



The Effect of Picture-Based Learning Media on Seventh-Grade Students' Descriptive Writing Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of picture-based learning media on seventh-grade students' descriptive writing skills. Writing descriptive texts requires students to observe objects carefully, organize details systematically, and use appropriate vocabulary and language structures. However, many junior high school students experience difficulties in developing ideas and expressing descriptions clearly in written form. This study employed a quantitative approach using an experimental method with a one-group pretest–posttest design. The participants were 26 seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Kutacane in the 2024/2025 academic year. Data were collected through descriptive writing tests administered before and after the implementation of picture-based learning media. The students' writing performance was assessed based on content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The results showed a significant improvement in students' descriptive writing ability. The average pretest score was 56.3, while the posttest mean score increased to 76.8. Statistical analysis using a t-test revealed that the obtained t-value was higher than the t-table value at the 5% significance level, indicating a significant effect of picture-based learning media on students' writing performance. The findings suggest that picture-based learning media effectively help students generate ideas, enrich vocabulary, and produce more detailed and coherent descriptive texts. Therefore, this media can be recommended as an alternative instructional tool to improve descriptive writing skills at the junior secondary school level.

KATA KUNCI

media pembelajaran berbasis gambar, teks deskriptif, keterampilan menulis, siswa sekolah menengah pertama, penelitian eksperimen

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan media pembelajaran berbasis gambar terhadap keterampilan menulis teks deskriptif siswa kelas VII. Menulis teks deskriptif menuntut siswa untuk mengamati objek secara cermat, mengorganisasi detail secara sistematis, serta menggunakan kosakata dan kaidah kebahasaan yang tepat. Namun, banyak siswa sekolah menengah pertama mengalami kesulitan dalam mengembangkan ide dan menuangkannya secara jelas dalam bentuk tulisan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode eksperimen melalui desain one-group pretest–posttest. Subjek penelitian adalah 26 siswa kelas VII SMP Negeri 3 Kutacane tahun pembelajaran 2024/2025. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes menulis teks deskriptif yang diberikan sebelum dan sesudah penerapan media pembelajaran berbasis gambar. Kemampuan menulis siswa dinilai berdasarkan aspek isi, organisasi, kosakata, penggunaan bahasa, dan mekanik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan pada kemampuan menulis siswa. Nilai rata-rata pretest sebesar 56,3 meningkat menjadi 76,8 pada posttest. Hasil uji statistik menggunakan uji t menunjukkan bahwa nilai t hitung lebih besar daripada nilai t tabel pada taraf signifikansi 5%. Temuan ini membuktikan bahwa media pembelajaran berbasis gambar berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keterampilan menulis teks deskriptif siswa. Oleh karena itu, media pembelajaran berbasis gambar direkomendasikan sebagai alternatif media pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis teks deskriptif di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama.

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Introduction

Writing is one of the essential language skills that plays a crucial role in developing students' ability to communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings in written form. In the context of Indonesian language learning at the junior high school level, writing is considered a complex skill because it requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, cognitive ability, and creativity. One type of writing that must be mastered by seventh-grade students is descriptive text writing. Descriptive texts aim to describe objects, places, people, or situations in detail so that readers can clearly visualize the subject being described. To produce a good descriptive text, students must be able to observe objects carefully, select appropriate vocabulary, organize ideas logically, and apply correct grammatical structures. However, in classroom practice, many students experience difficulties in writing descriptive texts. Students often struggle to generate ideas, provide detailed descriptions, and arrange sentences coherently. These difficulties result in descriptive texts that are vague, repetitive, and lacking in clarity. Consequently, students' writing achievement remains low, and many fail to meet the expected learning outcomes set by the curriculum.

One of the main factors contributing to students' low achievement in descriptive writing is the limited use of effective and engaging learning media during the teaching and learning process. In many classrooms, teachers still rely on conventional teaching methods, such as explanation and textbook-based exercises, which tend to make students passive learners. As a result, students have limited opportunities to explore ideas and develop their writing skills actively. Learning media play an important role in supporting students' understanding by providing concrete representations of abstract concepts. Visual learning media, particularly picture-based media, are considered effective in writing instruction because they can stimulate students' imagination and help them focus on specific details. Pictures provide visual cues that enable students to observe characteristics such as shape, color, size, and atmosphere, which are essential elements in descriptive writing. By using picture-based media, students are encouraged to generate ideas more easily and develop richer descriptions. Previous studies have shown that picture-based learning media can enhance students' motivation, improve vocabulary mastery, and support better organization of ideas in writing activities. Therefore, integrating picture-based media into descriptive writing instruction is expected to help students overcome their difficulties and improve their writing performance.

