Picture Sequences to Enhance Students' Narrative Writing

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Abstrak

Penelitian tindakan ini bertujuan untuk mencari tahu bagaimana gambar urutuan diimplementasikan untuk meningkatkan penulisan naratif pada 23 mahasiswa Informatika semester 1 di Panca Marga University Probolinggo. Tujuannya adalah untuk. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus. Data kualitatif diperoleh dari checklist observasi, catatan lapangan dan kuesioner. Sementara data kuantitatif diperoleh dari produk penulisan naratif siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menggunakan urutan gambar dapat meningkatkan penulisan naratif siswa. Tingkat 1 = miskin, tingkat 2 = adil, tingkat 3 = baik, dan tingkat 4 = baik. Dianggap sukses jika 65% siswa mencapai tingkat 3 atau lebih. Dalam studi preliminer ada total 35% siswa yang mencapai level 3 atau lebih. Setelah siklus 2, total 78% siswa mencapai tingkat 3 atau lebih. Ini menunjukkan bahwa urutan gambar dapat meningkatkan penulisan naratif siswa.

Kata kunci: gambar berurutan, menulis, narasi

Abstract

The objective is to determine how picture sequences can be implemented to enhance 23 students' narrative writing 1st-semester Informatics students in Panca Marga University Probolinggo. This research is performed in 2 cycles. Qualitative data are obtained from observation checklists, field notes, and questionnaires. At the same time, quantitative data are gained from the product of students' narrative writing. The research shows that using picture sequences can improve students' narrative writing. The scoring rubrics are Level 1=Poor, Level 2=Fair, Level 3=Good, and Level 4=Excellent. It is considered a success if 65 % of the students reach level 3 or more. In the preliminary study, 35 % of students reached level 3 or more. After cycle 2, 78 % of students reach level 3 or more. It indicates that picture sequences can improve students' narrative writing.

Keywords: picture sequences, writing, narrative

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, it is challenging to write. According to Richards & Renandya (2002:303), writing is the most challenging ability for second language learners to acquire compared to the other three. Writing includes a lot of very sophisticated talents. There are several components of writing that one should acquire. Writing is a sophisticated ability that might sometimes be challenging to acquire (Heaton, 1991:135). He also mentions that students should require both grammar mastery and writing elements in learning writing. The difficulty in writing is deciding what to write and considering the organization and vocabulary in a readable text. Thus, achieving a good mastery of writing skills is challenging because of its complexity.

However, in the English lesson syllabus, writing is a language skill that the students should gain after completing the lesson. The lecturer has to be concerned with the target while running the class. Thus, the students can possess good ability in writing skills. In reality, students mostly think that writing is complex and that they can hardly write readable text. This is in line with Chen (2002:5), who concludes that most students in their writing class often do not know what and how

to write something into one coordinated text. They tend to feel confused about how to organize their idea. The complexity of writing, which involves spelling and how to construct ideas, may cause students to feel anxious about their writing (Harmer, 2004). This causes students to be afraid of writing. They will be reluctant to practice writing. To deal with those problems, the lecturer needs to provide students with enough writing practice and information to allow them to finish their writing tasks. This study aims to provide action research findings on Informatics Students at Panca Marga University Probolinggo.

The outcome of the current action research's preliminary investigation showed that 1st-semester Informatics Students encountered problems in their writing section in their English lesson. They seemed confused about how to express their idea in one readable text. Students often complained about putting the word into the text during their writing section. They did not understand how to combine words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Many students complained about incorrectly organizing their spelling and grammar in the text. The significant problem found is most students did not know how to organize their writing. As a result, the outcome of the writing was unsatisfactory. Students' preliminary data were taken from their previous narrative text workbook.

To overcome these problems, the researcher proposed picture sequences as a substitute for narrative writing instruction. Picture sequences were chosen because the researcher thinks students need some simulator to help them express and organize ideas into one readable text. Listing (2019:217), through her research, had proven that visual images, including pictures, might enhance students' ability to develop their writing. A picture can aid students in delving into more creative and organized thinking. This will help students produce good writing skills. The picture helps students to develop their ideas. Rayo (2015) reinforced this idea by claiming that using picture sequences in language acquisition has numerous advantages since students may become more responsive through visual aids. By using pictures, students are guided to understand how the story went. Another research done by Baso (2016:117)117) also concludes that picture sequences can increase students' attitudes and writing scores.

Thus, students may use their creativity to write a good text. In addition, the idea is that pictures help students recount their experiences and comprehend concepts because images can represent a variety of objects, places, people, and more (Wright, 1989:30). Students will better understand the overall context. Additionally, Fadila and Fitrawati (2022:187) discovered that using picture sequences helps students write more effectively. This, for sure, is an excellent aid to guide students to produce a better narrative text.

