



Narrative Writing Ability Using Environmental Health Posters among Grade X Students at Senior High School

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-06-02 Revised: 2026-06-24 Accepted: 2026-06-29 Keywords: narrative writing; environmental health posters; visual prompts; writing ability; senior high school students DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.11961 Corresponding Author: Moh Sofian Tamran mohsofiantamran@gmail.com Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Inndonesia, Universitas Tadulako, Kota Palu, Sulawesi Tengah, Indonesia	<i>Narrative writing is one of the essential competencies in secondary education because it enables students to organize ideas, construct coherent stories, and communicate experiences effectively. Despite its importance, many Indonesian senior high school students continue to encounter difficulties in generating ideas, organizing narrative structures, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and applying correct language conventions. While previous studies have primarily examined the effectiveness of picture media or poster-assisted instruction through experimental or classroom action research designs, limited attention has been given to describing students' narrative writing performance when environmental health posters are employed as contextual visual prompts. This study aimed to describe the narrative writing ability of Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Palu using environmental health posters as visual stimuli. Employing a quantitative descriptive research design, the study involved 21 students who completed an individual narrative writing task based on environmental health posters. Students' compositions were assessed using an analytic rubric consisting of four dimensions: content, text organization, language features, and writing conventions. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including individual scores, percentages, class mean, and mastery attainment based on the school's minimum mastery criterion of 75. The findings revealed that students generally demonstrated good narrative writing ability, achieving a mean score of 76.79. Fifteen students (71.43%) achieved the minimum mastery criterion, whereas six students (28.57%) did not. Writing conventions represented the strongest performance area, while language features remained the weakest aspect. These findings indicate that environmental health posters provide meaningful contextual support for generating narrative ideas; however, additional instructional support is still required to strengthen students' vocabulary use, sentence effectiveness, cohesion, and narrative organization. As</i>

this study adopted a descriptive design without pre-test, comparison group, or experimental treatment, the findings should be interpreted as a diagnostic profile of students' writing ability rather than evidence of the instructional effectiveness of poster media.

1. Introduction

Writing is widely recognized as one of the most complex productive language skills because it requires learners to integrate cognitive, linguistic, and organizational competencies simultaneously. Unlike speaking, writing demands careful planning, idea development, linguistic accuracy, and logical organization before ideas can be communicated effectively to readers. Consequently, writing instruction occupies an important position within Indonesian secondary education, particularly because it develops students' critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, and academic literacy. According to Tarigan (2008), writing is not merely the process of recording ideas but also a systematic activity that enables learners to organize experiences into meaningful written discourse. Similarly, Dalman (2018) argues that effective writing requires continuous practice, mastery of language conventions, and the ability to connect ideas logically so that readers can easily understand the intended message.

Among various writing genres taught in Indonesian senior high schools, narrative writing represents one of the fundamental competencies. Narrative texts enable students to communicate personal experiences, fictional stories, and imaginative events by organizing orientation, complication, climax, and resolution into a coherent sequence. Keraf (2010) explains that narrative writing emphasizes chronological events while maintaining meaningful relationships among characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions. Through narrative writing, students develop creativity while simultaneously applying grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, sentence construction, and textual organization. Therefore, mastery of narrative writing contributes not only to linguistic competence but also to students' higher-order thinking skills.

Despite its educational importance, many secondary school students experience considerable difficulty in composing narrative texts. Previous classroom observations and empirical studies consistently report that students struggle to generate ideas, maintain coherence among paragraphs, develop logical storylines, employ appropriate vocabulary, and construct grammatically accurate sentences. In many cases, students produce narratives that are fragmented, repetitive, or poorly organized because they have difficulty transforming abstract ideas into structured written texts. Such difficulties often reduce students' motivation and confidence during writing activities, particularly when they are required to begin writing without adequate contextual support.

One instructional strategy that has received increasing attention involves the use of visual media as writing prompts. Visual stimuli such as photographs, picture series, comics, illustrations, and posters provide concrete representations that facilitate idea generation and stimulate students' imagination before they begin writing. From the perspective of Multimedia Learning Theory, learners process information more effectively when verbal explanations are accompanied by meaningful visual representations (Mayer, 2021). Rather than replacing students' cognitive processes, visual materials function as scaffolds that reduce cognitive load by helping learners establish connections between prior knowledge

and newly presented information. Consequently, visual prompts can encourage students to organize ideas more systematically before translating them into written narratives.

