

## **Improving Students' Skills in Writing Narrative Text by Implementing Comic Strips Media at MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research was purposed to describe how comic strips media was implemented to improve students' skills in writing narrative text at MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo. This research applied Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology. The researcher was helped by a collaborator in designing the lesson plan, implementing the action, observing the action, and making reflection. The subjects of the study were eleventh grade students of language program of MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo. The data analysis used quantitative data and qualitative data. The quantitative data were obtained from the students' writing test and the qualitative data were obtained from observation checklist and field-notes. The criteria of success were fulfilled after the implementation or the treatment in the second cycle. It means that the students' skill in writing narrative text improved. It is related to the students active participation, student interest, students' enjoyment during English learning using Comic strips media. It also reveals that the students' achievement in the test with the mean score 77.56 which was better than the mean score in the pre- test, 62.6. This score was better than the mean score in cycle 1, which was 75.4. The observation checklist and field note also proves that the students are interested in learning narrative text by implementing Comic strips media. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of comic strips media improve students' skill in writing narrative text.

**Keywords:** Writing Skills, Narrative text, Comic Strips

### **INTRODUCTION**

In English learning, there are four important skills that should be learnt. They are reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Among these four skills, writing skills may be considered as the most difficult one. According to Nurgiantoro (2001) there are some problems which are faced by students in learning writing. They are, (a) Organizing idea, (b) lack of vocabulary, (c) grammar accuracy. It needs some aspects like mastery of vocabulary, grammar, creativity, and surely writing skill. Writing skill is often considered not attractive to the

students and it is often neglected teachers. Nevertheless, students must learn about it and English teacher must teach writing skill to their students.

This phenomenon that writing is difficult and not favoured by students also happens in MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo or MARS. Before writing the research, the researcher did observation to know the students' situation in MARS. MARS is Islamic school which still uses traditional method for teaching and learning activities and obliged their student to stay in the boarding school. There are no any electronic media here, except computer laboratory for general examination. The teacher should be creative in conveying their lesson without using any media for the students. Teaching English in this kind of school needs high effort and creativity.

Based on students' score in pre-test, it was found that students writing skill is still very low. Most of them got stuck in developing their ideas and got poor vocabulary mastery. This situation causes English learning activity inactive and students always feel sleepy during the lesson. A lot of ways to solve the problems one of which is implemented appropriate strategies. Comic strips were found effective in developing students' thinking skill and make them creative by their own idea. Widya and Swondo (2021) investigated the effectiveness of comic strips on students' writing skill in narrative text. The result showed the experimental class got higher score in post-test than the control class. It means that the use of comic strips as a teaching media in learning process of writing especially in narrative text can make a significant improvement on the students' score. Also, Selong, Olii & Rettob (2020) stated that comics strips are an interesting media use in the creative writing class. For that, the researcher try to use English fun learning method by using media helping named Comic Strip media.

Comic strips is a series of chronological pictures to represent a story and it also can be continued story. Liu (2004) stated that among visual genres, comic strips catch many writer attention because they are communicative, popular, accessible, and readable, and they combine aesthetic perception with intellectual pursuit. The students got new stimulus in their brain when they read comic. Comic can contain a little or even no words, and consists of one or more images, which may either illustrate or counterpoint the text to affect greater depth.

Based on the statement above, Comic strips will be an appropriate media used for students. The students can fascinate by comics even actually they do not like to learn. Ravelo (2013) stated that reading comics might allow the reader to be completely absorbed in his reading and his imagination can be carried away even against his will. Comic is not only get their interest but also makes them thinking critically. Therefore, this study might be a solution to the students' problem produce the idea and generate in organize ideas into a good composition of writing by conducting a classroom action research entitled "Improving Students'

## Skills in Writing Narrative Text by Implementing Comic Strips Media at MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo”

### **METHOD**

#### Research design

The method of this study is Classroom action research (CAR). Mawaddah, Mustofa & Putra (2020), adopting the theory of Kemmis & McTaggart (1988, as cited in Burns, 2010). They explained that the procedure of CAR is the plan, action, observation, and reflection. This research focus on improving students' skill in writing narrative text by implementing comic strips. The researcher did this method in Grade XI of Language Program of MA Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo which consist of 25 female students. In conducting this research, the researcher was helped by collaborator in designing the lesson plan, determining the criteria of success, observing the teaching and learning process, and doing the reflection.

