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Enhancing Students Writing Ability In Recount Text Using Picture Series

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ABSTRAK

Bahasa merupakan sistem komunikasi yang digunakan oleh suatu komunitas atau negara, yang terdiri dari berbagai simbol dan tanda non-verbal. Mendengarkan, berbicara, membaca, dan menulis adalah empat keterampilan berbahasa utama. Di antara keterampilan berbahasa tersebut, menulis sering dianggap sulit oleh siswa karena memerlukan kemampuan tinggi untuk mengekspresikan ide, pikiran, dan perasaan dalam bentuk tulisan. Di lingkungan pendidikan bahasa Inggris sekolah menengah pertama, pemahaman dan pembuatan teks fungsional dan monolog, seperti esai dalam bentuk deskripsi, *recount,* narasi, prosedur, dan laporan, merupakan bagian penting. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan seri gambar sebagai alat pembelajaran dengan model *discovery learning* untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa dalam bahasa Inggris, terutama dalam konteks materi *"Recount Text"* di kelas VIII E SMP Negeri 36 Semarang. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang terdiri dari dua siklus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perbaikan yang diterapkan pada siklus kedua berhasil meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Pada pra-siklus, hanya sekitar 18.75% siswa yang mencapai Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM), namun pada siklus pertama, sekitar 71.88% kemudian pada siklus kedua mencapai 87.5% siswa yang berhasil mencapai tingkat kompetensi yang diharapkan. Pengamatan aktivitas peserta didik juga menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan pada siklus kedua, dengan siswa lebih aktif dalam mengembangkan dan menyajikan ide, serta memberikan serta menerima umpan balik. Hasil penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa pendekatan pembelajaran dengan model *discovery learning* dengan penggunaan seri gambar efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan menulis peserta didik dalam bahasa Inggris. Temuan ini memiliki implikasi bagi guru dan sekolah dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran, meningkatkan kompetensi guru, dan secara keseluruhan, meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di sekolah.

Kata kunci: Kemampuan Menulis, Seri Gambar, Recount Text

ABSTRACT

Language serves as a communication system utilized by communities or nations, comprising various symbols and non-verbal signs. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four core language skills. Among these, writing is often considered challenging by students as it necessitates the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions in written form. In the context of English language education in junior high schools, comprehension and production of functional texts and monologues, such as descriptive essays, recounts, narratives, procedures, and reports, are essential components. This study explores the use of Picture Series as a learning tool with a discovery learning model to enhance students' writing abilities in English, specifically focusing on the "Recount Text" material in Class VIII E of SMP Negeri 36 Semarang. The research employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method consisting of two cycles. The research results reveal that the improvements made in the second cycle successfully enhanced students' writing skills. In the pre-cycle, only around 18.75% of students achieved the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), but in the first cycle, around 71.88% then in the second cycle reached 87.5% of students who succeeded in achieving the expected competency level. Observations of students' activities also indicate significant progress in the second cycle, with students being more actively engaged in developing and presenting ideas, as well as

providing and receiving feedback. This research affirms that the learning approach using the discovery learning model with the utilization of Picture Series is effective in improving students' writing skills in English. These findings have implications for teachers and schools in enhancing the quality of education, improving teacher competence, and, overall, elevating the educational standards in schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication system employed by a specific community or nation. It constitutes an open and intricate system that is adaptive and non-linear, encompassing various symbols and non-verbal signs used by humans to communicate. Language constantly evolves in response to environmental changes, and such adaptations in language are crucial for enhancing the communication process (Repka, 2021).

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing represent the four core language skills. Among these skills, writing appears to pose a challenge for students as it demands a high level of proficiency to express ideas, thoughts, feelings, and create written texts.