Within the broader framework of visual literacy, posters represent a particularly valuable instructional resource because they combine images, symbols, colors, and written messages into meaningful visual communication. Unlike ordinary illustrations that simply depict isolated objects or events, posters are intentionally designed to communicate specific social messages and encourage interpretation. As students interpret poster content, they simultaneously activate prior experiences, infer relationships among visual elements, and construct meaningful narratives based on contextual information. Therefore, posters not only stimulate creativity but also encourage students to engage critically with social issues represented in visual form.

Environmental health posters constitute a distinctive type of visual medium because they integrate educational messages concerning sanitation, environmental conservation, waste management, public hygiene, and healthy lifestyles. These themes are closely related to students' daily experiences and social environments, enabling learners to generate narratives grounded in authentic situations. Compared with general picture media, environmental health posters provide richer contextual information by presenting both visual illustrations and persuasive verbal messages that may facilitate idea development. Consequently, environmental health posters have the potential to support students in constructing more coherent narratives while simultaneously promoting environmental awareness.

Numerous studies have investigated the contribution of visual media to writing instruction. Fitriani and Doyin (2021) demonstrated that keyword-assisted picture media improved students' imaginative story writing by facilitating idea development. Likewise, Pratiwi (2021) reported that picture sequences effectively supported students in organizing narrative paragraphs through chronological visualization of events. More recent studies conducted by Khasanah et al. (2024), Pradnya and Suniasih (2024), and Amami (2024) similarly revealed positive effects of poster-assisted or picture-series-assisted instructional models on students' narrative writing achievement. Collectively, these studies indicate that visual media can contribute positively to writing instruction by stimulating learners' imagination and organizing their ideas.

However, existing literature predominantly employs experimental or classroom action research designs that examine the effectiveness of visual media in improving writing performance. Consequently, relatively little attention has been devoted to providing descriptive evidence regarding students' actual writing profiles when contextual visual prompts are employed. Furthermore, previous investigations have focused primarily on elementary and junior secondary school students, leaving limited empirical evidence concerning senior high school learners. As a result, teachers still lack detailed information regarding which specific aspects of narrative writing require greater instructional attention when environmental health posters are used as writing prompts.

The present study addresses this gap by adopting a quantitative descriptive design to provide a comprehensive profile of Grade X students' narrative writing ability using environmental health posters as contextual visual stimuli. Rather than examining instructional effectiveness, this study focuses on describing students' performance across four essential writing dimensions: content, text organization, language features, and writing conventions. Such diagnostic information is expected to provide valuable insights for Indonesian language teachers when designing writing instruction that integrates contextual visual media.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research question:

How do Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Palu perform in narrative writing when environmental health posters are used as visual prompts?

By providing a detailed description of students' writing performance, this study contributes to the growing body of research on visual media in writing instruction while offering practical recommendations for Indonesian language teachers seeking to integrate contextual visual resources into narrative writing activities. Unlike previous experimental studies, the present research emphasizes descriptive profiling rather than causal inference, thereby complementing existing literature on visual-supported writing instruction.

2. Method

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design. The design was selected because the study focused on describing students' narrative-writing ability based on the results of a single writing assessment. The study did not use a pretest, a control group, or an experimental treatment; therefore, the analysis was directed toward profiling student performance rather than testing the effectiveness of poster media.

The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 7 Palu during [the semester and academic year should be provided]. The participants were 21 Grade X students from [the class name should be provided]. The participants were selected using [the sampling technique and the reason for selecting the class should be provided]. Student identities were anonymized in the data recapitulation to protect confidentiality.

The research instrument was a narrative-writing task using an environmental health poster as the stimulus. The poster contained [the theme, source, and visual elements of the poster should be described]. It was presented to the students through [the mode of presentation should be provided]. The students were asked to write a narrative text within [the time allocation] and with a length of [the required number of words or paragraphs]. The manuscript should also clarify whether the task was completed individually and whether dictionaries or other supporting resources were permitted so that the data-collection procedure can be replicated.

The students' texts were assessed using an analytic rubric covering four aspects: (1) content, referring to the relevance and development of ideas in relation to the poster theme; (2) text organization, referring to the completeness and logical sequence of narrative events; (3) language features, referring to appropriate vocabulary selection and sentence effectiveness; and (4) writing conventions, referring to accurate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. The writing was assessed by [the number and identity of the raters should be provided]. Information about rubric validation, rater training, and inter-rater reliability should also be added if available.

