



# The Effectiveness of Serial Pictures in Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Texts

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026 - 06- 01 Revised: 2026 06-18 Accepted: 2026 06-27	<i>This study investigates the effectiveness of the Serial Pictures Technique in enhancing reading comprehension of descriptive texts among eighth-grade students at Junior High School Jakarta. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the research involved an experimental group taught using the Serial Pictures Technique and a control group receiving traditional instruction. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure students' reading comprehension. The results indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group, with a mean score increase from 45 to 70, compared to the control group's increase from 48 to 62. Statistical analysis confirmed a significant difference (<math>p = 0.035</math>) and a modest effect size (Cohen's <math>d = 0.36</math>), suggesting that the Serial Pictures Technique effectively improves students' reading comprehension. These findings highlight the importance of innovative teaching methods in enhancing language skills.</i>
<b>Keywords:</b> Serial Pictures Technique, Reading Comprehension, Descriptive Texts, Eighth-Grade Students, Quasi-Experimental Design, Educational Media.	
<b>DOI:</b> 10.24256/ideasv14i1.9558	
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## 1. Introduction

Mastering four skills in learning English is essential for students to be able to use the language effectively. These skills are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. According to Springer et al. (2017), Reading is an important bridge for

students who wish to have the ability to integrate and interact with others. Reading comprehension is not only about how to pronounce words well, but also about how the reader understands the written form. It means an activity that can help them find information and create meaning. Reading comprehension is one of the important skills in order to build knowledge and understanding of readers.

It allows individuals to acquire new information and ideas, expand their vocabulary, and develop critical thinking and comprehension abilities. The above statement is supported by John N. Cabansag in Queen Erlinda's research, who says that "The fourth skill is important in reading comprehension since reading comprehension is supposed to be a key tool to learn new knowledge of reading (Kurniatillah, 2019). People who enjoy reading comprehension will gain new perspectives and enhance their intelligence, which will enable them to deal with their future challenges effectively.

In line with the importance of reading, in reality, there are so many students who still cannot understand about text that they have read. The writer's opinion to overcome these difficulties, various aspects that support students in reading comprehension are needed, one of which is the use of effective learning media. Utilizing media can assist students in the educational process by providing them with engaging and interactive ways to learn new information and concepts (Putro & Lee, 2017).

## **2. Literature Review**

Different types of media can be utilized during the instruction and learning process, such as videos, films, and pictures. One form of visual media that can be employed to learn reading is pictures, specifically a series of pictures that depict ongoing events and convey important information within a story. This can make students interested and active in the teaching and learning process. In addition, there are studies related to images. Reading comprehension is defined as a complex cognitive process that involves understanding written texts by connecting prior knowledge with new information (Tarchi, 2017; Ayu et al., 2017; Rusrianti, 2017).

It plays a crucial role in developing vocabulary, critical thinking, and learning new ideas (Wulandari, 2017; Dewi et al., 2020). According to Laufer-Dvorkin (1982) and Tarigan (1985), reading aims to extract main ideas, analyze information, and make inferences. Patel & Jain (2008) classify reading into intensive, extensive, aloud, and silent reading. McLaughlin & Allen (Grabe & Stoller, 2002) emphasize principles such as engagement, strategy use, and vocabulary development. Duchovicova et al. (2019) describe reading comprehension stages as literal, inferential, critical, and creative, while Hadley & Johnson (1993) outline the pre-, during-, and post-reading stages. Teaching reading comprehension requires varied approaches to meet students' needs (Brown, 2000; Rajagopalan, 2019).

Teachers are encouraged to employ innovative techniques such as Serial Pictures Technique, a form of visual media that facilitates learning by

enhancing memory, imagination, and understanding (Putro & Lee, 2017; Mbirongi et al., 2022). Descriptive texts aim to depict people, animals, objects, or places with detailed explanations (Fitriani et al., 2019; Suminar&Putri, 2018; Purnamasari et al., 2021), using structures like identification and description (Kirana,2018) and linguistic features such as present tense, adjectives, and relational verbs (Masitoh&Suprijadi, 2015).

The Serial Pictures Technique refers to a series of sequenced images used to assist students in organizing information visually. According to Hardiyanti (2020) and Risdayanti (2020), this technique supports memory retention, engagement, and comprehension. Levie &Lentz(dalam Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2004) mention four functions of visual media: attention, affective, cognitive, and compensatory. The use of the Serial Pictures Technique offers advantages such as increased motivation, better understanding, and improved reading skills (Werff, 2003; Gerlach et al., dalam Aprilia &Andreani,2020). However, it also presents challenges like limited visual dimensions and interpretation differences (Heinich et al., 1989; Irawinanti et al., 2020).

