

## THE USE OF PICTURE SERIES-AIDED LEARNING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY; A Case Study

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**Abstract.** This research is CAR (Classroom Action Research) conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Lamongan. This research uses picture aided learning strategy to improve students' writing ability. The subjects of this study are the 28 (twenty eight) students from grade VII. The research was conducted in year 2018-2019. The results shows that picture series-aided learning can improve students' writing ability. Their average scores increase from 56.86 into 77.87 (21.01 increase points), that can be elaborated as follows: 10.43 points increase, from 20.86 into 31.29, for content; 5.28 points increase, from 11.79 into 17.07, for language; and 5.29 points increase, from 24.21 into 29.50, for organization.

**Keywords:** Classroom Action Research, students, writing, ability,

### INTRODUCTION

Learning writing has been proved to give advantages to the students in the term of enhancing their language learning strategies as what currently has become a great concern of many experts in the movement of combining reading-writing instructions. The experts propose that by interconnecting reading and writing students will develop a great deal in their literacy Skills. Some researches, as reported by Major English Language Arts Professional Organization (Yale, 2010: 1), have found that when students read extensively they become better writers. At the same time, as Yale (2010: 2) says, practices in writing help students build their reading skills, i.e., practicing in the process of writing their own texts helps them analyze the pieces that they read, they can apply their knowledge about the ways to use particular language (words choice, combining words into logical and grammatical sentence structure, appropriate register, etc.), text structure or content to better understand a professional author's construction of his or her texts. It also will help students to strengthen their vocabulary mastery and language use which can be applied in speaking. This underlies the reason why writing must be taught in spite of its exclusion from National Examination.

Some perspectives mentioned above become strong consideration for the researcher as a teacher to answer the problem of her students. From her every day observation of her students, she discovers that whenever she asks her students to have speaking performances (performing dialogues or monologues, doing discussions, etc), they tend to write drafts or scripts first before performing them. To the contrary, the researcher finds it difficult for them, particularly grade seven students, to accomplish their writing tasks. Most of them would rather copy from other sources rather than write themselves or have a few words to write whenever they are asked to make composition, or in other words, they are poor of ideas.

To further probe the students' problem in writing the teacher then did a preliminary study in which she assigned the students to write a composition describing a well-known place in their regent, i.e. Lamongan Town Square. The result of the evaluation of the preliminary study shows that the average score of twenty eight students in 0-100 scale was 56.9. This fact indicates that the students' writings were far from satisfying because it could not gain the minimum level of passing grade (70) for English subject as it was suggested by the curriculum of SMP Negeri 1 Lamongan. Obviously they were lack of ideas and the ability to organize them, as well as the language aspect. What comes up to the researcher's mind, then, is how to help them write better that in turn it will advocate the improvement of their other language abilities just as what has been explained previously.

Therefore, the researcher decided to facilitate the students to be able to improve their ability to elicit their vocabularies and enrich ideas to write; she needs to present something

concrete, tangible, to be visualized into verbal language, like going to the places they will describe, or presenting realia, or displaying photos or pictures. In other words, the students need context as Walter (2004: 31).

Being inspired by classroom action research done by Dodik (2009) which used picture series to improve the ability of the students of the grade VIII C of SMPN Bati – Bati in academic year 2008-2009 in writing recount text, researcher decides to use the same media to improve her grade tenth students' ability in writing descriptive text and to increase their interest in writing and motivation to learn more. The students' ability that the researcher would like to improve includes the ability to enrich and develop their ideas, and to lead them to be better in organizing ideas. There are some reasons why the writer, who is also their teacher, chooses picture series as the media to help them. Firstly, pictures are visual media which are easy and do not need much money to get. Secondly, pictures are attracting, they will be able to evoke students' imagination. Munadi (2008: 89) proposes that pictures enable people to catch ideas or information conveyed in them clearly, more than merely expressed verbally. When the students watch pictures, they will be able to speak more, interact with the pictures and their friends well; make good relationship among paradoxes and build new ideas. Youra's (2009: 1) project on writing and photography has given strong evidence about the impact of photography (pictures) on the improvement of the students' ability to develop ideas in writing. Youra developed a writing and photography project for students in his Introduction to Language and Literature course. He delineated two goals for his project: (1) to improve students' writing by incorporating photography into descriptive and narrative writing exercises designed to inspire more varied and creative perspectives, and (2) to enhance visual as well as literacy. As the result of the project he found that the students' writings were significantly improved. It was surprising also that the reaction of the students were magnificent, their comments and actions reflected increased insight and motivation that encourage them to explore new possibilities in their writing.

