

Improving Word Writing Ability of Grade II Students at SD Kristen 1 Seira through the Application of Picture Media

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ABSTRACT

The background of this research is the low writing ability of students, which is attributed to monotonous and less engaging teaching methods, thus necessitating innovative learning media. This study aims to improve word writing skills among second-grade students of SD Kristen 1 Seira, Wermaktian District, Tanimbar Islands Regency through the application of picture media. The research adopts a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design conducted over two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection phases. The research subjects comprised 20 second-grade students, with data collected through observation and word writing tests. Data analysis employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, with individual mastery criteria set at a minimum of 65% and class mastery at a minimum of 80%. The findings indicate a significant improvement: in the pre-action stage, class mastery was only 20% with an average score of 55.33; in the first cycle, it increased to 45% (average 64.33); and in the second cycle, it reached 90% (average 85.67). The implementation of picture media proved effective in enhancing students' motivation, engagement, and word writing ability. The classroom atmosphere became more active and conducive, with teachers managing the class more effectively. In conclusion, picture media serves as an effective solution for improving word writing skills among second-grade students in settings with limited resources. This study recommends the adoption of picture media as an innovative strategy in basic literacy learning at elementary schools, particularly in underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost (3T) regions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing ability is one of the fundamental skills that elementary school students must master as a foundation for the comprehensive development of literacy competencies. At the second-grade level of elementary school, the ability to write words becomes particularly crucial because it serves as an initial bridge for students to express ideas and knowledge in written form (Rinawati et al., 2020; Sari et al., 2024). However, field realities still show low word-writing skills among students, as observed at SD Kristen 1 Seira, Wermaktian District, Tanimbar Islands Regency. The main problem identified is the use of monotonous and unengaging teaching methods, which have implications for the low motivation and participation of students in the learning process, especially in Indonesian language subjects. Writing activities are often perceived as boring and burdensome by students, resulting in suboptimal learning outcomes. This phenomenon highlights the urgency for educators to seek innovative solutions to improve the quality of writing instruction at the elementary level.

One approach that can be applied to address these issues is the use of engaging and interactive learning media, such as pictorial media (Aghni et al., 2024; Lutfiyani & Manan, 2026). The use of pictorial media in the learning process has been widely studied as a strategy to enhance students' interest, motivation, and engagement, particularly in writing instruction (Maharani & Liansari, 2025; Widodo et al., 2020). Pictorial media functions not only as a visual aid but also stimulates imagination, enriches vocabulary, and facilitates students in conveying ideas in written form (Nuramalia et al., 2026). In the context of Indonesian language instruction at the elementary level, pictorial media can serve as an effective stimulus for students to write words, enabling them to concretely understand the relationship between images and word meanings (Angriani, 2014; Pahrin, 2021). Therefore, the innovation of using pictorial media in teaching word writing in grade II at SD Kristen 1 Seira is highly relevant for further study.

The importance of this research is further reinforced by initial findings showing that the word-writing learning outcomes of grade II students at SD Kristen 1 Seira remain below the minimum mastery standard. Based on the initial test results, it is known that the average student score is low and the class mastery rate has not reached the expected target. This indicates a need for systematic intervention through the application of more innovative and enjoyable learning strategies. Furthermore, a review of the literature and previous studies reveals a research gap concerning the implementation of pictorial media in word-writing instruction for elementary school students in 3T (Frontier, Outermost, and Disadvantaged) areas (Ananda et al., 2025; Pakaya et al., 2024).

To date, there have been few studies specifically examining the impact of implementing pictorial media on improving word-writing skills in elementary schools located in island regions with limited facilities. In addition, most previous studies focus only on cognitive aspects, while affective aspects such as motivation, engagement, and the learning atmosphere are often overlooked (Cahyanti & Rhosalia, 2020; Ratnaningsih, 2018; Wora et al., 2023). This study aims to fill that gap by holistically examining the effect of pictorial media on the word-writing skills of grade II students at SD Kristen 1 Seira, both in terms of learning outcomes and the dynamics of the learning process.

