

THE USE OF DESCRIBING PICTURES STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are to find out whether the use of describing pictures strategy is effective to improve students' speaking skills and to find out the students' perception on the use of describing pictures strategy. This research took place at SMPN 49 Makassar. The population of this research were the students at grade VIII which consist of 317 students. The researcher used a random cluster sampling technique and class was chosen is VIII4 which consist of 20 students. The instruments of this research were an oral test and the questionnaire about students' perception on describing pictures strategy. The result of the research showed that the average score of post-tests does not reach the Minimum Completeness Criteria, the gain score for the post-test is in the category medium minimum, and the students' post-test score not achieved the classical completion namely under 85%. Two of the three indicators of effectiveness are not achieved, so describing pictures strategy is not effective to improve students' speaking skills. However, the researcher found that the use of describing pictures strategy improved students' speaking skills. It is proved by the mean score of the post-test which is higher than the pre-test ($15.65 > 6.15$). Students' perception of the benefit, the interest, the activities, and the implementation of describing pictures were high. Based on the data, most of the students answered strongly agree and agree from the one to twenty questions.

Keywords—*Describing Pictures Strategy, Speaking Skills, Students' Perception*

INTRODUCTION

In language learning, there are four skills that need to be mastered by students namely; listening skills, reading skills, writing skills, and speaking skills. Of the four skills, all of it is important because all skills are related to one another. One of the important skills to master is speaking skills. By mastering speaking skills, students can communicate with their friends, convey ideas, or ask the teacher using English. When students have not mastered speaking skills, they will find it difficult to do so.

Wahyuni, Suhartono, and Atok (2022) said that if students have good speaking skills, it will be easier for them to interact, especially in learning activities so that learning is more interactive. The speaking skills can determine the success or failure of students in the learning process. This can be seen when students can convey the subject matter correctly. Therefore, the learning process will no efficient when students cannot express their opinion or ideas because of a lack of speaking skills.

In Indonesia, many teachers only teach based on textbooks. Based on observations and experiences that have been made by researcher, the majority of teachers in the learning process are still carried out with conventional methods such as lectures, using textbooks and the teacher dominates the class too much. The learning process like this makes students' skills, especially speaking skills, not improved. This is supported by Noor, Korompot, and Baa (2023) said that students use the four language skills only if invited by the teacher. Students only get it when the teacher explains, write only when students are given assignments, and read only when

students are told to read questions. Noor et.al. (2023) stated that students were rarely asked to speak by teachers because they felt uncomfortable to speak.

Lack of speaking skills is still experienced by many students as happened to grade VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar. From the results of the researcher's interview with the grade 8 English teacher on February 6, 2023, the speaking skills of grade 8 students are relatively low. She added that there are also some students who have good speaking skills but more dominating those who still have low skills. From the results of researcher's observation in November 2022, in the learning process, the teacher teaches based on textbooks. It can be said that the teacher does not have a specific strategy to improve students' speaking skills. One of the factors that influence students' speaking skills is the inappropriate teacher's strategy. Teachers must have the right strategy so that students can learn effectively and efficiently in learning activities. The teacher must be able to create an active and communicative classroom atmosphere that can stimulate students' speaking skills. Murti, Jabu, and Samtidar (2022) added that students' speaking difficulties can be improved through appropriate learning strategies and also teachers should well prepare themselves. One strategy that teachers can use is describing pictures.

Using a describing pictures strategy in teaching speaking provides many benefits. Sundari (2013) said that the use of media images in teaching can arouse students' enthusiasm and interest so that it will increase student speaking skills. The increasing of students' enthusiasm and interest means that student motivation will increase. By increasing student motivation, learning will become more active. Rohmadona (2019) argued that pictures are useful for students to express and comprehend meaning in learning English. Several previous studies have also shown positive results from using describing pictures in improving students' speaking skills. In addition, Maghfirah and Baa (2021) stated that pictures can convey students' idea easily because it is increasing their attention since the pictures are colorful and enjoyable.

From the results of research conducted by Pratiwi and Ayu (2020) about the use of describing pictures showed positive results. In addition, Andriyani and Apriliana (2021) said that students' speaking skills are improving through describing pictures strategy. Previous researchers used qualitative methods and observation as instrument while the current study will be using quantitative methods and not use observation as instruments. Research conducted by Murni (2021) also showed positive results, but previous research was conducted on high school students, while the current research will be conducted on junior high school students who had never studied English during elementary school. What distinguishes this research from the three studies above is that in this study, besides will find out at the effectiveness of describing picture strategy in improving speaking skills, it also will find students' perception in learning speaking skills through describing pictures strategy. It is important for teachers and researcher to know student perceptions related to the use of the describing pictures strategy.