Presently, the imperative for educators is to provide writing instruction to students. As per the findings of (Rohaniyah & Mari, (2022), teaching writing encompasses more than merely instructing students in grammar, spelling, or mechanical aspects of language. It necessitates that students also grasp the nuances of genre comprehension within the target language. The 2013 Indonesian Curriculum mandates that students not only recognize the social function, overall structure, and linguistic characteristics but also produce concise oral and written texts. Among the various text types taught in schools, recount text stands out, primarily employed to narrate past events (Olson et al., 2020). Within the realm of English language education, writing activities hold a pivotal role, and it is the responsibility of educators to facilitate students in enhancing their writing proficiency.

Writing plays a vital role in the language acquisition process for students. As articulated by Sapkota, (2013) "Writing is defined as the process of employing symbolic representations to establish a language for the purpose of conveying meaning to the reader, enabling them to assimilate the information the writer endeavors to convey." Bazir, (2016) further elucidates that writing entails a systematic approach that involves the generation of ideas, cognitive processes, vocabulary usage, grammatical considerations, punctuation, and the expression of these concepts. This underscores the idea that writing serves as a means of communicating ideas through the utilization of words, sentence structures, mechanical elements, and punctuation, ultimately ensuring that the written expressions carry significance and are comprehensible to the readers.

Moreover, according to Sukarelawan et al., (2022), it was pointed out that engaging in writing tasks helps students establish intrinsic mechanisms for mastering literacy. While writing, students are encouraged to maintain composure, plan their actions, and subsequently express their thoughts in writing. Furthermore, as highlighted by Ansi et al., (2023), writing is characterized as a productive and expressive endeavor, constituting an essential component of the educational journey for students during their school years.

Additionally, Brink, (2020) provides insights into the significance of writing for various compelling reasons. To begin with, writing is not merely a skill pertinent to one's professional endeavors; it is, in fact, a fundamental life skill. It frequently serves as a yardstick used by others to assess an individual's depth of knowledge, values, ideas, and contributions to society. Furthermore, writing is an inherently personal endeavor. Even in our absence, it continues to reflect our identities, affording others the opportunity to glimpse into our wisdom, aspirations, and future aspirations. Writing serves as a medium through which we articulate our

thoughts to both ourselves and others, preserving our individual experiences and memories. Finally, writing has the power to extend one's message to a considerably wider and more enduring audience across time and diverse geographic locations. In other words, writing not only aids students in honing their life skills but also serves as a catalyst for nurturing avid readers in society.

Drawing from the author's firsthand teaching experience during a practical field placement at SMP Negeri 36 Semarang, it became evident that students encountered challenges, particularly when it came to generating ideas, especially during the initial stages of composing a recount text, which included orientation, events, and reorientation. Additionally, the students encountered difficulties in constructing coherent sentences for their recount texts. Notably, the issues extended to deficiencies in vocabulary and a fragile grasp of sentence structure, particularly in the context of past tense usage, a crucial aspect when it comes to crafting recount texts.

When it comes to the instruction of writing, teachers face the imperative task of developing improved methodologies aimed at fostering student motivation and engagement in the writing process. The implementation of more effective techniques not only encourages students to find enjoyment in writing but also cultivates their creative abilities as they engage in productive writing practices. Through the author's research and observations, it has been discerned that guiding students to create a recount paragraph with the aid of a sequence of images can be particularly beneficial. Nor Azlina and Yunus, (1985) further elucidate that pictures serve as two-dimensional visual representations of persons, places, or objects, possessing the unique potential to inspire and capture students' interest in the teaching and learning process. Consequently, the author conducted Classroom Action Research (CAR) utilizing a picture series as a pedagogical tool with eighth-grade students.

2. METHODS

This research employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology, a specialized research approach designed to improve the efficacy of classroom instruction Latief, (2010). Within the framework of CAR, educators assume a dual role, functioning both as facilitators guiding the learning experience and as researchers tasked with assessing and enhancing instructional techniques. CAR is characterized by its methodical and iterative investigative process, which involves introspection and self-assessment on the part of teachers or aspiring educators. The overarching objective of CAR is the identification and improvement of various facets, encompassing systems, methodologies, procedures, content, competencies, and learning environments (Herawati et al., 2011).