This research is designed using a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, which specifically aims to improve and enhance classroom instructional practices through cycles of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection (Arikunto, 2021). CAR is chosen as the research method because it provides teachers the opportunity to directly identify classroom problems, implement remedial actions, and evaluate their impact on student learning outcomes. By involving grade II students at SD Kristen 1 Seira as research subjects, this study seeks to systematically document the process of improving word-writing skills through the application of pictorial media. Through two cycles of action, it is expected that there will be a significant improvement in students' word-writing skills, both individually and classically, as measured by observation and evaluation of student learning outcomes. The objective of this research is to improve the word-writing skills of grade II students at SD Kristen 1 Seira through the use of pictorial media in the learning process.

2. METHODS

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, conducted in two cycles, with the aim of improving word writing skills among second-grade students at SD Kristen 1 Seira through the implementation of picture media. The research subjects consisted of all second-grade students, totaling 20 individuals (8 boys and 12 girls). Each cycle lasted for one week, with the first cycle conducted in the first week of April 2026 and the second cycle in the second week of April 2026.

The stages of CAR in this study refer to (Arikunto, 2021), including: (1) Planning, which involved identifying problems, preparing learning tools using picture media, arranging observation sheets and word writing tests, and organizing the schedule for the action; (2) Action Implementation, namely the application of picture media in word writing instruction in the classroom, during which the teacher guided students to write words based on the pictures provided; (3) Observation, consisting of monitoring and recording the activities of students and teachers during the learning process using observation sheets to assess engagement, responses, and the effectiveness of the action; and (4) Reflection, which entailed analyzing the results of observations and tests, identifying achievements and obstacles, and formulating improvement strategies for the subsequent cycle.

The picture media used in this study comprised a picture book consisting of 10 pages. Each page contained thematic illustrations, such as animals (for example, chickens, cats, birds), plants (such as trees, flowers, grass), and other objects relevant to the students' daily lives. The picture media were designed to be visually appealing, colorful, and sufficiently large for easy viewing and comprehension by students. Each illustration served as the main stimulus in the word writing lesson, where students were asked to write words corresponding to the displayed image. An example of the picture media used in this CAR can be seen in Figure 1.

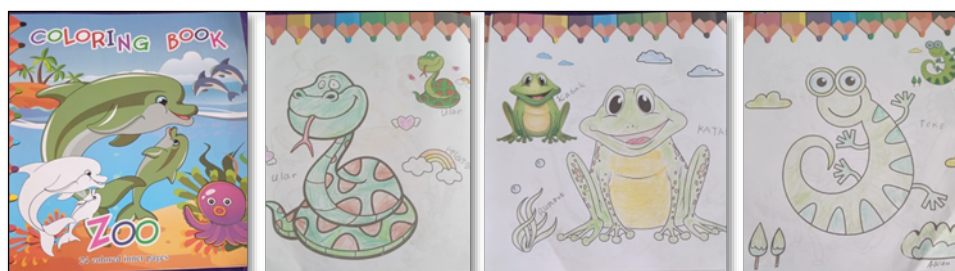


Figure 1. Example of Picture Media

Data collection instruments included observation sheets for teacher and student activities, word writing tests, and documentation in the form of photographs of the learning process and the picture media. The word writing test was developed with the following indicators: (1) the ability to write words that correspond to the picture, (2) accuracy in writing letters, (3) neatness of handwriting, and (4) accuracy in using simple spelling. The observation sheet was used to assess student engagement in learning and the effectiveness of the teacher's implementation of the action. Documentation supported the validity of the data and provided visual descriptions of the learning atmosphere and instructional tools.

The research procedure began with a pre-action test to determine the students' initial word writing ability, followed by the implementation of cycles I and II according to the CAR procedures. Evaluation was carried out at the end of each cycle using the word writing test based on the predetermined instrument. Data were analyzed quantitatively by calculating the average score and the percentage of learning mastery (with individual mastery set at a minimum of 65% and classical mastery at a minimum of 80%), as well as qualitatively by analyzing observation and reflection results to assess changes in the learning process, behavior, and student motivation.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDING

Description of Research Subjects and Location

This study was conducted at SD Kristen 1 Seira, located in Wermaktian Barat Subdistrict, Tanimbar Islands Regency, Maluku. The research subjects were all 20 second-grade students, consisting of 8 boys and 12 girls. The school is situated in an island area with limited learning facilities. The study was carried out over two cycles, each consisting of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection stages.