#### Setting of the Research

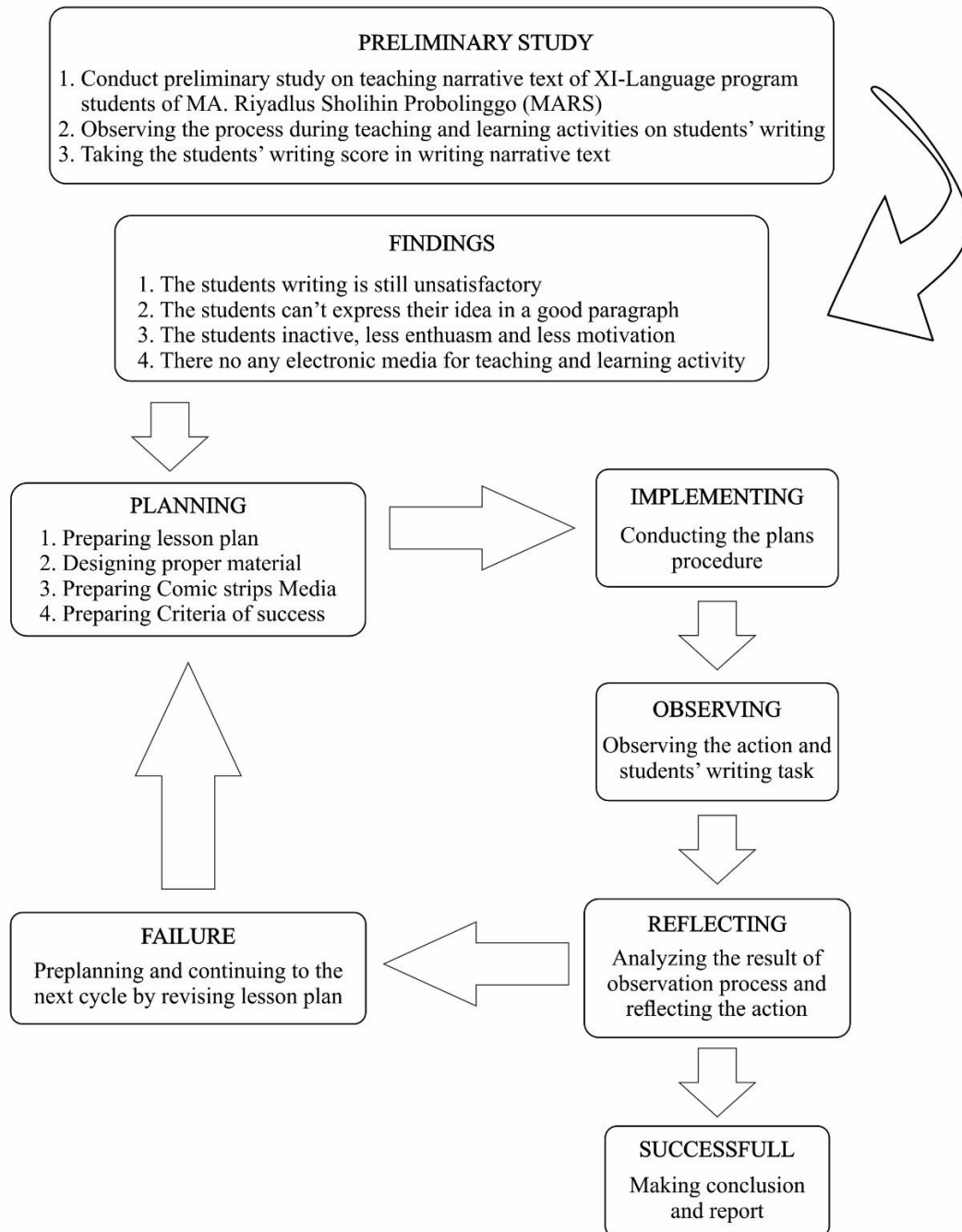
The location of the research was MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo and it was conducted in September - October 2022.

#### Instrument of the research

The instruments that were used in this research are observation checklist, field notes and students' writing test.

#### Research Procedure

The design of this study is Classroom Action Research. There are five steps which are implemented, adapted from Kemmis and Taggart in Arikunto (2006:97) ( (1) preliminary study, (2) planning, (3) implementing the action, (4) observing and (5) reflecting.