In this study, the researcher attempted to create a different approach to enhance the writing proficiency of Panca Marga University's first-semester informatics students. It was anticipated that the research would benefit from raising the standard of English instruction. The researcher's initial investigation was the basis for selecting the narrative text. The students' writing assignments were restricted to providing them with narrative text models and instruction on creating narrative texts using picture sequences. The research's stated problem is how to use picture sequence to help students write better narratives, which is in keeping with the study's background.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a classroom action research design. This method is essential for teacher educators to improve their professional lives (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). This is because action research can be seen as a means to create meaning and understanding in problematic situations (Burns, 2005). To solve problems found in teaching language, action research has a positive impact on the practice (Burns, 2005). Action research design involves a cyclical procedure that consists of several repeated steps.

Each action research cycle should consist of the following steps, according to Gebhard & Robert (1999): defining a goal, organizing an action to achieve the objective, carrying out the plan, watching the action, and reflecting on the observation. Each step had a different procedure. The cycle of action research had to be done continuously to solve the problem found in the field. In this research, the researcher prepared some cycles in case the first cycle failed; the researcher would

continue to the next cycle until the predetermined goal could be fulfilled. The description of the research method can be seen in Figure 1.
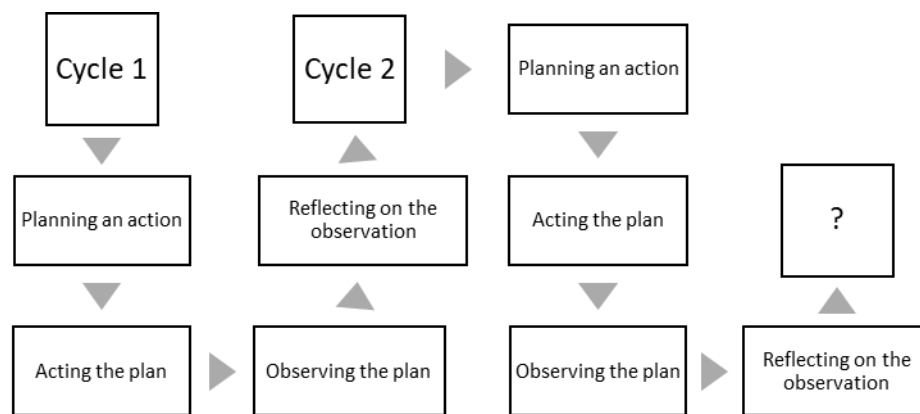

Figure I. Action Research Model by Gebhard & Robert (1999)

Preliminary Study and Setting the Goal

Panca Marga University Probolinggo in East Java, Indonesia, was the site of this study. The first 23 students in the informatics program served as the research subjects. A preliminary study was conducted to get reliable information about the writing exercise in the English lesson. Identifying the issue the preliminary investigation raises is part of setting a goal. The students struggled to compose narrative texts that effectively expressed their thoughts and had trouble organizing their stories. Table 1 displays the frequency distribution of the students' narrative writing from the pilot project.

Table 1. The Frequency Distribution of the Students' Narrative Writing in the Pilot Project

Level	Frequency	%
1	0	0
2	15	65
3	5	22
4	3	13
Total	**23**	**100**

Planning an Action

In Gebhard & Robert (1999), Kemmis and McTaggart assert that a plan needs to be prospective to be implemented. The researcher created materials related to the teaching technique of enhancing students' narrative text writing through picture sequences throughout this planning phase. Preparing the media and instructional materials, setting up the tools, and figuring out the success criteria were all included in the preparation. An overview of the instruments utilized in this study is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The Set of Instruments Used in this Research

Activities	Assessment		Instruments
	Process	Product	
Pre-writing Activity	Students' active participation	Students outline based on the picture sequences given	Observation, field notes
Writing Process	Students' activities in writing	Students' writing	Observation, field notes, questionnaires, students' writing

Two sets of success criteria were needed; they served as the standards for both the process and the final product's success. The results of the data gathered through field notes, questionnaires,

and observation were used as indicators of the process' success or failure. The product of this research was the result of the student's writing. The success criteria stating that more than 65% of the students reached level 3 above was determined because the value already showed a significant improvement compared to the preliminary study results, which showed more than 60% reached level 2. Table 3 provides information on the criteria for success.