The data were analyzed descriptively by calculating each student's final score, the class mean, the percentage achieved in each assessment aspect, and the number of students who met the mastery criterion. The minimum mastery criterion used in the researcher's recapitulation was 75. Ability categories were determined according to [the category intervals used by the researcher should be provided]. All final calculations should be reverified against the original scoring sheets because the source manuscript contained inconsistencies among component scores, obtained scores, and final scores.

The study was conducted after permission had been obtained from [the relevant school authority and permit number should be provided]. The data were reported anonymously and used for academic purposes. Where institutional regulations required consent from students or their parents or guardians, the procedure should be stated explicitly.

Table 1. Assessment Aspects for Narrative-Writing Ability

No.	Aspect	Main Indicator
1	Content	Relevance to the theme and development of ideas.
2	Text organization	Completeness of narrative elements and logical sequencing of events.
3	Language features	Appropriate diction, clear relationships among sentences, and sentence effectiveness.
4	Writing conventions	Accurate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

3. Result

The results describe the ability of 21 Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Palu to write narrative texts based on environmental health posters. The reporting focuses on overall class performance, mastery attainment, and performance in each assessment aspect. To avoid repetition and numerical inconsistency, the individual-score table in the initial manuscript is not reproduced until the raw scores have been verified by the authors.

Based on the researcher's recapitulation, the class mean was 76.79 and was classified as good. Fifteen students, or 71.43%, met the minimum mastery criterion of 75, whereas six students, or 28.57%, did not. The highest score reported in the recapitulation was 93.75, and the lowest was 43.75. A summary of the results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Narrative-Writing Ability

Indicator	Result	Description
Number of participants	21 students	One Grade X class
Mean score	76.79	Good category based on the researcher's recapitulation
Highest score	93.75	Reported in the recapitulation
Lowest score	43.75	Reported in the recapitulation
Met the mastery criterion	15 students (71.43%)	Score $\geq$ 75
Did not meet the mastery criterion	6 students (28.57%)	Score $<$ 75

Performance across the four assessment aspects varied. Writing conventions achieved the highest percentage at 76.19%, followed by content at 70.48% and text organization at 67.62%. Language features achieved the lowest percentage at 62.86%. These data indicate that the students were relatively more successful in applying spelling and punctuation conventions than in selecting vocabulary, constructing effective sentences, and maintaining the linguistic features of a narrative.

Table 3. Narrative-Writing Performance by Assessment Aspect

No.	Aspect	Percentage	Performance rank
1	Content	70.48%	Second
2	Text organization	67.62%	Third
3	Language features	62.86%	Lowest
4	Writing conventions	76.19%	Highest