This study focuses on writing descriptive texts. This decision is made based on some reasons. Firstly, it is one of five genres obliged by the content standard of Kurikulum 13 (K13), to be learned in this grade, grade seven, in which the research is conducted. Secondly, the core of a descriptive text is how to describe someone or something. The ability of describing is always required in writing other types of texts such as narrative, recount, report, and procedure. (McCarthy 1998:5)

In order to implement the picture series aided learning strategy to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text effectively, the researcher employs the strategy in cooperation with process-genre approach. Process-genre approach is an approach proposed primarily by Badger and White (2000). It is a hybrid of the process approach and the genre approach in which the students are exposed to the models of certain text genre being learned to make them familiar with the genre during their process of writing that comprises prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising, and editing. By applying this approach it is expected that the students will be more facilitated since being familiar means understanding well the purpose and conventions of the genre so that they will find it easy to write a text of the same genre. At the same time, guiding the students to attend the process of writing will provide the students with an opportunity to experience the real writing process which is recursive and the opportunity to develop their writing skills as well as their self-belonging toward their works.

Regarding to the background of the study above the researcher intentionally conducts a study to the students of Class VII of SMP Negeri 1 Lamongan through an action research using circular process which focuses on the implementation of picture series aided leaning strategy to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

### ***Scope and Limitation of the Study***

The subjects of this study are the grade VII students of SMP Negeri 1 Lamongan, which is located at Jalan Ki Sarmidi Mangunsarkara No. 18 Lamongan Kecamatan Lamongan. Those students are studying in the second semester of academic year 2018-2019. This grade consists of ten classes and each class consists of approximately 28 students. However, because of the scarcity of time and energy to analyze the students' progress, only one class, i.e., class VII F which consists of 28 students.

The same reason does also underline the priority of the problem selection that must be solved in this study. In line with the current trend in the language teaching that emphasizes more on the communicative purpose than grammatical correction, this study will focus on the improvement of content and organization of the writing skill. However, it does not mean that the researcher does not pay attention at all on the grammatical and other mechanical aspects of writing; it is only about the matter of weighing on the scoring system the researcher will take, i.e., the researcher will weigh content and organizational aspects higher than grammatical and mechanical aspects of writing.

In this semester the students have to write three kinds/genres of text; narrative, descriptive and news item. For some reasons stated in introduction, however, the object of the study is writing descriptive text.

### ***Definition of Key Term***

In order to avoid misinterpretation between the writer and the readers, it is important to explain the meaning of the key terms used in this study as follows:

1. *Writing*. It is a process to produce ideas communicated to the readers in the form of an essay or others such as poems, advertisements, and so forth (Seyler, 1984: 2)
2. *Descriptive writing*. It is a type of writing that appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/or sounds (Oshima and Hogue, 2007:61).
3. *Picture series*. They are photos of parts of certain places arranged systematically.
4. *Picture series-aided learning strategy*. It is a strategy of teaching-learning that employs picture series as the instructional aids.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITEATURE**

This study is inspired by classroom action research done by Dodik (2009) which used picture series to improve the ability of the students of the grade VIII C of SMPN Bati-Bati in writing recount text. He conducted his research in academic year 2008/2009 with significant result in which his 36 students achieve satisfying achievement within two cycles (ten meetings) with mean score 71.52, higher than the criteria of success required. It is also reported that in terms of students' motivation and activeness, during the teaching and learning process using picture series the students are actively involved and more motivated to write. Although the genre of the text is different from that the researcher uses as a target text studied, she consider Dodik's study is good model to be applied to her students.

This research also is inspired by Lilik Luthfiah's study which had similar strategy and text genre to be applied with the researcher's, i.e., teaching descriptive text using still pictures (Cahyono, 2009). She combined her strategy with CTL and found that this strategy was beneficial in helping her students to solve their problems in writing.

