

## USE OF COMIC STRIPS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SKILLS IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT AT THE ELEVENTH GRADE OF SMA NEGERI 7 BULUKUMBA

Nurul Fadillah<sup>1</sup>, Sri Wahyuni Thamrin<sup>2</sup>, Andi Anugrah M<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Bulukumba 1; [nurulfadillablk01@gmail.com](mailto:nurulfadillablk01@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Bulukumba 2; [sriwahyunit@yahoo.com](mailto:sriwahyunit@yahoo.com)

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Bulukumba 3; [andianugrah@umbulukumba.ac.id](mailto:andianugrah@umbulukumba.ac.id)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

#### *Article history:*

Received 2025-05-14

Revised 2025-06-20

Accepted 2025-07-21

---

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penggunaan komik strip sebagai media pembelajaran dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis narasi siswa kelas XI SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain pra-eksperimen dengan prosedur pre-test dan post-test, dengan jumlah populasi 107 siswa kelas XI. Sampel dipilih dengan teknik purposive sampling, yaitu dari kelas XI.2 tahun ajaran 2024/2025, yang berjumlah 25 siswa. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan tes pilihan ganda yang diberikan baik sebagai pre-test maupun post-test. Data primer diperoleh langsung dari hasil tes siswa sebelum dan sesudah perlakuan, sedangkan data sekunder dikumpulkan dari literatur yang relevan, termasuk temuan penelitian sebelumnya yang berkaitan dengan *comic strip* dalam pembelajaran bahasa. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata skor pre-test sebesar 56,04, sedangkan rata-rata skor post-test meningkat menjadi 78,24. Selanjutnya, nilai t-hitung (4,64) melebihi nilai t-tabel kritis (1,711), yang menunjukkan bahwa hipotesis alternatif ( $H_1$ ) diterima dan hipotesis nol ( $H_0$ ) ditolak. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan komik strip sebagai media pembelajaran efektif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis narasi siswa di SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba.

**Kata kunci:** Komik Strip; Keterampilan Menulis Naratif

---

### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to determine whether the use of comic strips as a learning medium can improve the narrative writing skills of Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. The research employed a pre-experimental design with pre-test and post-test procedures, involving a population of 107 Grade XI students. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, specifically from class XI.2 in the 2024/2025 academic year, consisting of 25 students. Data were collected through multiple-choice tests administered as both the pre-test and post-test. The primary data were obtained directly from students' test results before and after the treatment, while secondary data were derived from supporting literature and previous studies related to the use of comic strips in language learning. The analysis revealed that the average pre-test score was 56.04, while the average post-test score increased to 78.24. Furthermore, the t-test value (4.64) exceeded the critical t-table value (1.711), indicating that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that using comic*

---

---

*strips as a teaching medium effectively enhances students' narrative writing skills at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba.*

**Keywords:** Comic Strips; Narrative Writing Skills

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY](#) license.*




---

**Corresponding Author:**

Nurul Fadillah

Universitas Muhammadiyah Bulukumba 1; [nurulfadillablk01@gmail.com](mailto:nurulfadillablk01@gmail.com)

---

## 1. BACKGROUND

Language is a fundamental aspect of human life that facilitates communication, allows for the expression of ideas, and enables the establishment of social interaction. It comprises various components—such as phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics—that form a structured system, and is manifested in thousands of languages across the globe, including local, national, and international languages. Among these, English has assumed a dominant position as the international lingua franca. It is not only widely spoken and understood across continents but also functions as an official or second language in many countries. As stated by Crystal (2003), English has become the most influential language in the era of globalization, where communication across borders is vital for education, business, science, and diplomacy.

In the context of English language learning, writing occupies a particularly important place. Unlike receptive skills such as reading and listening, writing is a productive skill that requires learners to construct meaning through the organization of ideas, selection of vocabulary, and application of grammatical rules. According to Rofi'udin (1999), writing involves the articulation of thoughts, ideas, and emotions in written form. Suparno and Yunus (2005) define it as a means of communicating messages via written language, while Tarigan (2008) views writing as a medium for indirect communication. Ramet (2007) expands this notion by suggesting that writing serves not only as a tool for academic engagement but also as an outlet for creativity and self-expression. Narrative writing, in particular, plays a crucial role in the English curriculum at the senior high school level. It allows students to develop storytelling skills, foster creativity, and experiment with different linguistic expressions. Narrative texts enable students to recount events in a structured manner—complete with settings, characters, and plot development—which enhances their overall communicative competence. However, despite its importance, writing is frequently identified as one of the most challenging skills for students to master. Harmer (2004) notes that students often face difficulties in idea generation, content organization, vocabulary use, and achieving coherence and cohesion.