Table 3. The Criteria of Success

The Criteria of Success	Data	Source	Data Collection Technique
The Process: Students' motivation during the action.	Observation	Students	Observing
The Product: More than 65% of students reached level 3 or above	Score	Students' writing	Writing scoring rubric

The researcher used leveled scoring rubrics for writing, which included four levels for each item in content, language use, and spelling, to assess the student's written outputs and ascertain the students' writing achievement. Table 4 displays the writing score rubrics at each level. Subsequently, the researcher totaled every level that the students attained, resulting in the score category number below: Level 1=Poor, Level 2=Fair, Level 3=Good, Level 4=Excellent

Table 4. The Levels of Scoring Rubrics for Writing

Writing Component	Level	Description
Content	1	The content is not entirely relevant to the topic
	2	The content is relevant to the topic but is not easy to understand
	3	The content is almost complete and relevant to the topic
	4	The content is relevant to the topic and easy to understand
Language Use	1	Frequent (49% or below) grammatical and inaccuracies
	2	Numerous (50-69%) grammatical and inaccuracies
	3	A few (70-89%) grammatical inaccuracies
	4	Few (90% or above) grammatical inaccuracies
Spelling	1	No (49% or below) accuracy in spelling
	2	Low (50-69%) accuracy in spelling
	3	A few (70-89%) accuracy in spelling
	4	Almost (90% or above) accuracy in spelling

(Adapted from Heaton, 1990: 144)

Acting the Plan

The lesson plan acted. The students were first introduced to picture sequences. The researcher examined the students' understanding of the subject matter using questions pertaining to the provided photographs. Students were asked to respond to the researcher's questions and to identify any elements or connections to the image. Then, students were instructed to create a rough framework for the picture sequences. After that, the researcher created a narrative text model and gave students writing instructions. Lastly, the researcher explained the text's characteristics and gave the students chances to ask questions.

The researcher was always available in the writing process if someone needed help. In this part, the teacher gave another set of picture sequences and distributed them to each student. The researcher always controlled every step of writing to encourage students' motivation in writing. Showing the researcher's presence gave students serenity since they would know that in the process of writing, the researcher would always be there to help and guide them. The students were allowed to observe the pictures and identify the objects. Finally, they made a tentative outline based on the picture sequences and started developing their narrative writing.

Observing the Plan

During this phase of the study, the researcher watched the action process, observing events that transpired during the action's implementation and gathering information about them in connection to the success criteria. Surveys, field notes, observation, and student entry records were all employed in the data collection process. After completing all the activities, the researcher used the questionnaires she had created to get the students' responses.

The observation's outcomes were examined for additional planning and revision for the following cycle. The questionnaires asked about students' perceptions of using picture sequences to improve their narrative writing and their opinions, benefits, and requirements of utilizing picture sequences as a teaching and learning approach. Writing records were kept by the students to track their progress. The observation's outcomes provided the data. The observation outcomes, along with the writing process entries from the students, served as the foundation for additional edits and cycle planning. Each cycle's worth of data that the researcher collected through observational activities was subjected to a descriptive analysis.

Reflecting on the Observation

The researcher reviewed actions noted during the observation phase. Two primary success criteria, the method, and the outcome, were developed to determine whether or not the cycle needed to be updated for the action's subsequent cycle. The researcher considered whether or not the action satisfied the success criterion. Additional revision and cycle planning data were obtained from the reflection's outcome in Cycle 1. If the outcome of this activity fulfilled the predefined criteria, it was deemed successful.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's findings were demonstrated by describing how picture sequences were used and how the students' writing in cycles 1 and 2 improved. Every cycle involves the following steps: planning the action, carrying out the plan, observing, and reflecting. Picture sequences were shown in four stages for each cycle. The researcher implemented three teaching and learning steps in the plan. Pre-teaching, main-teaching, and post-teaching activities were the steps. During the modeling portion, students were required to look at the image, answer a few questions about the picture's sequences, and create a basic outline. Afterward, they had to combine the outline into a single, understandable sentence.

During the observation phase, the students' teaching materials, methodology, and attitudes during the writing process were examined. In addition, the researcher gathered and examined the research's output, which consisted of the students' narrative writing test scores. The outcome of this application. The first cycle's reflection outcome provided data for additional revision and cycle planning. It was deemed successful if the activity fulfilled the predefined success criteria, which included having 65% of the student's narrative writing at level 3 or higher.