*(Adapted from Kemmis and Taggart's Model)*

**Preliminary Study**

Preliminary study of this research identifies the major problem during teaching and learning activity. It is conducted when the researcher observes the learning activity in MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo. Preliminary study of this research aims to know the general situation about the students' real capability especially on writing ability and to identify all facts including the success and the

failure in implementing the general plan. The researcher observed the process during teaching and learning activities on students' writing. Then, the researcher took the student's score in writing narrative text. Last, the researcher also analyzes the problem faced by the students before conducting the research

#### Planning

Based on preliminary study above, the researcher begins to plan about what is being done and treats to the students. The researcher prepares anything relates to the research: designing proper material, preparing lesson plan, and preparing the requirements of CAR.

#### Implementing the action

The implementation of comic strips was conducted in class XI-language program of Islamic Senior High School Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo in the first semester. The researcher did the implementation based on the lesson plan. As an actor in this research, the researcher asks another teacher to be a collaborator to help her in observing the situation in the classroom. After each cycle, the researcher and the collaborative teacher do a discussion and make a reflection of the process in the cycle.

The researcher will give Pre-test to the students before implementing the action to know the basic knowledge of the students. Then, researcher gives Post-test after implementing the action to know the improvement of students' writing skills. The scores from pre-test and post-test would be compared to get the data.

In this case, (1) the researcher builds knowledge for the students by explaining narrative text and past tense followed by introducing comic strips. (2) the researcher explained the writing process using comic strips in narrative text, (3) the students work in pairs to try the writing test by implementing comic strips, (4) the researcher will give the students' writing test individually after they did the treatment several times to measure their improvement in writing skill of narrative text.

#### Observing

Observing is the activity to monitor the effect of implementation. This phase was done simultaneously with implementation. Meanwhile the teaching and learning activity happens, the researcher and the collaborative teacher do the observation. To get the information, the researcher uses observation checklist, field notes, and writing test.

#### Reflecting

At this phase, the researcher and collaborative teacher were reflecting, evaluating, and explaining the effect of the action which has been conducted to know what happened and what needed to be solved.

#### Criteria of Success

This research was considered successful if it already met the criteria of success. The criteria of success were determined by two aspects: the teaching and learning writing process as well as the product of the students' writing.

Table 1 Criteria of Success, Data Source, and Instrument

<b>The criteria of success</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
<b>The Process :</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All Students (100%) of XI-Language Program of MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo respond positively during the implementation of comic strips strategy</li> <li>- All students (100%) of XI-Language Program of MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo are motivated during the action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The students' statements about their attitude toward the implementation of the strategy</li> <li>- The students's involvement in the class activities</li> <li>- The students' responses and behavior during the implementation of the strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation Cheklist</li> <li>Field notes</li> </ul>
<b>The product :</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The average score of all students is equal or above the minimum passing criterion, which is 75. (75 is standard minimum score used in MA.</li> </ul>	The score of the students' writing	Writing test

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*((Adapted from Megawati & Anugerahwati, 2012:191))*

To find out the score of students' writing product, the researcher uses scoring rubric. The scoring rubric was developed based on the need of scoring narrative writing. So, the researcher scores based on the scoring purpose of composition such as content, organization, language use and mechanics. Then, the target that researcher wanted to achieve is based on KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal) of English of MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo, especially in XI grade of Language program. The KKM of English is 75. Therefore, if the students get 75, it means they reach the target of studying.

Table 2 Scoring Rubric of Writing Narrative

<b>Writing Aspect</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>Content (C)</b>	4	Very Good	All ideas in the sentences are relevant to the topic and easy understand.
	3	Good	The content is almost complete, relevant to the topic
	2	Fair	The content is relevant to the topic but it is not quite easy to understand
	1	Poor	The content is not quite relevant to the topic
<b>Organization (O)</b>	4	Very Good	Ideas clearly stated, well organized
	3	Good	Ideas clearly stated, but it is not quite well organized
	2	Fair	Ideas are almost clearly stated, no logical sequencing
	1	Poor	Ideas are confusing and are not well organized
<b>Language use (L)</b>	4	Very Good	A few grammatical inaccuracies
	3	Good	Some grammatical inaccuracies
	2	Fair	Numerous grammatical inaccuracy

	1	Poor	Frequent grammatical inaccuracies
<b>Mechanics (M)</b>	4	Very Good	It uses correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
	3	Good	It has occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
	2	Fair	It has frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
	1	Poor	It has no mastery of convention dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

*(Adapted from Brown, 2007)*

From the scoring rubric of writing narrative text (Table 3), the maximum score is 16 (4 x 4) and the minimum is 4 (4 x 1). So, to identify the final score of the students' achievement in writing narrative is based on the following score category :

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{obtained score}}{\text{Maximum score}} \times 100\%$$

