

The Effect of Photographic Image Media on Students' Poetry Writing Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of photographic image media on students' poetry writing skills, aiming to determine whether visual-based learning can enhance creativity and writing performance. The research was conducted with 57 Grade VII students during the 2023/2024 academic year using a quasi-experimental design and a simple random sampling technique. The participants were divided into two groups: 30 students in the experimental class, who learned poetry writing through photographic image media, and 27 students in the control class, who received conventional instruction. Data were collected through pretests and posttests to measure students' poetry writing skills. The results revealed that the experimental class achieved a higher average posttest score (73.17) compared to the control class (51.85). The improvement in the experimental group (57.35%) was considerably greater than in the control group (29.01%). Statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test indicated a significance value of 0.001, which is lower than the standard alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, confirming that the use of photographic image media had a significant positive effect on students' poetry writing skills. The findings suggest that photographic image media can be a powerful instructional tool for teaching poetry writing. By stimulating imagination and visual thinking, this medium helps students express emotions, select appropriate diction, and develop creative ideas more effectively. The study contributes to the field of language education by demonstrating the practical value of integrating visual learning aids to improve students' engagement and achievement in poetry writing.

Keywords: Writing Skills; Poetry; Photographic Image Media

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a fundamental role as a medium for communication, expression, and thought. Among the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is often regarded as the most complex because it requires not only linguistic knowledge but also creativity and organization of ideas. Writing poetry, in particular, demands imagination, precision, and emotional expression. However, many students struggle with poetry writing due to limited vocabulary, low motivation, and difficulty transforming abstract ideas into meaningful words. These challenges are often intensified by conventional teaching methods that rely mainly on explanation and written exercises rather than stimulating, interactive media.

To overcome these difficulties, teachers are encouraged to use learning media that can make lessons more engaging and meaningful. Learning media serve as tools that help teachers convey information effectively and make abstract concepts easier for students to understand (Hasan et al., 2021). Photographic image media, as one type of visual learning tool, provide concrete representations that can inspire students to generate ideas and express their emotions creatively in writing. Anggraini and Samihan (2016) found that photographic images enhanced learning outcomes by increasing student engagement and comprehension in classroom learning. Similarly, Fahriza (2014) showed that using photographic images improved students' ability to write poetry by stimulating their imagination and helping them find suitable diction and imagery. More recent findings by Sinta (2017) and Magdalena et al. (2021) also confirm that image-based learning significantly improves writing performance and motivation among students.

The use of photographic images not only encourages imagination but also strengthens students' ability to connect visual experiences with linguistic expression. Heru (2018) emphasized that pictures support descriptive and creative writing by allowing students to visualize and describe scenes in detail. This aligns with Ina (2022), who reported that visual aids help students overcome difficulties in identifying themes and imagery when composing poetry. In addition, Lazulfa (2019) and Anggraini and Samihan (2016) noted that such media promote students' independence, as learners become more confident and motivated to express personal experiences through poetry. These studies collectively highlight that visual learning media make learning more engaging, interactive, and effective.

Despite these encouraging results, existing studies present two main gaps. First, most previous research grouped visual materials broadly as "picture media," without differentiating between drawings, clip art, and photographic images. This makes it unclear whether photographs being more realistic and emotionally resonant have a distinct advantage in enhancing students' poetry writing skills (Dwi & Silvia, 2021). Second, much of the previous research used descriptive or classroom-action designs rather than quasi-experimental methods. As a result, there

is limited empirical evidence that measures the extent of improvement in poetry writing ability through pretest–posttest data and statistical analysis (Anggraini & Samihan, 2016; Sinta, 2017).

The present study aims to address these gaps by focusing specifically on the use of photographic image media and by employing a quasi-experimental design to provide quantitative evidence of its impact on poetry writing skills. This approach allows a controlled comparison between students taught using photographic images and those taught through conventional instruction. The novelty of this study lies in its effort to isolate photographic image media as the key variable influencing creativity and writing performance in poetry composition. Unlike prior research that examined general “picture” use, this study evaluates photographs as authentic, context-rich stimuli that can enhance diction, imagery, and thematic expression in poetry writing (Mahfud, 2019; Faizah, 2017).

