

## THE RECORD OF USING PICTURE SERIES TO DEVELOP STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

**Suparwoto Sapto Wahono**

*Tadris of English Language, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Training Education,  
UIN KHAS, Jember, Indonesia*  
Email: wahsapto@uinkhas.ac.id

**Kholidatul Afifah**

*Tadris of English Language, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Training Education,  
UIN KHAS, Jember, Indonesia*  
Email: kholidatulafifah@gmail.com

APA Citation: Wahono, S. S., & Afifah, K. (2022). The record of using picture series to develop students' writing skills. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 10(3), 965-974. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v10i3.6830>

Received: 29-06-2022

Accepted: 23-08-2022

Published: 30-10-2022

**Abstract:** Based on the observations results, the learners had difficulty in exploring their ideas. They took more time and could only write some sentences. Another barrier that students faced was that they could not write well-organized paragraphs. The students also often had difficulty in learning grammar, especially English tenses. Lack of vocabulary mastery was also the cause of writing difficulties. They stated that writing in English was difficult and complicated. That's why the researchers used classroom action research to apply picture series as media. It was conducted by two cycles. The subjects were seventeen students of tenth grade science student at Banyuwangi. To get the data, the researchers used observation, interview, and test. The research result could be stated that using the picture series improved the learners' writing narrative text competence. They could improve their writing gradually from the first cycle to the second one. The picture series that implemented significantly improved their skill in English writing.

**Keywords:** *picture series; writing skills.*

### INTRODUCTION

A foreign language is a language in which not many people use it as communication tool where the language is learned. On the contrary, "A second language is a foreign language that most people use it as tool of communication where the language is learned."

English is considered and become one of the subjects in educational Indonesia institutions. It becomes part of the lessons in the educational curriculum. Even English is a prestigious and proud competence for its lovers. Four language skills which include listening, speaking, reading, and writing (LSRW) should be emphasized and mastered by language learners.

The important reasons why writing is the students are able to convey and organize their ideas coherently in written form, they are able to express their feelings, and they will produce written language mechanics (Rangkuti *et al.*, 2021). Considering the difficult and complicated the writing skill, the writers focused on the skill to be learned. Writing is a skill used by writer to communicate or convey his ideas, opinions, imaginations, thoughts, knowledge, etc which

involves five aspects; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Nurlatifah & Yusuf, 2022). This skill is helpful one that is possible to contribute a person individually person in revealing their opinion with clearly and readable writing. This skill is a hard process that enables writers to disclose, reveal their opinion, ideas, and make it be seen and tangible (Yudiati, 2017). Supporting the statement above, Apsari declared that the skill of writing is regarded as the most arduous skill for language learners to master since it is a kind of productive skill that students who learn it must get a way how to figure out ideas and reveal them in writing (Apsari, 2017). Ideas or opinions, thoughts, and feelings that the students have can be revealed or expressed by writing (Kartika, 2017). In this way, English foreign language learners can understand, apply, and communicate effectively in writing.

Because of the complexity of writing skills, it requires a process and many aspects that must be considered. Since English as foreign language in Indonesia, writing requires hard thinking to create ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, and

compositions. There are a lot of aspects should be noticed to make a good written work, namely, "the rules of grammar, organization of ideas, motivation or willingness to write, and mastery of vocabulary." In writing narrative texts, the different of English and Indonesia sentence in structure also become one of the matters and problems that make the students find difficulty to write it. Writing is one of the arduous skills; it will be fun and exciting activity if the instructor employs a suitable media in his or her teaching (Wahono & Qodriyah, 2019).

Referring to the data of the observation and interview result, "the learners experience difficulties in resulting and extending their ideas, they take long time in getting their ideas." Accordingly, "most of the students are only able to produce a few sentences in their writing but also can not explore their imagination well. Other issues students faced are the inability of students to compose paragraphs. Ignoring the organization of the text made their writing incohesive and incoherent. This is also supported by the lack of students in mastering the rules of grammar. Students often assume, discover and justify that learning grammar takes a longer time with high concentration." Learning and understanding grammar requires time intensity which is done repeatedly. If learners ignore these things then as a result they experience difficulties not only in grammar but also in other language components such as vocabulary and choosing their use or diction. Inaccuracy in the use of collocations and mastery of vocabulary used by students were inhibiting factors in expressing themselves in writing. They considered that English writing was as a difficult subject. Therefore, most of the students were less motivated and had limited words to write something. It was also found, "the previous of the teaching and learning writing process, before this investigation had been conducted, had not attracted the students' attention."

