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## ESL Learners' Perspectives on the Use of Picture Series in Teaching Guided Writing

Charanjit Kaur Swaran Singh, Tan Pei Mei, Maria Shu Abdullah,  
Wan Mazlini Othman & Nor Azmi Mostafa

English Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Languages and Communication  
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

### Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate ESL learners' perspectives towards the use of pictures series in teaching guided writing. The subjects involved were 30 learners. Experimental group consisted of 15 learners of 2B while control group consisted of 15 learners of 2D. Experimental group received 4 lessons of treatments in which picture series were used to teach writing while picture series were not used in teaching writing in control group. Pre-test and post-test were administered to both groups. The instrument used to gather data for analysis was interview. Interview was carried out with selected learners from experimental group. The interview was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Learner's perspectives were categorised into 2 themes namely writing skill and perspective on the use of picture series. The findings indicated that learners showed positive perspectives with the use of picture series in writing lessons. It enhanced learners' motivation and interest in ESL classroom. Besides, picture series helped learners to brainstorm ideas during pre-writing stage. Learners were able to produce longer paragraph after the treatment session.

**Keywords:** Picture Series, Guided Writing, Writing

### Introduction

In this modern day and age, English is a language that most of the people learn and acquire. They use it to communicate, further their study, travel, working purposes, exchange culture, technology and knowledge with people who have different background and many other purposes. English has become an important tool that permeating every walk of life. English is implemented as a second language in Malaysia. With reference to the Malaysia Education Policy, English is a compulsory subject that needs to be taught in all level of education as second language. The aim is to unify the multi-ethnic nation under a common linguistic banner (Gill, 2014).

Malaysians have their own mother tongue and they learn English as second language. Cook (2016) implies that the learning of second language affects Malaysians' career and future.

It is twenty-first century where almost everyone is bilingual and it is vital to learn English as second language in order to increase competency in language and skill. Therefore, despite being fluent in mother tongue, learners need to acquire English for their future benefits. Besides learning English as a second language, teaching English as second language is also area that we need to look at. English teachers need to help students to listen and understand English, speak with correct pronunciation, read accurately and write correctly in English without any mistakes (Panigrahi, 2009).

There are 4 skills of English that learners need to master. Those skills are namely listening, writing, speaking and reading. According to Gangal (2011), writing is a skill, people use to express themselves emotionally and creatively that can agitate one's mind. People express themselves using words. People write with various purposes such as job application, invitation on certain occasions, compliant, short messages to inform people, formal letter, examination and many more. No doubt, writing is an important tool to communication with others. We can maintain relationship with other by exchanging messages and letters. In the age of information and technology, we can build relationship with people all over the world with written language through social application such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter and many more.

According to Baraoui (2007), writing is the most difficult skill that L2 learners are expected to acquire. Producing a good essay needs some skills such as the correct usage of grammar, vocabulary, part of speech, spelling and many more. Besides, they do not know how to express the ideas on the paper. They tend to translate the sentences from their mother tongue and this leads to making ungrammatical errors. They often find it difficult to express themselves through the use of appropriate words or grammar due to the lack of vocabulary.

In addition, learners are passive in the classroom. It is all about chalk and talk in the traditional classroom where teacher does all the talking and learners receive the knowledge passively. During the writing class, the students do not participate actively and engage their critical thinking skill. They do not know how to generate ideas and put the ideas into words. Therefore, teacher as a facilitator needs to put effort in solving the problem and improves students' writing skill.

Using teaching aids is one of the ways to improve students writing skill. Teachers should make use or create interesting learning aids to facilitate students' learning especially writing skill. It is used to engage students in classroom discussion and create a motivating atmosphere for learning so that they would feel positive towards completing an essay. Visual aids such as pictures, movies, realia, and many more can make the teaching and learning process more interesting and easier as it gains students' attention and teacher is able to convey the ideas easily. At the end of the lesson, learning outcome is achieved when students are able to produce an essay based on the visual aids.

Based on the classroom observation of 2B in school A, the major problem found in most of the students was they faced difficulties in writing an essay. The writing problem was related

to several factors which were students' motivation in writing class, grammatical errors, problem in generating ideas and the teaching aids used by teacher.