A great influence does come from Steven Youra's (2009: 1) project in which he set some activities of writing using photography. Steven Youra developed a writing and photography project for students in his Introduction to Language and Literature course. He delineated two goals for his project: (1) to improve students' writing by incorporating photography into descriptive and narrative writing exercises designed to inspire more varied and creative perspectives, and (2) to enhance visual as well as verbal literacy. To judge the

progress of his students, Youra compared work done early in the term with the variety of descriptive and narrative writing options completed during the project. He found their writing significantly improved and less advanced students made surprising stride, as they became creatively engaged by the connections between writing and photography. He concludes that his project can be easily replicated and adapted to a variety of settings because it is not dependent on technical equipment and because the viewing materials used in the early activities are very flexible.

### ***The process approach***

This approach focuses on the writer as the originator of a text and lays particular stress on a cycle of writing activities in which writers move from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the 'publication' of a finished text. There are many writing process steps proposed by experts; among of them are by Brereton (1982: 8) who found that every writer takes different process but some processes seem to be shared by most successful writers. According to him writer will go through some steps such as discovering a topic, planning their approach, writing a rough draft, revising the first draft, writing a final draft, and proofreading for errors. In this reasearch, the process-genre approach is used as the model. There are processes conducted in thi research; 1) *prewriting*; 2) *organizing*; 3) *darfting*; 4) *review and editing*; 6) *Instructional aids*; and 7) *Assessment in Writing*. (Gerlach, Ely, and Melnick, 1980 p. 241; Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982 p. 34; Gebhard, 1996; Jaban, 2005 p. 38; Oshima and Hogue, 2007 p. 72; Oshima and Hogue, 2007 p. 54; Abisamra, 2009 p. 3;)

### ***Assesment and Scoring***

Product assessment focuses on the quality of students compositions and often is equated with assigning a grade. In assessing students' writing, teachers should have the criteria which vary according to the purpose of the assessment. The criteria must involve assessing contents and mechanics of writing. There are two types of scoring methods that the teachers can use to assess the students' writing, they are holistic scoring (Table 1) and analytical scoring (Table 2)

In holistic scoring the students' writings are read quickly to get general or whole impression and, then, judged against a rating scale, or scoring rubric, that outlines scoring criteria. The rubric of this scoring type is complemented by a set of anchor or benchmark script at each level that are intended to exemplify the criteria of that level, and teachers as raters are carefully to adhere to the rubric when scoring the writings (Weigle, 2002: 112). The score is, then, given based on the general impression which matches the criteria stated in the scoring rubric.

The holistic scoring is considered faster and efficient, since it is based on the general impression and intended to focus on the strength of the writings. However, it can not be used to diagnose the weakness of the students' writing. A single score of holistic scoring does not allow teachers to distinguish between some different aspects of writing such as control of syntax, depth of vocabulary, organization, and so on.

In analytic scoring, the students' writing are rated on several aspects of writing or criteria rather than given a single score. Depending on the purpose of the assessment, the students' writing might be judged on such features as content, organization, cohesion, register, vocabulary, grammar, or mechanics (Weigle, 2002: 114). Therefore, it can be said that analytic scoring provides more detailed information about a students' performance in different aspects of writing and can be used to diagnose the student's weakness by which the feedback can be given to improve their writing ability.

*Table 1. Holistic Scoring Rubric for Writing Assessment*

Score	Descriptions
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conveys meaning clearly and effectively</li> <li>- Presents multi-paragraph organization, with clear introductions, development of ideas, and conclusion</li> <li>- Show evidence of smooth transitions</li> <li>- Uses varied, vivid, precise vocabulary consistently</li> <li>- Writes with few grammatical/mechanical errors.</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conveys meaning clearly</li> <li>- Presents multi-paragraph organization logically, though some parts may not be fully developed.</li> <li>- Shows some evidence of effective transitions.</li> <li>- Uses varied and vivid vocabulary appropriate for audience and purpose</li> <li>- Writes with some grammatical/mechanical errors without affecting meaning</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expresses ideas coherently most of the time</li> <li>- Develops a logical paragraph</li> <li>- Writes with a variety of sentence structures with limited use of transitions</li> <li>- Chooses vocabulary that is (often) adequate to purpose</li> <li>- Writes with grammatical/mechanical errors that seldom diminish communication</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attempts to express ideas coherently</li> <li>- Begins to write a paragraph by organizing ideas</li> <li>- Writes primarily simple sentences</li> <li>- Uses high frequency vocabulary</li> <li>- Writes with grammatical/mechanical errors that sometimes diminish communication.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begins to convey meaning</li> <li>- Writes simple sentences/phrases</li> <li>- Uses limited or repetitious vocabulary</li> <li>- Spells inventively</li> <li>- Uses little or no mechanics, which often diminishes meaning</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draws pictures to convey meaning</li> <li>- Uses single words, phrases</li> <li>- Copies from a model</li> </ul>