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of the students' writing test are presented bellow, Table 3 Students' Score in Pre- Test

NO	NAMES	SCORE	STANDARD ACHIEVEMENT (75)
1.	AR	55	Failed
2.	DW	80	Achieved
3.	DND	65	Failed
4.	DIT	50	Failed
5.	ELS	75	Achieved
6.	EFM	75	Achieved
7.	IM	60	Failed
8.	IRS	60	Failed
9	IN	65	Failed
10.	JF	55	Failed
11.	KS	50	Failed
12.	LM	50	Failed
13.	LNA	55	Failed
14.	MM	75	Achieved



15.	NZR	75	Achieved
16.	NA	50	Failed
17.	NI	75	Achieved
18.	NR	60	Failed
19.	PH	50	Failed
20.	SNR	55	Failed
21.	SA	60	Failed
22.	SEM	60	Failed
23.	TVR	70	Failed
24.	YNH	75	Achieved
25.	ZS	65	Failed

The mean score was 62,6 of the students` total score, 1565. There were 7 students who achieved the standard criteria, and 18 students failed to achieved the criteria.

Table 4 Students` score in the Cycle 1 test

NO	NAMES	SCORE	STANDARD ACHIEVEMENT (75)
1.	AR	73	Failed
2.	DW	88	Achieved
3.	DND	75	Achieved
4.	DIT	75	Achieved
5.	ELS	83	Achieved
6.	EFM	85	Achieved
7.	IM	70	Failed
8.	IRS	65	Failed
9	IN	69	Failed
10.	JF	65	Failed
11.	KS	68	Failed
12.	LM	77	Achieved
13.	LNA	75	Achieved
14.	MM	82	Achieved
15.	NZR	83	Achieved
16.	NA	70	Failed
17.	NI	80	Achieved
18.	NR	79	Achieved
19.	PH	69	Failed
20.	SNR	75	Achieved
21.	SA	73	Failed

22.	SEM	70	Failed
23.	TVR	75	Achieved
24.	YNH	83	Achieved
25.	ZS	78	Achieved

The mean score was 75,4 of the students' total score, 1885. There were 15 students who achieved the standard criteria, and 10 students failed to achieved the criteria.

Table 5 Students' score in the Cycle II test

NO	NAMES	SCORE	STANDARD ACHIEVEMENT (75)
1.	AR	75	Achieved
2.	DW	90	Achieved
3.	DND	76	Achieved
4.	DIT	78	Achieved
5.	ELS	84	Achieved
6.	EFM	87	Achieved
7.	IM	75	Achieved
8.	IRS	70	Failed
9.	IN	75	Achieved
10.	JF	65	Failed
11.	KS	70	Failed
12.	LM	78	Failed
13.	LNA	77	Achieved
14.	MM	84	Achieved
15.	NZR	82	Achieved
16.	NA	75	Achieved
17.	NI	82	Achieved
18.	NR	80	Achieved
19.	PH	70	Failed
20.	SNR	77	Achieved
21.	SA	75	Achieved
22.	SEM	75	Achieved
23.	TVR	76	Achieved
24.	YNH	85	Achieved
25.	ZS	78	Achieved

The mean score was 77,56 of the students' total score, 1939. There were 21 students who achieved the standard criteria, and 4 students failed to achieved the criteria.

Table 6 The Improvement of Students' Skills in Writing

Pre- test	Cycle 1 test	The improvement
The mean score was 62,6	The mean score was 75,4	17%

Pre- test	Cycle 1 test	Cycle II test	The improvement
The mean score was 62,6	The mean score was 75,4	The mean score was 77, 56	19%

### The improvement of students' writing skill

Based on the data of students' score from the table above, it showed that the students had achieved the target of the study. There was significant improvement in each students' test. From the mean score 62,6 in pre-test, the students got the mean score 75,4 in cycle 1, and they got the mean score 77,6 in cycle 2. It means that the implementation of comic strips media could improve students' skill in writing narrative text at MA. Riyadlus Sholihin.

### The implementation of Classroom Action Research (CAR)

In conducting this research, the researcher had used Classroom Action Research (CAR). This research method had solved the issues found in Grade-XI of Language Program at MA. Riyadlus Sholihin Probolinggo or MARS. The researcher was helped by a collaborator in designing the lesson plan, implementing the action, observing the action, and making reflection. The teacher researcher explained the material based on lesson plan and the collaborator observed the situation happened in classroom by completing the checklist and took notes about everything happened in the class.

