

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PICTURE SERIES IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS OF SMPN2 BANGUNTAPAN

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Abstract

The objectives of this study are to describe students' writing skills taught using picture series, to describe the students' writing skills taught using traditional method, to find out significant difference between students' writing skills taught using picture series and traditional method, and to find out a better class in producing writing skills e.g. experimental or control class. This research was experimental research. The population of this research was the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Banguntapan. The samples were taken using lottery technique. For collecting the data, the researchers used paragraph writing test, in the pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed using SPSS. The research findings showed that (1) the level of students' writing skills taught using picture series was "very high" at the category scale of 75-above, (2) the level of students' writing skills taught using traditional method was "high" at the category scale of 58.33-75, (3) the sig. (2-tailed) value of t-test was 0.000 implying there was a significant difference between students' writing skills taught using picture series and traditional method, and (4) the result of t-test showed that the experimental class produced better writing than the control class.

Keywords: writing, writing skills, picture series

Introduction

In this global era, communication does not occur only in spoken form, but it also occurs in written form. Many people still use written form for communicating with each other. As stated by Langan (2005), writing can be used as a means of communication. Many aspects of life need writing skills as part of the requirements. One of the examples which writing takes an important role is in the educational setting. In the educational setting, the students are expected to be able to write kinds of academic writing such as texts in the written form as well as possible.

It is clear that writing is very important for students, in fact, the teaching and learning processes of writing in the class somehow does not run smoothly. As a result, it does not show a successful achievement at the end of teaching and learning writing. The students still cannot master writing as well as expected. Their writing ability was still low, and they had difficulties in the writing class.

Beside those problems, the teacher tended to use lecturing technique with the whiteboard and text books without any modification. It made the activities monotonous and boring. There were no varied media in teaching. As a result, the students had difficulties in expressing their ideas during the writing process. They also had difficulties in writing good sentences and using appropriate grammar. In addition, they also had difficulties in expressing and arranging their ideas.

Regarding the problems above, the researchers proposed picture series as an alternative media to motivate and improve the students' writing skills, especially in writing narrative text. Picture series were chosen because the English teacher never used picture series in teaching

writing before. According to Wright (1989: 2), pictures contribute to increase the students' interest and motivation.

Based on the background the problem, the research problems can be formulated as follows:

1. How high is the students' writing skills taught using picture series?
2. How high is the students' writing skills taught using traditional method?
3. Is there any significant difference between students' writing skills taught using picture series and traditional method in writing narrative text?
4. Which class produce better writing skills? The class which is taught using picture series or the class which is taught using a traditional method?

Literature Review

Writing is a tool to share feelings, thoughts, and ideas. Again, it is used to communicate in the daily life. This is supported by Coulmas (2003), who says that the primary purpose of writing is to communicate meaning. In addition, Browne (1999) states that writing as a method of communication can be used to establish and maintain contact with others, transmit information, express thoughts, feelings and reactions, entertain, and persuade.

Writing skill is one of the most difficult skills in teaching and learning English. According to Heaton (1974: 138), writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also the conceptual and judgment elements. For having good writing skills, there some aspects that must be mastered by the students. They are grammatical skills, stylistic skills, mechanical skills, and judgment skills.

Based on *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia (Permendiknas) Nomor 23 Tahun 2006*, the aim of teaching and learning writing in junior high school is to make students able to express meanings in interpersonal and transactional language, either informally or formally, in the form of *recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, and report* in the daily life context.

Genre-based approach is classroom programming based on four stages in Teaching-Learning Cycle which is aimed at providing support for learners as they move from spoken to written texts (Hammond, Joyce, Brosnan, Gerot, Helena, 1992). There are four stages in the Teaching-Learning Cycle. At each stage the teacher needs to select a number of different activities that provide a framework of structure and support as the learners increasingly gain control over written language.

1. Building Knowledge of Field

The stage of building knowledge of the field is extremely important for learners, especially English Second Language learners, as it is point at which overall knowledge of the cultural and social context of the topic is built and developed.

2. Modelling of Text

This stage involves introducing the learners to model of the genre they will be reading or writing. In this stage, there is explicit focus on analyzing the genre through a model text related to the course topic.

3. Joint Construction of the Text

At this stage, the aim is for the teacher who works with the learners to construct a similar text. The emphasis at this stage is on the teacher providing guidance and support in order to convert and reshape language from spoken to the written mode.

4. Independent Construction of Text

In this stage, the teacher needs to assess if the learners are already able to construct the text independently.