First and foremost, the students were not motivated during writing lesson. When the teacher gave them writing task, they complained and some were reluctant to complete it. They expected the teacher to write the essay on the board and they would just copy it into their book. They did not participate actively in classroom discussion as well. When the teacher posted question for them, only a few students answered the questions. Thus, the teacher needed to call out names instead of asking for volunteer to answer the questions. Some of them were afraid of being called out due to high affective filter and limited knowledge.

Besides, there were a lot of grammatical errors in their writing. They were unconscious on the tenses when they wrote. The teacher needed to remind them to check their tenses before handed in their writing. Moreover, they used grammar wrongly. They were confused and asked whether they should use past tense or present tense. The students had low vocabulary mastery as well. They were unable to find and use correct words or phrase in their writing. They did not understand the meaning of the certain given notes as well. Another problem was they tended to translate the ideas from their mother tongue. The sentence was ungrammatical. The researcher understood what they were trying to write but the sentence structure was wrong as it was translated from their mother tongue.

Thirdly, the students faced problem in generating ideas. They failed to brainstorm the ideas beforehand. They could not generate ideas and make it into sentences. Hence, the students would construct sentences based on the given notes without proper ideas organisation. They were lack of critical thinking skill as they always asked for explanation of every detail of the essay. They did not put in their effort in term of understanding the notes and making sense of them based on the instruction.

The purpose of the study was to investigate students' perspective towards the use of picture series in their writing lesson. The research question posed by the teacher was:

'What are students' perspectives towards the use of pictures series in teaching guided writing?'

## **Literature Review**

### **Writing**

According to Spratt, Pulverness and Williams (2005), writing is a productive skill where writer communicates messages by making signs on a paper. Writer needs to be able to form words and sentence in order to communicate and exchange ideas with others. Writing is important for academic purpose, communication and maintaining relationship with others. As societies grew larger and more industrialised, it is vital for the people to be able to write.

According to Harmer (2004, p. 3), 'spoken language, for a child is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned.' Learner

needs to learn about the writing process, paragraph construction, cohesive and coherent in order to acquire writing skill in target language. For learners who are proficient in the language, they are able to master the grasp of writing. The learners can develop ability to generate ideas and organise ideas in paragraph, express feeling through the use of appropriate vocabulary items. On the contrary, low proficient learners tend to avoid and show no interest in learning how to write. They make a lot of grammatical mistakes in the task and sometimes, teacher's feedback will demotivate them to learn writing.

Gutierrez et al (2015) point out that writing is the most demanding skill that learners are required to acquire but with the lowest level of achievement. Mastering the ability to write effectively is seen as a key purpose of learners to learn writing skill. Most of the English lessons are focusing on writing. Learners' perspective to writing is differed from other skills as writing needs accuracy. Learners need to use the language correctly and accurately in order to produce good piece of writing. As a result, many learners struggle in writing since primary school.

### **Guided Writing**

According to Dunigan (2006), guided writing is an effective teaching method for all ages which include adults. The core of guided writing is using scaffolding technique to guide learners especially weak learners in the process of writing. Teacher models type of writing task to learners so that they have an overall idea of what they need to write. Teacher needs to guide them through the process of writing which are pre-writing, writing and post-writing in the first few writing lesson. Then, learners follow the pace of teacher. Teacher can give feedback to learners' writing task by showing example of acceptable and unacceptable writing so that teacher can address learners' writing problems. Learners will be able to write independently soon afterwards.

Guided writing is the most appropriate strategy of teaching writing as it benefits the learners in writing skill. Teacher poses questions during the process of writing to guide learners. This encourages two ways of classroom discussion and participation. Nevertheless, it develops learners' think skill which helps in brainstorming ideas during pre-writing. Learners are able to transform their ideas into written form when guidance is given.

Study done by Dani (2014) showed writing skill of learners at SMPN 2 Selat had improved through the use of guided writing technique. Learners' post-test score showed improvement compared to pre-test after the application of guided writing. Barnes (2006, as cited in Dani, 2014) claimed that guidance was given in generating ideas, sequencing, taking into account of vocabulary and grammar and preparing notes and outlines during writing class. Learners were able to complete an essay by following a sequence of steps. Besides, learners were motivated to learn writing through guided writing that contributed significantly to the improvement of writing ability.