Preliminary observations conducted at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba reveal that many Grade XI students struggle with writing tasks, especially narrative texts. These students commonly experience difficulties in starting their writing, constructing coherent stories, and using varied

vocabulary. The lack of integration with other language skills, such as reading or listening, further impedes their writing development. In addition to external factors such as limited instructional time or resources, internal factors—such as low motivation, poor motor coordination, and limited visual memory—exacerbate the problem. These obstacles underscore the need for innovative and engaging teaching strategies that can address students' challenges and enhance their writing competence. One pedagogical approach that has shown promise in recent years is the use of visual media—particularly comic strips—as a teaching tool. Comic strips combine images and texts in a sequential format to narrate stories, making them inherently suitable for teaching narrative writing. Gonzales-Espada (2003) defines comic strips as sequences of illustrations that present a storyline through a combination of dialogue, narration, and visual elements. Their visual nature supports students in understanding plot structures, organizing ideas, and building vocabulary. Moreover, they stimulate creativity and make learning more enjoyable, which in turn can boost student motivation and engagement.

While a number of studies have examined the application of comic strips in English language learning, the majority of these have either focused on young learners or emphasized general language skills such as vocabulary or reading. For example, Liu (2004) found that the use of comics in ESL settings improved student engagement and vocabulary retention, but the study did not investigate the impact on narrative writing. Similarly, Yang (2016) explored how comic-based instruction influenced reading and writing fluency among junior high school students, yet did not address senior high school contexts. As a result, there is a clear research gap in the existing literature—namely, the lack of empirical studies that examine the use of comic strips to improve narrative writing skills specifically among Grade XI students in Indonesian senior high schools.

Furthermore, most of the existing research has been theoretical or survey-based, lacking classroom-based experimental evidence that can inform practical instructional strategies. This study seeks to fill that gap by implementing a pre-experimental classroom-based design that uses comic strips as a learning medium for writing narrative texts. By employing pre-test and post-test data, the study provides measurable insights into how visual storytelling can enhance student writing performance in an authentic learning environment. Based on the aforementioned context, this study aims to answer the following research question: *Does the use of comic strips significantly improve students' writing skills in narrative texts among Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba?* Therefore, the objective of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of comic strips as a teaching medium in improving students' narrative writing skills at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba, the research site, is a public high school located in a suburban area of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, known for its strong commitment to curriculum innovation and the integration of creative media in classroom instruction. The school has actively supported teacher initiatives that incorporate student-centered and visually engaging learning strategies, making it an ideal setting for implementing and testing the use of comic strips in writing instruction. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of innovative instructional strategies for English teachers, offer empirical support for the use of visual media in language education, and enhance students' motivation and creativity in writing.

The theoretical framework underpinning this research draws from visual learning theory and communicative language teaching (CLT), which emphasize the role of multi-sensory input and meaningful interaction in language acquisition. According to Mayer (2001), visual representations can significantly improve learning outcomes by aiding memory, comprehension, and retention. The integration of comic strips aligns with this perspective by providing contextual cues that support language production. In summary, this research seeks to explore and validate the use of comic strips in narrative writing instruction, focusing on the extent to which this medium can address students' writing difficulties and enhance their overall performance. The discussion will encompass the theoretical foundation of comic-based learning, the design and implementation of the study, the analysis of student performance, and the pedagogical implications for English language instruction in Indonesian senior high schools.

## 2. Research Method

This research employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental design. A pre-experimental design involves only one group or class that is subjected to both a pre-test and a post-test without a comparison or control group. As Sugiyono (2014, p. 109) explains, this design focuses solely on measuring the effects of an intervention on the same group before and after the treatment. The design used in this study is illustrated as follows:

Figure 3.1 Research Design

$$E = O_1 \times O_2$$

Where:

E : Experimental Group

O<sub>1</sub> : Pre-Test

X : Treatment (use of comic strips)

O<sub>2</sub> : Post-Test

According to Creswell (2012, p. 142), a population is defined as the total number of individuals who share certain characteristics relevant to the study. Based on this definition, the population in this research consisted of all 107 students from four Grade XI classes at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, a technique in which participants are chosen based on specific criteria set by the researcher to ensure the relevance of the data collected. In this study, Class XI.2, comprising 25 students, was selected as the sample.