This study employs a classroom action research (CAR) methodology, where the concepts of population and samples are irrelevant, given that the impact of the intervention is solely applicable to the subjects exposed to it. As such, the investigation centers on a group of 32 students hailing from class VIII E at SMP Negeri 36 Semarang during the 2023/2024 academic year. The research was executed in the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, specifically targeting the assessment of students' composition abilities concerning the topic of Recount Text.

The Classroom Action Research (CAR) is structured around a two-phase cycle, commencing with the planning stage and subsequently proceeding to implementation, observation, and evaluation of the interventions. This process encompasses four pivotal components: planning, execution, observation, and reflection, and it continues iteratively until the desired level of improvement, as determined by pre-established success criteria, is attained.

In data collection, the researcher employed a writing test. Students were required to compose a recount text using a series of images. The data collection steps were as follows:

1. Administering a pre-test to the class for writing a recount text with a minimum of 3 paragraphs.
2. Explaining to the class the concept of a recount text.
3. Administering a post-test to the class for writing a recount text.
4. The researcher calculated and compared the scores from the pre-test and post-test to determine the impact of using a series of images on students' abilities to write recount texts.

Table 1. Essay Scoring Rubric

Aspek	Statement	Score
Grammar	• All grammar is right • Less good, but it doesnt influence the meaning • Less good and it influence the meaning • Grammar is bad • All grammar is wrong	4 3 2 1 0
Coherence	• The relation of ideas is coherence • There is transition of ideas relation • The relation of ideas is less clear • The relation of ideas is not clear • There is no the relation of ideas	4 3 2 1 0
Vocabulary	• Meaning is clear and express effectively • Meaning is clear, but not express effectively • Meaning is less clear • Meaning cannot be understand • Pointless	4 3 2 1 0
Punctuation	• Punctuation choice is good and effective • Punctuation choice is good, but less effective • Punctuation choice is not too bad and not effective • Punctuation choice is bad and not effective • All wrong	4 3 2 1 0
The purpose of text communication	• Clear • Clear enough but still having little mistakes • Difficult to understand • Not clear • Wrong	4 3 2 1 0

To assess the impact of the picture series technique in this study, the author employed three techniques to obtain valid data and objective information, as follows:

1. Pre-test
   The pre-test was conducted in the initial meeting before the introduction of the picture series. The purpose of the pre-test was not only to establish the initial equivalence of the two classes but also to assess the students' fundamental abilities in writing recount texts.
2. Post-test
   This test was also administered to the class after the implementation of the picture series in the classroom. Its aim was to examine whether there was progress between the class before and after the treatment, as well as to measure the impact or influence of the provided images on students' writing abilities in recount texts by reviewing the students' post-test scores. The

post-test utilized an essay format, similar to the pre-test, and had the same level of difficulty as the pre-test.

The researcher employed a test as the primary research instrument. In this study, data pertaining to student learning achievements will be acquired through the administration of tests, encompassing both pre-test and post-test assessments. The essay format used in the post-test corresponds to that of the pre-test, and the tests maintain a consistent level of difficulty throughout.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the Picture Series is utilized as a means to enhance the recount text writing proficiencies of eighth-grade students in class VIII E at SMP Negeri 36 Semarang. The instructional process encompasses two cycles and incorporates two daily assessments. Cycle I comprises two sessions and a single daily review, while Cycle II involves two sessions and one daily review. A comprehensive depiction of the educational process during the research endeavor is presented, focusing on the data collected before and after the interventions. The pre-cycle phase encompasses the initial assessment of the student's situation and status, involving the observation of learning activities and written assessments to gauge the students' cognitive abilities prior to the research initiative. The initial conditions of the students are documented in the following table.

