



The Effectiveness of Picture Media in Improving Narrative Writing Skills of Grade V Students at Primary School

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of picture media in improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City. A pre-experimental research design with a one-group pretest-posttest design was adopted. The research population comprised all Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City, with a purposive sample of 23 students. Data were collected through narrative essay instruments administered as a pretest and posttest, supplemented by observation and documentation. Instrument validity was assessed by expert validators, and reliability was calculated using the Kuder-Richardson 21 (KR-21) formula. Descriptive analysis yielded a mean pretest score of 57.17 and a mean posttest score of 77.21, representing an improvement of 20.04 points (22.80%). Normality testing via SPSS confirmed that both data sets were normally distributed (pretest Sig. = 0.436 > 0.05; posttest Sig. = 0.201 > 0.05). Hypothesis testing through the paired sample t-test produced a t-count of 6.026 against a t-table of 1.68 (df = 22; α = 0.05), indicating that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. It is concluded that the use of picture media is effective in significantly improving the narrative writing

skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language is a compulsory subject in the Indonesian primary school curriculum that encompasses four key skill domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing represents one of the most complex and productive skills, requiring students not only to understand language structures but also to organize ideas, select vocabulary, and communicate meaning in a coherent and meaningful form. Ki Hajar Dewantara, the Father of Indonesian National Education, articulated that education must continuously nurture and develop the full capacities inherent in each child, enabling them to achieve the highest possible level of individual and social wellbeing (Marisyah et al., 2019). In line with this vision, writing instruction in Indonesian Language education is expected to cultivate students' ability to compose narratives on a variety of topics with attention to correct spelling, structure, and expressive clarity.

Narrative writing, specifically, requires students to construct accounts of events or experiences in a way that allows readers to visualize and engage with the described situations. This form of writing demands a high level of cognitive engagement, including the ability to sequence events logically, sustain a consistent perspective, and employ descriptive and precise language (Anggraeni et al., 2024). Such skills are consistent with the broader objectives of Indonesian language instruction, which include communicating effectively and efficiently in both oral and written forms; understanding and applying the language creatively for a range of purposes; and using language to develop intellectual capacity and emotional maturity (Djamarah & Zain, 2015; Hamalik, 2016).

Despite the recognized importance of narrative writing, classroom observations and teacher interviews conducted at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City, prior to this study revealed significant challenges in its instruction. Teachers reported that they frequently assigned narrative writing tasks without providing adequate scaffolding or concrete examples of well-structured narratives. Students were typically expected to write without sufficient exposure to visual or contextual stimuli to support idea generation. As a result, the majority of students experienced difficulty translating their thoughts and experiences into written form. Instruction tended to follow conventional, teacher-centered patterns that limited student engagement and creative expression. This situation aligns with findings from prior research indicating that the absence of varied and stimulating learning media is a primary contributor to low writing achievement in primary schools (Nurrita, 2018; Wulandari, 2021).

Picture media offers a concrete and accessible instructional tool for narrative writing. By providing visual stimuli, picture media supports students in generating ideas, organizing narrative sequences, and developing descriptive language. Research has consistently demonstrated that visual learning media stimulates students' imagination and curiosity, facilitates active engagement with the learning process, and supports the development of independent thinking (Valentina & Wulandari, 2022; Anggraeni et al., 2024). Studies employing picture media in writing instruction have reported significant improvements in students' writing outcomes, including improved story organization, expanded vocabulary use, and greater student motivation (Mbasi et al., 2023; Agustiwati et al., 2024). Furthermore, at the international level, visual aids have been shown to support writing skill development by enhancing students' capacity to formulate and organize ideas (Pateşan et al., 2018; Podobnik, 2017).

This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of picture media in improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City. The central research question is, "Is the use of picture

media effective in significantly improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City?

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research design, specifically the one-group pretest-posttest design. In this design, a single group of students was assessed both before and after the implementation of the picture media treatment, without a separate control group (Sugiyono, 2018). This design allows for a direct empirical comparison of students' narrative writing scores before and after the intervention. The research was conducted at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City, between 6 and 13 December 2023.

Research Participants

The research population comprised all Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City, totalling 150 students. Purposive sampling was applied, resulting in a sample of 23 students who were selected based on their availability and the contextual conditions of the school at the time of data collection (Arikunto, 2017). The selected 23 students constituted the single experimental group for the one-group pretest-posttest design.

