ELT IN FOCUS

PICKYWO CARD TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

The use of media in the teaching-learning process is very helpful. It is like a bridging stuff to communicate between teacher ideas and students. This research had two objectives. Those are to find out the significant improvement of using PICKYWO card in writing descriptive text and to find out the students' activeness during the research. This research was carried out by using classroom action research. It took two cycles. The research participants were the students in eighth grade of SMP N 2 Sulang. The researchers took class VIIIA as the sample. The researchers used three instruments. Those were writing tests, checklist observation, and questionnaires. The finding showed a significant improvement in students' average in writing descriptive text from the first and the second cycle. It was from 67,1 to 74,6. Moreover, the students' activeness also improved. Before conducting the research, students tend to get bored and lazy and complain about having difficulty getting ideas when they are writing descriptive text. In the first cycle, 80% of students actively used the PICKYWO card in writing descriptive classes. Meanwhile, 87,2% of students were active in the second cycle. In short, using PICKYWO card brings significant improvement toward students' achievements and students' activeness in writing descriptive.

Keywords: *PICKYWO, teaching writing, descriptive text.*

INTRODUCTION

The essential background of conducting this research is the low interest of students in writing class. The students tend to be reluctant, quickly get bored and are always preoccupied with their own business when their teacher teaches in front of the class. Moreover, the student's scores, particularly in writing class, are not yet satisfactory. The average score is below the minimum standard (KKM). Writing class seems a boring class. Students are expected to create their own ideas through writing products. Rahmah (2017) argues that writing tends to inform the readers about the author's ideas and information. Therefore, writing consists of information that expresses ideas to the readers. Writing is one of activity used by the students to convey ideas in written form. Students struggle to find what ideas they will write down on their pieces of paper. Writing is a progressive activity. It means that the activity does not stop at once after writing one sentence. There will be the following activities or next steps to complete writing down the whole idea. Additionally, Harlena (2020) stated that writing is a complex activity that makes students explore their ideas and thoughts to make them visible and tangible. In line with that, Javadi-Safa (2018) mentions that writing needs considerations such as

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organization, content, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and quality expression, concluding that writing needs competency to be mastered.

In the classroom activity, teaching writing to students began with the most minor components, such as individual letters and their sounds, then moved on to spelling individual words, writing individual sentences, and finally, "composition. Students play a dominant and vital role in the writing activity. Teachers are facilitating or bridging between students' ideas and the process of jotting them down in word order. The teacher intervened and provided support through a technique known as conferencing, in which students, either individually or in groups, were assisted in drafting, editing, proofreading, and publishing their work. In this research, the researchers will intervene in the students' writing activity process by providing them with media. This media is called a PICKYWO card. This media will be a bridging component between students and their ideas. As a result, students will be helped by using this media to express their ideas, opinions, or feelings during the writing activity. PICKYWO card is a media name abbreviated from pictures and keywords. Therefore, the PICKYWO card is a medium that includes photographs and some keywords. The name of the PICKYWO card is made to attract students' interest in teaching writing descriptive text. Teaching descriptive writing is challenging for teachers. Noprianto (2017) stated that descriptive text not only constructs some rigid rules in the sentence but is also composed by contemplating the purpose and meaning of each structure. Therefore, the teacher must have sufficient knowledge of how these clauses make sense—moreover, descriptive text is categorized as a text that reveals some objects' characteristics. Furthermore, adopting an appropriate strategy to teach descriptive text in writing class is needed.

In June 2023, the researchers conducted an observation in SMPN 2 Sulang, which showed low students' interest in writing classes. The students tend to be reluctant, quickly get bored and are always preoccupied with their own business when their teacher is teaching in front of the class. Moreover, the student's scores, particularly in writing class, are not yet satisfactory. The average score is below the minimum standard (KKM). The teacher must determine whether the method is suited for the students. Based on the background above, we would like to find out how the teachers implement strategies to improve students' scores in writing descriptive text. There are two objectives of this research. The first is whether there is any significant improvement in teaching writing descriptive text using the PICKYWO card. This will be shown by the students' scores when writing descriptive text. The second objective is how the students' activeness during the research. This will be seen in classroom observations during the study. The researchers are about to conduct the research by using action research. It is the most suitable one since the researchers will find out the improvement during the teaching writing process.