The instrument used to collect data was a writing test, which included both a pre-test and a post-test. Students were instructed to compose narrative texts based on comic strip images provided by the researcher. The pre-test aimed to measure students' baseline narrative writing skills prior to the intervention, while the post-test assessed their improvement after the use of comic strips as a teaching medium. The pre-test was administered during the first meeting, where students were asked to write a narrative text based on a theme derived from the provided comic strip images, within a time limit of 45 minutes. The post-test, conducted after the treatment, followed the same procedure and format but was allocated 60 minutes to allow students more time for content development and revision. The data collection employed quantitative techniques. Quantitative data were obtained from students' scores on the pre-test and post-test. These scores were then analyzed statistically to evaluate the effectiveness of using comic strips in improving students' narrative writing skills.

### 3. Result And Discussion

#### a. Findings

The data were collected from SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba during the 2023/2024 academic year and were administered to eleventh-grade students who participated in a pre-experimental research design. To gather the data, the researcher used tests consisting of a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was administered before the treatment, while the post-test was conducted after the treatment.

##### 1) The Students' Score in Pre-Test and Post-test

**Table 1. The Frequency and The Rate Percentage of Student's Score in Pre-Test**

No	Classification	Score	Pre-Test	
			F	%
1	Excellent	96-100	0	0%
2	Very Good	86-95	0	0%
3	Good	76-85	0	0%
4	Fair	56-75	7	28%
5	Poor	46-55	12	48%
6	Very Poor	0-45	6	24%
<b>Total</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above shows the percentage rate of scores in the pre-test taken by 25 students. Based on the table, it can be seen that 7 students (28%) obtained a fair score, 12 students (48%) obtained a poor score, and 6 students (24%) obtained a very poor score.

**Table 2. The Frequenct and The Rate Percentage of The Students Score in Post-Test**

No	Classification	Score	Pre-Test	
			F	%
1	Excellent	96-100	0	0%
2	Very Good	86-95	2	8%
3	Good	76-85	15	60%
4	Fair	56-75	8	32%
5	Poor	46-55	0	0%
6	Very Poor	0-45	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above shows the percentage distribution of scores in the pre-test taken by 25 students. Based on the table, it can be seen that 2 students (8%) obtained a very good score, 15 students (60%) obtained a good score, and 8 students (32%) obtained a fair score.

## 2) Difference Between of Students Score in Pre-Test and Post-Test

**Table 3. Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Pre-Test and Post-Test**

Component	Mean Score	Category	Standard Deviation
Pre-Test	56,04	Fair	56,52
Post-Test	78,24	Good	78,27

The table above shows the mean scores and standard deviations of students' pre-test and post-test results involving 25 students. Based on the data, the mean score of the pre-test is 56.04, which falls into the "fair" category, while the mean score of the post-test is 78.24, which is categorized as "good." The standard deviation of the pre-test is 56.52, whereas the standard deviation of the post-test is 78.27. This indicates that the standard deviation of the post-test is slightly higher than that of the pre-test. Therefore, it can be concluded that students' writing ability in narrative text improved, as shown by the increase in mean score, the change in category, and the difference in standard deviation.

**Table 4. The Students' Mean Score and Gain Score**

Component	Pre-Test	Post -Test	Gain (D)
Mean Score	54,12	78,24	24,12

Based on Table 4.4 above, it can be seen that the average score of the pre-test is 54.12, while the average score of the post-test is 78.24. The difference in the average scores between the pre-test and post-test, or Gain (D), is 24.12. This indicates that the students' post-test scores are higher than their pre-test scores, with a score improvement of 24.12 points.

## 3) Test of significance

In this study, the researcher used a t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test scores. The hypothesis was tested at a significance level of 0.05 (5%).

**Table. 5 Destribution The Value of T-test and T-table**

T-test	T-table
4,73	1,711

The table above shows the distribution of the t-test and t-table values, indicating a significant improvement, as the t-test value (4.73) is greater than the t-table value (1.711). This means that the t-test result exceeds the critical value, suggesting a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores.

