
ENHANCING THE STUDENT'S ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY USING PICTURES AT TENTH GRADE OF SMK YAPIS TIMIKA

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Abstract- *This research project was enforced based on the outcome of the researchers' observations at SMK Yapis (Yapis Vocational School) Timika, where almost all students experienced difficulties in writing English texts, especially descriptive texts. Based on that problem, the researchers tried to find a solution by reading several theories from variousR existing literature. In the end, the researchers tried to use a medium, namely the use of pictures to enhance students' enthusiasm and encouragement in the learning process of writing descriptive text. This research project was a Class Action Research (CAR) and used instruments: tests and observations. To measure the students' writing ability, the researchers used the components that were adapted from Jacob's assessment rubric. This research project aimed to enhance the students' writing skills in descriptive text. In this study, the researchers attempted to enhance the way of teaching writing by making use of pictures. It had been held in some cycles to break the problem occurring in teaching and studying writing. The results showed that, apart from increasing students' encouragement and enthusiasm in the class, using pictures as the media was also able to increase students' imagination in developing ideas and concepts for writing descriptive text.*

Keywords: *Picture, writing; descriptive text; vocational school; Timika*

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INTRODUCTION

There are two proficiencies in learning English that are highly necessary for English learners. They are speaking and writing. These two skills are very important because they are the basis of learning English (Sadiku, 2015). It is important for whom want to be able to speak and write English as a way to interact and communicate with the

community. Alexander said that the highly necessary of all primary language skills are speaking and writing (Pradu & Ratih, 2021).

Both speaking and writing are the high priority than other skills. In this study, the researchers tried to discuss one of these two skills, namely writing ability. Writing is one of the particular language skills that the students should possess. According to Hyland (2015) writing is usefully described as a process that exhibits continuous change over time, like the organic growth of nature. Similarly, Brown argues that writing is essentially a compositional process. Written compositions are usually the result of a long thinking process, sketching and revision (Carrillo González et al., 2018). Practice takes time because good and successful writing depends on the process of putting down ideas, arranging each sentence in a coherent sequence, and revising the paragraph for clarity.

Writing success depends on students' ability to apply these components. When students write out a paragraph, article, paper or an essay, they always consider about the spelling, grammar, and vocabulary they will use. A good writer must understand this. However, sometimes students ignore these problems and not all teachers explain the correct rules to them in writing. Most teachers do not have a good method to make students understand the rules well. Therefore, the teacher should know how best to apply this rule to the students.

Based on the early observation by the researchers at SMK Yapis Timika, the lack of direct participation of students in the class is still a problem. This is due to the important role of teachers in applying certain methods and using writing learning media. As is known, a teacher should be able to find and apply a learning method that is able to provide good interaction between the teacher and students. According to Sudjana (2009), the teaching method is a way that teachers use in interaction with students during the lesson. Apart from that, the way teachers teach in class has not been able to attract students' attention to write descriptive texts effectively, so the students get bored easily and find it difficult to learn. The students' lack of interest and motivation also has an impact on their lack of ability and skills in writing descriptive texts

Observations were made by the researchers in the teaching and learning process in tenth grade at SMK Yapis Timika. The material was explained by the English teacher and the whiteboard was used as a teaching medium. Makes students feel bored, takes a

long time to write or draw an object on the whiteboard, and also requires teachers who have special skills in drawing. This shows that teachers teach writing descriptive texts using less effective media. To develop students' skills in writing descriptive texts, new media is needed to replace the media used previously. One media that can help develop students' ability to write descriptive text is the use of pictures.

By using picture as a medium in the teaching process, it is hoped that students will be motivated to learn to write descriptive text in the hope that they will be able to improve their writing skills. In line with Wright, he said that picture used as a medium in writing are able to encourage and motivate students, define the subject they are studying, and clarify the generic ideas and shape of objects or actions that are certain to a culture (Sihombing, 2016).

In this research, the researchers tried to discover the way to rectify the students' aptitude in the case of writing skill. After looking for various techniques and media to develop students' writing skills, the researchers found a medium that was considered capable of providing a solution in developing the skill of the students in writing, particularly in writing descriptive text namely by utilizing pictures in teaching writing descriptive text.