### **Pictures as Visual Aid**

In tradition classroom, information presented is overwhelming verbal as there is a lot of teacher-talk in traditional classroom. Learners are passive and they receive all the knowledge without voicing their own ideas. The learners are surrounded with written words in textbook, on

whiteboard and workbook. There do not have much visual stimulus in learning process. Learners are bored with the similar teaching aids in daily learning routine. Thus, it is vital for the teacher to provide visual aids to facilitate teaching and learning process. Picture is one of the visual aids that teacher can utilise in the ESL classroom. Pictures in the form of graphs, comic, poster, cartoon, board drawing, pictures in newspaper, magazines, calendar, photograph, maps, wall chart and many more are widely used as teaching aids in language classroom (Heidari & Araghi, 2015).

A proverb says that 'A picture is worth ten thousand words'. Picture can used to teach everything such as vocabulary, language skills and grammar. Teacher should make use of picture while planning lesson as it can keep the lesson interesting and learners would not be bored and fatigue. Picture can be used to reinforce the language skill by developing motivation and producing positive attitude of learners towards the language. When the learners get interested in the lesson, they will receive the knowledge easily and retain the knowledge.

Two way interactions can be happened with the use of picture to stimulate communication between teacher and learners. Pictures are most attractive to the eyes of learners. They will express their opinion based on what they see. Learners will be curious to know what the picture is about when teacher displays it in the classroom. Many difficult topics such as bioenergy, consume right, pregnancy, technology and many more can be taught easily with the help of picture. It enables teacher to speak less and learners can construct the knowledge easily during learning process.

As suggested by Panigrahi (2009), there are certain criteria that teacher should take care of while using pictures in teaching. First, the picture should be related to the topic. Teacher needs to carefully choose the suitable pictures that suit the topic of the lesson. Pictures should be beautiful and interesting to look at. Seeing is the sense that learners use to learn. Learners like to see beautiful thing and the image will keep in their mind for a period of time or even permanently. Besides, pictures should be used systematically. For instance, teacher prepares a series of pictures in a lesson. Teacher shows the picture one after another as per need of the content and classroom activities.

### **Pictures in ESL Writing**

Yunus (1985) classifies pictures into three types namely composition pictures, picture series and individual pictures. Composition picture is a large picture that consists of a scene and a number of people who can be seen doing things. It can be used in whole-class teaching as the teacher can use the content to maximum. 'Picture series is a number of related composite pictures linked to form a series or sequence' (Yunus, 1985, p. 50). Picture series is suitable to be used in teaching narrative writing as it tells a story or sequence of event. Meanwhile, individual picture is a single picture of object, person or activity.

Moreover, pictures can be used in teaching descriptive writing. Learners described person, place or thing based on the picture. There are a vast variety of topics can be employed

in the writing class. Besides, writing an essay based on a poster is one of the writing classroom activities. Poster can be effective in learning process (Smaldino et al., 2005). It stimulates interest in learning new topic such as school event, campaign, awareness on health issues and many more. Learners can resemble the topic with the real world and thus writing based on a poster becomes a meaningful activity.

There are several advantages of using pictures in teaching writing. Smaldino et al (2005) states that pictures help learners to generate ideas during pre-writing stage. They write what they see. Their writing ability improves compare to writing based on the outline without picture. They make use of their imagination and critical thinking in writing. Visual aids like picture will benefits visual learners as they prefer using picture, graph, chart and many more to learn. 83% of learners learn by seeing as visual clarifies the materials being taught and make learning more permanent (National Children's Ministry Conference, 2002). Moreover, pictures can translate abstract ideas into realistic form (Puspitaloka, 2016). Teacher can save time and energy to explain the abstract ideas to learners as they could understand the ideas through picture.

### **Relevant Studies**

Study conducted by Ruswinarsih (2015) proved that 33 first grade students of SMPN 5 Dumai, Riau writing procedure text ability had increased by using picture. The researcher collected data of students' writing test score and carried out observation on students' classroom activities in aspect of students paid attention to teacher's explanation about procedure text and pictures provided, students sat in their group, students worked in group to write procedure text and individually wrote procedure test based on the pictures provided. The researcher concluded that there was a significant improvement of students' writing procedure text ability and students' classroom activity showed improvement after implementing picture as teaching aid in writing lesson.