Based on several reasons above, the researcher is interested in doing research with the title of the use of describing pictures strategy to improve students' speaking skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking Skills

According to Nurlaelah and Syakir (2020) speaking is a tool for communicating ideas that are arranged and developed according to the needs of the listener or listener. While Kustanti and Prihmayadi (2022) said that speaking is a way to issue or express opinions. From the definitions, the researcher can conclude speaking is a way or form for someone to express ideas or opinions and also an easy way to communicate with other people.

Brown (2004) said that the component of speaking is divided into five namely; pronunciation (way to say a word), grammar (rule), vocabulary (words), fluency (ability to speak quick and accurate), and comprehension (ability to receive communication). Hughes

(2003) also divided component of speaking into five types, namely; Accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. It can be concluded that speaking has five components namely; pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Describing Pictures

According to Rofiqi (2021), describing picture is one strategy that can be used in teaching speaking English, which students get a picture and describe it in front of the class. Romahdhona (2019) said that picture help teacher to support and makes things more interesting for students in learning. The use of pictures can be applied in class as strategy, which is describing picture. From the definitions by the experts, the researcher can draw the conclusion that pictures are tools that can be used in learning English that can make students interested and also active in learning.

Perception

According to Nurqaidah and Hendra (2022), perception is a person's behavior after being followed by activities that have general characteristics, namely research, observation, responses, potential, memory, thinking, feelings, and motives. Furthermore, Syahrir, Jabu, and Baa (2022) said that perception is a process that is preceded by an observed process, namely a process receiving stimulation from someone through the senses or also called sensory processing. From the five opinions above, the researcher draws the conclusion that perception is a human psychological behavior in which the process occurs when the five senses send messages to the brain. The components of perception used in this research are from Tampubulon (2017) which are divided into four, namely the benefit, the interest, the activities, and the implementation.

METHODS

Research Design

This research used a pre-experimental quantitative method. The research design is one group pretest-post-test design, which mean the sample is only from one class. The researcher gave a pre-test in the first meeting to measure the students' speaking skills. After that, the researcher gave a treatment in four meetings. In this step, the researcher used the describing picture strategy to improving the students' speaking skills. In the last meeting, the researcher gave a post-test to know the improvement of the students' speaking skills, ss drawn by Sugiyono (2013), pre-test (O1), treatment (X), and post-test (O2).

Time and Place

The research location is at SMP Negeri 49 Makassar. This school is located on Jl. Syekh Yusuf, Jl. Minasa Upa, Tombolo, Rappocini District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi Province. The researcher conducted research from the August 23 to September 27 or for 6 weeks.

Population and Sample

The population in this research is all of students in the VIII grades at SMPN 49 Makassar which consists of 137 students in five classes from grades VIII1 to VIII5. The sampling technique used in this research is cluster random sampling. Based on the sampling technique, the sample for research is all of students in class VIII4. The number of student class VIII4 is 20 students in total.

Research Variable

In this research there are three variables, such as: Describing Picture (Variable X), Speaking Skills (Variable Y1), Perception (Variable Y2).

Research Instrument

To collect the data as complete and valid as possible and based on the question in the background, the researcher oral test for pre-test and post-test and questionnaire to collecting the data.

1. Pre-test and Post-test

This instrument used to measure students' speaking skills (variable Y1) before and after (pre-test and post-test) giving the treatment in the form of learning English through describing pictures (variable X). The score sheet uses five components of speaking with the highest score of 5. Here is the table of scoring criteria.

