classroom. Picture series is very good in providing an idea for the students to write. The students' works are also more persistent to the idea as compared to when not using the picture series. The pictures also attract more attention from the students and motivate students to get involved in the classroom interaction with the teacher and among themselves.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Based on the research finding and discussion, it was concluded that using picture series to teach writing procedure texts, teachers should select or create a series of images related to the process students would write about. They would start by explaining procedure writing and how the pictures would inspire their work, then present the first image and engage students in discussion to brainstorm ideas for their text. Students would write a rough draft focusing on clear instructions and the sequence of actions depicted. After completing their draft, teachers would introduce the next picture, guiding students to continue their writing and ensure logical flow between steps. Research indicates that using pictures significantly enhances writing skills, improves scores, and boosts enthusiasm for learning, as visuals make the material engaging. However, challenges may arise, such as students struggling to interpret certain images without sufficient background knowledge, limited vocabulary hindering their ability to describe steps in detail, and difficulties in organizing the pictures logically to create a coherent procedure text.

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