The use of comic strips in the teaching of writing narrative texts at MARS was implemented in 2 cycles. Cycle 1 was conducted in September, 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 continued with post-test in Oktober, 1<sup>st</sup> 2022. Then, Cycle 2 was conducted in October, 5<sup>th</sup> 2022, the second meeting was on October, 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 and the last meeting on October, 15<sup>th</sup> 2022. Each cycle would consists of planning the action, implementing, observing, and reflecting. In addition, pre-test was given before the implementation and post-test was given after implementation.

#### Cycle 1

Based on the findings of their pre-test, the researcher developed an action plan for this first cycle. It was designed into three writing stages : pre-writing, main-writing, and post writing activity including teacher's and students' activities. The researcher intended to provide an explanation for narrative text : the definition, the social purpose, generic structure and language features. Then, researcher introduced comic strips as the main purpose of this research.

In implementing stages, the researcher as a teacher of the class was accompanied by Miss Titik Rofiqoh, S.Pd. as collaborator to help in observing the situation in the classroom. The teacher explained the material based on lesson plan and the collaborator completed the checklist and took notes about everything happened in the class. In the first meeting, the teacher explained about narrative text and gave example of narrative text entitled “Cinderella” by using comic strips. The teacher divided students to sit in groups randomly which consisted of 4-5 students. They were asked to discuss together and develop the outline of the narrative text based on comic strips media. The teacher introduced the used of comic strips as a visualization of the story. In the second meeting, the teacher contributed comic strips entitled “Snow White”. From the previous meeting, it found that the students got difficulties in translating the story to English because they lack in vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the teacher asked students to sit in their groups to discuss about difficult words that would be written later. Then, the teacher wrote the difficult words on the white board to be translated together. The students were very enthusiastic when they did the discussion. In the third meeting, the teacher was reviewing what had been done in the previous meeting and giving the new comic strips entitled “Malin Kundang”. Students asked to sit in the groups and discussed the difficult vocabulary on the picture. Then, students asked to write narrative paragraph individually based on the comic strips.

While teaching and learning process, the collaborator and the teacher observed the students’ activities by filling the observation sheets about how far was the students’ comprehension and participation in teaching-learning process in the class. The result of implementation in meeting 1 showed that the students’ participation in joining writing process was still poor, many students were sleepy. The students seemed happy when the teacher divided in groups for discussing the outline of story based on comic strips. In the second meeting, it showed that the students were so enthusiastic when they did the discussion. Then, in the last meeting it showed that the students’ participation was good. Some of them were active and enjoy in joining the writing class, even though some of students in back row still felt sleepy.

In analyzing the teaching and learning process, the researcher focused on some aspects related to the classroom activities. The students seemed more interesting in writing paragraph by using comic strips as the media. They were enthusiastic in discussing together in their groups. They motivated in trying to write narrative text better than before. Nevertheless, there were still found students sleepy in the class.

In analyzing the students’ learning result, it was found that the student’s writing skill has increased. The indicators about the ability of organizing idea, developing the content, writing and using expression were improved as the writer

expected. However, the students still made some mistakes in language use (grammar). Most of them still used present tense either than past tense. Also, the students were got difficulties in putting ideas into words. Even though they had ideas to write but they are unable to connect one sentence to others. Their writing were unorganized well. There were still many incomprehensible writing.

Finally, the researcher concluded that the implementation of comic strips media in improving students' skill in writing in Cycle 1 was good enough. However, there were still many problems faced by the students. Therefore, the action in Cycle 1 should be revised and then continued to the next cycle that is Cycle 2.

#### Revised plan

Based on result of the first cycle, the researcher realized that there were significant improvements of the students' ability in writing narrative text by implementing comic strips media, but there were still found many problems faced by students. Thus, some revisions should be devised to implementation of the action by considering findings and suggestions in the first cycle. The revision would be focus on the lesson plan and classroom management.

Dealing with the lesson plan, the teacher researcher focused on improving student's ability in terms of grammatical rules and how to write sentences to be a good writing. Then, in the classroom management, teacher divided the groups based on the result of students' test in Cycle 1. There were smarter students in each groups, they could help other student in the group.

#### Cycle 2

This cycle was conducted in October, 5<sup>th</sup> 2022, the second meeting was on October, 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 and the last meeting on October, 15<sup>th</sup> 2022. As in revised plan, for this cycle the researcher focused on improving student's ability in terms of grammatical rules and how to write sentences to be a good writing. Also, she would changed the groups based on the result of students' test in the first cycle.