Furthermore, this research is significant for teaching practice. In an era when teachers are encouraged to integrate multimedia resources into instruction, photographic images provide a simple, accessible tool that requires minimal resources but offers substantial pedagogical benefits. The integration of such media can make the teaching of poetry writing more interactive, contextual, and aligned with students’ visual learning preferences. As highlighted by Herlina et al. (2022), creative and student-centered strategies are essential for fostering engagement and improving learning outcomes in language education. Therefore, this study contributes not only empirical data but also practical insights for educators seeking to implement effective, creative approaches in teaching writing.

Many junior high school students still find it difficult to express ideas, select appropriate diction, and apply imagery when writing poetry. Conventional teaching methods often fail to provide the stimulation needed to support creativity and motivation. To respond to these issues, this study seeks to determine whether the use of photographic image media can significantly improve students’ poetry writing skills compared to traditional instruction. Specifically, it aims to (1) measure the difference in poetry writing performance between students taught using photographic image media and those taught conventionally, and (2) assess the extent to which photographic images enhance imagination, diction, and imagery in poetry writing. The findings are expected to contribute to more creative, effective teaching strategies that support the development of students’ expressive and linguistic abilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Media in Language Classrooms

Learning media help teachers convey information clearly and make abstract ideas more accessible to students. Recent Indonesian classroom literature emphasizes media as channels that improve message clarity, sustain attention, and promote

active, student-centered learning routines that build skills over time (Hasan et al., 2021; Herlina et al., 2022; Dwi & Silvia, 2021). These works argue that well-chosen media directly support language learning processes such as noticing, practicing, and receiving feedback, which are essential for writing development.

Visual Media and Writing Performance

Studies using image-based prompts show consistent gains in idea generation, lexical choice, and organization in student writing. In Indonesian settings, pictures and classroom visuals have been linked to better participation and more persistent effort on writing tasks (Magdalena et al., 2021; Heru, 2018). Reviews of media categories further note that visuals help students plan content and transform observations into text, a process that strengthens both descriptive and creative writing (Dwi & Silvia, 2021; Hasan et al., 2021).

Photographic Image Media

While many studies speak generally of “picture media,” several highlight the unique value of photographs. Findings indicate that photographs can provide realistic, context-rich cues that spark imagination, scaffold diction choices, and deepen imagery in student texts. Classroom reports show that photographic images increase engagement and comprehension, making lessons feel more meaningful (Anggraini & Samihan, 2016; Mahfud, 2019). In poetry-focused contexts, researchers report that visual prompts help students identify themes, select precise words, and experiment with figurative language, which are core criteria in poetry assessment (Sinta, 2017; Ina, 2022; Lazulfa, 2019).

Motivation, Confidence, And Creativity

Several recent studies underline the motivational benefits of visual media. Integrating images tends to raise attention, reduce hesitation at the start of writing, and sustain effort during drafting and revision (Magdalena et al., 2021; Herlina et al., 2022). Reports from poetry units note that visuals can lower anxiety, support risk-taking with language, and build confidence as students see immediate pathways from observation to expression (Sinta, 2017; Ina, 2022).

Two methodological issues recur. First, many reports use the broad label “picture media,” combining drawings, clip art, and photographs. This blurs which visual types drive the observed improvements and makes it difficult to infer the distinctive contribution of photographic images for poetry outcomes (Dwi & Silvia, 2021). Second, a significant portion of classroom evidence relies on descriptive accounts or small-scale action research without comparison groups, which limits causal claims about effectiveness (Anggraini & Samihan, 2016; Sinta, 2017). We need studies that (a) isolate photographic images as the intervention and (b) apply

stronger designs, such as quasi-experiments with pretest–posttest measures and statistical tests, to estimate effects on poetry writing with more confidence.