Media can be applied to assist the skill of the students' writing in developing their ideas and thoughts (Febriyanto & Yanto, 2019). Using the media in assessing student writing is much more interesting and exciting (Wirastuti & Mantra, 2019). They can express their ideas or thoughts easily. They will not feel a heavy burden in pouring their ideas. A picture as teaching media is used to grow and appear the student creativity in learning process (Sari & Putri, 2018). With its various characteristics, pictures as media can stimulate learners in the language learning

process (Soviyah & Purwaningtias, 2018). By observing pictures immediately, learning will be more impressive (Tambunan *et al.*, 2022).

Narrative paragraph is a paragraph that tells a story, whether fictional or non-fictional, written in chronological order by using time order signal which contains orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation (Wirastuti & Mantra, 2019). Narrative text tells stories or past events and entertain or amuse which consisted of three generic structures namely; orientation, complication, and resolution (Syafitri *et al.*, 2021). Writing consists of five aspects namely; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. In sequence, content refers to paragraph unity; organization provides readers with a well-organized piece of writing framework to help and make it easy for them to follow text; vocabulary pertains to word selection; language use focuses on grammar; meanwhile Mechanics refers to punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and paragraphs (Achmad *et al.*, 2019).

Related to these problems, the media as a literacy aid can be used to help scholars in literacy to write. "There are considerable media to guide learning to write similar as bills, flashcards, picture series, illustrations and others." In this exploration, the experimenter used picture series in tutoring jotting. In tutoring literacy process, media has several functions; it can save our time as a schoolteacher, it can stimulate interest to learn, pupil's participation can be encouraged, it also can give a review, and it helps the scholars learn to communicate ideas visually (Hasanah, 2017). With media, classroom condition will be dynamic, applicable and seductive. Pictures represented in EFL learning is considered to be worth implementing (Sugianto & Prastika, 2021).

Picture or image series can escalate students' encouragement in learning writing. In addition, "series pictures are believed to be able to help students in producing ideas." The series of picture is some bound and united combination images which are connected to establish a chain of sequences. Therefore, the major utility of it is to depict or explain a story or sequence of happening in chronological order. Because of the statement above, the series of pictures or images are media to assist students to result and evolve their notion. They can also guide learners to rule their writing product since it is composed of a chain of pictures that learners can notice the paces and their array. They are able assist the learners to expand their thought and solder their

clauses or paragraphs to result unity and well-organized writing product. It says, "In the process of teaching and learning writing, the series of picture can be used to motivate students to learn." Picture series consists of several pictures that reflect a story in a good order or sequence. Therefore it can lead students to get words and describe a narration that follow the pictures given easily. Series pictures are pictures as media used to show several chronological actions or events that are displayed sequentially (Wening, 2017). The use of serial picture is very possible to become students' ability better in jotting narration significantly (Khotimah & Burhansyah, 2017). In addition, teaching writing with series of picture can upgrade the students' stimulation, enhance and practice their writing skill (Ramadhanty *et al.*, 2021). The series of picture is a reasonable way for teaching EFL learners to escalate their English narrative text writing skill. The text of narration contains a story (fantasy/real event). It has a plot that includes a story climax or complication and a resolution that is written in a systematic way. Narrative texts aim to entertain and deal with actual experiences presented in different ways (Abdullah & Yunus, 2019). Narrative text is a text tell stories or past events and entertain or amuse which consisted of three generic structures namely; orientation, complication, and resolution (Wahyuni *et al.*, 2020). The narrative regard with problematic happenings that bring to a crisis that ultimately comes across a decision. Narrative is kinds of text that talk the past activities or events to amuse or entertain readers (Lubis, 2017). Pictures or images can excite and promote scholars to expand their ideas, profound and imagination to write (Raharjo, 2018). Picture series are be suitable to help scholars to ameliorate their jotting chops because they can support scholars to write madly in the tutoring and literacy process (Deviga & Diliyana, 2020).