Several researches have been written regarding the application of pictures as the learning media to enhance students' abilities in learning English. The following are several explanations that are relevant to this research. Asrifan in his study entitled *The Use of Pictures Story in Improving Students' Ability to Write Narrative Composition* (Asrifan, 2015). This research project intend to discover and analyze the efficacy of using picture story as a medium in terms of improving students' writing skills, especially those related to issues of writing content, how to organize sentences, choosing diction and vocabulary in writing. The subjects of the research were the students of the first year (X) of SMA Negeri 3 Parepare in 2013/2014 academic years. The conclusion of this study shows an avarage (75.80) score was got by the students in the experimental group, while an average score (60.03) was got by the students in the control group. These results show that the use of picture stories by the teachers as a learning medium in the classroom has a significant effect for writing subject compared whom that does not use this medium.

Karsono In his study entitled *Using Pictures in Improving the Speaking Ability of the Grade Eight-A Students of SMP Negeri 1 Anggana* (Karsono, 2014). This research was carried out in Class 8A Students of SMP Negeri 1 Anggana in the 2012/2013 Academic Year. The aim of this research was to determine students' ability to speak English. The Classroom Action Research (CAR) design was used as the basis for the research. In the end, researchers concluded that the application of pictures in the learning process to a certain extent succeeded in increasing students' learning participation as well as their speaking abilities.

Al-khresheh in his study entitled *The Efficiency of Using Pictures in Teaching Speaking Skills of Non-native Arabic Beginner Students* (Al-khresheh et al., 2020). The aim of this research project is to discover whether the use of Picture media can have a positive impact in improving Arabic speaking skills in a group of people who use Arabic as a foreign language. From the outcomes of this study, it was found that the use of Picture media was very effective in improving Arabic speaking skills in the group tested.

Another research from Episiasi entitled *The Effectiveness of Using Pictures to Improve Students' Speaking Skill* (Episiasi et al., 2015). Based on the results of the analysis, the researchers concluded that using pictures as a teaching medium can improve students' speaking skills.

The distinctions among this research with prior researches were that the first research only focused on enhancing students' skill in composing the narrative text. The second, third and the fourth research were focus on enhancing students' speaking skills by using pictures in teaching. The last research was the same as the second research where the researcher focused on enhancing students' ability in speaking skill, while this research will use pictures as a medium to enhance students' proficiency in composing descriptive texts. This is what motivates the researchers to discuss this topic with the assumption that there has been no other previous research projects that discusses in detail the use of pictures to improve students' writing skills, especially in writing descriptive text.

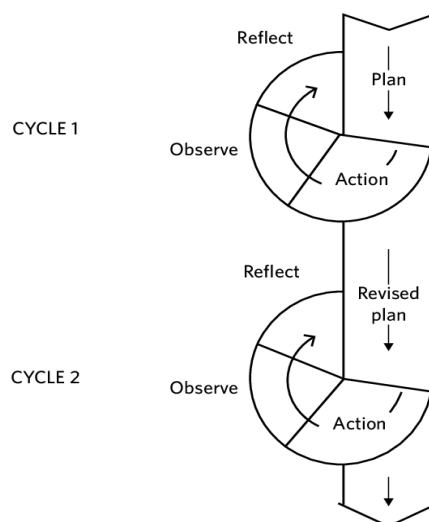
METHODS

Research Design

This research uses Classroom Action Research. The ability to write descriptive text for students was the goal that the researchers want to achieve. The research subjects were 25 students from class X at SMK YAPIS in the 2023/2024 academic year. The cyclical action model described by Kemmis and McTaggart (Koeswara, 2023) was the reference in this research. The main problem found by researchers during preliminary observations was the lack of students' skills in writing descriptive texts. It was because the students usually get bored easily, lack of interest and motivation in the classroom when they learn the descriptive text material. Starting from this problem, the researchers identified problems, planned and carried out actions. After going through several processes, the researcher then carried out evaluations, reflections and discussions regarding the actions to be taken next.