*Table 2. Analytic Scoring Rubric for Writing (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996)*

Domain Score*	Composing	Style	Sentence Formation	Usage	Mechanics
4	Focuses on central ideas with an organized and elaborated text	Purposefully chosen vocabulary, variety, information and voice to affect reader	Standard word order, no enjambment (run-on sentences), completeness (no sentence fragments), standard modifiers and coordinators, and effective transitions.	Standard inflections (e.g. plurals, possessives, -ed, -ing with verbs, and ly with adverbs), subject-verb agreement, standard word meaning.	Effective use of capitalization. punctuation. spelling, and formatting (paragraphs noted by indenting)
3	Central idea, but not as evenly elaborated and some digressions	Vocabulary less precise and information chosen less purposeful	Mostly standard word order, some enjambment or sentence fragments	Mostly standard inflections, agreement, and word meaning	Mostly effective use of mechanics; errors do not detract from meaning

2	Not a ocused idea or <i>more</i> than one idea, sketchy elaboration digressions	Vocabulary basic and not purposefully selected; tone flat or inconsistent	Some non-standard word order, enjambment, and word omissions (e.g. verbs).	Some errors with inflections, agreement, and word meaning	Some errors with spelling and punctuation that detract from meaning
1	No clear idea, little or no elaboration, many digressions	Not controlled, tone flat, sentence halted or choppy	Frequent non-standard word order, enjambment, and word omissions	Shifts from one tense to another; errors in conventions (them/those, good/well, double negatives, etc)	Misspells even simple words: little formatting evident

**Notes:** 4 = consistent control; 3 = reasonable control; 2 = Inconsistent control; 1 = Little or no control

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research design of this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR) which develops a learning model using picture series to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text. Classroom action research begins with a question or questions about classroom experiences, issues, or challenges. It is a reflective process which helps teacher to explore and examine aspects of teaching and learning and to take action to change and improve. According to Ur (1996), action research is carried out by the teachers on phenomena in their own classroom. Action research is meant primarily to improve the teacher-researcher's own teaching.

