

## THE USE OF PICTURE SERIES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN NEWS ITEM TEXT

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### Abstract

This study aims to explain whether picture series can improve students' abilities and describe the factors that influence changes in writing news item text using picture series. The research method used in this study is PTK (Classroom Action Research). The object of this research is class X students. The researcher uses 2 types of research instruments which are quantitative and qualitative. In quantitative, the researcher gives a writing test. While in qualitative, the researcher chose one of the teachers as a collaborator to observe and fill in the note field when the researcher taught during the research. Based on the results of the analysis data, the researchers obtained evaluation score I was 63.29 and evaluation II was 77.14. This shows that using picture series can improve students' writing skills. Factors that influence changes in students' writing ability using this media are visible from classroom management, media used by teachers, and learning methods.

**Keyword :** *Writing, News Item, Picture Series.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of four skills that are used frequently beside the speaking skill is writing skill. Writing is one of four basic skills, writing is very important in teaching and learning English. Writing is a kind of expression media and a means of communication. That is why writing is very essential to be learned by students to make good relationship with other people. Writing is a language skill which used for communication indirectly. In writing learning involves some language components (spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation). This is line with what is stated by Braine and Claire May (1996:60). Writing clear sentences requires you to learn the rule of English grammar and mechanics such as the correct use of verbs and pronouns, as well as commas, and other marks of punctuation. Then, writing is an activity that can usefully be prepared for by work in the other skill of listening, speaking, and reading. According to J.D Angelo (1989:5), writing is a form of thinking. It means that writing is an activity to express ideas, issues, events, feeling or thinking to the others through written form.

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There are various ways to organize the sentences in a piece of writing. One of them is news item text. News item text is a piece or article of information that tells about some events that are interesting to take as a piece of news. In theory of Damayanti (2011), she said that a news item text is a text which is grouped into the text genre of narration. The main function of narration is telling stories or informing about events in chronological order. The order in the narration can be based on time, place and the events themselves. Supported by Kholidin (2010), he said that news item is a text which informs readers about events of the day. The events are considered newsworthy or important. Last, Yudhistira, (SMA Package, 2006:152-153) states that a news item text is a piece or article of information that tells about some events that are interesting to take as a piece of news. Most people think that news is very important. Successful people are usually knowledgeable, having knowledge of many fields that can be obtained from news and other sources. The topics of news items can be politics, economy, culture, education, health, etc. news can be found in newspapers, magazines, bulletins, TV, radio, internet, etc. The main function or communicative purpose to inform readers or listeners or viewers about events of the day that are consider newsworthy or important. Most people think that news is very important. News item text is written for public information of what is the newsworthy of the day. Basically, a news item text tries to answer 5Ws and 1H questions: what, who, when, where, why, and how relating to the newsworthy.

