



The Effect of Posters on Students' Descriptive Writing Skills

Asmanadia ^{1*}, Sabrun Jamil ², Wikiaprian Pinim ³

*Department of English Language and Literature Education
STKIP Usman Safri Kutacane, Aceh Tenggara, Indonesia*

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of using posters on students' ability to write descriptive texts. The research was conducted at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara during the 2024/2025 academic year using a quantitative approach with an experimental method. A pretest–posttest design was applied to measure students' writing performance before and after the treatment. The population of this study consisted of 53 tenth-grade students from classes X A and X B, while the sample involved 28 students from class X A selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through writing tests administered as pretests and posttests. The students' writing scores were analyzed using a t-test to determine whether there was a significant improvement after the implementation of poster-based instruction. The results showed that the mean score of the pretest was 46.42 with a standard deviation of 5.74, while the posttest mean increased to 66.25 with a standard deviation of 5.55. The result of the t-test revealed that the t-observed value (13.26) was higher than the t-table value (2.052) at a significance level of 0.05. These findings indicate that the use of posters had a significant positive effect on students' descriptive writing ability. Therefore, poster media can be considered an effective instructional tool to enhance students' writing skills and support a more engaging English teaching and learning process.

KATA KUNCI

kemampuan
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pembelajaran
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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan poster terhadap kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa. Penelitian dilaksanakan di MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025 dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dan metode eksperimen. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah pretest–posttest untuk mengukur kemampuan menulis siswa sebelum dan sesudah penerapan media poster. Populasi penelitian terdiri atas 53 siswa kelas X A dan X B, sedangkan sampel penelitian berjumlah 28 siswa kelas X A yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui tes menulis yang diberikan dalam bentuk pretest dan posttest. Data hasil penelitian dianalisis menggunakan uji t untuk mengetahui tingkat signifikansi peningkatan kemampuan menulis siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata pretest sebesar 46,42 dengan standar deviasi 5,74, sedangkan nilai rata-rata posttest meningkat menjadi 66,25 dengan standar deviasi 5,55. Hasil uji t menunjukkan bahwa nilai t-hitung sebesar 13,26 lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai t-tabel sebesar 2,052 pada taraf signifikansi 0,05. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan poster berpengaruh signifikan terhadap peningkatan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa. Oleh karena itu, media poster direkomendasikan sebagai salah satu strategi pembelajaran yang efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis bahasa Inggris.

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* Corresponding author name:
E-mail address: asmanadia064@gmail.com

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals both intellectually and morally, enabling them to develop their potential and contribute meaningfully to society. In the era of rapid globalization and technological advancement, education is expected to equip students with the knowledge and skills required to face global challenges. One essential component of education is language learning, particularly English, which functions as an international language used in communication, science, technology, business, and education. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language, and its mastery is considered crucial for students to access global information and opportunities. English learning involves four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, writing is often regarded as the most complex because it requires not only vocabulary mastery but also grammatical accuracy, organization of ideas, and coherence. Writing enables learners to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a structured and meaningful way. In the school context, students are required to master various text types, including descriptive, narrative, recount, and argumentative texts. Descriptive text, in particular, aims to describe people, places, or objects based on their physical and characteristic features, and it requires students to use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and text organization. However, many students experience difficulties in writing descriptive texts, especially in using correct grammar, developing ideas, and selecting suitable vocabulary. These difficulties are often caused by limited exposure to English, low motivation, and the use of monotonous teaching methods that fail to engage students actively in the learning process.