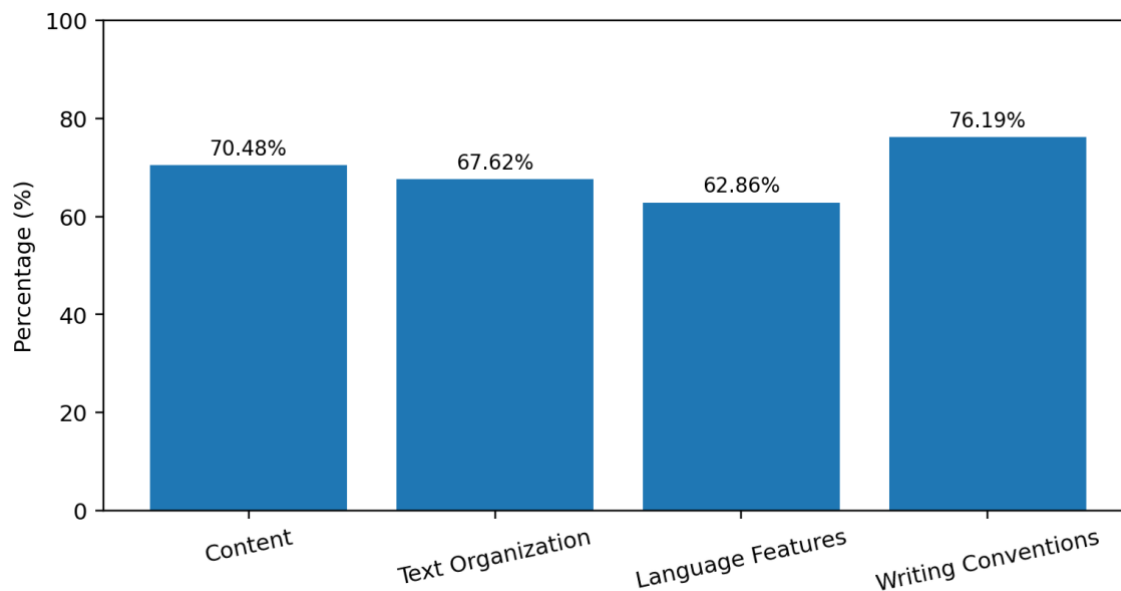


Figure 1. Comparison of performance percentages across the four narrative-writing assessment aspects

The findings show that the components of writing did not develop at the same level. Most students met the mastery standard, but six students still required additional support. The primary instructional needs concerned language features and text organization rather than writing mechanics alone.

4. Discussion

The present study aimed to provide a descriptive profile of Grade X students' narrative writing ability when environmental health posters were used as contextual visual prompts. The findings indicate that students generally demonstrated satisfactory writing performance, as reflected by a class mean score of 76.79, which exceeded the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). Most students successfully developed narratives that incorporated ideas derived from the environmental health posters, suggesting that contextual visual media can facilitate the idea-generation stage of narrative writing. However, considerable variation remained across the four writing dimensions, with language features representing the weakest aspect of students' performance.

One important finding is that students achieved relatively higher scores in content than in language features. This pattern suggests that the environmental health posters primarily supported students in generating and organizing ideas rather than improving linguistic accuracy. According to Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2021), meaningful visual representations reduce learners' cognitive load by providing concrete information that facilitates information processing and idea construction. Rather than requiring students to imagine situations from abstract instructions, the posters offered contextual visual cues that activated prior knowledge and stimulated story development.

Consequently, students were able to construct narratives that were relevant to the environmental themes presented in the posters.

This finding is consistent with previous studies reporting that visual media facilitate idea generation during writing activities. Fitriani and Doyin (2021) found that picture-assisted instruction encouraged students to develop richer story ideas because visual stimuli activated imagination and reduced difficulties in initiating the writing process. Similarly, Pratiwi (2021) reported that picture sequences improved students' ability to organize narrative events chronologically. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that environmental health posters, which combine visual illustrations with persuasive textual messages, also provide meaningful contextual support for narrative construction. Unlike ordinary illustrations, environmental health posters communicate social issues that are closely related to students' everyday experiences, enabling learners to connect personal knowledge with written narratives.

The relatively high performance in text organization further indicates that students understood the general structure of narrative texts. Most participants successfully organized their compositions using orientation, complication, and resolution, although some narratives lacked detailed conflict development or satisfactory endings. This finding suggests that students possess a basic understanding of narrative structure but still require instructional guidance to produce more coherent and elaborated narratives. Narrative writing involves more than arranging events chronologically; effective narratives also require logical progression, appropriate pacing, and meaningful relationships among events. Therefore, while visual prompts assist students in identifying possible storylines, teachers should continue providing explicit instruction on narrative organization and coherence.

The most significant finding concerns students' relatively low achievement in language features. Vocabulary selection, grammatical accuracy, sentence effectiveness, and cohesive language use remained the most problematic aspects of students' writing. Although the environmental health posters successfully stimulated ideas, they did not automatically improve students' linguistic competence. This finding illustrates an important distinction between conceptual development and linguistic realization during writing. Visual media may help students decide what to write, but they do not necessarily improve how students express those ideas linguistically.

This result can be explained through the writing process model proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981), which distinguishes planning, translating, and reviewing as interconnected cognitive activities. The environmental health posters primarily supported the planning stage by providing meaningful contextual information. However, during the translating stage, students still depended on their existing vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, and sentence construction skills. Consequently, limitations in linguistic knowledge continued to influence the overall quality of students' writing.

The findings also align with theories of visual literacy, which emphasize that interpreting visual information constitutes a cognitive activity distinct from linguistic production. Visual literacy enables learners to decode images, symbols, and contextual messages before transforming those interpretations into verbal communication. In this study, students appeared capable of interpreting environmental health messages represented in the posters; however, transforming those interpretations into coherent written narratives remained linguistically challenging for many participants. Therefore, visual literacy should be viewed as complementary rather than equivalent to writing proficiency.