There were many problems found in the teaching and learning process of writing English before the application of the media was carried out. These issues were related to students' problems, namely generating, growing ideas and compiling paragraphs. The students also had problems using the right grammatical guidelines for a particular text and deciding on the right words for a particular context. Moreover, their motivation in obtaining English lessons was low. Referring to the facts, action to resolve these cases was needed in that condition. Picture series

was chosen because the media can improve students' writing skills. There are differences in the results of investigations on students' writing abilities, namely the existence of good and bad research results or high and low research results, making research on students' writing abilities in English as a foreign language still relevant for research (Toba *et al.*, 2019).

Grounded on the issues mentioned, the researcher decided to use picture series to ameliorate their jotting chops, particularly in narrative text material. It is hoped that by bringing picture series into writing classrooms, students can better improve their critical and creative thinking skills in writing.

## METHOD

This study was classroom action research study which covers planning, acting, observing and reflecting (PAOR). At the step of planning, the researcher prepared narrative text material in the form of pictures, designed assessments, made test questions for pre-test (prior knowledge), first cycle, and second cycle. At the implementation step, the researcher distributed a pre-test and then analyzed the test results. After analyzing, the researcher applied cycle 1 and then gave a test in cycle 1 and analyzed the results of the test. Then the researcher applied cycle 2, gave a test in cycle 2 and analyzed the test results. The observation phase was carried out by researchers to seek and find strengths and weaknesses of learning strategies, record student behavior in the time of learning process. In the reflection stage, the researcher analyzed the test results and findings from observations to get the success and failure factors.

Data collection techniques which used were interview, observation, and test. The test conducted was covering preliminary test, cycle 1 and 2 test. Interviews were used to figure out students' opinions about the use and the carrying out the series of picture in process of narrative text writing. Observations were made to determine student behavior during the writing learning process. The test was done to decide the level of student learning ability in writing.

The formula used to determine and analyze the success criteria for student scores was as follows (Sugiono, 2017):

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

M = the mean score of students

$\sum x$  = the total students score  
 N = the students' total number

To find out the percentage score, the writing test result were analyzed by using the following formula:

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

E = the students' percentage that reach minimum standard score

n = the number of students who reached the minimum score

N = the students' total number

This research was successful if the indicators are achieved. The criteria for the success of this research was if 70% of all students achieve a score of 75 or higher.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher was employed for two cycles which consisted of four meetings. To figure out the ability of the students' writing, the researchers had done a preliminary study before they conducted the cycle. In the preliminary study or pre cycle, the researchers gave a writing test to students. In the pre-cycle, "students' ability to write on the content aspect get an average score of 19, the organizational aspect get an average score of 14, the grammatical aspect get an average score of 13, the vocabulary aspect get an average score of 13, and the mechanical aspect get an average score of 3. Thus, the overall average in the pre-cycle is 62." In the pre-test, "the students have difficulties in generating and managing the thought to write and many of them still employed the present tense on narrative text writing". The result of preliminary study is displayed on the Table 1 below:

Table 1. Result of preliminary study

No	Name	Score					Total Score	Criteria
		C	O	G	V	M		
1	AKA	17	11	15	8	3	54	Unsuccessful
2	AGP	20	15	11	12	3	61	Unsuccessful
3	AST	15	15	12	10	3	55	Unsuccessful
4	AKS	22	15	14	13	3	67	Unsuccessful
5	AAR	25	17	15	15	4	76	Successful
6	HZJ	17	17	10	15	4	63	Unsuccessful
7	JLN	18	14	15	8	2	57	Unsuccessful
8	JNF	13	11	10	14	2	50	Unsuccessful
9	KCA	27	15	18	12	3	75	Successful
10	MFAH	15	16	15	15	3	64	Unsuccessful
11	MDK	15	11	14	12	3	55	Unsuccessful
12	NPR	27	14	18	14	4	77	Successful
13	NPA	19	16	17	11	2	65	Unsuccessful
14	RDWUG	18	14	12	13	3	60	Unsuccessful
15	VS	13	12	9	14	2	50	Unsuccessful
16	WSD	19	15	12	14	4	64	Unsuccessful
17	ZLM	15	15	9	13	3	55	Unsuccessful
Total Score		315	243	226	213	51	1048	
Mean		19	14	13	13	3	61.6	

Note: C means content; O is organization; G is grammar; V is vocabulary; M is mechanic

Pointing at the result of preliminary study, "The data of the preliminary study mean score is 61.6. It means that 3 learners or 17.65% of students' number gain the passing score of the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM). Meanwhile, 14 students or 82.35% of the total students do not fulfill the criteria score. The students' weaknesses are; they have limited knowledge of subject and show a little knowledge of matter, little substance, and inadequate topic exploration."