Based on classroom observations conducted at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara, it was found that students' writing ability, especially in descriptive texts, was still relatively low. Many students had difficulty generating ideas, organizing paragraphs, and using appropriate grammar and vocabulary. One major factor contributing to this problem was the limited use of instructional media in the classroom. Teaching writing without adequate media made students feel bored, confused, and less motivated to participate actively in learning activities. As a result, students tended to depend heavily on the teacher and lacked confidence and independence in writing. Instructional media play a significant role in supporting the teaching and learning process, as they can stimulate students' interest, activate prior knowledge, and provide concrete references that help students understand abstract concepts. Visual media, such as posters, have been widely recognized as effective tools in language teaching because they combine images, colors, and text to attract students' attention and stimulate imagination. Posters can help students generate ideas, enrich vocabulary, and visualize the objects being described, which is particularly useful in teaching descriptive writing. Previous studies have indicated that the use of visual media can significantly improve students' writing performance by increasing motivation and engagement. In line with these findings, this study focuses on investigating the effect of using posters on students' ability to write descriptive texts at the tenth-grade level of MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara. By integrating poster media into writing instruction, students are expected to become more motivated, active, and confident in expressing their ideas in written form. Therefore, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of poster media in improving

students' descriptive writing skills and to offer pedagogical insights for English teachers in enhancing the quality of writing instruction in EFL classrooms.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using an experimental research design to examine the effect of using posters on students' ability to write descriptive texts. Experimental research was selected because it allows the researcher to identify causal relationships between instructional media and students' learning outcomes. Specifically, this study applied a one-group pretest–posttest design, in which students' writing performance was measured before and after the implementation of poster-based instruction. The independent variable in this research was the use of posters as instructional media, while the dependent variable was students' ability to write descriptive texts in English. The research was conducted at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. This school was selected because preliminary observations revealed that students experienced difficulties in writing English texts, particularly descriptive texts, and the school granted permission for the research to be conducted. The population of the study consisted of all tenth-grade students at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara, totaling 53 students from two classes (X A and X B). The sample was selected using purposive sampling, with class X A chosen as the experimental group consisting of 28 students. This class was selected because it was considered representative of the population and exhibited similar writing difficulties identified during the initial observation.

Data collection in this study was carried out through writing tests administered as a pretest and a posttest. The pretest was conducted before the treatment to measure students' initial ability in writing descriptive texts. In the pretest, students were asked to write a descriptive text based on a given topic, allowing the researcher to assess their baseline writing skills. After the pretest, students received treatment through poster-based instruction. During the treatment phase, posters were used as visual media to stimulate students' ideas and guide them in developing descriptive texts. The teaching procedure involved several stages, including pre-teaching activities such as greeting, attendance checking, and introducing the lesson, followed by explanation of descriptive text structure and language features. Students were then provided with posters containing visual representations related to the writing topic. They were given time to observe the posters, generate ideas, and write descriptive texts based on the visual information. At the end of the lesson, feedback and evaluation were provided to help students improve their writing. After the treatment, a posttest was administered using a similar writing task to measure students' improvement. The writing tests focused on key components of writing, including content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. To ensure objective assessment, a scoring rubric adapted from established writing assessment criteria was used. Each aspect was rated on a scale ranging from poor to very good, allowing for systematic and consistent evaluation of students' writing performance.

The data analysis techniques involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean, mode, median, standard deviation, and standard error of students' pretest and posttest scores in order to

describe their overall performance and score distribution. Inferential statistical analysis was conducted using a t-test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between students' pretest and posttest results. The t-test was chosen because it is appropriate for comparing the means of two related sets of scores obtained from the same group of participants. The hypothesis testing procedure involved calculating the mean difference between pretest and posttest scores, the standard deviation of the difference scores, and the standard error of the mean difference to obtain the t-observed value. This value was then compared with the t-table value at a significance level of 0.05. If the t-observed value exceeded the t-table value, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the use of posters had a significant effect on students' descriptive writing ability. Through this analytical process, the study aimed to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of poster media in improving students' writing skills in an EFL classroom context.

Results

This section presents the results of the quantitative analysis conducted to examine the effect of using posters on students' ability to write descriptive texts. The data were obtained from pretest and posttest scores administered to 28 students of class X A at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara during the 2024/2025 academic year. The results are organized into descriptive statistics, measures of central tendency and variability, and inferential analysis using a t-test to test the research hypothesis.