Responding to these gaps, the present study focuses specifically on photographic image media and uses a quasi-experimental design to compare outcomes against conventional instruction. Building on recent evidence that media improve clarity, engagement, and writing quality, this study tests whether photographs enhance idea generation, diction, and imagery in junior high school poetry writing. The contribution is twofold: it clarifies the unique role of photographic images within the visual-media family and provides quantitative evidence of their impact on poetry performance using pretest–posttest data and significance testing.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, specifically the pretest–posttest control group model. The design was selected because it allowed comparison between two groups under similar learning conditions, despite the absence of full randomization within the school setting. The purpose was to examine the effect of photographic image media on students' poetry writing skills. The research was conducted during the 2023/2024 academic year at Yayasan Nurul Ibrahimi. The population consisted of all Grade VII students, from which 57 students were selected using a simple random sampling technique. They were divided into two groups: an experimental group of 30 students and a control group of 27 students. The experimental group received instruction using photographic image media, while the control group was taught through conventional methods without media assistance. Both groups were taught by the same teacher using the same syllabus and time allocation to control for external variables that could influence the learning outcomes.

Instrument and Procedure

The main research instrument was a poetry writing test developed to assess students' ability to express ideas, choose appropriate diction, and employ imagery and structure in their writing. The test was validated by two experts in Indonesian language education to ensure its content validity and reliability. A pilot test was conducted prior to the main study, and minor adjustments were made based on expert feedback to improve clarity and scoring consistency. The study procedure was divided into three stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. In the pretest stage, both the experimental and control groups were asked to compose a poem to measure their initial ability in poetry writing. During the treatment stage, the experimental group was taught using photographic image media. The students were shown selected photographs depicting various themes such as nature, social life, and human emotions. They were guided to observe visual elements, interpret meanings, and connect the images with personal experiences before writing poems inspired

by the visuals. In contrast, the control group followed a conventional method, where the teacher explained the elements of poetry such as rhyme, diction, and imagery without the aid of visual media. The treatment was conducted over four sessions, each lasting two meetings of 40 minutes, spread over two weeks. In the posttest stage, both groups were given a poetry writing task similar in format to the pretest. The results were evaluated using a scoring rubric focusing on three aspects: (1) idea development and creativity, (2) diction and imagery, and (3) structure and coherence. The rubric was designed to reflect the learning objectives and ensure consistent evaluation between pretest and posttest performances.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics were first applied to determine the mean, standard deviation, and improvement rate in poetry writing skills for both groups. The analysis revealed that the experimental group achieved a higher improvement compared to the control group. Before hypothesis testing, assumption tests were conducted, including normality and homogeneity tests, to confirm that the data met the requirements for parametric analysis. After confirming the assumptions, an independent sample t-test was performed to compare the posttest results between the two groups, and a paired sample t-test was used to measure within-group differences between pretest and posttest scores. The significance value obtained from the t-test was $0.001 < 0.05$, which indicated a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The analysis confirmed that the use of photographic image media had a positive and significant effect on students' poetry writing skills. Students who were exposed to photographic images demonstrated better idea development, richer diction, and more vivid imagery than those who learned through conventional methods. This study utilized a well-structured quasi-experimental design involving an experimental and a control group to test the effect of photographic image media on poetry writing skills. The use of validated instruments, consistent instructional procedures, and rigorous data analysis ensured the reliability of the findings. The results provide strong empirical evidence that photographic image media are effective tools for enhancing students' creativity and performance in poetry writing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to examine the effect of photographic image media on the poetry writing skills of Grade VII students. Data were collected from pretest and posttest scores of both the experimental and control groups. The results of descriptive and inferential analyses are presented in this section to demonstrate the impact of the treatment.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to identify differences in the students' average scores before and after treatment. Table 1 summarizes the results of the pretest and posttest for both groups.