According to prior study conducted by Yuliarsih (2016), the research proved that students of SMPN 1 Waru Pamekasan that had been taught using picture series had better achievement in writing descriptive compared to students who were taught by non-picture series. The research compared the result of post-test of 2 different classes of students which experimental group was taught using picture series while control group of was taught by non picture series in their writing lesson. The researcher concluded that the usage of picture series was able to help students to become a good writer.

### **Methodology**

The research design was an exploratory case study which the researcher aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using picture series in teaching guided writing and students' perspective. Zainal (2007) defines exploratory case study as a case study that set to explore any phenomenon in the data which catches interest to the researcher. Moreover, the context of the study which was teaching guided writing was highly important. It related to the phenomenon of the use of picture series which meant how the use of picture series influence the context of teaching guided writing in ESL classroom

The research approach used in this study was qualitative research. Baxter and Jack (2008, p. 3) illustrates that 'qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates the exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data source.' The researcher collects data through various techniques and explores the context within the phenomenon to answer the research questions. It provides explanation of the problems in the research.

In this study, the teacher came out with a topic of interest which was the use of picture series to teach guided writing through classroom observation. Then, the teacher proposed research questions that concerned the classroom practice. Both the research questions opened up the door for further investigation of the topic of interest. Then, the teacher gathered and analysed data to understand the research questions posed. The teacher interviewed experimental group to obtain insights from learners' perspective on the use of picture series in guided writing. Besides, pre-test, post test and documents analysis were employed to enrich the data. This research approach enabled the novice teacher to gain insight into the problem arise in ESL classroom by gathering data from a variety of sources and analysing the data to illuminate the case.

The sample of this study was class 2B as experimental group and class 2D as control group from the population of 4 classes of Form 2. In this study, the teacher used purposive sampling technique. The teacher handpicked the learners to be involved in the sample based on the teacher's judgement (Cohen et al., 2000). Consider both 2B and 2D had 20 learners, the teacher picked only 15 learners of each class to be involved in this study. For 2D class, there were learners who played truant, did not want to collaborate with the teacher and several disciplinary cases which they seldom show up in the class. To make the number of student equivalent, the teacher also selected only 15 learners of 2B to be categorised into experimental group. Hence, the total number of the sample of both classes was 30 learners. Experimental group was taught writing skill using picture series while control group was taught writing skill without picture series.

### **Research Procedure**

18/7/2016 was the first day that the teacher entered the class 2B and 2D. After a few weeks of getting to know her learners, she realised that both classes were weak at writing an essay. The teacher identified the weakness of writing skill through their monthly test and the tasks completed in the class. The learners were under performance for the section D in their examination which required learners to write a recount between 120 to 150 words. Therefore, the teacher decided to conduct an action research to solve this problem and improve her teaching practice.

After identifying classroom problem, the teacher asked for learners' consent before carrying out the study. The teacher asked for volunteers to participate in the research. Most of the 2B learners participated voluntarily as they hoped to improve their writing skill through this study. The same went to learners of 2D. Teacher classified learners of 2B as experimental group and learners of 2D as control group. The teacher asked for mentor's help and guidance



throughout the process of conducting the research as the mentor was more comprehend about learners' performance and behaviour.

### **Pre-test**

The teacher planned a pre-test for both classes in order to know their present writing ability. Learners were required to write an essay entitled 'Singing Competition' based on the notes as guideline. The topic of the essay was taken from their workbook. Experimental group carried out the pre-test on 15.8.2017 while control group carried out the pre-test on 18.8.2017. Experimental group took 45 minutes to complete the essay.

### **Treatment**

After the pre-test, the teacher planned 4 lessons of treatment which was using picture series in teaching writing. On 23.8.2016, the teacher carried out the first treatment. During the treatment, the learners were exposed to the use of picture series as teaching aid to help the learners improve their writing ability with the guidance of teacher. The teacher taught an essay entitled 'A Visit to National Park' to learners by providing picture series and notes as guideline. She asked for learners' experience of visiting National Park. This would help the learners to generate ideas on what could be done and seen in the National Park. After that, teacher guided learners to construct sentences based on the notes and pictures. Teacher also taught learners on aspects of writing such as content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary and mechanic. Teacher provided feedback to their essay and asked them to do correction.