In the research process, the researcher went through several cycles in terms of solving writing learning problems in the classroom. In each cycle there were several processes including planning, implementation, action, observation, re-evaluating actions that had been implemented. All these processes were depicted as in the illustration below:

Pattern 1. Design of CAR



Source: (Kemmis and Mc Taggart's Design of CAR in Altrichter, H. K.-S., 2002)

In accordance with the action cycle pattern illustrated by Kemmis and Mc Taggart above, the researcher wanted to explain in detail the problem of implementing Classroom Action Research (CAR). Before carrying out this research, the preliminary observation was carried out early by giving several written tests (descriptive tests) to the students. In action research, according to Aliyyah (2020) several cycles are carried out to obtain maximum description and results. For each cycle carried out there are several processes including planning, carrying out actions, observing, and also reflecting or re-evaluating. (1) Planning is an initial estimate of an activity that will be carried out and is the first step in collecting all information relevant to the research to be carried out. (2) Acting or Action is the second step that is carried out after planning. Action is a form of implementation and execution of research activities based on the results of planning. (3) Observing is the process of collecting data along with monitoring actions to measure the extent of the results of the actions that have been carried out in research. (4) Reflecting is a process where all information found during the action process can be analyzed and interpreted by researchers to be re-evaluated, and used as material for consideration so that it can be used as a theoretical basis for existing research results.

Data Collection

This research uses two types of instruments, namely tests and observations. The tests have two kinds namely Pre-test and Post-test. Pre-test carried out before being given the action (Using a picture as a medium). At the same time, Post- test measures students' ability to write descriptive text when the class activity (using picture as a medium) has been given. To obtain the required information, an observation was carried out. The data was collected by observing the conditions and situations of the teaching and learning process in the class. The procedures carried out by researchers when collecting data include the researchers sitting behind the students and recording all forms of required activities that occurred when the teaching and learning process was carried out. In this process the researchers tried to notice the students' attitudes and also the conditions that occurred in the classroom. The steps required in data collection are as follows:

1. Data source

The main data source in this research project was the students' writing abilities. After that, treatment is given in the form of using images as a learning medium in writing descriptive text.

2. After the students were given the lessons in writing descriptive text using pictures as a learning medium, they were then given a test by the teacher. The following are the types of activities that researchers carry out:

- a). The researcher explained the test procedure.
- b). The students propose a topic that they find interesting.
- c). The topics chosen by the students are developed into descriptive texts.
- d). The results of the students' written descriptive texts were collected to the researchers who acted as teachers.

3. To measure the students' writing ability, the researchers used the components which were adapted from Jacob's assessment rubric, compiled by Jacob et al 1981 in Setyowati (Setyowati et al., 2020).

Data Analysis

The data collected from observations is analyzed by:

1. The students' average scores were analyzed using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where :

\bar{X} = Mean score

$\sum X$ = Total score

N = Number of student (Mills & Gay, 2019)

2. The researchers then classified the data collected from the students. Furthermore, student scores were classified according to the criteria below:

96 – 100 is classified as excellent

86 – 95 is classified as very good

66 – 85 is classified as good

66 – 75 is classified as fairly good

36– 65 is classified as fair

36 – 55 is classified as poor

0 - 35 is classified as very poor

3. The calculation technique was then described in the following formula:

$$P = F/N \times 100$$

P = Percentage

F = Number of Correct

N = Number of Sample (Awalia, 2014).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

In the first stage, a preliminary study was carried out by the researchers before carrying out the first cycle. This is intended to measure students' ability in writing. In this process, observation began and a writing test was given to the students by the researchers. Writing tests are employed to rate students' headway and how their scores rectify. There were 25 students who took part in the writing pre-test. In the pre-test, the total score obtained by students was 1412 with the average score of students being 56.48. This shows the students' low scores in writing descriptive texts. It was said to be low because the 25 total students who took part in the diagnostic test, there were only 6 students who got a score of 75 and were considered to have passed, so the graduation percentage was only 24%. The other 19 students were deemed to have failed to achieve the minimum score in the test or around 76%.

Based on the data displayed above, the students' writing skills, especially in writing descriptive texts, are still low, this is the researcher's final conclusion. So, the post-test passed on in the first cycle.