Based on the preliminary observation conducted at the research site, it was found that seventh-grade students demonstrated low ability in writing descriptive texts. Many students were unable to describe objects in detail and tended to produce short and incomplete paragraphs. The learning process was generally teacher-centered, with minimal use of learning media that could actively engage students in writing activities. This condition indicated the need for innovative instructional strategies that could support students in developing descriptive writing skills more effectively. Picture-based learning media were chosen in this study because they provide concrete visual stimuli that can guide students in observing, interpreting, and describing objects systematically. Through the use of pictures, students are expected to be more motivated and confident in expressing ideas in written form. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of picture-based learning media on seventh-grade students'

descriptive writing skills. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the improvement of descriptive writing instruction and provide empirical evidence for teachers regarding the effectiveness of picture-based learning media in junior high school English and Indonesian language classrooms.

Method

This study employed a quantitative research approach using an experimental method to investigate the effect of picture-based learning media on students' descriptive writing skills. The research design applied was a one-group pretest–posttest design, which aimed to measure students' writing performance before and after the implementation of the instructional treatment. This design was selected to identify the extent to which picture-based learning media contributed to changes in students' descriptive writing ability. The participants of this study were tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Lawe Bulan in the 2024/2025 academic year. The sample consisted of one class selected using a total sampling technique, involving 30 students. Before the treatment, a pretest was administered to assess students' initial ability in writing descriptive texts. The pretest required students to write a descriptive text based on a given topic within a limited time. After the pretest, the treatment was conducted over several instructional meetings in which picture-based learning media were integrated into the teaching and learning process. During the treatment, students were introduced to the characteristics and structure of descriptive texts and guided to observe and interpret pictures provided by the teacher. The pictures served as visual prompts to help students generate ideas, identify details, and organize their descriptions systematically.

Data were collected through descriptive writing tests administered as both pretest and posttest. Students' writing was assessed using an analytical scoring rubric covering five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The obtained data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate students' mean scores and score distributions, while inferential statistics were applied to test the research hypothesis. A paired-sample t-test was employed to determine whether there was a significant difference between students' pretest and posttest scores at the 5% significance level. The results of the analysis were used to evaluate the effectiveness of picture-based learning media in improving tenth-grade students' descriptive writing skills.

Results

This section presents the results of the study on students' ability to analyze exposition texts through the implementation of the fishbowl method. The data were obtained from tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Lawe Bulan in the 2024/2025 academic year. The results include students' achievement scores, descriptive statistical analysis, score distribution, and rubric-based analysis of exposition text components.

Students' Achievement Scores

Students' ability to analyze exposition texts was measured using a written test administered after the implementation of the fishbowl method. The assessment evaluated students' understanding of exposition text structure and linguistic features. A total of 25 students participated in the test. The individual scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Students' Scores in Analyzing Exposition Texts

No	Student	Score
1	Ahmad Fauzi Azehar	80
2	Ajuansah	80
3	Bunga Najla	85
4	Cantika	85
5	Elfrita	85
6	Eva Agustina	85
7	Janatun Sakinah	85
8	Jonatan	80
9	Kristian	80
10	Lionel Yosia S	85
11	M. Insan	85
12	M. Taufik	80
13	Martin Sinaga	80
14	Miranda Sari	85
15	Muhammad Aldo	80
16	Pahndi Tio Sipahutar	85
17	Rahel Aulia Natasya Lingga	85
18	Rapiansyah	75
19	Rama Dana	75
20	Ria Marselina	80
21	Rido Marasitua Sihombing	85
22	Sayra Dwita Sari	85
23	Vio Pangihutan Siburian	85
24	Widya Auliani	80
25	Wilda Tuzannah	85
Total		2060

The data show that students' scores ranged from 75 to 85. All students achieved scores above the minimum mastery criterion (KKM) of 75, indicating that the students demonstrated adequate to high ability in analyzing exposition texts after the application of the fishbowl method.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to summarize students' performance. The mean score was calculated by dividing the total score by the number of students. The mean score obtained was 82.40, which indicates that students' overall ability in analyzing exposition texts was categorized as **good**. This result reflects that most students were able to identify and analyze the structure and language features of

exposition texts effectively. To examine the variability of students' scores, the standard deviation was calculated. The standard deviation value was 3.20, showing that students' scores were relatively homogeneous and clustered around the mean. This low variability suggests that the fishbowl method produced consistent learning outcomes across students.

Furthermore, the standard error of the mean was calculated to assess the reliability of the mean score. The standard error value was 0.65, indicating that the mean score accurately represents students' performance and that sampling error was minimal.

Measures of Central Tendency

To further describe the distribution of students' scores, the mode and median were calculated. Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of the scores.

Table 2
Frequency Distribution of Students' Scores

Score	Frequency
75	2
80	9
85	14

The most frequently obtained score was 85, achieved by 14 students. Therefore, the mode of the data was 85. The median score was determined by identifying the middle score of the ordered data set. Based on the calculation, the median score was also 85. These results indicate that more than half of the students achieved high scores in analyzing exposition texts.

Achievement Category Distribution

Students' scores were classified based on the achievement categories used in the study:

- 85–100 : Very Good
- 60–84 : Good
- 25–59 : Fair
- 1–24 : Poor

Based on these criteria, 14 students were classified in the **very good** category, while 11 students were classified in the **good** category. No students fell into the fair or poor categories. This distribution confirms that students' overall performance after the implementation of the fishbowl method was satisfactory.