Descriptive Analysis of Pretest and Posttest Scores

To measure students' writing ability before and after the implementation of poster-based instruction, a pretest and a posttest were administered. The pretest was designed to assess students' initial ability in writing descriptive texts, while the posttest measured their writing performance after receiving treatment using posters. Table 1 presents the individual scores of students on both tests.

Table 1
Students' Pretest and Posttest Scores

No	Student	Pretest	Posttest
1	AP	45	65
2	AKP	55	75
3	AMR	50	65
4	AH	50	60
5	AIS	55	75
6	A	45	60
7	EL	50	60
8	DS	55	75
9	FM	50	60
10	ID	50	60
11	IZ	45	70

12	JA	45	60
13	KM	40	65
14	LS	40	65
15	MW	55	75
16	MS	45	70
17	MFA	40	60
18	NB	40	65
19	HM	40	65
20	MH	45	60
21	NA	40	60
22	PW	40	65
23	PR	55	70
24	RA	40	70
25	RD	45	70
26	RPA	45	70
27	SA	40	65
28	SY	55	75
Total		1300	1855

As shown in Table 1, students’ pretest scores ranged from 40 to 55, indicating that most students had low initial writing ability. Based on the scoring criteria, the majority of students fell into the *poor* and *fair* categories. In contrast, the posttest scores ranged from 60 to 75, showing a clear improvement after the use of posters as instructional media. These results suggest that poster-based instruction positively influenced students’ descriptive writing performance.

Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest

To describe students’ overall performance, the mean scores of the pretest and posttest were calculated. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Mean Scores of Pretest and Posttest

Test	N	Total Score	Mean
Pretest	28	1300	46.43
Posttest	28	1855	66.25

The mean pretest score was 46.43, which indicates that students’ writing ability before the treatment was relatively low. After the treatment, the mean posttest score increased to 66.25. This improvement of nearly 20 points demonstrates a substantial enhancement in students’ ability to write descriptive texts following the use of posters.

Mode and Median Analysis

To further analyze the distribution of students' scores, the mode and median of both tests were calculated. Table 3 summarizes the frequency distribution of pretest and posttest scores.

Table 3
Mode and Median of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Score (Pretest)	Frequency	Score (Posttest)	Frequency
40	9	60	9
45	8	65	8
50	5	70	6
55	6	75	5

The mode of the pretest was 40, and the median was 45, indicating that most students initially obtained low scores. In contrast, the posttest mode was 60, and the median was 65, showing a shift toward higher achievement levels after the treatment. This shift reflects an overall improvement in students' writing performance.

Standard Deviation and Standard Error

Measures of variability were also calculated to examine the dispersion of students' scores. Table 4 presents the standard deviation and standard error of both tests.

Table 4
Standard Deviation and Standard Error

Test	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Pretest	5.75	1.11
Posttest	5.55	1.07

The standard deviation of the pretest was 5.75, while the posttest standard deviation decreased slightly to 5.55. This reduction indicates that students' scores became more consistent after the treatment. Similarly, the standard error decreased from 1.11 to 1.07, suggesting increased precision of the posttest mean score.

Inferential Analysis Using the t-Test

To determine whether the observed improvement in students' writing ability was statistically significant, a paired-sample t-test was conducted. The difference between each student's pretest and posttest score (D) was calculated, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Difference Scores Between Pretest and Posttest

No	Pretest	Posttest	D
1	45	65	20
2	55	75	20
3	50	65	15
4	50	60	10
...
28	55	75	20
Total			555

Based on the calculations, the mean difference (Md) was 19.82. The standard deviation of the difference scores was 5.59, and the standard error of the mean difference was 1.07. Using these values, the t-observed (t_o) value was calculated as 18.52. The obtained t-observed value was compared with the critical t-table value at a significance level of 0.05 with 27 degrees of freedom ($df = n - 1$). The t-table value was 2.052. Since the t-observed value (18.52) was significantly higher than the t-table value (2.052), the null hypothesis was rejected.