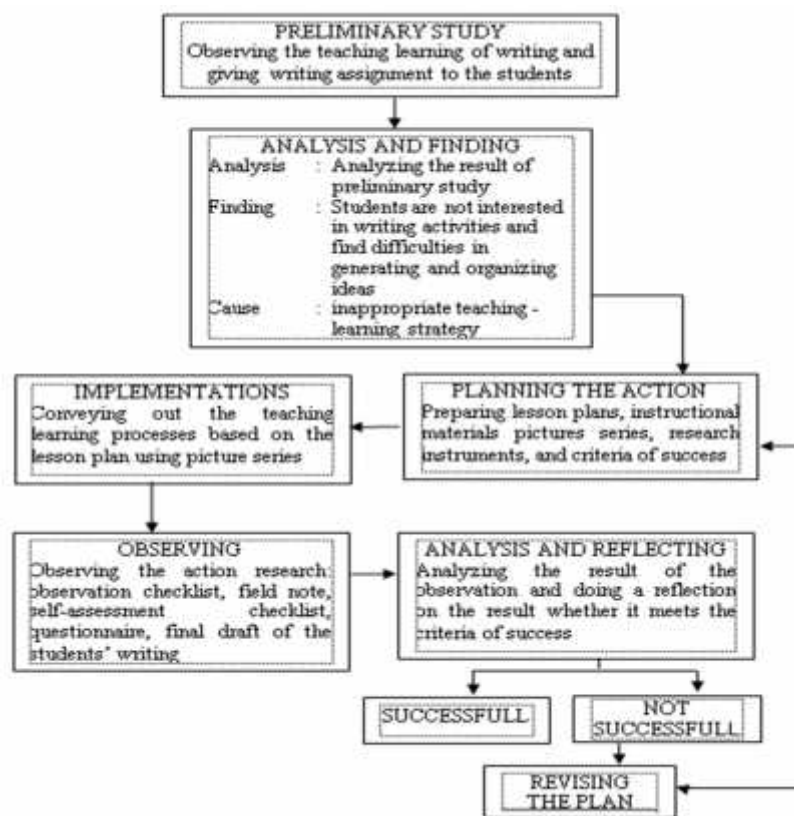


Figure 1. CAR Procedure Adapted from Kemmis and Taggart

Mistar (2006: 29) proposes that this kind of research is characterized by two main points (1) it is conducted to solve the practical or real problems occurring in a teaching-learning process in the classroom so that the predetermined objective of learning can be effectively and efficiently reached; (2) it always uses the following procedure: identification of problems; choosing a problem to solve, setting up criteria of success of solving the problem, and developing a teaching-learning strategy. Meanwhile, Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1999) propose three defining characteristics of action research as follows (1) it is carried out by practitioners; (2) it is collaborative; (3) it is aimed at changing thing.

This study was a collaborative action research since the researcher worked together with her partner in a team teaching to plan, implement, and observe the action, as well as to analyze and reflect it. In conducting the study, the researcher implemented the Classroom Action Research (CAR) procedures proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1999) which consists of four steps: planning an action, implementing the action, observing (as it is shown in figure 1).

### ***The Setting and Subject of the Study***

This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Lamongan in Jalan Ki Sarmidi Mangunsarkara No. 18 Lamongan. The subjects of this study were all the students of Class VII F who are in the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019. The class consists of 28 students. This class is chosen since it is the class where the researcher is teaching and found the problem. Based on unstructured daily observation and the result of preliminary study, among them there was only 10% which was categorized as having high/good command in English, the rest of them ranged from intermediate to low proficiency.

### ***Research Instrument***

The next step in planning Classroom Action Research (CAR) is preparing the teaching-learning media, the lesson plan, and the research instruments. First, after determining the appropriate strategy, i.e. using learning aids in the form of picture series, as the solution to the students' learning problem, the researcher designed the instructional media intended. The picture series was made of some photographs arranged according to the spatial order of the original objects. In this study the researcher focused on the description of the places, therefore, the photographs taken were those which portray some parts of an interesting place. The photos, then, were printed on a banner to be displayed in front of the class (on the wall) and on papers to be distributed to the students' groups. In the first cycle the place that was taken into photograph was Lamongan Town Square. This place was chosen again to be the topic because the researcher would like to have clear comparison of the students' writing achievement in the preliminary study and in the classroom action research .

Second, following the preparation of the instructional media, the steps on how to use them were, then, designed into a lesson plan. The lesson plan also elaborated the technique the researcher- teacher used in the CAR and the application of the process genre approach in her teaching learning process. The model of process genre approach that the researcher-teacher applied was the adaptation of Tribble's (1996) model that was integrated with the writing stages proposed by Oshima and Hogue (2007).

Third, to find out the students' opinion or perception about the media as well as their attitude toward the teaching-learning process the researcher designed a questionnaire. This instrument was very important to collect the data primarily on the attitudinal factors of the students.

Then, as mentioned above that the students did the writing through a process consisting of several stages that could be complicated for them, it is very important to provide them with a guideline that is capable of helping the students to get through the process well.

Therefore, the researcher designed a self-assessment that can guide them to do the whole process of the writing. It was also utilized to collect the data that could support the evidences found in the observation sheet on the students' attention and seriousness.

Last but not least, the researcher designed observation checklist and prepared field note that were used as data collection instruments. The collaborator of this research and the researcher herself used both instruments to observe the process of teaching in which CAR was done. Those two instruments are very important to collect the data pertaining to the application of the strategy and the process of teaching learning – to see the seriousness, the enthusiasm, and the participation of the students. The data collected were useful to assess the success of the strategy applied, to measure whether the strategy has resulted in improving the students' motivation.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

In the content aspect it is clearly seen that the use of pictures enriches their ideas and helps the students focus their description to the object. From the table of the students' writing scores above it can be seen that there is no student who got score under 24. Only four (14%) students got 24 -25 meaning that the content of their writing was still not completely developed, their description is a bit out of topic. Eight (29%) students got 28-32 showing that a significant development of ideas are starting to happen even though they still missed some points or still included some materials which should have not been present. Eight (29%) students got 35-39. It means that their writing has been developing significantly toward the good descriptive writing and started to become a vivid description of the object although there is still a bit lack of some details. Only two (7%) students achieved the top level or score in the content aspect, 40. Their writing started to grow to be a perfectly vivid description of the topic object. The writing has focused on the description of the object and the ideas were concrete and well-developed reflecting a pretty good description. All in all, 86% students have achieved good improvement in the content of their writing.