Instruments and Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through four techniques: (1) classroom observation of student learning activities; (2) a pretest comprising a narrative essay assignment administered before the treatment; (3) a posttest using the same narrative essay instrument administered after the implementation of picture media; and (4) documentation in the form of photographs and written test results. The narrative essay instrument required students to compose a structured narrative text based on visual stimuli provided through the picture media. Instrument validity was verified through expert judgment by a media specialist and a content specialist. Reliability was calculated using the Kuder-Richardson 21 (KR-21) formula to confirm the internal consistency of the measurement instrument (Janna & Herianto, 2021).

Treatment: Picture Media

The picture media used in this study consisted of a series of contextually relevant images related to everyday student experiences, selected to stimulate narrative idea generation and support sequential story organization. The images were presented in printed format and distributed to students during the instructional sessions. Students were guided to observe, interpret, and use the images as the basis for composing their narrative essays. This approach is grounded in the principle that visual stimuli activate prior knowledge, support associative thinking, and facilitate more vivid and organized written expression (Hamalik, 2016; Susanto, 2015).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the pretest and posttest were analyzed in three stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the mean, standard deviation, and variance of both pretest and posttest scores. Second, a normality test was performed using SPSS to verify that the data distributions satisfied the assumptions required for parametric testing. Third, hypothesis testing was conducted using the paired sample t-test (t-count vs. t-table at $\alpha = 0.05$) to determine the statistical significance of the difference between pretest and posttest scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Prior to data collection, the research instruments were validated by expert judges to ensure their suitability and content validity. The pretest and posttest were then administered to the 23 Grade V students. Individual pretest and posttest scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Individual Pretest and Posttest Scores on Narrative Writing

No.	Student Code	Pretest Score	Posttest Score
1	C1	65	75
2	C2	70	85
3	C3	55	80
4	C4	50	75
5	C5	55	65
6	C6	80	80

7	C7	70	80
8	C8	50	70
9	C9	75	70
10	C10	80	80
11	C11	45	85
12	C12	60	85
13	C13	60	80
14	C14	40	65
15	C15	50	60
16	C16	45	60
17	C17	60	65
18	C18	35	80
19	C19	70	90
20	C20	70	70
21	C21	20	70
22	C22	70	90
23	C23	40	70

Descriptive statistics derived from the pretest and posttest results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Statistics	Pretest	Posttest
Minimum Score	20	60
Maximum Score	80	90
Mean	57.17	77.21
Variance (S ²)	225.708	77.127
Standard Deviation (SD)	15.023	8.782

As shown in Table 2, the minimum pretest score was 20 and the maximum was 80, with a mean of 57.17 and a standard deviation of 15.023. Following the implementation of picture media instruction, the minimum posttest score improved to 60 and the maximum reached 90, with a mean of 77.21 and a standard deviation of 8.782. The mean improvement of 20.04 points (22.80%) reflects a substantial positive effect of the picture media treatment on students' narrative writing performance. The distribution of students' narrative writing scores by performance category is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution and Percentage of Narrative Writing Score Categories

Score Range	Category	Pretest		Posttest		Max N
		f	%	f	%	
0-39	Very Low	2	8.69	0	0.00	23
40-54	Low	8	34.78	2	8.69	23
55-74	Moderate	11	47.83	12	52.17	23
75-89	High	2	8.69	6	26.09	23
90-100	Very High	0	0.00	3	13.04	23

Total	23	100.00	23	100.00	23
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Table 3 demonstrates a clear upward shift in the distribution of students' writing performance following the picture media treatment. On the pretest, 2 students (8.69%) scored in the Very Low category, 8 students (34.78%) in the Low category, 11 students (47.83%) in the Moderate category, 2 students (8.69%) in the High category, and no student reached the Very High category. On the posttest, no student remained in the Very Low category; 2 students (8.69%) were in the Low category, 12 students (52.17%) were in the Moderate category, 6 students (26.09%) were in the High category, and 3 students (13.04%) reached the Very High category.