Table 2. Students Learning Outcomes Pre-Cycle

No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Passed	6	18.75%
2	Unpassed	26	81.25%
	Total	32	100%

Based on the data presented in the table, it is evident that the student's success rate is at 18.75%, falling short of the target passing rate. Therefore, there is a requirement for enhancement in the subsequent cycle.

Following the culmination of the educational activities in Cycle 1, a thorough analysis of these activities is imperative. This reflection encompasses

the assessment of data derived from the student's test performance. The achievements of the students in the activities of Cycle 1 are reflected in their test scores. Table 3, shown below, exhibits the outcomes of the written assessments, illustrating the advancements in learning outcomes throughout the activities in Cycle 1.

Table 3. Students Learning Outcomes Cycle 1

No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Passed	23	71.88%
2	Unpassed	9	28.12%
	Total	32	100%

As evident from the information provided in Table 3 above, it is observable that 23 out of the 32 students, constituting 71.88% of the total, completed the test successfully, while the remaining 9 students (28.12%) did not finish it.

During Cycle I, utilizing the Picture Series as a pedagogical tool, students continued to encounter difficulties in arranging the images and grasping the subject matter. In essence, the desired learning outcomes were not achieved. Consequently, the action-based approach initiated in Cycle I will be extended into Cycle II to facilitate optimal learning and maximize the learning outcomes.

With the findings in cycle 1, we can see differences in student learning outcomes in table 4.

Tabel 4. Student Learning Outcomes from Pre-cycle to Cycle 1

Category	Pre-Cycle		Cycle 1	
	F	%	F	%
Passed	6	18.75%	23	71.88%
Unpassed	26	81.25%	9	28.12%
Total	32	100%	32	100%

Table 4 demonstrates a rise in the quantity of students who have attained the KKM standard (75%). Presently, 23 students have met this criterion, which is a notable increase compared to the initial count of 6 students.

Table 5. Students Learning Outcomes Cycle 2

No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Passed	28	87.5%
2	Unpassed	4	12.5%
	Total	32	100%

A sum of 28 students, constituting 87.5% of the total 32 students, successfully met the objectives, while 4 students, comprising 12.5%, had not achieved them at this stage. This indicates that the assessment test in Cycle II can be regarded as effective. Based on the data gathered from the two-cycle classroom action research, the researchers can draw the conclusion that the implementation of the Picture Series as a teaching tool has significantly enhanced the English learning outcomes of class VIII E students. The progression of evaluation scores and the observation ratings from one cycle to the next is presented in Table 6 as follows:

Table 6. Students Learning Outcomes Pre Cycle, Cycle 1, Cycle 2

No.	Category	Complete	Not Complete
1	Pre-Cycle	18.75%	81.25%
2	Cycle I	71.88%	28.12%
3	Cycle II	87.5%	12.5%

The information derived from the data in Table 6 can be summarized as follows: (1) there was a 53.13% increase in the proportion of students who had met the learning objectives between the pre-cycle and Cycle I, and (2) there was a 15.62% increase in the proportion of students who had fulfilled the learning objectives between Cycle I and Cycle II.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion derived from the preceding section's results and discussion underscores the efficacy of employing the Picture Series as an instructional tool to enhance students' recount text writing skills over the course of two cycles. Initially, at the outset of this pedagogical intervention, only 6 students, equivalent to 18.75%, had attained the desired level, while 26 students, making up 81.25%, had not. In Cycle I, the number of students

who had successfully met the criteria increased to 23, representing 71.88%, and those who had not completed the task decreased to 9 students, accounting for 28.12%. In Cycle II, the number of students who successfully completed the task further rose to 28 students, constituting 87.5%, with only 4 students, or 12.5%, not reaching the set criteria. Therefore, it is recommended that the utilization of the Picture Series as a teaching aid be implemented in other educational institutions, regardless of whether they have similar or distinct classes and materials. This approach has demonstrated its potential to significantly enhance students' English writing skills.

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