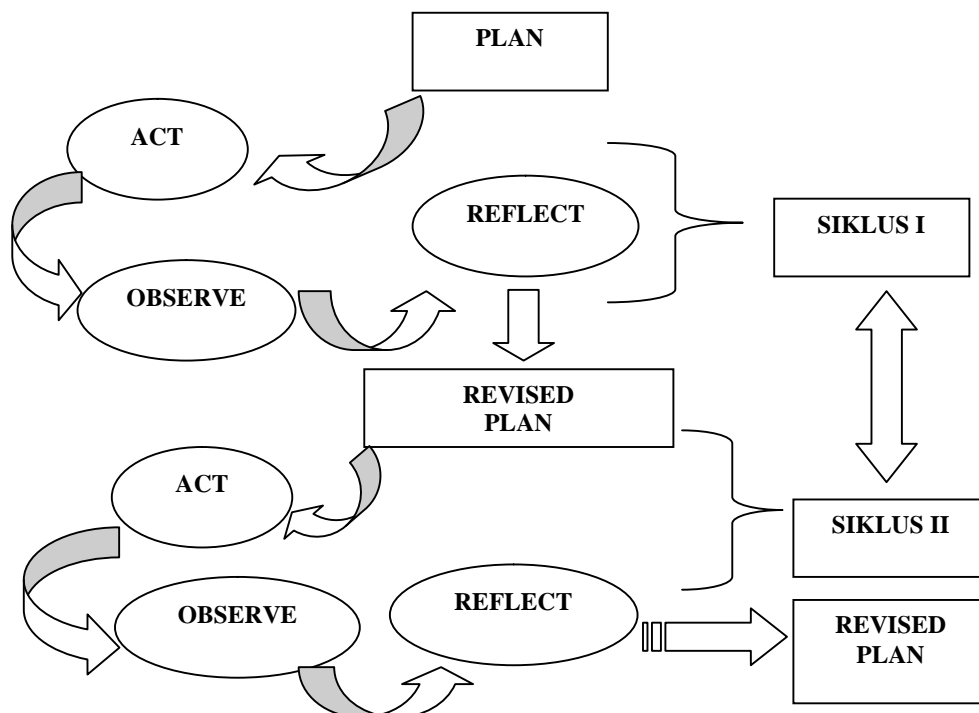
Based on the researcher interview with English teacher of SMAN 7 Kerinci, there were some problems find in the field when giving writing materials to the students, especially the news item text. The first problem was that the students' writing was not comprehensible, because the content of the composition was not relevant to the topic, the idea not clearly stated, the ideas and sentences were not well organized. The second problem was that there were many errors in vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Another problem was the students had low motivation and were not interesting in doing the task since the writing activities were not interesting. Usually, the students were asking to write sentences and paragraphs without being giving some clue so that it was difficult for them to express their ideas on a piece of paper. Beside that, the students had difficulty at telling some events to be a piece of news. This was because writing was difficult for them since they had to master enough vocabulary, grammar, and spelling.

To solve the problems above, it needs good media as picture series to improve students' ability in writing, especially news item text. Wright (1994:4-5) stated that picture can be used to as a references and stimulus in order to provide five different language teaching emphases, such as structures, vocabulary, functions, situations, and skills. Wright (1994:4) stated that examine four skills of language. As mentioned before by Wright (1994:17), writing is a productive skill and picture can be used in similar ways to promote it. There are some roles of pictures in writing as stated by Wright (1994:17) in Library of Indonesian Education University: a) Picture can motivate the students and make them pay attention and take a part in learning; b) Pictures contribute to the context in which the language is being used, such as bring the world into the

classroom (an object or situation); c) Pictures can be described in an objective way, or it can be interpreted, or responded to subjectively; and d) Pictures can prompt responses to questions or bring substitutions through controlled practice. The use of picture series expected to give better for the students in writing news item text.

The procedure of the research was by using cycles to improve the students' ability in writing news item text by using picture series. It consists of two cycles (cycle one, and cycle two). In every cycle had four steps, that were planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Kurt Lewin, 2009:15). The figure of classroom action research developed by Kemmis and Taggart can be describe as follow:

**Figure 1**  
**The model of classroom action research developed by Kemmis and Taggart**



## METHOD

The design of the research appropriated with the purpose of the research was improving students' ability in writing news item text by using picture series, so this research included in classroom action research. Elliot (1991:5) states that classroom action research is a study from a social situation with possibility action to improving the quality of social situation. According to Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988:26) say that classroom action research is trying out ideas in practice as a means of increasing knowledge about or improving curriculum, teaching, and learning. The participants of the research were XB of SMAN 7 Kerinci. It consisted of 35 students. They were 25 female, and 10 male. In this research, the researcher worked together with English teacher as the collaborator. Time allotment for English was 4 x 45 minutes in a week (2

x 45 minutes for each meeting). The time did the cycles in the research, they were cycle one, and cycle two. In each cycle were treatment in each meeting and evaluation in the end of the cycle. The instruments of this research were quantitative and qualitative. In quantitative instrument, tasks and tests were used to collect the data. Tasks and tests used were to see whether improvement achieved by the students or not in their writing ability in the classroom action research. While in qualitative instrument, the researcher took observation and field notes. In analyzing data, the researcher used the steps, they were counting the students' score, mean, and percentage for quantitative analyzing. And for the qualitative analyzing, the researcher used six steps suggested by Gay (2000: 239). They are: Data managing; Reading the note; Description; Classifying; Interpreting; and Writing the report.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Data Analysis