Another noteworthy finding is that writing conventions received the highest average score among the four assessment dimensions. Most students demonstrated satisfactory mastery of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraph formatting. This suggests that students had already acquired basic mechanical writing skills through previous classroom instruction. Mechanical accuracy generally requires repeated practice and explicit instruction over extended periods, which may explain why students performed relatively well in this dimension despite continuing difficulties in vocabulary and sentence construction.

The environmental health theme itself may also have contributed positively to students' narrative development. Unlike abstract topics, environmental health represents an issue that students frequently encounter in everyday life, including waste management, school cleanliness, sanitation, and community health campaigns. Familiarity with these topics likely facilitated idea generation because students could connect the visual information presented in the posters with their own experiences. This contextual relevance may explain why students demonstrated relatively strong performance in content development despite linguistic limitations. Consequently, contextual visual prompts appear particularly useful when writing topics relate closely to students' lived experiences.

However, the present findings should not be interpreted as evidence that environmental health posters improve narrative writing ability. The descriptive research design employed in this study did not include experimental treatment, comparison groups, or longitudinal observation. Therefore, causal conclusions regarding instructional effectiveness cannot be drawn. Instead, the findings provide a diagnostic description of students' writing ability when environmental health posters served as contextual writing prompts. Future experimental studies are needed to determine whether such visual media produce measurable improvements in writing achievement compared with alternative instructional approaches.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings offer several practical implications for Indonesian language teachers. First, environmental health posters may be incorporated into pre-writing activities to stimulate students' background knowledge and facilitate idea generation before drafting narratives. Second, teachers should complement visual prompts with explicit instruction focusing on vocabulary development, sentence construction, and cohesive devices because visual media alone cannot overcome linguistic limitations. Third, writing instruction should integrate visual literacy with narrative writing by encouraging students to interpret visual messages critically before transforming those interpretations into written texts. Such integration may simultaneously enhance students' creativity, environmental awareness, and written communication skills.

Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study involved only one class from a single senior high school, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the descriptive quantitative design does not permit causal inference regarding the effectiveness of environmental health posters. Third, the study relied exclusively on students' written products without incorporating interviews or classroom observations that might have provided additional insight into students' writing processes. Finally, the analysis focused on four broad writing dimensions and did not examine specific linguistic features such as lexical diversity or syntactic complexity.

Future research should employ experimental or mixed-methods designs involving multiple schools to investigate the effectiveness of environmental health posters compared with other visual media. Researchers may also explore how visual literacy influences planning strategies, creativity, and writing quality across different educational levels.

5. Conclusion

This study described the narrative writing ability of Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Palu using environmental health posters as contextual visual prompts. Overall, students demonstrated satisfactory writing performance, achieving an average score above the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion. Most participants successfully generated narratives that reflected the environmental messages presented in the posters, indicating that contextual visual media can effectively support the idea-generation stage of narrative writing.

The descriptive analysis revealed notable variation across the four writing dimensions. Students performed relatively well in content, text organization, and writing conventions, suggesting that they were generally capable of developing relevant story ideas, organizing narrative structures, and applying basic writing mechanics. In contrast, language features remained the weakest aspect, indicating persistent difficulties in vocabulary selection, grammatical accuracy, sentence construction, and cohesive language use. These findings suggest that while environmental health posters may facilitate conceptual development by providing meaningful contextual support, they do not automatically improve students' linguistic competence.

The study contributes to the growing body of literature on visual media in writing instruction by providing a diagnostic profile of students' narrative writing performance rather than evaluating instructional effectiveness. Unlike previous experimental studies, this research demonstrates how environmental health posters function as contextual visual prompts that stimulate students' ideas while simultaneously revealing the specific linguistic challenges that remain in narrative writing.

Practically, the findings suggest that Indonesian language teachers may integrate environmental health posters into pre-writing activities to facilitate brainstorming and idea development. Nevertheless, such visual media should be accompanied by explicit instruction in vocabulary development, grammar, and text cohesion to improve students' overall writing quality.

Given the descriptive nature of the study, future investigations should employ experimental or mixed-methods approaches involving larger and more diverse participant groups to examine the effectiveness of environmental health posters in improving narrative writing achievement. Such studies would provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the role of contextual visual media in supporting writing instruction across different educational settings.

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