Normality Test

Prior to hypothesis testing, the normality of the pretest and posttest data distributions was verified using the Shapiro-Wilk test via SPSS. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Normality Test Results (Shapiro-Wilk)

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk			Conclusion
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.	
Pretest	0.146	23	.200*	0.959	23	0.436	Normal
Posttest	0.181	23	.049	0.942	23	0.201	Normal

* This is a lower bound of the true significance. Lilliefors' significance correction applied.

The Shapiro-Wilk significance values were 0.436 for the pretest and 0.201 for the posttest, both exceeding the threshold of 0.05. These results confirm that both data sets are normally distributed, satisfying the prerequisite for parametric hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

The research hypotheses were: H_0 : picture media is not effective in improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City; H_1 : picture media is effective in improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City. The results of the paired sample t-test are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results (Paired Sample t-Test)

Comparison	Mean Diff.	df	t_{hitung}	t_{tabel}	Decision
Pretest - Posttest	+20.04	22	6.026	1.68 ($\alpha=0.05$)	H_0 rejected; H_1 accepted

The t-count of 6.026 substantially exceeds the t-table value of 1.68 at $\alpha = 0.05$ with $df = 22$ ($n - 1 = 23 - 1 = 22$). H_0 is therefore rejected and H_1 is accepted. It is concluded that the use of picture media is statistically effective in significantly improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that picture media constitutes an effective instructional tool for improving narrative writing skills at the primary school level. The improvement in mean score from 57.17 (pretest) to 77.21 (posttest), representing a gain of 20.04 points, is both statistically significant and pedagogically meaningful. The shift in the distribution of writing performance categories, particularly the elimination of the Very Low category and the emergence of students in the Very High category, underscores the transformative potential of visual stimuli in narrative writing instruction.

During the instructional process, students demonstrated markedly higher levels of enthusiasm and participation compared to conventional, teacher-centered approaches. Students engaged actively in examining the images, collaborating with peers to discuss narrative ideas, and independently composing their written texts. This observation aligns with the assertion of Hamalik (2016) that effective learning media stimulates students' interest, provides authentic contextual references, and promotes active engagement. It is also consistent with findings by Wulandari (2021), who documented that learning media facilitate productive interaction between students and the subject matter, reducing cognitive barriers to written expression.

The results of this study are congruent with findings from comparable research. Mbasi et al. (2023) demonstrated that serial picture media was effective in improving both writing and reading skills in the Indonesian language for Grade II students at the elementary level. Agustawati et al. (2024)

similarly found that the use of pictures significantly improved eighth-grade students' writing skills, with students showing improvements in idea formulation, text organization, and grammatical accuracy. At the international level, Pateşan et al. (2018) documented the efficacy of visual aids in language education broadly, while Anggraeni et al. (2024) identified that teachers' solutions to students' difficulties in narrative writing at the elementary school level consistently involved the integration of image-based prompts to stimulate idea generation and narrative sequencing.

The theoretical underpinning for these findings draws on established cognitive and constructivist learning principles. Susanto (2015) asserts that concrete and visual learning media support students' cognitive engagement by providing external representations that reduce cognitive load and enable students to focus on higher-order processes such as narrative construction and expressive writing. Djamarah and Zain (2015) similarly argue that innovative learning strategies and media are indispensable for creating active, effective, and enjoyable learning environments. The use of picture media in the present study operationalizes these principles by providing students with contextually rich visual stimuli that serve as scaffolding for narrative development, idea organization, and descriptive language production.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of picture media is effective in significantly improving the narrative writing skills of Grade V students at SD Inpres 109 Perumnas, Sorong City. The paired sample t-test yielded a t-count of 6.026 against a t-table of 1.68 at $\alpha = 0.05$ with $df = 22$, leading to the rejection of H_0 and the acceptance of H_1 . The mean narrative writing score improved from 57.17 on the pretest to 77.21 on the posttest, a statistically significant gain of 20.04 points (22.80%). The distribution of student performance categories shifted markedly, with the proportion of students in the Moderate, High, and Very High categories increasing substantially after the treatment. Students demonstrated heightened engagement, motivation, and active participation

during the picture media-based instructional sessions. It is recommended that primary school teachers in Sorong City and comparable settings integrate picture media systematically into Indonesian language writing instruction to strengthen students' narrative writing competence. Future research should investigate the effect of picture media in combination with other instructional strategies, such as cooperative learning or digital storytelling, and across different text types and grade levels.

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Declarations

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