This research was six meetings, each meeting took 2 x 45 minutes. In each cycle were three meetings, two meeting did treatment, and one meeting did evaluation. The implementation of each cycle was same way but different theme. In the implementation of each cycle, the researcher was used picture series as media in teaching and learning process to improve students' ability in writing news item text. Picture series used as media to improve students' ability in writing news item text. The improvement of the students' average score could be seen in table (below). Based on Brown and Bailey, there are five indicator in writing assessment, namely:

1. Organization; introduction, body, and conclusion.
2. Logical development of ideas; content.
3. Grammar.
4. Punctuation, spelling, and mechanics.
5. Style and quality of expression

In each treatment and evaluation news item text, the scoring was based on five indicator above. For each indicator there was scoring. The scoring was from level work to excellent, the score was 1 to 20 for each indicators. If the students could get 20 for each indicator so they could get 100 in their writing. To know the students' achievement for each indicator in each cycle could be seen in the chart (below).

**Table 1 Students' Average Score In Cycle One**

Meeting	Activity	Average (Mean)
First meeting	Treatment	54,26
Second meeting	Treatment	60,66
Third meeting	Evaluation I	63,29

In this Table 1, it showed the improvement of students' average score in each meeting. The implementation of first meeting was first time for students used picture series as media in teaching and learning writing. The students' average score in first meeting was 54,26. It was still low. For the next meeting, there was improvement of

students' average score, and also in evaluation cycle one. It showed that picture series could help students to improve their ability in writing, especially writing news item text.