The implementation of the first meeting, the teacher researcher focused to repair grammatical rules in students' writing, especially in the using of simple past tense. Therefore, the teacher explained detailed about sentence pattern of past tense and structure in which the students frequently made mistakes. The teacher also changed students groups based on the result of students' test in the first cycle. There were smarter students in each groups, they could help other student in the group. Then, the teacher gave the new comic strips entitled "Timun Mas". As in the first cycle, they asked to discussed the story and find the difficult vocabulary. Also, students asked to implement simple past tense to their writing. In the second meeting, the teacher focused on explaining Conjunction. As in the first cycle found that students got difficulties in collaborating sentence to another. Conjunction bring words and phrases together. It will help the students to make complex sentences in their writing. Then, the students asked to sit with their groups to

discussed comic strips entitled “Jaka Tarub”. They were asked to implement what they had studied before. Most of students were pleased with their recent actions. In the last meeting, the researcher gave the students post-test aimed to know the students’ achievement and progress in writing a narrative text. The comic strips entitled “Sangkuriang”. They were told to implement what they had studied before in their writing. They were asked to pay attention to the writing elements, content, organization, language use (grammar) and mechanics.

The observation process was done during the implementation of the action. Teaching and learning process had changed better than the first cycle. It could be seen from the students’ attention and motivation in following lesson. The improvement of the students’ ability in constructing and arranging the sentences into narrative text had progress well. The researcher and collaborator observed two important things. They were the process of teaching learning in the classroom and the students’ progress in their learning. During the activity in the first meeting, the students kept silent and paid attention seriously to the lesson. They seemed interesting in learning English focusing on writing because they worked in their group and also could discuss with their friend. While teacher focus on explaining conjunction in English to help students in collaborating sentences for good writing in the second meeting, the students looked more spirit because they had known the trick how to write it later. Then in the last meeting, the teacher gave the post-test for the students. The result of their writing is satisfied. Every student was interested in writing narrative using comic strips media because they enjoy the activities. They made better progress in writing and motivation in joining teaching learning process in classroom.

Based on the data obtained, the researcher got some results dealing with the implementation of comic strips media activities in Cycle 2. First, the researcher found that the students seemed more active in participating teaching learning activities. Second, in terms of language function, the students were able to minimize their mistakes in using the grammar, especially simple past tense as the language feature in writing narrative text. Also, students find it easier to connect sentences to another by using conjunction in their writing. Furthermore, their ability progressed too. The five indicators about the ability of organizing idea, developing the content, using correct grammar and using correct mechanism in writing were improved as the researcher expected. In general, the findings are presented in line with the criteria for success that have been determined. These criteria include the student’s participation in the teaching and learning process, the writing products that the student produces, and the student’s responses to the implementation of comic strips in order to improve the student’s writing ability in narrative text.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Implementing comic strips media has made the students' narrative writing ability improved. In order to be successful, several procedures in teaching and learning activities should be followed. First, the teacher grouping the students based on the test result which there were smarter students in each group. Second, the teacher contributes comic strips to each group and asks students to discuss about difficult words found that would be written later. Third, the teacher explained detailed about sentence pattern of past tense and structure in which the students frequently made mistakes. Then, the teacher explaining conjunction to help students in collaborating sentences for good writing.

The teaching of narrative text by implementing comic strips media has some benefits. First, comic strips help students improve their ability in writing narrative text. Second, comic strips develop students' ideas. They had no worry to be writer's block because the core of ideas had been written. Third, comic strips make students more aware to use correct grammar in their writing. Fourth, comic strips can encourage the students to be actively involved in writing narrative. The last, comic strips suit to their interest.

The use of comic strips media helps the students make much progress. The findings indicate that the students' results in writing narrative text showed significant improvement. The students achieved the higher score from the first cycle to the second cycle.

### Suggestion

Based on the research findings, some suggestions are given to follow up the result of the study.

For English teachers, it is suggested to use comic strip media in teaching of narrative writing. Implementing comic strips media is one of effective way to be used for developing students ideas. The method can help students improve their writing skills. Through the result of the research, the teacher is hoped to motivate and attract the student's interest by using various methods in writing.

For students, it is suggested to use comic strips media as one of strategy to practice their narrative writing ability in their leisure time. The result of this research is expected to help them to write be better.

For further researcher, it is suggested to involve the collaborator for scoring the result of students' test to increase interrater reability of the data. Also, this research is expected to facilitate them to be used as reference in conducting the further study in different context.

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