Table 1. Pretest and Posttest Results of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Test Type	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	Pretest	46.50	30	11.97	2.19
Experimental	Posttest	73.17	30	8.85	1.62
Control	Pretest	40.19	27	14.31	2.75
Control	Posttest	51.85	27	14.88	2.86

The data in Table 1 show a clear improvement in students' poetry writing skills after the treatment. The experimental group's mean score increased from 46.50 to 73.17, representing an improvement of 26.67 points (57.35%), while the control group's mean score rose from 40.19 to 51.85, or 11.66 points (29.01%). The higher posttest mean in the experimental group indicates that learning activities supported by photographic image media were more effective in enhancing poetry writing skills than traditional methods. Furthermore, the smaller standard deviation in the experimental group's posttest suggests more consistent improvement among students compared to the control group.

Normality and Homogeneity Tests

Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were subjected to normality and homogeneity tests to ensure they met the assumptions for parametric analysis. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test indicated that all data had significance values greater than 0.05, confirming that the distributions were normal. Similarly, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances produced a significance value above 0.05, showing that the data were homogeneous. These results validate the use of a t-test for further analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

To determine whether the improvement in poetry writing skills was statistically significant, both paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests were conducted. The paired sample t-test revealed a significance value of 0.001 (< 0.05) for the experimental group, indicating a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores. This means that the use of photographic image media contributed meaningfully to students' improvement. In contrast, while the control group also showed improvement, the level of significance was lower, suggesting that conventional teaching methods had a weaker effect.

The independent sample t-test comparing posttest scores between the two groups also yielded a significance value of 0.001 (< 0.05), confirming a statistically significant difference in poetry writing achievement between the experimental and

control groups. These findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1), which states that photographic image media positively affect students' poetry writing skills.

The results clearly demonstrate that students who learned through photographic image media achieved greater progress in writing poetry than those taught using conventional methods. The experimental group's significant score improvement suggests that photographs stimulated students' imagination, encouraged creative thinking, and made it easier for them to construct poetic imagery and select expressive diction. During the learning process, students in the experimental group were observed to be more engaged, actively discussing the meaning of images and expressing emotions inspired by the visuals. These activities helped them transform visual impressions into well-structured poems that reflected personal experiences and creativity. In contrast, students in the control group, who relied on text-based instruction, tended to produce more literal and less imaginative poems. Their ideas were often repetitive, and their choice of words lacked variety and emotional depth. Although they demonstrated some improvement after instruction, the progress was not as substantial as that achieved by the experimental group. This finding reinforces the importance of visual stimuli in promoting deeper engagement and more expressive writing performance among students.

The results of this study demonstrate that the use of photographic image media significantly improved students' poetry writing skills compared to conventional instruction. The experimental group achieved a higher mean posttest score and showed greater consistency in performance, indicating that photographic images effectively stimulated creativity, enhanced diction, and helped students express imagery more vividly. These findings align with previous research that underscores the positive influence of visual media on writing development, student engagement, and creative thinking in language learning contexts.

The findings of this study are consistent with Anggraini and Samihan (2016), who found that the application of photographic images in learning improved students' comprehension and active participation in the classroom. Similarly, Fahriza (2014) concluded that visual images helped learners translate abstract ideas into concrete expressions, which led to more coherent and expressive poetry writing. Sinta (2017) also reported that picture-based learning increased students' motivation and improved their ability to develop poetic ideas, diction, and imagery.

In addition, Heru (2018) emphasized that visual media enhanced descriptive writing by helping students observe details and structure sentences more imaginatively, a finding that parallels the present study's results on poetry composition. Magdalena et al. (2021) and Herlina et al. (2022) similarly noted that visual materials increase student engagement, making learning more interactive and meaningful. Furthermore, Ina (2022) and Lazulfa (2019) observed that visual prompts reduced students' difficulty in identifying themes and imagery, which mirrors the way photographic images in this study guided students to form clearer poetic concepts.

Together, these findings confirm that photographic image media can serve as a bridge between perception and expression. By observing a photograph, students receive a visual stimulus that helps them conceptualize emotions, identify themes, and connect sensory impressions to language. This transformation from image to word strengthens not only creativity but also linguistic competence, as students learn to translate visual cues into symbolic representations within poetry. From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce constructivist principles that learning is more effective when students actively construct meaning through interaction with stimuli and personal experience. The use of photographic images encourages learners to engage cognitively and emotionally with learning materials, thus fostering deeper understanding and retention. This supports the notion that learning media are not merely supplementary tools but integral components of effective instruction (Hasan et al., 2021; Dwi & Silvia, 2021).