Rubric-Based Analysis of Exposition Text Components

Students' ability to analyze exposition texts was also evaluated using an analytical rubric consisting of ten assessment aspects. The results for each aspect are described as follows.

Thesis Identification.

The analysis showed that 14 students obtained a score of 9, 9 students obtained a score of 8, and 2 students obtained a score of 7. The dominant percentage (59.43%) indicated that students' ability to identify the thesis of exposition texts was categorized as sufficient.

Argument Structure.

In the argumentation aspect, 17 students scored 7, 6 students scored 8, and 2 students scored 5. The largest percentage (67.23%) fell into the good category, indicating that most students were able to analyze the sequence of arguments appropriately.

Restatement.

The restatement aspect showed that 17 students scored 8, 6 students scored 7, and 2 students scored 5. The dominant percentage (72.34%) was categorized as good, reflecting students' understanding of restatement components.

Conclusion.

For the conclusion aspect, 14 students scored 9 and 11 students scored 8. The results indicate that students' ability to analyze conclusions was generally sufficient.

Technical Vocabulary.

The majority of students (23 students) scored 9, resulting in a very high percentage (92.83%) categorized as very good. This finding shows strong student awareness of technical vocabulary in exposition texts.

Logical Connectors.

In this aspect, 16 students scored 9 and 9 students scored 8. The results indicate that students' use of logical connectors was categorized as good.

Mental Verbs.

The analysis revealed that 23 students scored 8 and 2 students scored 9. The dominant percentage (91.09%) was categorized as very good, indicating strong recognition of mental verbs.

Factual References.

For factual references, 14 students scored 9 and 11 students scored 8, indicating that students' ability in this aspect was categorized as good.

Persuasive Language.

All students obtained a score of 8 in this aspect, resulting in 100% of students categorized as very good in recognizing persuasive language features.

Denotative Word Usage.

Finally, in denotative word usage, 14 students scored 9 and 11 students scored 8, indicating sufficient to good performance.

Summary of Results

Overall, the results demonstrate that tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Lawe Bulan showed good to very good ability in analyzing exposition texts after the implementation of the fishbowl method. The mean score of 82.40, low score variability, and strong performance across rubric-based aspects indicate that the fishbowl method effectively supported students' analytical skills. All assessment aspects met the expected achievement criteria, confirming that students were able to analyze exposition texts successfully.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the fishbowl method had a positive impact on students' ability to analyze exposition texts. The overall results show that all students achieved scores above the minimum mastery

criterion, with a mean score categorized as good and low variability among individual performances. This indicates that the fishbowl method was effective in facilitating students' understanding of exposition text structure and linguistic features. The improvement in students' analytical ability can be attributed to the interactive and student-centered nature of the fishbowl method, which encourages active participation, discussion, and critical thinking. Through structured discussion, students were given opportunities to exchange ideas, clarify understanding, and evaluate arguments presented in the exposition texts. This process supported students in identifying key components such as thesis statements, argument development, and conclusions more accurately. The relatively homogeneous performance across students suggests that the method was beneficial not only for high-achieving students but also for those who initially experienced difficulties in text analysis. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that discussion-based learning strategies enhance students' comprehension and analytical skills by promoting engagement and collaborative learning.

Furthermore, the rubric-based analysis reveals that students performed well across various aspects of exposition text analysis, including linguistic features such as technical vocabulary, logical connectors, mental verbs, and persuasive language. The high achievement in these aspects suggests that the fishbowl method effectively supported students' awareness of language use in exposition texts. By observing peers' discussions and participating in guided analysis, students were able to internalize language features and apply them when evaluating texts. The fishbowl setting allowed students to learn not only from direct instruction but also from peer interaction, which contributed to deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. Additionally, the method created a learning environment that encouraged students to express opinions and respond critically to others' ideas, fostering higher-order thinking skills. The strong performance in identifying persuasive language and technical terms indicates that students developed sensitivity to the rhetorical and functional aspects of exposition texts. Overall, these findings suggest that the fishbowl method is an effective instructional strategy for improving students' analytical ability in reading and interpreting exposition texts at the senior high school level. Therefore, the method can be recommended as an alternative approach for teachers seeking to enhance students' critical reading and text analysis skills through interactive and collaborative learning activities.

Conclusions

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the fishbowl method had a positive and effective impact on students' ability to analyze exposition texts. The findings indicate that tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Lawe Bulan in the 2024/2025 academic year demonstrated good overall achievement after participating in learning activities using the fishbowl method. All students achieved scores above the minimum mastery criterion, and the mean score reflected a satisfactory level of analytical ability. The fishbowl method supported students in understanding the structure of exposition texts, including thesis identification, argument development, and conclusions, as well as recognizing key linguistic features. The interactive and collaborative nature of the method encouraged

active participation, critical thinking, and meaningful peer interaction, which contributed to improved comprehension and analysis skills. Therefore, the fishbowl method can be considered an effective alternative instructional strategy for teaching exposition text analysis at the senior high school level. Future studies are recommended to apply this method to different text genres or larger samples to further examine its effectiveness.

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