Teaching writing Descriptive

Writing seems to be the most challenging skill in English teaching. It takes a long process, from the concept or brainstorming ideas to the final writing product. Moreover, writing needs elements such as content or organization of the text, grammatical function, vocabulary, and mechanics such as punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. According to Brown (2001), writing is a thinking process because it is a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words and give them structure and

coherent organization. A writer can use writing to communicate with a reader to tell the meaning of information and explain a topic without face-to-face interaction through the word; a reader will understand the meaning.

Glencoe and Mac Graw-Hill (2014) mention a general rubric for holistic evaluation of writing assessment.

Table 1. *General Rubric for Holistic Evaluation of Writing Assessment*

Criteria	Description	Score
Focus/Organization	• Sense of completeness • Opening that draws in reader, effective closing • Logical flow of ideas or events	4
	• Sense of completeness • An opening, but not necessarily focused or attention-getting; attempt at closing • Ideas may be in the most effective order	3
	• Piece seems incomplete • May be no opening sentence; no attention to closing • Order of ideas not effective	2
	• Piece is not complete • No opening or closing • Focus on a topic not sustained •	1
Elaboration/Support /Style	• Precise,engagingg, and vivid word choice • Varied sentence style • Ideas/events related by adequate transition words and phrases	4
	• Word choice adequate to convey meaning, some precise, vivid words • Varied sentence style • Transitions used, some details not used effectively	3
	• Word choice adequate to convey meaning but few precise or vivid words • Most sentence simple; overall style choppy • Few or no transitions	2
	• Vocabulary limited • Sentence style choppy • No transitions; half or more details may be irrelevant •	1
Grammar, Usage, And Mechanics	• Few, if any errors in punctuation • Precise syntax; competence in coordination and subordination • Free of spelling, capitalization, and usage errors	4
	• Ccompetence in coordination and subordination • Few, if any, spelling, capitalization, or usage errors • Consistent command of standard English	3
	• There are errors in punctuation • Some fragments or runs-on • Some spelling, capitalization, or usage errors	2
	• Sserious and frequent punctuation errors • Many run-ons of fragments	1

	• Frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, and usage	

Based on the table above, rubric writing assessment tend to be a guideline for the teachers to assess the students' writing skills. This implies that Pratiwi (2015) mentions that writing is a complex process; it needs some skills to generate concepts, organize ideas, write a topic and decide the words to put into written form. Through this concept, the students will master the skill of writing; by writing some text, the students will learn how to deliver their ideas into a text, one of which is descriptive text. Urunami et al. (2017) mention that descriptive text comprises information about specific things, such as written descriptions of animals, people, things, places, or descriptions of an object. So, by writing descriptive text, the students will describe and imagine the object through written text.

Mursyid in Siregar (2020) stated that in writing descriptive text, there are three essential factors to be mastered before starting to write a paragraph in descriptive text, they are (1) social function, which describes a particular place, object, or thing; (2) Generic structure consists of identification phenomenon which describe part, qualities and characteristics, (3) Language feature consists of grammatical aspects of use simple present tense, focus on specific participant, use of attributive and identify the process. It can be concluded that the factors to start writing a paragraph in the descriptive text should follow all of the parts to make the paragraph easy to understand.

The descriptive text describes something and gives information to the reader (Fitriyani et al., 2019; Jayanti et al., 2019; Suminar & Putri, 2018). They argued that through descriptive text the students will clearly describe the picture of the object and essentially make the reader understand and get information from the text. Thus, to support this research, several studies focus on descriptive text. Duha (2023) reveals that students' ability to write descriptive text through concept sentence models is useful and helpful in terms of writing ability. Apriliana et al., (2020); Panjaitan & Elga (2020); Siregar & Dongoran (2020); Wiyanto & Asmorobangun (2020), Purnamasari et, al. (2021) researched students' perceptions and difficulties in writing descriptive text that the result of the studies had significant implications for material developers, students' stages in overcoming the barriers and teachers' strategy in teaching writing descriptive text to the students.

Many researchers conducted most of the studies on students' perception of how their writing in descriptive text. Hence, the novelty of this research is prioritizing the significant improvement of teaching writing descriptive text by using the PICKYWO card. It will be shown by the students' scores in the writing descriptive text and how the students' activeness during the research. Thus, this research is expected to enhance PICKYWO as a technique that will significantly improve students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

METHOD

Research Method

This research employed classroom action research methodology. Classroom action research is ideally conducted by the teacher. The teacher is someone who knows very well about the condition of the classroom. According to Mills (2011), as cited by Cohen (2012) defines that action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers to improve the ways a particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and the students' learning. The most essential substance of action

research is improving a particular educational setting in the context of classroom situations.