Summary of Results

The statistical findings indicate that the use of posters as instructional media had a significant positive effect on students' ability to write descriptive texts. The improvement was evident in the increase of mean scores, the shift in score distribution, the reduction in score variability, and the statistically significant t-test result. These results demonstrate that poster-based instruction effectively enhanced students' writing performance at MAN 3 Aceh Tenggara in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the use of posters had a significant positive effect on students' ability to write descriptive texts. Prior to the treatment, students' writing performance was relatively low, as reflected in the pretest mean score of 46.43, with scores ranging from 40 to 55. These findings suggest that students initially experienced difficulties in generating ideas, organizing descriptive paragraphs, and applying appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Such difficulties are common among EFL learners, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language and exposure outside the classroom is limited. Writing descriptive texts requires learners to visualize objects, places, or people and translate those mental images into coherent written language. Without adequate instructional support or stimulating media, students often struggle to develop ideas and rely heavily on the teacher. The high standard deviation of the pretest scores also indicates variation in students' writing ability, suggesting that many students lacked consistent understanding of descriptive text structure and language features. These initial conditions confirm the need for instructional media that can assist students in visualizing content and organizing their ideas more effectively.

After the implementation of poster-based instruction, a notable improvement in students' writing ability was observed. The posttest mean score increased to 66.25, indicating a substantial gain compared to the pretest results. In addition, the highest posttest score rose to 75, while the lowest score improved to 60, showing that even students with lower initial proficiency benefited from the treatment. The decrease in standard deviation in the posttest suggests that students' writing performance became more consistent, which implies that the poster media helped reduce gaps in writing ability among students. Posters functioned as visual stimuli that encouraged students to observe details, generate ideas, and organize their descriptions more systematically. By providing concrete visual references, posters reduced students' cognitive burden when developing content, allowing them to focus more on language use and text organization. This finding aligns with learning theories that emphasize the role of visual aids in enhancing comprehension and memory retention. Visual media such as posters can activate students' background knowledge, stimulate imagination, and support the construction of meaning, which are essential elements in writing instruction. Moreover, the statistically significant t-test result confirms that the improvement in students' writing ability was not due to chance but was directly influenced by the use of posters as instructional media.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating appropriate instructional media into writing instruction, particularly for descriptive texts. Posters not only support students' cognitive processes but also increase motivation and engagement in the learning process. When students are provided with visually appealing and meaningful media, they tend to participate more actively and show greater interest in learning activities. This increased engagement can lead to better learning outcomes, as students become more confident in expressing their ideas in written form. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research that reported positive effects of visual media on students' writing performance. However, despite the encouraging results, this study has some limitations that should be considered. The research employed a one-group pretest–posttest design without a control group, which limits the ability to compare poster-based instruction with other teaching methods. Additionally, the sample size was relatively small and confined to a single school context, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore recommended to use experimental designs with control groups, larger samples, and longer treatment durations to further investigate the effectiveness of poster media in writing instruction. Nevertheless, the present study provides empirical evidence that posters are an effective and practical teaching medium for improving students' descriptive writing ability in EFL classrooms and can be considered a valuable alternative to traditional teaching methods.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the use of posters as instructional media has a significant positive effect on students' ability to write descriptive texts. The improvement in students' writing performance, as indicated by the increase in mean scores from the pretest to the posttest and supported by the results of the t-test analysis, demonstrates that poster-based instruction effectively enhanced students'

writing skills. Posters helped students generate ideas, organize descriptive content, and apply appropriate vocabulary and grammar more accurately. The visual nature of posters also increased students' motivation and engagement during the writing process, contributing to more active participation in classroom activities. Although the study was limited by its one-group experimental design and relatively small sample size, the findings provide empirical support for the integration of poster media into English writing instruction. Therefore, it is recommended that English teachers utilize posters as an alternative and effective teaching medium to improve students' descriptive writing skills, particularly in EFL classroom contexts.

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