



SNAP TO READ

THE EFFICACY OF CHAIN PICTURES IN TRAINING EFL STUDENTS TO WRITE NARRATIVE PARAGRAPHS

Widya Rizky Pratiwi

STMIK Bina Adinata, Indonesia

pratiwiwidyarizky@gmail.com

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Abstract

Writing skill is very crucial in learning the language. However, it is the most challenging skill for learners because of the complexity of various nuances. Learners find it is hard to produce well-written essays, primarily narrative paragraphs. Therefore, this study aimed to discover the efficacy of using chain pictures in writing narrative paragraphs to Indonesian EFL students. This study population was the second year students of Senior High School 4 Bulukumba, South-Sulawesi, Indonesia. Thirty students were selected as the sample. The data were collected through the pre-experimental method by using pre and post-test design. The result showed that the students' writing skills were significantly improved after training them by using chain pictures. The analysis result shows that students' mean score in the pre-test was 56,87, categorized as poor writing skills. In contrast, the students' mean score in the post-test was 74,13, classified as good writing skill of narrative paragraph. The t-test value was also higher than the t-table value, which was $8,25 > 2.045$. Thus, it is recommended to use chain pictures in the English learning environment, especially in teaching EFL students to write narrative paragraphs.

Keywords: *Chain Picture, Narrative Paragraph, Writing Skill, EFL Students.*

Writing skill is essential in learning the language. Thus, it is one of the language skills that should be mastered by all students in learning (Sakkir, 2018). Writing is a series of creative inspiration, problem-solving, reflection, and revision that can result in a completed manuscript (Defazio, Jones, Tennant, & Hook, 2010). Writing is a typical pattern to be designed and instructed to create an effective instructional practice (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Klimova (2013) claims that there is a dramatic improvement in self-esteem and self-confidence that creative writing inclines to develop among learners. They sometimes discover astonishing things for themselves about the language and about themselves too, which promotes personal and linguistic growth. Thus, these contribute to the increase in learners' positive motivation.

However, writing is quite challenging, and many factors burden the process of teaching and learning this skill. Writing is much more than the production of a graphic symbol. It has to be arranged according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences. As a rule, students do not only write one sentence or even several unrelated sentences. However, they have to produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in specific ways. The series may be concise, perhaps only two or three sentences, but because of how the sentence has been put in order and linked together, they form a coherent whole.

Teaching English writing skills requires learners' linguistic development and communicative (Rajesh, 2017). It involves mastery of vocabulary and grammar to present the messages, and self-knowledge to organize the thinking (Ali & Ramana, 2018). Writing is the most complex skill with the various nuances involved in it. It needs a different kind of organization and a much more detailed organization than other skills. Writing is also less forgiving of technical and grammatical errors. To write well, people need knowledge of words and grammar, language styles, organizational patterns, connotations, tone of the language, and communication strategies.

Writing is not as simple as people thought. It is perceived as the

most challenging skill for learners because of the complexity of the English language, where learners find it challenging to produce well when they are given specific tasks in writing. There are two main challenges in composing writing for ESL students. They are connecting and writing ideas in a readable form. However, it is also stated that the problem lies in generating and organizing ideas and translating them into readable text (Richard and Willy, 2002). In the English language learning environment, Rao (2019) discovers several reasons students have lack written communication skills. They are the use of traditional methods by the teachers, lack of appropriate motivation, insufficient classroom capacity, lack of facilities, and learners' behavior towards learning.

This problem was also encountered by the students of SMA Negeri 4 Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Students found it was challenging when teachers ask them to write something, primarily a narrative essay.

Writing a narrative paragraph should consider the coherence and unity of the article that should tell a series of events or actions. When a student writes a narrative paragraph, she/ he writes an incident of what is happening in a logical order (Zulfadlan & Arifin, 2013). To produce a good narrative essay, the writer should bring the conflict to life and relates a story from personal experience or imagination to make the reader easily catch the flow of the story.

When conducting the preliminary study, observing the site of research study, and doing an interview with the teacher, it was identified that the students got distressed to make free writing of narrative text based on their imagination. The students needed a very long time to find out the idea of writing a composition. Even though they were given a specific theme, they spent much time to think, but the idea has not come up yet. They must think harder about writing chronologically, start the story, and make their first sentence. When finally, students succeeded in writing, most of them were identified as having low writing performance. This problem is in line with Alfarwan's statement (2015). He says weak writers formulated texts with

seriously problematic coherence and cohesion, while the strong writers often generated the same kinds of error compositions, though not in an extreme form.