Research Participant

The research participants were the seventh graders of SMP N 2 Sulang in the academic year 2023/2024. The researchers only took one class as the sample. The number of students in class 7A was 24. The researchers conducted the research in two cycles, each with three meetings.

Research Instrument

There were three instruments that researchers administered. Firstly, The researchers employed tests to measure students' achievement in writing descriptive text. Secondly, the researchers took checklist observation to measure students' activeness and behavior during the research. The last was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted to define students' interest in applying or implementing the PICKYWO cards during the writing descriptive class.

Research Data and Collecting Technique

Pretests and posttests were conducted to measure the students' improvement, particularly in their achievement of writing descriptive text. The pretest was administered before the research was conducted. It was aimed at knowing the previous students' scores

before treating them by using the PICKYWO card in writing descriptive classes. Meanwhile, the posttest was conducted at the end of the first and second cycles. Those two posttests will be compared to determine whether there is significant improvement among those two cycles.

Checklist observation was administered to observe students' activeness and behavior during the research. The researchers made a list of observation categories in the observation checklist. Therefore, the observation could be done maximally. In addition, the researchers also needed students' comments about using the PICKYWO card in the descriptive writing class. The researchers distributed questionnaires to all the participants of the research. The questionnaire will be structured.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research took two cycles. Each cycle took around three meetings. Before conducting the research cycle, the writer prepared all the instruments for the research. Those instruments were tests, checklist observation, and questionnaires. The pretest was done before conducting the cycle. The pretest was administered to 24 seventh-grade students, particularly 7A students. The pretest was about writing a simple descriptive text. Based on the result of the pretest, most of the students got scores below KKM.

Table 2. *Students Result of Pretest of Writing Descriptive Text*

No.	Category	Scale	F	Weight	f (%)	Average	KKM	
							T	B
1.	Sangat Baik	86 – 100	0	0	0	1210/24	1	23
2.	Baik	75 – 85	1	75	4,17	x 100		
3.	Cukup	65 – 74	1	65	4,17	= 50,4		
4.	Kurang	51 – 64	6	335	25	(sangat		
5.	Sangat Kurang	0 – 50	16	735	66,6	kurang)		
	Total		**24**	**1210**	**100**		**4%**	**96%**

Moreover, the researchers found that the students' activeness was low. Mostly, students got bored and preoccupied by themselves. They thought that they found a lot of difficulties when they were writing descriptive text. They thought that they did not know where to start. Based on this result, the researchers conducted the first cycle.

The first cycle was divided into three meetings. The first and the second meeting for the first cycle involved the treatment. The treatment included introducing a PICKYWO card to teach writing the descriptive text to students (participants). The researchers took "flower" as the theme of descriptive text for the first cycle. The researchers prepared PICKYWO card media for the first cycle. The PICKYWO card media included some pictures related to the theme "flower" and some keywords related to some pictures. The researchers

assumed that the students would be helpful if there was a PICKYWO card as their guideline for writing a descriptive text. During the treatment, the researchers also observed students' activeness. The researchers observed how students behaved during the treatment. The researchers used checklist observation as the guidelines for observing students' activeness.

The third meeting in the first cycle was a posttest for the first cycle. After conducting the posttest, the researchers would distribute printed structured questionnaires to students. The researchers presented a printed structured questionnaire in order to make it easy to analyze the results of the questionnaire. The researchers presented yes or no questions for the questionnaire questions.

Table 3. *Students Result of First Cycle of Writing Descriptive Text*

No.	Category	Scale	F	Weight	f (%)	Average	KKM T	B
1.	Very Good	86 – 100	0	0	0	1610/24	6	18
2.	Good	75 – 85	6	470	25	x 100		
3.	Fair	65 – 74	11	760	45,83	= 67,10		
4.	Low	51 – 64	4	240	16,67	(cukup)		
5.	Poor	0 – 50	3	140	12,50			
	Total		**24**	**1610**	**100**		**25%**	**75%**

In another way, the researchers also observed the students' activeness during the research. Generally, there was a significant improvement in terms of students' activeness compared from the pre-cycle to the first cycle. Most students were interested in using PICKYWO to

help them write a descriptive text. The researchers provided a checklist observation to help her observe students' activeness. The checklist observation contained some indicators dealing with positive and negative students' activeness