**Chart 1 Students' Achievement For Each Indicator In Cycle One**

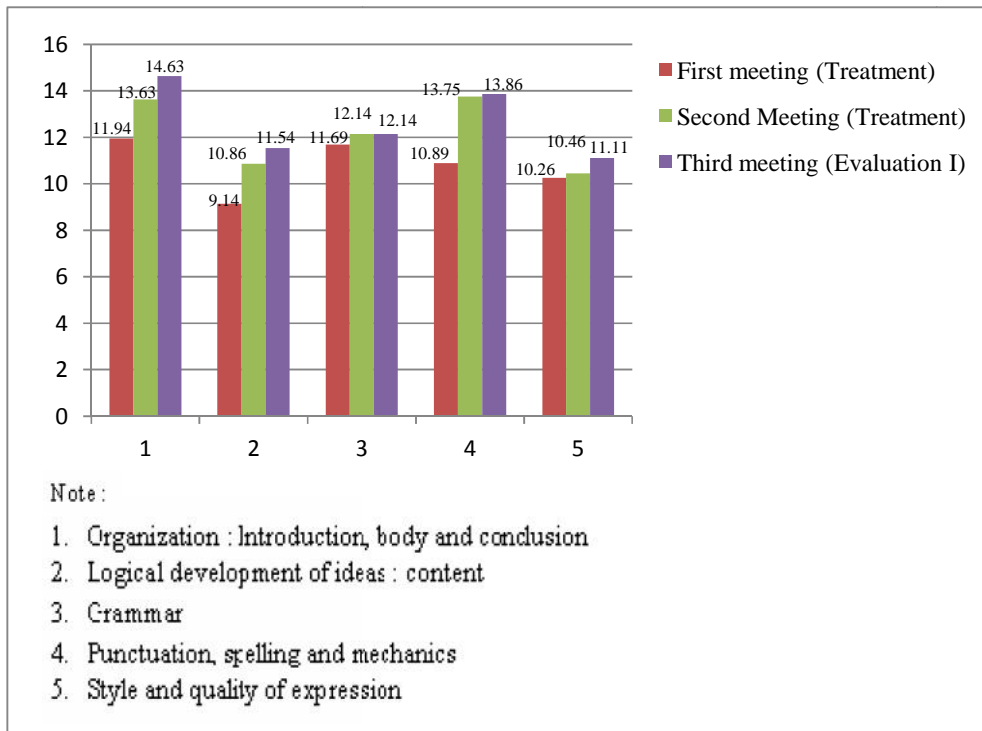


Chart above showed the lowest average score was in development ideas, style and quality of expression. The students had weakness in those indicators. And also the punctuation, spelling, and mechanics in second meeting to third meeting (evaluation I) did not improve. All of weakness would be revised in the next cycle.

**Table 2 Students' Average Score In Cycle Two**

Meeting	Activity	Average (Mean)
First meeting	Treatment	65,63
Second meeting	Treatment	70,89
Third meeting	Evaluation II	77,14

In table 2, it showed the students' average score in cycle two. For each meeting, there was improvement of students' average score. The implementation of each meeting in cycle two was still same with cycle one but different theme. The implementation in first meeting, second meeting, and third meeting was still using picture series as media. The media was better because could make the students' average score always improve in meeting by meeting.