Previous studies have shown that the Serial Pictures Technique is effective in both writing and reading contexts. In writing, studies byDeviga&Arum Ardhani (2022) and Gendroyono (2021) found improvements in students' organization and vocabulary. In reading, research by Ilmi (2021), Nurholila (2021), Lailitsani (2017), Hardiyanti (2020), Yasmine (2018), and Irawinanti et al. (2020) reported significant gains in students' comprehension scores after implementing the technique. There are several studies that researched the Serial Pictures Technique in teaching reading comprehension: Irawinanti et al. (2020), Hardiyanti (2020), Yasmine (2018), Ilmi (2021), and Elytis (2021). There have been many studies on the Serial Pictures Technique in teaching reading comprehension, and most of them are effective.

However, the researcher would like to know the effectiveness of this technique with a student's background that is different from previous studies. Most of them researched at the public-school level, such as state junior high schools and senior high schools; meanwhile, this research was conducted at junior high schools in Islamic Boarding Schools. Islamic boarding schools are Islamic educational institutions. People think that studying at Islamic boarding schools only involves studying religion. In fact, if we look at the curriculum system typical of modern Islamic boarding schools such as Asshiddiqiyah, students are given a balanced and proportional basis with general subjects.

To address these challenges, effective learning media are needed. Putro and Lee (2017) argue that media such as videos, films, and especially pictures can enhance student engagement and comprehension. One promising approach is the Serial Pictures Technique, which uses image sequences to help students visualize and understand reading content. Previous studies (Irawinanti et al.,2020; Hardiyanti, 2020; Yasmine, 2018; Ilmi, 2021; Elytis, 2021) have shown the

effectiveness of this technique in public schools. This study aims to explore its effectiveness in a different educational context—an Islamic boarding school (Junior High School Jakarta), where general and religious subjects are integrated.

The research is limited to the use of serial pictures in teaching descriptive texts to 8th-grade students. The main research question is: Is the Serial Pictures Technique effective in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive text to 8th-grade students at Junior High School Jakarta? The objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of this technique and identify any challenges in its implementation.

### **3. Method**

This research employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. The choice of this method was intended to allow the researcher to examine the effectiveness of the Serial Pictures Technique in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive text by comparing the results from two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The procedure involved administering a pre-test to both groups to assess their initial reading comprehension ability. Then, the experimental group received treatment through the use of the Serial Pictures Technique, while the control group was taught without using the technique. After two sessions of treatment, a post-test was administered to both groups to measure the outcomes of the instruction. The resulting data were then analyzed using statistical methods to determine whether the applied treatment had a significant effect.

The research was conducted at Junior High School Jakarta, located at Jl. Panjang No. 6C Kedoya Utara, Kebon Jeruk, West Jakarta. The data collection took place in November 2025. The population of this study consisted of all eighth-grade students at the school. From this population, the researcher selected two classes consisting of 60 students in total—30 students in the experimental group and 30 students in the control group. These groups were chosen to enable the researcher to compare outcomes between those exposed to the Serial Pictures Technique and those who were not.

To collect data, the researcher used tests as the primary research instrument. These included a pre-test and a post-test in the form of multiple-choice questions assessing students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. The pre-test served to establish students' baseline knowledge, while the post-test measured the extent of learning after the treatment was applied. Both the experimental and control groups received the same sets of questions, ensuring comparability.

The process of data collection began with the administration of a pre-test to both groups to gauge students' existing knowledge and reading ability. Following this, the experimental group received specific treatment using the Serial Pictures Technique in the teaching of descriptive texts, whereas the control group received instruction without any special visual aids or techniques. After two treatment sessions, both groups were given a post-test. The difference in scores between the

pre-test and post-test was then analyzed to determine whether the use of serial pictures significantly improved the students' reading comprehension

#### **4. Result**

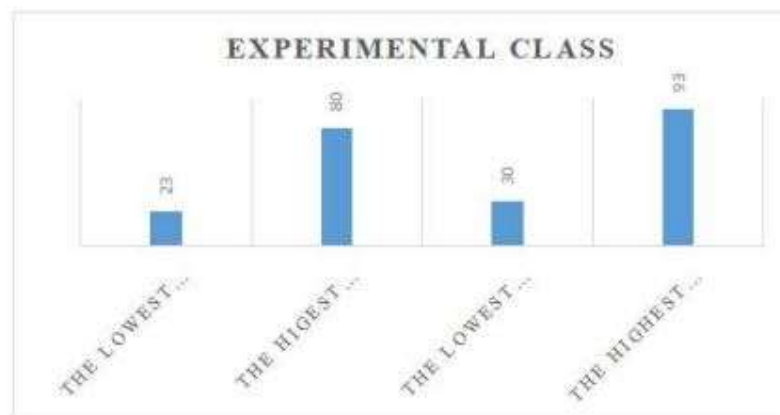
Based on the results of the data analysis, it can be concluded that the use of the Serial Pictures Technique had a positive and statistically significant effect on students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. This conclusion is supported by several key findings derived from statistical tests. First, the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk method confirmed that the data in both the experimental and control classes were normally distributed, with significance values greater than 0.05 in both pre-test and post-test results. This means the data met the assumption of normal distribution required for further parametric testing.