The organization of students' writing was loosely managed but main topic stood out. It had restricted party, reasonable management but the

sequencing was incomplete. The students' writing was not eloquent, the notion were confused or disconnected. The writing had lacks of original sequencing and development. The students' often made grammar mistakes, numbering, wording order, articles, pronouns, prepositions and many others. Meanwhile the learners had little knowledge of English vocabulary. They also were not able to construct the words into sentence so that the writing was not enough to communicate. Besides, they also often make mistakes in spelling, punctuation, use of capital letters, paragraph preparation. It made the meaning of writing was

confused or obscured. Similarly, Most of the learners found the writing difficulty, especially writing narrative text. Limited vocabulary, difficulty expressing ideas, and the arrangement of words and sentences make them spend too much time thinking about making sentences.

After conducting preliminary study and analyzing the results, it was concluded, “Most of the students have problem in writing skill.” Therefore, the researchers tried to overcome the students’ problem by using picture series to escalate students’ writing skill.

Having known the results of the pre cycle, the researcher implemented the use of series of picture in learning to write with the following results. In the cycle I, “the content of their writing is already improved. In cycle I, the students' ability to write in the content aspect get an average score of 21.4, the organizational aspect get an average score of 18, the grammar aspect get an average score of 17.7,

the vocabulary aspect get an average score of 13.8, and the mechanical aspect get a score 3.5 average. Thus, the average overall score in cycle 1 is 74.4.” In this cycle, “the students have adversity in ruling the text and lack of words. Many students still write in one paragraph and have difficulties in arranging the sentences into a good paragraph based on the generic structure.” In Cycle I, “the students show some improvements especially in the content where the students can write longer writing although many of them still have difficulties in arranging the text and using past form.” In the post test of cycle 1, “the students show better improvements than before. They are able to write well-organized writing and they grow more conscious of using the past form.”

To know more detail about the description above, the result of counted data in cycle 1 is also presented on the table 2 as follows:

Table 2. *Result of cycle 1*

No	Name	Score					Total Score	Criteria
		C	O	G	V	M		
1	AKA	18	15	17	11	3	64	Unsuccessful
2	AGP	18	15	17	11	3	64	Unsuccessful
3	AST	20	17	15	10	3	65	Unsuccessful
4	AKS	20	17	15	10	3	65	Unsuccessful
5	AAR	28	20	15	16	4	83	Successful
6	HZJ	28	20	15	16	4	83	Successful
7	JLN	18	18	18	11	3	68	Unsuccessful
8	JNF	18	18	18	11	3	68	Unsuccessful
9	KCA	28	18	20	15	4	85	Successful
10	MFAH	28	18	20	15	4	85	Successful
11	MDK	27	20	20	15	4	86	Successful
12	NPR	27	20	20	15	4	86	Successful
13	NPA	20	18	17	17	4	76	Successful
14	RDWUG	20	18	17	17	4	76	Successful
15	VS	15	18	19	15	3	70	Unsuccessful
16	WSD	15	18	19	15	3	70	Unsuccessful
17	ZLM	15	18	19	15	3	70	Unsuccessful
Total Score		363	306	301	235	59	1264	
Mean		21	18	18	14	3	74	

Pointing out the result of the students’ average score on the table 2 and figure 1, it could be said that the cycle 1 was better than the result of preliminary study. It was proved by 47.05% of the students who gained the minimum score. In other words there were 8 students passed score based on the criteria. The students have definite knowledge of the subject, adequate coverage, mostly connected to the topic but they were still lacked in detail and restricted in developing thesis. Although the students' aptitude increased but the result was not contented with the score gained because the number of students who passed was still below 60

percent. So the researchers continued the treatment for cycle II.

Based on the result and the reason, the researchers applied the picture series in writing learning for the second cycle with result as follow. In Cycle II, “their writing shows a better progress. In this cycle the students' ability in writing on the content aspect get an average score of 24, the organizational aspect get an average score of 19, the grammar aspect get an average score of 19, the vocabulary aspect get an average score of 16, and the mechanical aspect get an average score of 4. Thus, the overall score in cycle 2 is 82. They are

able to write the full story in more detail.” As the researchers, “we only give guidance in the beginning of the individual activity just to make sure whether they understand the story.