Table 1. Scoring Criteria

Component	Score	Description
Pronunciation	1	Pronunciation errors are common.
	2	The accent is understandable, although it is often flawed.
	3	Mistakes seldom disrupt the understanding of a native speaker.
	4	Pronunciation errors are infrequent.
	5	Equivalent to and fully accepted by educated native speakers.
Grammar	1	Errors in grammar are common
	2	Can typically manage basic structures with reasonable accuracy but may lack thorough understanding.
	3	Grammar control is good.
	4	Grammar errors are infrequent.
	5	Equivalent to that of a well-educated native speaker.
Vocabulary	1	The vocabulary for speaking is limited and can only express the most basic necessities.
	2	Has an adequate speaking vocabulary to express themselves in a simple manner, although they may need to use circumlocutions (indirect ways of expressing something) at times.
	3	The vocabulary is extensive enough that he seldom has to struggle to find the right word.
	4	Can engage in conversations and understand with a high degree of vocabulary precision.
	5	Speaking is encouraged at every stage or level.
Fluency	1	There is no specific description of fluency.
	2	Capable of handling situations with confidence but may not be very sociable.
	3	Rarely struggles to find the right words.
	4	Capable of using the language fluently at all levels typically required for professional purposes.
	5	Able to utilize the language fluently at all levels relevant to professional requirements.
Comprehension	1	Can understand basic questions if they are presented with slowed speech, repetition, or rephrasing.
	2	Can grasp the essence of most discussions on non-technical topics.
	3	Comprehension is fairly comprehensive at a regular speaking pace.

	4	Can understand any conversation that falls within their realm of experience.
	5	Equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.

(Brown, 2004)

2. Questionnaire

This instrument will be used to measure students' perception (variable Y2) after giving the treatment in the form of learning speaking through describing pictures strategy (variable X). Types of answer choices using a Likert scale with five answer choices. The answers on the Likert scale have levels from strongly agree to strongly disagree which can be seen in the table below.

Procedure of Data Collection

1. Students' speaking skills

a. Pre-test

The researcher asked the students to describe their seatmate. The pre-test was given in the first week of the research.

b. Treatment

As explained in the research design, the treatment carried out for 4 weeks. In the first week to the fourth week of treatment, the researcher used the describing pictures strategy in learning to improve students' speaking skills. The type of picture used is a picture of a famous person

c. Post-test

After doing the treatment, the students described the same person in the pre-test (their seatmate) to see if there is a significant difference after being given treatment or not

2. Students' Perception

The data collected on the last week of research. The students were given a questionnaire to find out their perception in learning English through describing pictures strategy.

Technique of Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this research is an inferential statistical analysis technique and statistics descriptive. Inferential statistics is a method that used statistical formulas and the calculation results are used as a guide in making general conclusions or generalizing them. Statistics descriptive is a technique of data analysis that describes a collection of data by displaying a summary of the sample data.

FINDINGS

The finding of the research shows the improvement of students' speaking skills by describing pictures strategy at eighth grade of SMPN 49 Makassar. The researcher chose one class as sample. The researcher started by giving the pre-test in the first meeting to measure the students' speaking skills and the post-test and the questionnaire were given in the last meeting.

T-test result

The t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a significance difference between the pre-test and the post-test with. The decision made by observing the significance scores in the coefficient table.

Table 3. T-test Result

Test	Paired Differences			T	Df	Sig (2 tailed)
	Mean of difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error			
Pretest - posttest	9.6	5.296	1.009	-7.326	19	0.000001

The data showed that the t-test score (0.000001) is lower than the significance score (0.05). The researcher concluded that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. In this case, it means that the describing pictures strategy is improving students' speaking skills.

Learning Completeness

Based on the posttest results, the English learning outcome scores for class VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar, specifically students with low self-efficacy, are presented in table below.

Table 4. Student Posttest Descriptive Statistics Results

Statistics	Statistics Number
Sample	20
Maximum score	96
Minimum score	24
Ideal score	100,00
Range score	72
Median	68
Modus	68
Mean	62.8
Standard deviation	23.94
Variance	573.094

Based on table 4.5, it shows that the average post-test score (62.8) is smaller than the Minimum Completeness Criteria score (77), so it can be concluded that the average learning outcome score for class VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar does not reach the Minimum Completeness Criteria, namely 77.

N-gain Score

Improving mathematics learning outcomes for class VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar with N-Gain in full in the attachment. The results of the N-gain categorization are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 5. Results of student N-Gain categorization

Interval	category	Frekuensi	Persentase (%)
$g < 0,3$	Poor	5	25
$0,3 \leq g < 0,7$	Medium	12	60
$g \geq 0,7$	High	3	15

Based on Table 4.6, it is found that 3 (15%) students are in the high category, 12 (60%) students are in the medium category, and 5 (25%), so the average N-gain of student learning outcomes is 0.507, which is in the medium category. It can be concluded that the gain value of English learning results for students in class VIII at SMPN 49 Makassar who were taught using the describing pictures strategy is in the medium minimum category.