There are some types of pictures used in the English teaching and learning. One of them is picture series. Picture series is a kind of medium which belongs to picture category. Picture series consists of a number of pictures which relate each other and they place in sequence. Picture series is usually used to tell a series of events or to tell a story (Yunus, 1981: 49).

Picture series is recommended for it has many benefits in the writing learning process. The first benefit using picture series is that it will make the students interested in writing English because picture series is one of the visual teaching media (Smaldino: 2005 : 9). It means that picture series is interesting medium to catch students' interest in writing. The second benefit is that picture series will stimulate the students to develop and use their imagination so that they will be able to write well. The last benefit is that picture series will improve the students' motivation in writing. Students can construct their knowledge during writing a text easily by using media.

Method

Research Design

The researchers used experimental research with the pre-test – post-test control group design. In this design, one group received an experimental treatment while the other got a different treatment. Here, the experimental group was treated using picture series, while the control group was treated using traditional method (Sugiyono, 2012).

Population and Sample

The population of this research was the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Banguntapan. The samples were VIII C as the experimental class and VIII B as the control class. In getting the samples of this research, the researchers did the procedure which was called lottery technique. Each group of the population was presented by small piece of paper. The small pieces of paper were placed in a box and well mixed, and then the papers which dropped out from the box became the samples of this research (Zuriah, 2007)

Setting

This research was conducted in English subject in the eighth grade of SMP N 2 Banguntapan. The researchers did the preparation in March 2016 and took the data collection in April and May 2016. The researchers analyzed the data in June 2016 and did the report writing in June 2016.

Discussion

Table 1
The Result of Post-test

Classes	Numbers of Students	Mean of Post-test	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Minimum Score
Experimental Class VIII C	34	78.1324	6.99600	93.00	62.50
Control Class VIII B	32	62.5938	6.84911	77.50	52.00

Table 2
The Category Scales of Students' Writing Skills

Score Interval	Category of Level
75 – above	Very High
58.33 – 75	High
41.67 – 58.33	Moderate
25 – 41.67	Low
25 – below	Very Low

Suryabrata (1984)

Based on the table 1 above, the total number of the students who belonged to the experimental class was 34 students. From the table above, the highest score of the post-test was 93.00 and the lowest score of the post-test was 62.50. The minimal score showed the lowest result of writing ability. The maximal score showed the highest result of writing ability. The analysis of the data gave information that the mean score was 78.1324 and the standard deviation was 6.99600.

Table 1 above also gave information the total number of the students who followed the post-test in the control class was 32 students. From the table above, the highest score of post-test was 77.50 and the lowest score of post-test was 52.00. The minimal score showed the lowest result of writing ability. The maximal score showed the highest result of writing ability. The analysis of the data gave information that the mean score was 62.5938 and the standard deviation was 6.84911.

Based on the category scale in the table 2 above, and the mean score of post-test in the experimental class was 78.1324, it could be said that the students' writing skills of the experimental class taught using picture series was "very high" at the category scale of 75 – above. Meanwhile, the mean score of post-test in the control class was 62.5938, it could be said that the students' writing skills of the control class taught using traditional method was "high" at the category scale of 58.33 – 75.

Based on the result of t-test, the score of Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000. It implies that there was a significant difference between the students' writing skills taught using picture series and those who were taught using traditional method. Therefore, it could be concluded that the experimental class taught using picture series produced better writing skills than the control class taught using traditional method.

Conclusion

Based on the result of analysis, the researchers could draw some conclusions:

1. The level of students' writing skills taught using picture series was categorized as "very high" at the category scale of 75-above (Mean= 78.1324, SD= 6.99600).

2. The level of students' writing skills taught using traditional method was categorized as "high" at the category scale of 58.33-75 (Mean = 62.5938, SD= 6.84911).
3. The result of t-test showed that Sig. (2-tailed) level was 0.000. Therefore, it could be concluded that there was a significant difference between the students' writing skills taught using picture series and those who were taught using traditional method.
4. Based on the result of t-test, the experimental class taught using picture series produced better writing skills than the control class.

Based on the result of this research, the suggestions are addressed to other researchers, English teachers, English language students, and the school. For the other researchers, the researchers suggest that they should investigate problems that affect students' writing ability. For the English teachers, the teacher should provide interesting topic and media to encourage students' interest and motivation in teaching and learning processes. The teacher can use genre-based approach and picture series in teaching writing. For the students, the researcher suggests that they should be more diligent in learning English. The students should manage themselves to always have positive attitudes towards English. For the school, the writer suggests that the SMP N 2 Banguntapan provides infrastructure and equipment especially visual learning media, such as picture series.

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