Fortunately, all of the students can develop their ideas of the story by themselves. They also do not feel perplexed anymore about what they shall write in their story.” In this cycle, “we explain the organization of a narrative text to the students and provide them some exercises with serial pictures as media to help them identify the sentences belong to the orientation, the complication and the resolution. The practice covers arranging jumbled words, jumbled sentences and rewriting the sentences into good paragraphs based on the generic structure of the narrative text.” As the researchers, “we also implement picture series as media to assist them to write the text. In this cycle, we see an increase in their organization skill with good grammar and increase their vocabulary mastery. They can distinguish the generic structure of narrative text and write well-organized and cohesive writing. The students’ mean score in the post-test is 81.65. There are 14 students or 82.35% of the students who get the score above the passing grade, meanwhile the other 3 students are below that criterion. It means, “This research is successful, because the results of students’ writing test score achieved the criteria of success.

Students were able to develop a thesis. Their sentences were relevant to the assigned topic even though they lacked detail. The paragraphs they composed were well organized, logical order, and cohesive. Their writing was also effective and had few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order,

articles, pronouns, and prepositions. They were able to master the form of words. Their writing also had few spelling errors, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraph structure.

In addition, the series image is one of the media that helps the brainstorming process at a certain stage in the writing process. Moreover picture series is as a stimulating visual aid to inspire something specific. Teachers must be able to choose suitable media and provide techniques that can stimulate learners for writing purposes. By providing picture series, they are able to express their idea what the pictures are about and they can gain ideas and transcribe them by imagining the pictures and starting from the first picture to the end. They can begin to think and imagine the story that refers to the pictures that have been determined. In this way they are able easily to write their frame of mind (Abdullah & Yunus, 2019). Picture series can put out the capability of achieving new language (Andayani & Arono, 2020).

Looking at the explanation, applying the picture series to teach English narrative text writing was a success. The Students' cognitive processes in writing activities can be improved by using story images that support the development of ordering ideas so that the rhetorical structure of narrative texts can be applied easily. The use of Picture Series gets a positive response from the subjects in the teaching and learning process and they are more active in writing so that their writing skills improve (Wahyuni *et al.*, 2020).

From the description above, the result of cycle 2 can be displayed in detail on the table 3 below:

Table 3. *Result of cycle 2*

No	Name	Score					Total Score	Criteria
		C	O	G	V	M		
1	AKA	22	18	20	20	3	83	Successful
2	AGP	25	17	22	12	4	80	Successful
3	AST	17	18	20	18	4	77	Successful
4	AKS	27	20	15	16	4	82	Successful
5	AAR	28	20	22	15	3	88	Successful
6	HZJ	25	18	17	16	4	80	Successful
7	JLN	20	17	17	17	3	74	Unsuccessful
8	JNF	17	18	15	17	3	70	Unsuccessful
9	KCA	27	19	21	14	4	85	Successful
10	MFAH	26	20	22	13	4	85	Successful
11	MDK	25	18	15	18	4	80	Successful
12	NPR	28	20	22	14	4	88	Successful
13	NPA	27	19	20	16	4	86	Successful
14	RDWUG	26	18	22	12	4	82	Successful
15	VS	20	17	17	17	3	74	Unsuccessful
16	WSD	25	19	20	17	4	85	Successful
17	ZLM	28	20	22	15	4	89	Successful

Total Score	413	316	329	267	63	1388
Mean	24	19	19	16	4	81.6

Table 3 displayed, “The average of students score is 81.65. Referring to the study results, it can be noted that there are 14 students or 82.35% of the total students who achieve scores above the KKM 75. At the same time, there are only three students do not fulfill the standard criterion.” It means, “The result of the second cycle is successful and the researchers stop continuing conducting the next cycle.” Based the data above, the researchers justified or deduced, “the implementation of Picture

Series can be used to improve the students’ competence in writing skill.” In line with with Swarastuti (2019) who also found that picture series is effective to improve students’ ability in writing narrative text. Students are more interested in writing narrative text so that it helps and enhances the students` motivation to express their ideas freely. The progress of the students’ narative text writing using picture series could be seen at the figure 1 below.