**Chart 2 Students' Achievement For Each Indicator In Cycle Two**

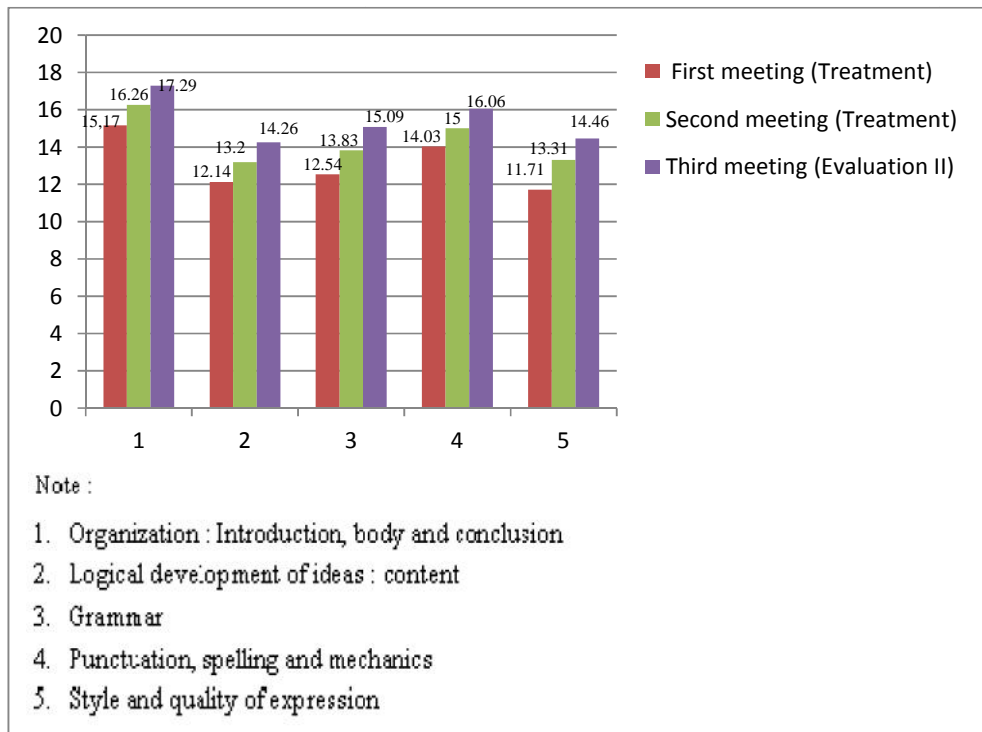


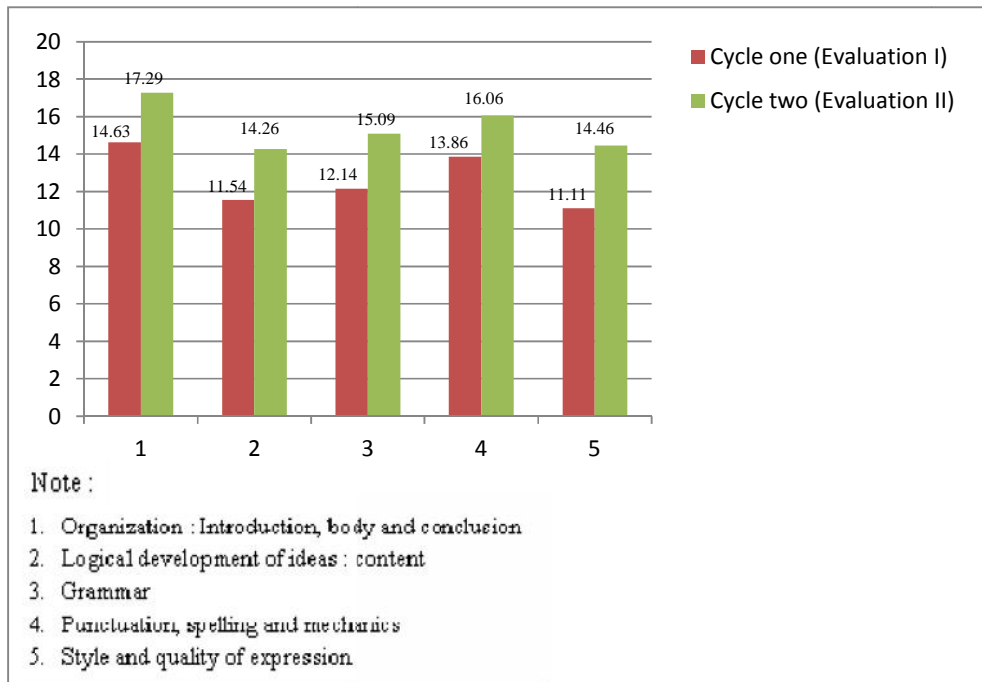
Chart above showed the students achievement for each indicator in cycle two. In each meeting the average score always improve. The weakness in previous cycle had revised. It could be seen in the chart. The average score in logical development ideas had improved, and also in other indicator had improved. The punctuation, spelling and mechanics did not have problem anymore, it had improve for each meeting. Chart 1 and chart 2 showed there were improvement for each meeting in each cycle. The data above showed that the research could be stopped in cycle two because the students' average score had improve.

**Table 3 Students' Average Score At Evaluation In Cycle One And Cycle Two**

Cycle	Activity	Average (Mean)
Cycle one	Evaluation I	63,29
Cycle two	Evaluation II	77,14

Table 3 was the students' average score at evaluation in cycle one and cycle two. The evaluation did in the end of the cycle. The implementation of evaluation was by using picture series as media to improve students' ability in writing news item text. From evaluation in cycle one and evaluation in cycle two, the students' average score was improve. It showed picture series was better to used as media in teaching and learning writing, especially news item text. This research stopped till cycle two (evaluation II) because the researcher felt that the result of each cycle was improve. The implementation of each cycle was the same way but different theme. The following chart had showed in cycle one and cycle two. Chart 3 was only show the average score for each evaluation in cycle one and cycle two.

**Chart 3 Students' Achievement For Each Indicator In Evaluation I And II In Cycle One And Cycle Two**



### Discussion

In first meeting of cycle one, the researcher gave a task to the students. The theme of the task was about natural disaster, the topic was about Wasior flood. The researcher used a picture series as media in teaching and learning process. Degeng (2001) explain that media which can be used to make the students learn more easily and the teacher teaches easily is the main part of the learning process. The expert opinion above, the researcher believed that students could do the task. The students' average score in first cycle were 54, 26. It was still low. There were some students could not reach the target of KKM. There were 25 students had score under 60. The students' score caused of the students were not familiar with the picture series, some of the students still chatting when teaching and learning process, and also caused of they came late.