Related to these problems, a chain picture was proposed to provoke students to write a composition story quickly. The picture's concept is the shared experience of many people because of their matching ability, enabling them to match the words with pictures (Akbari, 2008). Chain picture is a visual instructional media that contemporary illustration or real situation chronologically. Fadilah (2010) explained chain picture is a series of images that have a connection between one and the others to perform a meaningful story. Puspitasari (2014) promotes chain picture as picture series in her study. She identifies that picture series as a kind of media that belongs to the picture category. It involves several pictures that relate to each other, and they place in the sequence. These pictures can appear as the image of people, things, animals, or events.

Some researchers have been working on the use of chain picture. Achmad (2019), Puspitasari (2014), Fadilah (2010), Hidayati (2010), and Dewi (2009) found that chain pictures facilitate students to learn English, and they increase the students' writing skill of narrative text. Using a chain picture, the students can generate ideas and write the correct organization with low grammar errors. It can also improve students' vocabulary. Considering the benefits of chain pictures to help students to raise their imagination in practice narrative writing, therefore, this media is proposed.

Related to the above background, this study is aimed to find out whether the use of chain pictures can improve students writing skills of a narrative paragraph. By conducting this research, it is believed that this study's result can contribute to the students' writing skill improvement, especially in writing a narrative paragraph. This study is also likely to develop the students' critical thinking to value a series of events. And finally, the result of this study is expected to give a new contribution to curricular development to integrate pictures as media in the learning environment, especially in teaching writing.

METHOD

This study was conducted at second-year students of SMU 1 Bontotiro, Bulukumba, Indonesia. The researcher used a cluster random sampling technique to choose one class from a total of four classes of the population. Thirty students were selected as the sample.

The data were collected through the pre-experimental method with one group pre-test and post-test design (Gay, 2006). In the pre-test (O1), the researcher asked the students to write a narrative paragraph. The topic was "keep the forest clean." The pre-test was to know the students' prior knowledge of writing narrative paragraphs before giving the treatment. The students wrote essays without using chain pictures. In each session of the procedure (X), the researcher explained what narrative text is and how to organize narrative paragraphs based on the images presented. Five chain pictures were trained to students; 1) fishing is my hobby, 2) my favorite toys, 3) my naughty dog, 4) the red balloon, and 5) gardening. After training the students in five meetings, the researcher provided a post-test to the students. In the post-test, the students were also asked to write narrative paragraphs. The topic in the post-test was the same with the pre-test, "keep the forest clean." However, the students wrote by seeing chain pictures. It aimed was to know whether the writing skill of the students developed after being given treatment and habituation of writing narrative paragraphs with the help of chain pictures.



Figure 1. Chain Picture of Post-Test

In analyzed the data, the researcher did some steps. First, the researcher collected the result of the test and checked students' essays. Second, the researcher scored the students' writing essays according to Jacob's component criteria of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar/ language use, and mechanics (1981). Next, the students' scores were classified into five levels based on the standard rating of evaluation. The maximal score intervals were 100 as classification of very good, and the minimum score was 34 as classification as very poor. The last, the researcher determined the mean score, the standard deviation of the students' pre-test and post-test. The researcher also found out t-test value and compared it with t-table.

FINDINGS

The data of this study were the students' score of pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was given as trying out to know the students' prior skills before applying the treatments, while the post-test was addressed to the students after giving the treatments in five different themes. The result of analyzing was presented below:

Table 1. The Percentage of students' score of all components observed

Component of score standard			Pre-test		Posttest	
No	Classification	Range	Freq	Percentage	Freq	Percentage
1.	Very good	87-100	0	0	5	16.67
2.	Good	74 – 86	4	13.33	9	30
3.	Average	61 – 73	9	30	11	36.67
4.	Poor	48 – 60	9	30	5	16.67
5.	Very poor	34 – 47	8	26.67	0	0
Total			30	100%	30	100%

The data analysis resulted in the pretest, no student reached very good score, four students (13.33%) got a good score, nine students (30%) found average rating, nine students (30%) got a poor score, and eight students (26.67%) got a very poor score. While in the post-test, there were five students (16.67%) reached a very good score, nine students (30%) got a good score, 11 students (36.67%) in average rating, five students (16.67%) found poor

score and no student got a very poor score.

Table 2. The mean score and standard deviation of the students' pre-test and post-test

Test	Mean score	Standard deviation
Pre-test	56.87	14.46
Post-test	74.13	9.74

Table 2 shows that the mean score of students' pre-test was 56.87. It was lower than the mean score of students' post-test, 74.13. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 14.46, while the standard deviation of the post-test was 9.74.

The t-test statistical analysis for the dependent sample was employed to know whether pre-test and post-test is a significant difference. The result of the t-test was 8.25, while the t-table value at the level of significance 0.05 with the degree of freedom ($df = n-1 = 30-1=29$) was 2.045.