**DISCUSSION**

This section presents the discussion of the data analysis result from the pre-test and post-test, focusing on the research objective: to determine whether the use of comic strips effectively enhances students' skills in writing narrative texts in the eleventh grade at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba.

The statistical analysis revealed a t-test value of 4.73, which is greater than the critical t-table value of 1.711. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), indicating a statistically significant difference between students' writing performance before and after the treatment. This demonstrates that the use of comic strips has a positive effect on students' narrative writing abilities. Before the treatment, students in the experimental group showed low performance in narrative writing. The frequency and percentage distribution indicated that only 7 students (28%) were categorized as sufficient, 12 students (48%) as deficient, and 6 students (24%) as very deficient. No student achieved the good or very good category. These results reveal substantial challenges in students' writing skills, including disorganized storylines, limited vocabulary, and frequent grammatical errors. Many students found it difficult to generate coherent narratives from the provided comic strip images, reflecting weak idea development and poor narrative structure.

After four instructional sessions utilizing comic strips, students' writing scores improved markedly. The average pre-test score was 56.04 (SD = 56.52), while the average post-test score rose to 78.24 (SD = 78.27), signifying a gain of 22.2 points. This improvement reflects students' enhanced ability to write coherent and structured narratives with improved vocabulary use and organization. The observed improvement in students' writing performance can be attributed to the instructional use of comic strips, which serve as visually rich, contextualized, and engaging learning media. Comic strips provide visual support for understanding narrative components such as plot, characters, and setting. The humorous content, sequential illustrations, and embedded dialogues foster creativity and motivate students to write. When students create or complete comic stories, they are encouraged to organize ideas, develop storylines, and express themselves in a creative and imaginative manner.

These findings align with previous research conducted by Rohmaniah et al. (2023) and Ratnawati (2020), both of which highlight the effectiveness of comic strips in enhancing students' English writing competence. Visual storytelling encourages idea generation, supports the use of descriptive and narrative language, and contributes to a more enjoyable learning environment. This suggests that the use of comic strips is a pedagogically sound method for improving writing proficiency among high school students.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the use of comic strips is an effective medium to improve students' skills in writing narrative texts. The findings from the pre-test and post-test revealed a significant increase in students' writing performance after being taught using comic strips. The average score rose from 56.04 to 78.24, and the t-test result (4.73) exceeded the critical value (1.711), indicating that the improvement was statistically significant. The comic strip-based learning model provided visual and contextual support that helped students generate ideas, structure their narratives, and use language creatively. It also increased student motivation, engagement, and confidence in expressing their thoughts in written form. Despite some individual differences in learning outcomes, the overall

effectiveness of comic strips in enhancing narrative writing skills is evident. This study contributes to the growing body of research on visual media in language learning and addresses a research gap by providing empirical evidence from an Indonesian EFL context where the use of comic strips is not yet widely explored.

#### REFERENSI

- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Gonzales-Espada, W. J. (2003). Integrating comic books into science instruction. *The Science Teacher*, 70(2), 42–45. [Journal]
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Pearson Education.
- Liu, J. (2004). Effects of comic strips on L2 learners' reading comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38(2), 225–243. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588389> [Journal]
- Ramet, A. (2007). *Creative writing*. How To Books Ltd.
- Ratnawati, T. (2020). The use of comic strips to improve students' writing skill of narrative text. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Literature (JELTL)*, 5(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.47080/jeltl.v5i1.45> [Journal]
- Rofi'udin. (1999). *Keterampilan berbahasa dan apresiasi sastra*. Universitas Negeri Malang Press.
- Rohmaniah, I., Setyawan, D. A., & Suryani, I. (2023). Comic strips in improving students' writing ability in narrative text. *Journal of English Language Teaching Innovations and Materials (JELTIM)*, 5(2), 34–45. <https://doi.org/10.32528/jeltim.v5i2.701> [Journal]
- Suparno, & Yunus, M. (2005). *Keterampilan dasar menulis*. Universitas Terbuka.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2008). *Menulis sebagai suatu keterampilan berbahasa*. Angkasa.
- Yang, L. H. (2016). The effectiveness of using comics in English reading and writing instruction for EFL junior high school students. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 4(2), 54–65. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijll.s.2016040201.19>