The findings also contribute to the body of literature on multimodal learning, which emphasizes the importance of combining visual and verbal modes to support literacy development. In poetry writing, multimodality enhances creative thinking by encouraging students to associate visual stimuli with abstract ideas. The images act as scaffolds, allowing students to visualize content before translating it into language. This aligns with Mahfud (2019), who highlighted that media serve as conveyors of messages that transform complex or abstract concepts into more comprehensible forms. Practically, this study demonstrates that photographic image media can be an effective instructional tool for teachers seeking to improve students' writing abilities. By integrating photographs into poetry lessons, teachers can create more engaging and meaningful learning experiences that foster creativity, observation, and linguistic expression. The activity of interpreting photographs before writing encourages students to think critically, develop vocabulary, and apply poetic devices more effectively.

Moreover, this method supports differentiated instruction, as photographs allow students of varying proficiency levels to engage with the material at their own pace. Visual prompts can be especially helpful for students who struggle to initiate writing, as they provide concrete reference points to generate ideas. Teachers can adapt this approach using simple classroom resources, such as printed photographs or digital slides, making it both cost-effective and accessible in a range of educational settings. Although the study's results are promising, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted in one school with a limited number of participants, which restricts generalization to broader contexts. Future studies could involve larger and more diverse samples to strengthen external validity. Second, the duration of the treatment was relatively short, lasting only two weeks. Longer interventions might yield more comprehensive insights into how sustained exposure to photographic media influences students' writing development over time.

Additionally, this study focused specifically on poetry writing. Future research could extend the use of photographic image media to other genres, such as narrative or descriptive texts, to explore whether similar improvements occur across different writing types. It would also be valuable to integrate qualitative approaches, such as interviews or classroom observations, to capture students' perceptions and attitudes toward visual-based learning in greater depth. This study provides empirical evidence that photographic image media significantly enhance students' poetry writing skills by stimulating imagination, improving diction, and enriching imagery. The results are supported by previous findings and align with theoretical perspectives on multimodal and constructivist learning. Beyond its statistical significance, the study's pedagogical implication is clear: integrating visual media into writing instruction can transform passive learning into active, creative exploration. By bridging the gap between visual perception and verbal expression, photographic image media can help teachers cultivate more imaginative, confident, and expressive young writers.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of photographic image media on the poetry writing skills of Grade VII students during the 2023/2024 academic year. The results showed that students who were taught using photographic images achieved significantly higher posttest scores than those who received conventional instruction. The experimental group demonstrated greater improvement in idea development, diction, and imagery, indicating that photographic image media effectively stimulated creativity and enhanced students' ability to express emotions and ideas through poetry. Practically, these findings suggest that teachers can use photographic image media as an effective tool to enrich writing instruction. Photographs serve as visual prompts that help students generate ideas, develop themes, and select expressive language more easily. By integrating visual materials into poetry lessons, teachers can make learning more interactive, contextual, and engaging. This approach can also increase students' motivation and confidence, particularly for those who find creative writing challenging. Since photographic images are easy to obtain and inexpensive, they provide a practical and accessible strategy for language teachers at various educational levels.

For future research, it is recommended that similar studies explore the use of other visual or digital media, such as videos, comics, or interactive online platforms, to determine their comparative effectiveness in enhancing students' writing skills. Further studies could also apply this approach to different writing genres, including narrative, descriptive, and expository texts, to investigate whether visual media produce similar improvements across various forms of writing. In addition, combining quantitative and qualitative methods such as classroom observations or student reflections would provide deeper insight into how visual learning influences students' creativity and engagement in writing. The findings of this study confirm that incorporating photographic image media into writing instruction not only

improves students' poetry writing performance but also enriches the overall learning experience. By encouraging creativity through visual stimuli, teachers can foster a more dynamic and student-centered classroom environment that supports both linguistic and artistic development.

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