Comparing to the students' writing achievement in the preliminary study, it is obvious that there is a significant increase in the number of the students who got good scores in content aspect. In the cycle 1 there are twelve (43%) students who got 32 and up meaning those students' description has focused on the object and has been developing into good writing; while in the preliminary study there are only four (14%) students who got that score level. If no one got score under 24 (the level in which the writing is considered poor) in cycle 1, to the contrary, there are sixteen (57%) students that got that score level.

In the organization aspect it can be seen that the use of picture series was able to help the students to organize their ideas better; they were better in organizing their description according to generic structure of the text and, especially, to the spatial order. Only five (18%) students got under 24, meaning that the ability of organization was still poor. Although they had organized their description according to the generic structure of descriptive text – there had been identification in the early paragraph and description in the next paragraphs accordingly, they were still lack of spatial order in describing the object. This number of the students who got this score level has decreased compared with preliminary study in which there were ten (36%) students who got that score level. Meanwhile, in this cycle there were eleven (39%) students who got 32 and up, meaning that their text had been organized according to generic structure of the genre and spatial order as required for a good descriptive text pretty well. However, five of those students, those who got 32-34, still had somewhat weakness in organizing their materials; therefore, rereading was still needed to comprehend their writing. There was one (4%) student who got top score (40) in this aspect. Her text was organized very well including the generic structure organization, spatial order arrangement,



and organization of all materials to build a good description. Twelve (39%) students got between those two score levels, i.e. ranging from 24 up to 31. In this level the students had good descriptive structure organization as well as spatial order arrangement but were lack of material organization. To sum up, there were twenty three (83%) students who achieved a good improvement in their organization skill. It does not mean that the rest of them did not get progress in their organization skill since if it is compared with the preliminary study result in the same aspect of the same students, students number two and three for examples, it can be seen that they had some progress, in this case from 16 to 19 and 12 to 20, 3 and 8 digits of increase.

Viewing the students' language aspect on their writing, it is noticeable that they had a good progress in the use of vocabularies; they used more vocabularies compared with their works in the preliminary study or even in their regular writing activities. It is noted that they used more adjectives to make their description more vivid than their previous description in the preliminary study. Discussing their scores in this aspect, there were twenty (71%) students who got 16 and up. One out of twenty students even got 20, the top score this aspect. Only eight (29%) students got under 16. However, five of those eight students' writing was not severely bad because their scores were 15 meaning that they were closed to 16. The interpretation of the score is that although they made frequent mistakes in language use, by re-reading the works their language was still understandable. Their works also showed that although they made frequent errors in the grammar or word order, punctuation, and spelling, they have had increase in the number of vocabularies.

Compared with the students score in the preliminary study, it is obvious that the students who got 16 and up had got bigger in number. In the preliminary study the students achieving this score level were only six (21%) of the whole class, while in the cycle 1 as stated above the number increases 14 digit into twenty, a significant improvement of an achievement. In the term of their average score in this aspect, it was found that they also gained a fairly significant increase, considering their previous bad achievement, that is, they achieved 5.29 points increase from 11.79 to 17.07. In conclusion, even though language was not included to be the aspect which was intended to be improved, it was proved that this aspect also gained some improvement along with others aspects, namely, content and organization. It is evidence that the use of picture series is able to improve the students' skill in using language, especially in the vocabulary use as well as other aspects of writing, content and organization.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***The Picture Strategy***

As stated in the previous chapter that the researcher sets up the criteria of success that this study will be stopped when 80% of the students have high motivation to do the writing task and when 80% of them achieve 70 in their writing score. Reflecting the result of the data analysis, it is proved that those criteria of success were met with relatively satisfaction in which more than 80% students had good attitude toward the learning process as well as their motivation to do the task as represented by their big attention, seriousness, enthusiasm, and participation in doing the writing task; and 82% or 23 students achieved 70 and even some of them got higher than that in their scores, a significant progress considering the previous bad attainment the students did.