Second, the homogeneity test showed that the variances between the two groups were not significantly different (Sig. > 0.05). This indicates that the two groups were relatively similar in terms of score variability, allowing for a fair comparison using the independent sample t-test. Third, the hypothesis testing through an independent sample t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. The experimental group, which received the Serial Pictures Technique treatment, achieved a mean score of 69.87, while the control group had a mean of 61.50.

The p-value of 0.035 (less than 0.05) confirmed that this difference was significant, suggesting that the Serial Pictures Technique effectively improved students' reading outcomes. Finally, the effect size analysis using Cohen's d yielded a value of 0.36, which falls into the category of a modest effect. While not large, this indicates that the technique had a meaningful impact on enhancing students' comprehension skills, especially in interpreting descriptive texts.

#### **5. Discussion**

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of the Serial Pictures Technique on the reading ability of eighth-grade students at Junior High School's reading comprehension of descriptive texts. Before implementing the Serial Pictures Technique for the experimental class. This study employed a pre-test to evaluate the students' reading comprehension. Because the 85 class from eighth-grade Junior High School had a lower mean score than the 84 class, the experimental class was selected for this study specifically to evaluate the impact of the Serial Pictures Technique on students' reading comprehension. According to the similarity test of the average of the two post-tests, the ability of students to read descriptive texts differs between the experimental and control groups. The experimental highest score is shown below:



The data in the table above represent the pre- and post-test scores of the experimental class. Students in the experimental class improved their reading scores after using the Serial Pictures Technique. The lowest pre-test score was 23, and the lowest post-treatment score in the experimental class was 47. Furthermore, the experimental class increased its top score by 20 points, from 80 to 100. Meanwhile, students in the control group were given the same reading test but without any pictures.

Based on the findings of this study, the Serial Pictures Technique proved to be effective in improving students' reading comprehension, particularly in understanding descriptive texts. This conclusion is drawn from a study conducted on eighth-grade students at Junior High School, where students in the experimental class—who were taught using the Serial Pictures Technique—demonstrated significantly better performance compared to those in the control class, who were taught using conventional methods. Initially, the mean score of the experimental class in the pre-test was 45, slightly lower than the control class's mean score of 48. However, after the implementation of the Serial Pictures Technique, the experimental class showed a remarkable increase, with a mean post-test score of 70—an improvement of 25 points.

In contrast, the control mean score only increased by 14 points, from 48 to 62, indicating a much smaller gain. Although both groups experienced some improvement, the experimental class clearly benefited more from the intervention. The statistical significance of this result was further confirmed by an independent sample t-test, which produced a p-value (sig. 2-tailed) of 0.035. Since this value is lower than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, affirming that the Serial Pictures Technique had a significant influence on students' reading comprehension. Additionally, the effect size, calculated using Cohen's *d*, was found to be 0.36.

This value indicates a modest effect, reinforcing the conclusion that while the impact was not overwhelmingly large, it was still meaningful and beneficial in the context of classroom instruction. In light of these findings, several suggestions can

be offered for teachers, students, and future researchers. For English teachers, it is recommended to incorporate the Serial Pictures Technique into reading lessons, as this method can help students visualize the content of a text, making it easier for them to comprehend meaning and context.

As facilitators of learning, teachers can use this technique to make reading more engaging and accessible for their students. For English learners, the Serial Pictures Technique can serve as a valuable tool for independent practice. By using visual cues, students can better connect with the reading materials they enjoy, enhancing both their comprehension and interest in reading.

Lastly, for future researchers, it is encouraged to explore the use of the Serial Pictures Technique in other areas of language learning, such as writing, listening, and speaking. Future studies could also consider adopting qualitative research approaches to gain deeper insights. This technique affects various language skills in different learning environments.

## **6. Conclusion**

The study concluded that previewing is an important strategy in reading instruction to activate students' prior knowledge, improve comprehension, and adapt learning to diverse learning styles. Although both teachers used the same types of previewing - picture questions, title-based questions, and vocabulary discussions - the more experienced teacher demonstrated a more contextualized and in-depth approach than the novice teacher. Therefore, it is suggested that EFL teachers should optimize previewing with questions that encourage critical thinking and meaning connections, and that teacher training and follow-up research should examine this strategy more broadly and contextually.

## **7. Acknowledgments**

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to all parties who contributed to and supported the implementation of this research. First and foremost, the author would like to thank [Name of Supervisor] for providing valuable guidance and direction throughout the research process. The author would also like to thank the English teachers who participated in this research and shared their experiences and perspectives on formative assessment. Thanks, are also due to [Name of Institution] for providing support and facilities during the research process. The author would also like to thank his family and friends for their support and encouragement throughout the research process. Finally, the author would like to thank all parties who helped and supported the implementation of this research, both directly and indirectly. We hope this research will make a beneficial contribution to the development of English language education and formative assessment practices in Indonesia.

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