Table 3. The T-test of students' writing achievement

Variable	T-test value	T-table value
X2 - X1	8.25	2.045

Table 3 shows that the t-test value was higher than the t-table value of $8.25 > 2.045$, where the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

From all the analysis above, the researcher concludes that there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test of the students' writing skill of narrative paragraph by using chain pictures. Chain pictures can improve the students writing skills of a narrative paragraph.

DISCUSSION

This session presents a discussion of the result of the data analysis. It aims to describe how Chain Picture can improve the students' writing in narrative paragraphs. The finding of this study shows that chain pictures can improve the students writing skills of narrative paragraphs. The same results were also supported by some previous researchers Achmad (2019),

Puspitasari (2014), Fadilah (2010), Hidayati (2010), and Dewi (2009). Chain picture is very beneficial that facilitate students to learn English, especially increase the students' writing skill of narrative text (Fadilah, 2010). Puspitasari (2014) reveals that pictures are media which can be easily modified to adjust the teaching and learning condition. They help the students to improve and to arouse their imagination in practice writing.

The result of the pre-test showed students found difficulties in writing narrative paragraphs. They got trouble in writing the sentences of the paragraphs because the students needed a very long time to find out the idea of writing a composition. They got difficulties thinking about the story chronologically. They must think harder about how to start and make their first sentence. Even though students succeeded in writing, most of them were identified as having poor and very poor writing performance. The students were poor to fair in content, vocabulary, and grammar. While they were categorized as very poor when it should be related to mechanics, the examples of this problem can be as follow:

1) My friends to perform many activities at school should be My friends join many activities at school.

2) We were law should be we were punished

3) I permanent enjoy should be I really enjoy.

The other mistakes they usually did were their grammatical errors. The examples of this problem can be as follows:

1) The form of "passive voice": The monkey give banana should be the monkey was given banana.

2) The writing of "unusage word": Rico is average fishing, should be Rico is fishing

3) Simple past tense : Yesterday, I go to the Market, should be yesterday, I went to the market.

4) Auxilary of "do": we no believe, should be we did not believe, etc.

The next mistakes they usually did were their mechanics errors, namely

the errors of capitalization, punctuation and spelling (wicked up should be waked up, study should be study).

Pictures refer to a mental representation of the mind that can better affect the learning. Pictures give practice in most skills and components and most stages of teaching (Akbari, 2008). Wright (1989) also explains some benefits of using pictures in teaching and learning environment; 1) motivate the students to pay attention and take part in writing, 2) contribute to the meaningful context, 3) can be described in an objective way and work ('this is a car') or interpreted ('It's probably a local car.') or responded to subjectively ('I like traveling by car.'). 4). accommodate students with information to use in controlled practice, 5). stimulate and provide information to be referred to in conversation and discussion.

The primary function of the materials is to guide the students to use their store of a foreign language to express their views and opinion. Chain pictures were presented to give bright illustrations chronologically, so students were helped to imagine and write the story based on the images. In this research study, the students were asked to write or tell a story using what appears in those pictures. It would allow the students to write in a connected way, using some patterns they have learned. It is a small early step in the direction of free expression of ideas.

The post-test result indicated that students are not only able to write story chronologically, but also write fluently without spending too much time. The students did the well-writing performance with less grammatical errors. They were also found to use more variety of unfamiliar vocabulary in writing.

Puspitasari (2014) supports the result of the study. She founds picture series could help the students to stimulate ideas about what they had to write. As a result, they could develop their ideas into long paragraphs. They also could write fluently. Furthermore, picture series could help the students to organize their thoughts because by studying some series of pictures, the students could understand the sequence of the ideas. The students could arrange insights based on the generic structure of the narrative text. As a

result, the students' paragraphs were well-written and also well-read. Picture series also could improve the students' vocabulary mastery. By looking at the pictures, the students knew the vocabulary that they wanted to use, and then they checked the dictionary to find the words in English. Besides, the students' writing skills also improved in the aspect of language use. By giving the explanation, worksheet, and feedback, the students had a better mastery of using simple past tense in writing narrative texts. They could produce meaningful but straightforward sentences.

CONCLUSION

The result showed that the chain picture is efficient in improving students' writing skills in narrative paragraphs. Chain pictures can guide the students to use their store of a foreign language to express their views and opinion. Thus, they can write stories chronologically in a meaningful context. The students' mean score in the pre-test was 56,87 as category poor writing skill while the mean score of the students' test after given the treatment was 74,13 as a category of good writing skill of narrative paragraph. The t-test value was also higher than the t-table value, which was $8,25 > 2.045$. Chain picture gives contribution in EFL learning environments. Therefore, it is suggested to use chain pictures in teaching writing, especially to improve the students' writing skills of the narrative paragraph.

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