In the term of students' motivation and activeness represented by their interest, attention, enthusiasm, seriousness, and participation in the learning activity it is noticeable that there is a significant improvement gained in this study in which according to the questionnaire data presented in the previous section the majority of the students (88%) were interested in the pictures and 82% of them were enthusiastic to do the writing activities that

therefore, the majority of them (82%) would like to have pictures aids to do writing. It is evidence that the picture series strategy was able to enhance the students' interest and enthusiasm to do writing activities. Furthermore, the use of picture series also promotes the students' seriousness. The data from the self-assessment checklist states that 92% students followed all the steps of the writing process to guide their writing activity. It is supported by the questionnaire data showing that the students' degree of seriousness is considered high in which the majority of the students indicated some characteristics of the seriousness stated in the observation sheet covering the students' degree of attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction, the degree of activeness in getting involved in the learning process by giving comments or questions about the instruction as well as about the picture either to the teacher or to their classmates, and the degree of their attention and seriousness in observing the pictures. This also indicates that the use picture series stimulates the students' participation and interaction between and among the students in addition to their high degree of their participation in asking questions, giving ideas, working in group in which many of them took the initiative to do the task, helping their friends understand the instruction, observe the pictures, generate ideas and find vocabularies needed to do the task. This fact is supported by the data got from questionnaire result showing that all (100%) of them agreed that they did discussion with friends while they were observing the pictures. All in all, it can be said that the picture series strategy is able to promote the students' motivation to do the writing task indicated by the high percentage of the students with the characteristic of high motivation, i.e. in this study more than 80% of the whole class. This proves that the criteria of success of this study in the term of motivation are achieved.

The meaningful achievement is also shown by the improvement of the students' writing ability in which the students' average scores increase significantly from 56.86 in the preliminary study into 77.87 (21 increase points) that is spread out among three scored aspects, they are content with 10.43 increase points, organization with 5.28 increase points, and language aspect with 5.29 increase points. Analyzing the increase in detail it is noticeable that the biggest increase and the most significant improvement are on the aspect of content. This fact can also be proved from the students' writing works that show the improvement of both in the quantity (the length) and the quality (the variety of ideas and the appropriate organization of them). None of the works is the copy of friend's. They had their own way in expressing ideas in spite of the difficulty they found in expressing thought especially in the matter of language use.

*Table 3. The Increase of the Student' Writing Ability*

STAGE	WRITING ASPECTS			
	CONTENT	LANGUAGE	ORGANIZATION	TOTAL
PRELIMINARY	20.86	11.79	24.21	56.86
CYCLE 1	31.29	17.07	29.50	77.87
INCREASE POINTS	10.43	5.28	5.29	21.01

The increase also occurs in the matter of the number of the students who gain 70 and up. In the preliminary study it is found that only eight (29%) students who got 70 and up. Meanwhile, in the cycle one the condition is up-side down; the students who got 70 and up become the majority of the students (82%), only five (18%) students who got under 70. considering all the facts above it is concluded that the score criteria of success in the term of the students' score for the CAR are met. The students' score increase can be summarized in Table 3.

## CONCLUSION

The result of the picture series aided learning strategy implementation using the predetermined procedure. The observation of this study shows that the use of picture series in cooperation with process-genre approach succeeded in promoting the students' motivation as

shown by the data got from the questionnaire, observation sheet, and self-assessment checklist represented by the high percentage of the answers or aspects constituting the characteristics of high motivation that comprise the students' interest, attention, enthusiasm, and seriousness as well as the students' participation in accomplishing the writing task. Moreover, this study reveals that the presence of the picture series as an interesting realia in this study has also facilitated the interaction between the students and the teacher. Finally, this study also proves the efficacy of using picture series aided learning strategy to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Their average scores increase from 56.86 into 77.87 (21.01 increase points), that can be elaborated as follows: 10.43 points increase, from 20.86 into 31.29, for content; 5.28 points increase, from 11.79 into 17.07, for language; and 5.29 points increase, from 24.21 into 29.50, for organization. As conclusion instructional media are needed to help students to generate ideas to write. Pictures especially photographs in series are capable of evoking the students' interest and retaining their attention to make the students enthusiastic and serious in accomplishing their writing tasks. The use of picture series also promotes the interaction and participation of the students in learning process. These all motivational factors give strong contribution and support to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

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