1. Cycle I

There are four stages carried out in this cycle, including the planning, action, observation and reflection stages. In this cycle, the researchers held two meetings with

the students in class. Students are given a test at the end of the learning process. The following are the stages in this cycle:

a. Planning

First of all, the researchers prepared everything needed for the research, such as observation sheet instruments and the type of test that would be applied. In carrying out observations in the classroom, the researchers acted as a teacher who would teach descriptive text material.

b. Acting

At this stage, the first meeting was conducted Thursday, August 24th 2023. It was followed by 25 students. The researcher acted as a teacher and came in to the class, greeting the students and so on. In the classroom, the researcher explained the text through various pictures as a learning medium. In this first meeting, the students were asked to write the physical of the animals randomly. Most of them could not write the text well. Therefore, the students had problems where they had not enough vocabulary to express their ideas. In the end of the first meeting, the researcher provided the students some vocabularies related to the pictures, and asked them to get ready for the next second meeting. The learning process was carried out in two meetings.

The second meeting, the researcher reviewed the previous materials to strengthen the students' memory. At this time, the students were given the individual test where the researcher gave them a sheet of paper containing animal pictures that would be explained and elaborated on the paper (writing descriptive text) by the students. While the students were trying to express their ideas, the researcher allowed them to open dictionary if they had difficulty finding appropriate words in English. After a series of meetings at this stage, it was summed up that the students' competence to write the descriptive texts was still quite low.

c. Observation

To get detailed information about the learning activities that occur in the classroom, it was necessary to carry out observation. From observation result, it was discovered that the students engaged in the learning process enthusiastically. It can be proved from the seriousness of the students to do the given task and also paying attention to the researcher's explanation when explaining the material for writing descriptive texts using

pictures as a teaching medium. Likewise with students' responses when asked questions. They were able to answer well the questions asked by the researcher.

d. Reflection

At this stage, the researchers carried out a comprehensive evaluation of the results from actions stage in the research process. This was done to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the previously applied method so that the researchers could make improvements in the next cycle. In this stage, student test results can be known and evaluated. Based on the results of the assessment in cycle I, there were still several deficiencies in students' writing of descriptive texts. Based on this, the researcher considered that several improvements need to be made. As for the evaluation outcome of students' writing skills in cycle I, the author found better results compared to the scores in the previous diagnostic test. In cycle I, the total student scores were 1643, and 8 out of 25 total students passed at this stage. The average number of student scores is 65.72. This could obviously be noticed from the work up in the student scores on test results in cycle I, although the increase was not that significant. A total of 8 students (32% of the total 25 students) got a score of 75. Thus, the researchers considered that the test results in cycle I were considered failed. So the researchers carried out cycle II. Next, this research would continue to cycle II stage.

2. Cycle II

Based on the result of the first cycle, and after reflecting and re-evaluating in cycle I, the researcher considered continuing this research to cycle II. This was done because the average score of the students in writing descriptive text had not reached the research target.

a. Planning

At this stage, the researchers tried to design new material to be included in the lesson plan. The researchers focused on problems that were often found in cycle I, including presenting some new vocabularies that students would use to write descriptive texts, and also the researchers tried to invite students to be more enthusiastic in the teaching and learning process.

b. Acting

In the second cycle, the classroom learning activity was carried out in two meetings. The first meeting was attended by 25 students. In the first 10 minutes, the class was opened with greeting by researcher, asked the students' condition and attracted their attention so they could focus on the learning that would soon be carried out, then the researcher invited all students to pray first, after that the researcher checked out the students by reading the attendance list, then explained learning objectives, and finally the researcher explained to students about the objectives of the research. In explaining the research objectives, the researcher did not forget to explain the tricks and procedures for writing descriptive text by providing various examples. At that time, the researcher invited the students to imagine and explore the animal pictures displayed on the whiteboard. At that time, the students seemed enthusiastic about collecting the story ideas in their minds about the animals shown by the researcher.

At the second meeting, before starting the primary materials, the researcher reviewed the material provided at the previous meeting. After that, each student was given a test. In this test, each student was given a piece of paper containing several pictures of animals where the students were assigned to describe the pictures by writing them in descriptive text. At that time, the researcher invited the students once more to imagine and explore the animal pictures displayed on the whiteboard. The students seemed enthusiastic about collecting the story ideas in their minds about the animals shown by the researcher. After collecting the ideas, they are invited to write down all the story ideas collected based on the pictures provided by the researcher on the pieces of paper that have been provided. It was seen that the students were very enthusiastic in writing down their story ideas.