Classical Completeness

The English learning outcomes of class VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar after being taught using the PBL model were grouped into two categories to obtain a frequency and percentage distribution as shown in table 6.

Tabel 6. criteria for completeness of post-test

Skor	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
≥ 77	Complete	4	20
< 77	Not Complete	16	80

Based on table, it is known that as many as 20% of students got a complete score, while as many as 80% of students got an incomplete score. It can be concluded that the application of the describing pictures strategy is significantly ineffective in achieving classical completion for class VIII students at SMPN 49 Makassar when viewed from the proportion of students who have completed at least a percentage of 85%.

Result Analysis of the Questionnaire

Students' scores pre-test was classified into five categories, namely; very positive, positive, neutral, negative, and very negative. The classification of the students' scores is presented below:

Table 8. Students' Score Classification of the Questionnaire

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Positive	84-100	4	20%
2	Positive	67-83	14	70%
3	Neutral	53-66	2	10%
4	Negative	39-52	0	0%
5	Very Negative	≤ 38	0	0%
Total			20	100%

The data above showed that there are 4 (20%) students have very positive perception, 14 (70%) students have positive perception, 2 (10%) students have neutral perception. From the data the researcher concludes that the students have positive perception on the use of describing pictures strategy in English class.

The accumulated total scores and mean score can be seen in the table below:

Table 9. Questionnaire Sum and Mean Score

Sum Score	1593
Mean Score	79.65

From the data above, it can be concluded that the students have a positive perception of the use of describing pictures strategy in learning English.

Besides the mean score, based on the results of a closed questionnaire analysis about students' perceptions of learning English using Describing Pictures Strategy, it is described through several indicators: the benefit, the interest, the activities, and the implementation.

a. The Benefit

Based on closed questionnaire data analysis, students' perceptions of Describing Pictures Strategy on speaking skills can be seen in the following table:

Table 10. The Benefit of Describing Picture Strategy

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SDA
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	The Describing Pictures Strategy increases my curiosity to find some information in descriptive text of a person picture.	9 (45)	10 (50)	1 (5)		
2	The Describing Pictures Strategy helps me find vocabulary by reading descriptive text of a person picture.	11 (55)	6 (30)	3 (15)		
3	The Describing Pictures Strategy develops my grammar understanding.	7 (35)	10 (50)	3 (15)		
4	The Describing Pictures Strategy improves my pronunciation/fluency in describing picture of person.	8 (40)	6 (30)	6 (30)		
5	The Describing Pictures Strategy improves my comprehension in speaking skills.	5 (25)	10 (50.0)	4 (20)	1 (5)	
6	The Describing Pictures Strategy motivates me to improve my speaking skills.	6 (30)	11 (55)	3 (15)		
7	The Describing Pictures Strategy builds my speaking skills.	4 (20)	11 (55)	5 (25)		
8	The Describing Pictures Strategy makes me more serious about speaking skills material	11 (55)	5 (25)	4 (20)		
N		20				

The findings related to the students' perceptions toward the benefits of the Describing Pictures Strategy showed that they agreed that their curiosity to find some information through learning media such as pictures had increased. This is shown by the large percentage in the first question, namely 9 (45%) students answered strongly agree and 10 (50%) students answered agree.

b. The Interest

Based on closed questionnaire data analysis, students' perceptions of Describing Pictures Strategy on speaking skills can be seen in the following table:

Table 11. The Interest of Describing Pictures Strategy

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SDA
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	I was assigned to find some information by describing picture.	3 (15)	9 (45)	7 (35)	1 (5)	
2	I share findings from pictures and share them with my friends during the lesson.	1 (5)	9 (45)	10 (50)		

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SDA
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
3	I convey my findings from pictures through presentations	3 (15)	13 (65)	4 (20)		
4	I am interested in forming groups to discuss with friends about speaking.	6 (30)	3 (15)	10 (50)		1 (5)
N		20				

The distribution of students' perceptions of the interest in using Describing Pictures Strategy in speaking skills showed that students agreed that their independence is formed to be able to present or convey the finding from person pictures through presentation. This is evidenced by the high value of the frequency and percentage of the third statement on the indicator of the interest in applying the Describing Pictures Strategy which is equal to 13 (65%).

c. The Activities

Based on closed questionnaire data analysis, students' perceptions of Describing Pictures Strategy on speaking skills can be seen in the following table:

Table 12. The Activities of Describing Pictures Strategy

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SDA
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	I always conclude ideas after describing person pictures.	1 (5)	9 (45)	8 (40)	2 (10)	
2	I collect some words/sentences that I don't understand from a descriptive text of person picture.	7 (35)	9 (45)	3 (15)		1 (5)
3	I find and use techniques in speaking.	4 (20)	8 (40)	7 (35)	1 (5)	
4	I was allowed to share my findings from the describing pictures of a person.	3 (15)	10 (50)	7 (35)		
N		20				

The distribution of students' perceptions of activities to Describing Pictures Strategy in speaking skills showed that students agreed that they could gather a difficult or new vocabulary from the descriptive text of a person picture and they could share all the information and make the findings from the text with their friends. Where the fourth statement has the highest number of frequencies and percentages 10 (50%), this means that the application of the Describing Pictures Strategy has an effect on students' activities in learning English, especially in speaking material.

d. The Implementation

Based on closed questionnaire data analysis, students' perceptions of Describing Pictures Strategy on speaking skills can be seen in the following table:

Table 13. The Implementation of Describing Pictures Strategy

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SDA
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	The Describing Pictures Strategy can be applied to speaking comprehension materials	4 (20)	7 (35)	9 (45)		
2	In speaking comprehension materials learning to read through describing picture makes it more active	8 (40)	7 (35)	5 (25)		
3	The Describing Pictures Strategy should be used in all English-speaking classes	4 (20)	9 (45)	6 (30)	1 (5)	
4	The best way to improve my reading skills is to use the Describing Pictures Strategy.	10 (50)	6 (30)	3 (15)	1 (5)	
N		25				

The distribution of students' perceptions of the implementation of the Describing Pictures Strategy in speaking skills showed that students strongly agreed that using Describing Pictures Strategy improved their speaking skills the best way. This is shown based on the frequencies and percentage of statement four 10 (50%).

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the data, the researcher would like to discuss the two research questions in this discussion.

1. The effectiveness of using describing pictures

After carrying out the pre-test and post-test, the data was analyzed and calculated using SPSS. The results obtained are; (1) The average score of learning outcomes does not reach the Minimum Completeness Criteria, namely 77. (2) The gain score for English learning outcomes for students who were taught using the describing pictures strategy is in the category medium minimum. (3) significantly the application of the describing pictures strategy is not effective in achieving classical completion when viewed from the proportion of students who have completed at least a percentage of 85%. It can be concluded that use of describing picture strategy is not effective to improving students' speaking skills.

On the other hand, the result of the pre-test and post-test showed significance difference as explained in the data analysis. Based on the calculation, the mean score of the students' pre-test is 6.15 and the post-test was 15.65. The result of the test showed that there an effect of describing picture strategy in improving students' speaking skills. It is proved by the result of the data analysis showed that the t-test score (0.00) is lower than the significance level (0.05).

Based on the explanation above, the use of describing picture strategy is not effective to improving students' speaking skills but there is a significant difference between before and after the treatment.

2. Students' Perception

The data showed that the students have a positive perception of the use of describing pictures strategy in learning English. This is indicated by the high average value (79.65), which is in the positive classification. Besides, there are several indicators that has been analyzed, namely: the benefit, the interest, the activities, and the implementation. In the benefit indicator, students agree that the describing picture strategy can increase curiosity, improve vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, and motivation. On the interest indicator, students agreed that their independence is formed to be able to present or convey the finding from person pictures through presentation. The third indicator is the activities showed that

students agreed that they could gather a difficult or new vocabulary from the descriptive text of a person picture and they could share all the information and make the findings from the text with their friends. The last indicator is the implementation showed that students agreed that using Describing Pictures Strategy improved their speaking skills the best way. Based on the explanation above, researchers can conclude that the describing pictures strategy can be used in learning English speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result, the conclusion of the study can be drawn as follows, the use of describing pictures strategy is not effective to improve students' speaking skills. However, there is a significant difference in students' speaking skills before and after treatment. This can be understood by the mean score of pre-test and post-test that have a significance different.

Students' perception of the benefit, the interest, the activities, and the implementation of describing pictures were high. Based on the data, most of the students were answered strongly and agree from the one to twenty questions. In addition, the students have a positive perception of the use of describing pictures strategy in learning English. This is indicated by the high average value (79.65), which is in the positive classification

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