Three improvements were made regarding content, language usage, and spelling. Figure II compares the overall writing results from the students' narratives.
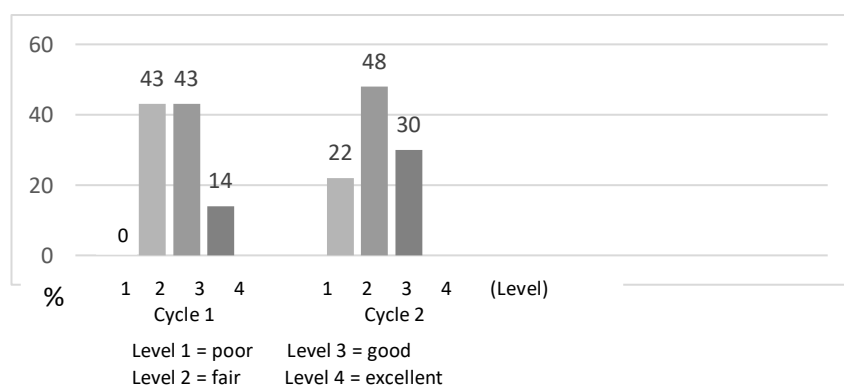

Figure II. The result of Students' Narrative Writing

As seen in Figure I above, the student's narrative writing results improve from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Five students, or 22% of the total, achieved level 2 (fair) in cycle 2. Additionally, 11 pupils, or 48%, achieved level 3 (good). Finally, seven students, or 30%, were present. In summary, there has been a notable improvement in students' writing performance. Previously, only 33% of students had achieved level 3 or higher in the preliminary study. Following the planning phase, 78% of the students attained level 3 or higher. These enhancements demonstrate how picture sequences can help students write stories more effectively.

DISCUSSION

Before commencing the teaching and learning process, the researcher inquired about the students' conditions and feelings to provide a pleasant environment in the classroom. According to Myhill et al. (2023:13-14), the researcher must develop a comfortable classroom environment to encourage and maintain students' writing motivation. According to Ofoghi et al. (2016), it also helps the learning process to improve. Additionally, pupils are more motivated to learn writing in a better atmosphere (Meiranti, 2012:96). To increase student's comprehension of the lesson and inspire them to write well, the researcher then described the study's goals and the writing process.

The researcher asked the students questions throughout the prewriting exercise.

The students then answer the questions responsively. Questioning was helpful for students to develop their writing (Herayati, 2020:762). It helped students to explore and develop their ideas into one readable text. The students responsively answered every question asked by the researcher. It proves that through questioning in pre-activity writing, students had already gained information and descriptions about what they would develop. It helps students to make a map of the writing. This is based on Agustina and Nur's research (Agustina & Nur, 2018).

As an instrument to enhance students' narrative writing, picture sequences can stimulate students to expand their ideas (Wright, 1989:17). Wright (1989:17) mentions that it can encourage students to focus on their education and contribute to the language use context. Students outlined the picture sequences given. The outline was arranged chronologically and developed into one readable text. This method has demonstrated its ability to assist students in comprehending and building the subject (Le et al., 2023:328). It's an excellent approach to writing in the future (Karminah & Nurkamto, 2017). Then, they were requested to revise their writing regarding context, language use, and spelling. In the process of editing and reviewing, students felt enthusiastic. Picture sequences can stimulate students to develop their ideas well. Picture sequences allowed students to learn from primary sources (Febriani, 2018:22).

Three points are indicated by the writing rubric criteria: vocabulary, language use, and topic. Students' encouragement to write can be increased by picture sequences (Wahono & Afifah, 2022:966). Additionally, it works well to support students in improving their writing (Susanti, 2021:83). The outcome has given the pupils a greater awareness of how to construct content appropriately, construct both simple and complicated sentences, and use word choice and form appropriately. This is consistent with the findings of research by Fitri et al. (2022:6), who found that picture sequences can improve students' writing skills.

The study's conclusion revealed a significant difference between the preliminary study and the writing treatment using picture sequences. Many students achieved one level higher after the cycle. Students could formulate the concept of the stories, tell the stories in chronological order, and write the stories with better content, language use, and spelling. Students also showed a positive attitude towards the process of the treatment. Students' positive responses may be helpful to enhance their writing (Round et al., 2022). Picture sequences make them happy and excited about the story they will write. It helps students to do writing activities (Agustina & Nur, 2018:195).

In conclusion, using picture sequences enhances the students' writing skills. Picture sequences give students ideas to create stories and stimulate their imagination. Picture sequences also help students develop their ideas in chronological order. During the implementation, it is evident that students are paying closer attention to the instruction, and nearly all are engaged actively. The method of instruction and learning shows a positive atmosphere. The product of students' narrative writing shows significant improvement in content, language use, and spelling.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicated that using picture sequences as a teaching tool for writing might help students write better narratives. Content, language usage, and spelling all improved. By employing picture sequences, the students could write more quickly and tell the tale chronologically. The researcher proposed using picture sequences in writing lessons to get students interested in writing assignments. In conclusion, using picture sequences can encourage students to write better. It is recommended that additional scholars use picture sequences to help students write better in different text genres.

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