c. Observation

To obtain detailed information about the conditions and activities of teachers and students during the teaching and learning process, observation activities were carried out. The results of observations found in the classroom were changes in students' behavior in the form of enthusiasm for learning and enthusiasm. It can be seen that the students show an enthusiastic attitude in the process of learning to write descriptive texts. They were enthusiastic when the researcher explained the material in class. This was also proven by

the students' ability to answer specific questions related to the material asked by the researcher.

d. Reflection

At this stage, the ability of the students to write descriptive text has begun to appear. This improvement in writing was obtained after researchers used pictures as a teaching medium for writing descriptive text. Based on the quantitative assessment in cycle II, the cumulative score of all students reached 2008 with a total of 19 students successfully achieving standard scores and being declared passed, with details of the average score of all students being 80.32. The percentage of student scores was 76%, consisting of 19 students who were successful and got a score of 75 or 75. So, the test in cycle II was categorized as successful.

According to data collected from observations, there was an increase in student enthusiasm in the teaching and learning process in the classroom after researchers implemented the use of images as a learning medium in descriptive text writing lessons.

Based on the data above, there was an improvement in the students' results in writing descriptive texts from the first cycle to the second cycle. In cycle I, with only 8 students out of 25 total students got a score of 75. That means only 32% of students got a standard score. Meanwhile, in cycle II, there were 19 students out of a total of 25 students who got a score of 75. That means there were 76% percent of students who got a standard score and were declared to have passed the descriptive text writing test. If we look at the increase in students' writing skills from cycle I to cycle II, quantitatively there was an increase of 99%. This made the researchers conclude that there had been a significant progress in the process of learning especially in writing descriptive texts and the research into the next cycle was no longer necessary.

Discussion

As the researchers mentioned in the background of this research, there were some causes that the students deal with when learning to write the descriptive text in the class such as the lack of direct participation of students in the class, the teacher explained and wrote all the materials in the white board where this way could take longer time. It made

students feel tired and bored to write. In this way, this is likely to reduce students' enthusiasm and motivation in the learning process, especially writing descriptive texts.

According to Wright (cited in Zurgawi et al., 2023), Pictures used as learning media are able to intensify student encouragements, elucidates the subject matter being studied, and depict the generic picture and shape of an object or action that is characteristic of a culture. From the findings of this research, the researchers have found an effective medium (picture) to increase students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn to write descriptive text in the classroom. By using this media, the subject (writing descriptive text) that the students were dealing with precise, and it could be easier for them to depict the generic concept and forms of writing descriptive text. Thus, the research result indicated that the use of pictures as a medium for learning writing can improve and increase student achievement, especially in learning to write descriptive text. This is based on quantitative research data which showed an increase in students' writing scores from cycle I to cycle II.

As previously mentioned in the background, several studies have discussed the effectiveness of using pictures in improving students' English language skills. One of the studies which was very close to this paper was Asrifan's work. In his study he intends to discover and analyze the efficacy of using picture story as a medium in terms of improving students' writing skills, especially those related to issues of writing content, how to organize sentences, and choosing diction and vocabulary in writing. In line with the previous research, this research also discussed the effectiveness of using pictures in the process of improving the quality of writing English texts in schools. The novelty in this research is that the researcher used pictures as a medium to improve students' descriptive text writing skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

By using pictures as a medium to stimulate students to be more interested in learning to compose descriptive text. The students looked very enthusiastic and excited about the learning process, besides that, the employ of pictures as a medium made the students more creative in visualizing their ideas to compose sentences in writing

descriptive text. This was indicated by the results of tests carried out during the learning process. Quantitatively, this could also improve students' abilities in writing as proved by the test outcome in both cycle I and cycle II.

The researchers hope that this research project can provide benefits for teachers in the field of English in an effort to improve students' writing skills. This research is expected to contribute, namely additional points of view and information to other researchers who have research interests in themes related to improving the ability to write descriptive texts for students in schools. Apart from that, this research is also expected to provide an overview and general overview of the effectiveness of using images for teachers and students as a learning medium for writing descriptive text material in the classroom.

Through this research project, the researcher hopes that by implementing the steps mentioned in this research, teachers can use them during the teaching process, especially in writing subjects. Furthermore, this research project can encourage other researchers to continue or comprehensively develop other research that has the same theme as this research for the sake of progress and development of science.

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