Table 4. *The Observation Of Students' Activeness in The First Cycle*

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Percent (%)	Classical Average
1.	Students are interested in asking and giving their ideas during the learning process	18	75%	

2.	Students are actively involved in the learning process	18	75%	96/(24x5) x 100
3.	Students are interested in writing descriptive text by using PICKYWO card	24	100%	= 80% (BAIK)
4.	Students are actively discuss their ideas about writing descriptive with their friends	18	75%	
5.	Students are doing writing descriptive activity very well	18	75%	
	Jumlah		**100**	

The result of the table showed that mostly the students were active in the classroom. It was shown that 80% of students showed positive activeness during the research. It was categorized as "good".

The next data collection done by the researchers in the first cycle was questionnaire. The researcher used objective questions. Therefore, the students would find it easier to answer the questionnaire. The researchers provided 5 Yes/No questions to the participants. Below the questions, the researchers provided a comment below the questions. Most students answered that they were interested in using PICKYWO cards.

Some students also commented that the researchers should present the media of the PICKYWO card more interesting, such as the glossy paper and more colorful pictures. Based on the data from the questionnaire in the first cycle, the researchers would revise it for the next cycle.

The second cycle also took three meetings. The researchers took "Pet (animal)" as the topic for writing descriptive text. Based on the first cycle, the researchers made revisions, such as using glossy paper to make the PICKYWO card and making it more colorful.

Tabel 5. *Students Result of Second Cycle of Writing Descriptive Text*

No	Category	Scale	F	Weight	f (%)	Average	KKM	
							T	B
1.	Very Good	86 – 100	4	375	20,9%	1790/24	14	10
2.	Good	75 – 85	10	790	44,1%	x 100		
3.	Fair	65 – 74	4	265	14,8%	= 74,6		
4.	Low	51 – 64	6	360	20,2%	= 75		
5.	Poor	0 – 50	0	0		(baik)		
	Total		**24**	**1790**	**100**		**58%**	**42%**

The table above shows that 58% of students got scores above KKM. This means that there was a significant improvement in terms of scores from the first cycle to the second cycle. There was also an improvement in the percentage of students' scores in writing descriptive text. The data also showed that half of the class got scores above KKM.

In the second cycle, the researchers also observed the students' activeness. In this cycle, the researchers made a PICKYWO card from glossy paper. It made the class more interesting and lively, and the PICKYWO card helped them generate ideas for composing and writing descriptive text.

Table 6. *The Observation Of Students' Activeness in The Second Cycle*

No.	Indicators	Frequency	Persen (%)	Classical Average
1.	Students are interested in asking and giving their ideas during the learning process	19	79,2%	109/(24x5) x 100 = 87,2% (SANGAT BAIK)
2.	Students are actively involved in the learning process	23	95%	
3.	Students are interested in writing descriptive text by using PICKYWO card	24	100%	
4.	Students are actively discuss their ideas about writing descriptive with their friends	19	79,2%	
5.	Students are doing writing descriptive activity very well	24	100	
	Total	**109**		

The table above shows that 87,2% of students were actively involved in the learning process. Most students were interested in using PICKYWO card in writing descriptive text. the glossy and colorful PICKYWO card made them enthusiastic. The percentage of students' activeness in the second cycle was categorized as "excellent".

The third data collection method used by the researchers in the second cycle was a questionnaire. It was aimed at determining the students' responses to using the PICKYWO card in writing descriptive text. Most students answered that they were satisfied with the PICKYWO card. This medium helped them a lot in bridging the students' ideas and writing process.

CONCLUSION

The researchers draw two main conclusions. The first conclusion is that there is a significant improves students' achievement in writing descriptive text by using the PICKYWO Card. The first cycle showed that the average of students' achievement was 67,1. And the second cycle obtained 74,6. The second conclusion is that there is a significant improvement in students' activeness in writing descriptive text by using the PICKYWO card. The first and second cycles showed that there was a significant improvement in students' activeness based on the data of checklist observation and questionnaire. Most students showed that they were interested in using the PICKYWO card during the descriptive writing class. They thought that by using PICKYWO card, they found some ideas or words to make up a composition of descriptive text.

The researchers address some suggestions to the next researchers, including that they may use the PICKYWO card and develop it in the writing of descriptive text. Moreover, the next researchers should create media as a bridging tool for students to generate ideas, particularly in writing class.

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