Teacher carried out treatment 2 on 30.8.2016. Teacher distributed an envelope that contained pictures to each learner. She explained topic of the day to them. Learners were required to arrange the sequence of the pictures to create a story title 'An Accident'. Then, the teacher asked for volunteer to tell the story based on the pictures that they had arranged. All learners participated in the classroom discussion actively. The learners understood the storyline and they were able to generate ideas to write essay. After that, teacher called out some learners to write sentences. The teacher corrected the mistakes made by students on the board. The learners completed the essay on their essay book based on the sentences that constructed by their friends on the board.

Treatment 3 was conducted on 21.9.2016. The essay was about a fire that had broken out at Sara's house. First, the teacher pasted pictures on the board. The teacher played music chair with the learners. The learners were required to pass a box containing clue words. When the music stopped, learner that held the box needed to pick one clue word from the box and matched with the pictures. The learner pasted the clue word under the matched picture and explained to teacher what the picture was about. The game continued until there was no more clue word in the box. The learners enjoyed the game and the music used. It created a stimulating environment for them to focus on the writing lesson and enhanced their learning process. Then, the teacher discussed the story with learners based on the pictures and clue words. Learners were required to draft the essay and then they re-wrote the draft which had been devised by the teacher in their writing book.

The last treatment was conducted on 27.9.2016. The learners were required to complete an essay entitled 'A Robbery'. Teacher decided to carry out group activity to encourage peer learning. Learners were grouped into 5 groups which each group had 4 learners. There was a leader in each group and the teacher gave a picture to the leader. The leader would initiate group discussion by discussing what the picture was about and drafted a short paragraph on a manila card about it. The picture assigned to each group was part of the story. Hence, the leaders would discuss among themselves which picture came first. After that, each group would present their paragraph to the class until the story ended. The manila cards were attached on the board and teacher provided feedback. Then, the manila cards were took off and the students backed to their own seat and completed the essay individually. The students had brainstormed the ideas during group discussion and hence they should be able to complete the essay on their own.

### **Post-test**

Teacher would not able to carry out the treatment for 2 weeks in between because learners were involved in a talk. After carrying out 4 lessons of treatment, a post-test was administered to experimental group. They completed the test within 45 minutes. Compared to the pre-test, the learners asked fewer questions from their friends and teacher. Most of the learners managed to complete the essay by their own. Control group was administrated the same test as well. The text was taken from their workbook.

### **Data Collection**

Interview was used to collect qualitative data and investigate students' perspective about the use of picture series in teaching guided writing. In this study, the teacher used semi-structured interview to get deeper information about learners' opinion on learning English, writing essay and their response on the use of picture series in to improve their writing ability. The teacher followed the interview guide to conduct the interview. The learners were not proficient in English, Therefore the teacher gave them prompts when conducting the interview to know more about their perspective on the use of picture series in teaching writing and reduce their nervousness. The teacher selected 5 learners from experimental group to carry out the interview after the post-test. There were 7 interview questions and each learner took about 15 minutes to complete the interview with the teacher.

In addition, the teacher asked for learners' consent before conducting the interview. They were informed that the collected data would be strictly confidential and anonymous. A brief explanation of the purpose of the interview was explained to the learners. They were administrated with consent form to protect their right.

### **Data Analysis**

Braun and Clarke (2006, p, 6) define thematic analysis as 'A method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data.' It is simple to use especially for novice researcher who is unfamiliar with complex qualitative analysis. Through this analysis, researcher is able to obtain rich and details description of collected data.

Verbal data collected from interview would be transcribed into written form in order to conduct thematic analysis. The teacher would generate initial codes from the 5 set of interview transcriptions by identifying repetitive words or phrase. Teacher would collate the same codes together. After that, the teacher would collate the codes into potential themes. Themes would be analysis and selected extracts would be presented in table form.

## Finding and Discussion

### Analysis of Interview

Theme	Category	Sub-category	Codes
Perspective on English	Negative perspective	-difficult to learn -limited knowledge on English -cannot obtain good grade in exam	-hard to learn English -not good in English -do not know English -need to learn many things -no A in exam
	Positive perspective	fun to learn English	-watch English movie -listen to English song -get A in exam
	Seldom practice English	Communication in English is only limited at classroom	-talk in Bahasa Malaysia -others did not speak English -speak with teacher in English
Perspective on writing skill	Enjoy writing class	able to indulge in writing class	-like to write -fun
	Did not enjoy writing lesson	demotivating during the lesson	-difficult -do not like to write
	Negative perspective on writing skill	-have limited knowledge of vocabulary and grammar - lack of ideas	-do not know English -do not know what to write -cannot get high mark -English not good -make mistake
Perspective on using picture series in teaching writing	Positive perspective on the use of picture series	-helpful in generating ideas -write better -visual aids -pay attention to the lesson	-write better -get ideas to start writing -pictures are interesting -focus in the class
	Enjoy the classroom activities	-create a conducive environment -interaction with friends	-fun to play with friends -not boring
	Writing ability had improved	-help in generating ideas	-write better -write more