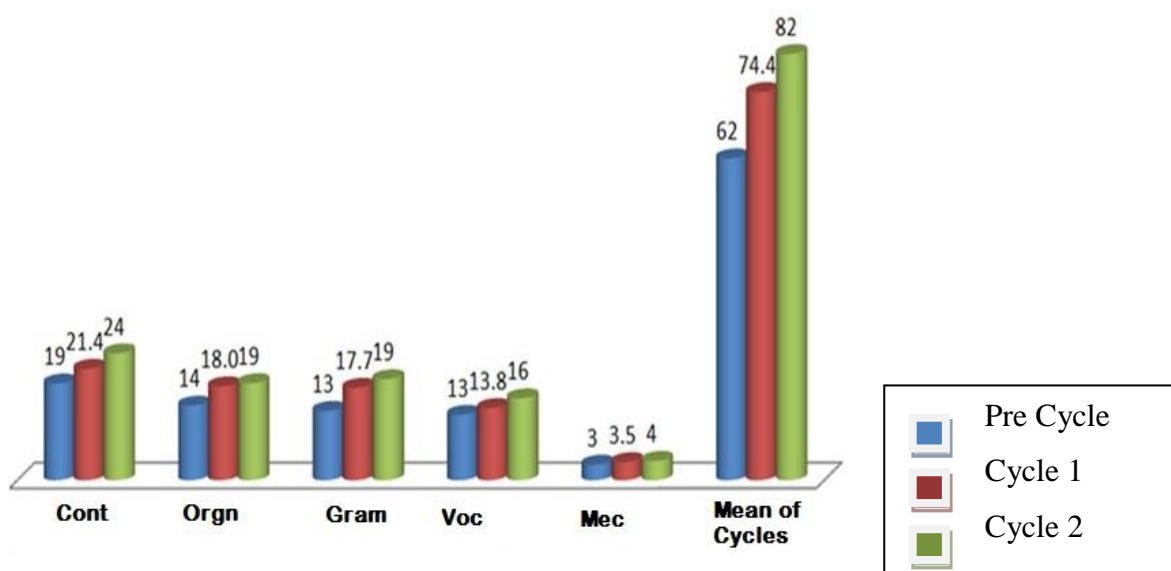


Figure 1. Result of pre cycle, cycle 1, & cycle 2

Seeing figure 1, we say, “The implementation of picture series to stimulate the students’ ideas and organizing their writing is proven to be successful. They are able to develop the story with amazing ideas and their writing is not longer than those in the pre-test. Referring to the interviews, it could be stated that it is easier for them to write story using serial pictures.” It is in line with Pasaribu *et al.* (2020) that because the use of picture series facilitates the students to get information easily, it has significant affect to achieve their ability of the writing narrative text. In addition, the students’ ability to write narrative composition can be enhanced by using pictures story. It is believed that the media will help the English teachers to increase and develop the students in writing narrative texts.

Pictures are most attractive to the eyes of learners that grow students' curiosity to express their ideas, opinion when teacher brings them in the classroom (Singh *et al.*, 2022). Before implementing the picture, they had trouble to combine some sentences into a good paragraph because they had no ideas. After employing serial

picture, students were able to develop principles and express thoughts of the story they wrote. Students are able to remember the vocabularies and improve their vocabulary memory for a long time when the words are taught and associated with pictures (Othman *et al.*, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

Pointing out the study results of the teaching writing by conducting the picture series, it is deduced, “By displaying the series of picture, we can improve students' narrative text writing skills.” It is proved by the results of students' scores in the pre study, first cycle, and second cycle. The improvement consisted of 1) The students' scores increased gradually, 2) the process of teaching and learning to write using picture series makes students happy to write stories, 3) The students are very motivated in learning to write, 4) They are able to express and make sentences with the help of picture series. They also find a lot of new vocabulary to understand. The sequence of pictures makes students' writing well organized and systematically arranged. The completeness of

picture series is able to stimulate students' ideas so that they can express ideas easily. The completeness of the pictures also makes students' writing more detailed."

Referring the students' result on writing skill, the analysis of the problem and solving the problem, it is recommended for English teachers or lecturers to choose and use picture series as the main media in the process of learning and teaching writing, especially writing narrative texts.

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**Suparwoto Sapto Wahono & Kholidatul Afifah**

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