For the next meeting, the researcher had some theme but different topic. The topic was about Situ Gintung. The way of the research was still same with the first meeting. Before gave task to the students, the researcher gave explanation about main material and about picture series. Then, the researcher asked the students to write news item text based on picture series. After did the task, the researcher got the students' average score in second meeting was 60, 66. It means there were improving than before. In this meeting, some of the students did not understand about main material and about picture series.

In the end of this cycle, the researcher did the test to know the students' ability in writing news item text. The theme of the test was still same with the treatment n first meeting and second meeting. Test used picture series as media in teaching and learning

writing, the media hoped could improve the ability of the students. Furthermore, related to a series of picture which is a sequence of three to six pictures describing a story line, a series of pictures can provide a suitable motivation for written production (Brown, 2004:227). As Brown explanation by using picture series, students could make story line based on picture series. The students' average score was 63, 29.

The implementation of cycle two was same with cycle one but different theme. The theme was about traffic accident. The researcher chosen this theme because news item text was talking about news, so the news had to the fact that could be a piece of news. The topic in first meeting of cycle two was about Tani Monument accident. The students made a news based on picture series. The students' average score in did task was 65, 69. There were several of students' still could not reach the target of KKM, there were 9 students. The total number of students could not reach the target of KKM was less than before. Many of students had high attention to teacher's explanation so they got good score than others that did not pay attention to teacher's explanation.

The topic of the task in second meeting of cycle two was about Sumber Kencono traffic accident. The students' average score in did task was 70, 89. It means the average score improved. In this meeting, there were 2 students could not reach the target. Many of students had high attention to teacher' explanation. The teaching and learning process running well because students did not come late anymore, no chatting in the class, they could be more active when teaching and learning process. In the end of this cycle, the topic was about Karunia Bakti Bus Accident. The teacher asked students to write news item text based on picture series. The students' average score in the test of the end of cycle was 77, 14. The students' average score was improving than before. In this test, there were not students could not reach the target of KKM. All of students got score more than 60. In this case, the researcher would stop the research in cycle two because all of students' ability was improving by using picture series.

Picture series had important role for the students to improve their ability in writing news item text. The role of picture series as stated by Wright (1994:17) in Library of Indonesian Education University, namely: 1). Picture can motivate the students and make them pay attention and take a part in learning. 2). Pictures contribute to the context in which the language is being used, such as bring the world into the classroom (an object or situation). 3). Pictures can be described in an objective way, or it can be interpreted, or responded to subjectively. 4). Pictures can prompt responses to questions or bring substitutions through controlled practice.

In other hand, picture series had benefit in increasing students ability in writing news item text. The benefits like stated by the following experts. Heinich, Molenda, and Russell (1985:89) stated that pictures compared to other media are very easy to use because they do not need other particular tool. Moreover, pictures are relatively inexpensive and can be used to many ways at all levels of instruction. In line with the statement, Sadiman (2003) in Library of Indonesian Education University also stated that pictures are more concrete because they show more than verbal media. Furthermore, picture also solved the problem of area and time. Then, students can learn

many abstract ideas through seeing picture, media pictures do not show the motion like three dimensional object.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research has proved the use of media picture series in improving students' ability in writing news item text had good improvement at the first year of SMAN 7 Kerinci. By using picture series, the students' ability in writing news text was able to improve at first year of SMAN 7 Kerinci academic year 2011/2012. By using picture series, students could be more active than before. Students could make news item text more easily by using media picture series, and the result of their writing was better than before. Based on data analysis result, the researcher got students' average score of evaluation I was 63,29 and the students' average score in evaluation II was 77,14. So the researcher was able to conclude that there was improvement of students' ability in writing news item text by using picture series at first year of SMAN 7 Kerinci.

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