		-able to produce lengthy essay -sequencing ideas	-help me to sequence ideas -know what to write
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Table 1: Thematic Analysis – Interview Transcription

### Interviewees’ Background

The teacher had selected 5 students from experimental group to conduct the interview. The aims of the interview were to investigate students’ perspective on the use of picture series in teaching guided writing and to answer research question. Out of the 5 students, only 1 student was proficient in English. That particular student scored an A in English exam and was enthusiasm in learning English. She was an active student as she participated actively in classroom discussion. The proficiency of the 4 students was intermediate. They obtained average result in the last exam and not fluent in English. They usually communicated in their mother tongue among themselves.

Based on the interview data and observation in the class, the students were more confident in written language than spoken language. During the interview, some of them were shy and hardly uttered what they wanted to convey. The teacher prompted the students and made sure that the students were comfortable throughout the interview process. The given responses were short and contained grammatically error but understandable. However, the teacher was not focus on these aspects in analysing the data. The main focus was the content of the interviewees.

### Findings

The interviews were transcribed into written form and used thematic analysis to analyse the data to obtain information on students’ perspective regarding the use of picture series in teaching guided writing and answer research question. The teacher had identified 3 main themes in the interview data. Based on the interview guide, teacher analysed the responses from question 1 to question 3 and collated the codes under one major theme that was students’ perspective on English. 2 interviewees responded that they liked English language whereas 3 interviewees disliked English. One of the interviewees mentioned that he liked English because English helped him to comprehend English text and he was able to communicate with others in English.

<p>Interviewee A: I think English is hard to learn.                  Interviewee B: because it is hard.                  Interviewee D: because English is hard.</p>
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Based on the responses above, the 3 interviewees indicated that they disliked English because English was hard to learn. There were several reasons on why English was difficult for them to learn. *‘I am not good in English. I do not know how to do in exam.’* Most of the students had limited knowledge in English especially vocabulary and grammar. It hindered him to do well in exam. They had low self-esteem and high affective filter towards the language. Overall, their perspective on English learning was negative. On the other hand, there was one particular

student who liked English and immersed herself in rich English learning environment. She listened to English song and watched English movies. It helped her to acquire the language unconsciously and she had positive perspective towards English learning.

All of the interviewees did not practice the target language outside of ESL classroom. They usually communicated in their mother tongue among themselves. They only practiced the language during English lesson. This will hinder the acquisition of the language as they seldom practice it especially spoken language. This factor also contributed to the negative perspective towards English as they were not fluent in spoken language.

Moving on to the theme of students' perspective on writing skill, 3 interviewees out of 5 interviewees did not enjoy the writing lesson. They claimed that the writing lessons were hard as they did not like writing activity. Students need to have good mastery of writing convention in order to produce good piece of writing. However, they were not in advantage as English was a second language or even a third language for some of the students. As stated by Baraoui (2007), writing skill is the most difficult skill to learn. Writing activity was difficult for the students due to their lack of mastery of the convention of writing and eventually lost their interest in writing. This problem reflected in the context of the experimental group.

On the contrary, 2 interviewees enjoyed the writing class. Reason being was they liked to write and wanted to gain more knowledge from the teacher as they had the awareness of the importance of writing skill. However, all the interviewees had negative opinions about writing an essay.

Interviewee D: I do not know how to write. My English is not good.

Interviewee E: It is hard to find words to write. I do not know how to write also.

The most prominent reason was they did not have ideas on what to write about. First of all, they did not have good mastery of vocabulary and grammar in which they made a lot of mistakes in their essay. This led to demotivation of students and low achievement in examination. Teacher should try and heed students' preference in learning so that they would get rid of the negative perspective towards writing lessons.

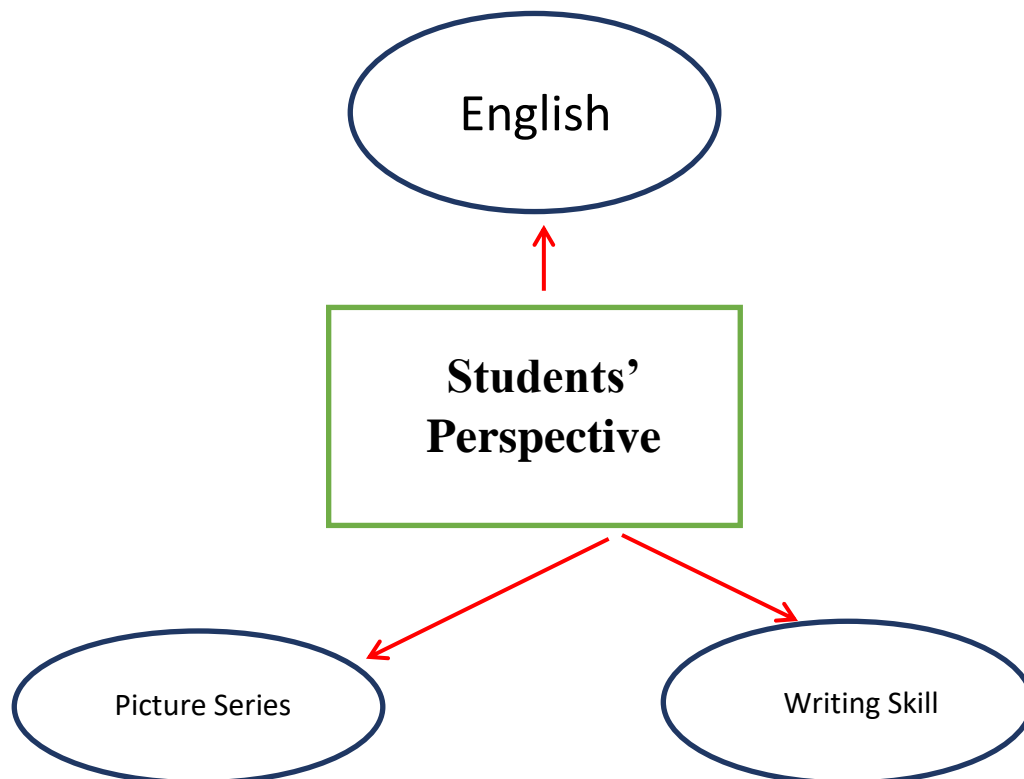
In short, the interviewees had negative perspective on writing skills that discouraged them to acquire the skill before the treatments of using picture series in teaching writing skill. The interviewees also mentioned that they were trying their best to change their perspective on writing skill. However, due to the low achievement of test score, they tended to lost self-confidence in learning the language. Teacher needed to think out of the box to help students changed their negative perspective of writing skill as it needed constant efforts and time.

In addition, the analysis of interview data showed that students had positive perspective on the use of picture series in teaching guided writing. Firstly, the interviewees claimed that the picture series used was interesting and it helped them to focus in the writing lesson. They were

curious to the picture series and listened attentively to teacher's explanation. With the guidance of teacher and picture series as a visual aid, they were able to write better. Teacher also used questioning techniques in prompting students based on the picture series. It helped students to brainstorm ideas during pre-writing stage. There was one interviewee highlighted that she wished that teacher can use picture series in teaching other skills as well so that she could learn better with the aid of pictures. The teacher believed that she was a visual learner whereby visual aid helped her to comprehend the content of the lesson better.

The teacher carried out various classroom activities with the use of picture series as teaching aid during writing lessons such as music chair, arranging pictures and group work activity. 100% of the interviewees liked the classroom activities. *'Miss A just let us write, she no let us play like this and it is fun.'* As mentioned by one of the interviewees, the previous English teacher did not carry out pre-writing activity and she asked the students to write an essay based on the outlines given. It was a boring lesson for the students as there was no visual aid to enhance their learning. Based on the reflection of the teacher after each treatment class, the teacher planned interesting classroom activities with integration of picture series to guide students on writing an essay. It was an effective teaching practice that helped students to engage in learning.

Besides, all the interviewees expressed that their writing ability had improved as they were able to write more and able to sequence and generate ideas. Before that, there was one interviewee stated that he did not write anything in essay during exam because he had no ideas on what to write about. With the help of picture series, he was able to brainstorm some ideas. As a conclusion, the data presented would conclude that the interviewees generally had positive perspective on the use of picture series in learning writing.



## Conclusion

The participants of this study consisted of 15 students from 2B that grouped into experimental group and 15 students from 2D that grouped into control group. Experimental group received 4 lesson of treatments in which teacher used picture series to teach writing while the teacher did not use picture series in teaching writing in control group. Interview was administrated to experimental group.

The findings of interview indicated students' perspective on English learning was negative as they seldom practice the language and they were not confident in using the language. Besides, the interviewees had negative perspective on writing skills that discouraged them to acquire the skill before the treatments of using picture series in teaching writing skill.

Students had positive perspective on the use of picture series in teaching guided writing. The use of picture series in ESL classroom enhanced students' motivation and interest when teacher integrated pictures as teaching aid in classroom activities so that teaching and learning were not monotonous. Majority of the students had gained interest in writing after the treatment. When students gained interest in writing, it would be ease for the teacher to teach writing skill as the learning environment was lively and students showed enthusiasm in the lesson. This later would help them to acquire the skill unconsciously.

## Implications of Practice

The teacher reflected on the process of conducting this study for 1 month. The novice teacher was still in the process of learning to teach and developing professionalism. The teacher had gained insight on the use of visual aid to improve students' writing skill. Writing skill was an essential skill that students needed to acquire and the process of acquisition was challenging. It required continuous effort and motivation of students and teachers as well Teachers need to ponder over the effectiveness of their technique and be creative in applying various techniques that can further improve students' writing ability. Teacher should believe their every student is able to improve their writing skill and always prompt students to think critically while writing.

The teacher hoped to have more time to carry out another study using different teaching aid such as comic strip, mind map, game, newspaper and many more to improve students' writing skill. As the focus of the study was on experimental group, the teacher hoped to use the same teaching aid to improve the students of control group as they were the one that really needed help from teacher. No doubt, they were weak but the teacher needed to understand their thoughts and put herself in the students' shoe. Teacher needed to plan lesson that suited their needs and picture was one of the ways to help weak students learn the basic of writing.

On the contrary, there was limitation of using picture series in teaching writing skill. Picture series could not improve vocabulary, sentence structure and other writing aspects. Students made many grammatical mistakes even though they had the ideas. They tended to translate from their mother tongue. Therefore, the teacher needed to plan and create other teaching aid in order to improve students' other aspect of writing.

The experience of conducting this study could help the teachers to apply the knowledge in future teaching. Teachers would get a more coherent learning experience when she was critical and creative in trying out different teaching strategies and employing different teaching aids in

the classroom. This study encourages teachers to be more dynamic in finding ways to improve students' weakness and learning ability.

Moreover, this study could help other English teachers to understand the way to improve students' writing ability. Using picture series would be an effective teaching aid in contributing to the effective learning of students'. Exposing students with interesting teaching aids such as picture series would improve their writing performance and increase their interest.

Other teachers should be aware that they needed teaching aids in their teaching process. They could not solely depend on textbook and workbook which could demotivate the learning process of students. They needed to be creative in creating different types of teaching aids during writing lesson to avoid students' boredom and increase their motivation for writing. The purpose of teaching and learning would be gained when suitable teaching aid was employed in the classroom.

The article hopes to give inspiration to the novice teachers that they can implement this action research cycle into their practice to improve students' writing skill. Novice teachers are lack of experience in teaching but they have the passion of teaching to help the students gain knowledge and discover their potential. Moreover, novice teachers are creative in creating their own teaching aids and apply various teaching techniques to gain students' interest. They should have more confident within themselves that students' writing skill can be improved using action research cycle as the cycle helps them to reflect on their practice continue to ponder over which techniques are best apply in the classroom.

Above all, this study showed that the use of picture series enabled students to enjoy the process of writing and abandon the thought of writing was difficult. It provided different perspective on writing to the learners. For example, writing could be fun when teacher planned picture-based classroom activities during pre-writing stage to increase their enthusiasm and motivation. It would attract students to complete the writing task. Students with high motivation would be motivated to learn and hence it could improve their learning achievement and attain meaningful learning.

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