Pre-Action

The pre-action phase was carried out to obtain an initial overview of the students' word writing skills before the intervention using picture media. Activities at this stage included observing conventional learning and administering an initial word writing test. Observations indicated that learning tended to be monotonous, dominated by lecture methods, and students were less actively involved.

Table 1. Distribution of Initial Word Writing Test Scores (Pre-Action)

Score	Frequency	Total Score	Mastery
40.00	2	80.00	Not Mastered
46.67	4	186.68	Not Mastered
53.33	5	266.65	Not Mastered
60.00	5	300.00	Not Mastered
66.67	3	200.01	Mastered (3 students)
73.33	1	73.33	Mastered (1 student)
Total	20	1,106.67	Mastered (4 students)

Based on the results in Table 1, only 4 students (20%) achieved individual mastery (score ≥ 65), while 16 students (80%) did not. The average student score was 55.33, far below the minimum mastery criterion (KKM). One student stated: "I often feel confused when writing words; sometimes I forget the letters or write them incorrectly."

Cycle I Results

Overview of Action Implementation in Cycle I

During the learning process, students were introduced to the use of picture media; however, they still appeared confused and lacked confidence in writing words based on the images. Observations of teacher activity showed a score of 31 out of a maximum of 40 (77.5%). The teacher had started implementing picture media, but the learning process was not yet optimal. Classroom management and giving instructions related to the word writing task using images required further adjustment. An interview with one student revealed: "It's my first time filling out a worksheet using pictures, I'm still confused about what word to write."

Cycle I Test Results

After the implementation of actions in cycle I, a word writing test was conducted to measure students' progress. The test consisted of 5 fill-in-the-blank questions, completed within 2 × 35 minutes. The distribution of scores is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Cycle I Test Results

Score	Frequency	Total Score	Mastery
53.33	5	266.65	Not Mastered
60.00	6	360.00	Not Mastered
66.67	4	266.68	Mastered (4 students)
73.33	2	146.66	Mastered (2 students)
80.00	2	160.00	Mastered (2 students)
86.67	1	86.67	Mastered (1 student)
Total	20	1,286.66	Mastered (9 students)

Individual mastery in cycle I was achieved by 9 students (45%), while 11 students (55%) did not reach mastery. The average score increased to 64.33, but class mastery had not yet reached the expected minimum ($\geq 80\%$).

Reflection Stage in Cycle I

Reflection conducted after cycle I highlighted several main issues, including low student engagement, lack of understanding of instructions for using picture media, and suboptimal teacher assistance during the writing process. Reflective discussions between the teacher and researcher also identified that some students still struggled to recognize letters and connect them with the presented images. Additionally, group interaction was not yet effective, and some students appeared passive in discussions. The teacher also realized the need to clarify task instructions and provide more frequent direct examples in front of the class. Therefore, during the reflection stage, it was agreed that improvements were necessary for the next cycle, such as better explanation of instructions, intensified individual guidance, and the implementation of more structured group work to create a more interactive and supportive learning atmosphere. During reflection, the observer suggested that the teacher should give examples and directly assist students more frequently so they understand how to write words from pictures.

Cycle II Results

Overview of Action Implementation in Cycle II

In the second cycle, student involvement in learning was considered very good. Students appeared more active, enthusiastic, and able to collaborate in small groups when working on picture-based worksheets. Teacher activity observations also showed an increase, with a score of 38 out of 40 (95%). The teacher succeeded in managing the class better, giving clearer instructions, and providing more intensive guidance to students in writing words based on pictures, as seen in Figure 2..



Figure 2. Teacher Facilitating Discussion and Providing Motivation

Improvements in Cycle II Learning

As a follow-up to the reflections from cycle I, the teacher implemented several important improvements in cycle II. The teacher began lessons by giving direct examples of writing words based on pictures at the front of the class and provided more detailed and repeated instructions so that all students could easily understand. Students were encouraged to ask questions when they had difficulties, and the teacher provided both individual and group guidance. In addition, group work was focused on helping students who were still weak in recognizing letters and writing words, with more capable peers acting as mentors. The teacher also allocated special time for discussion and feedback sessions after the writing tasks were completed, allowing students to learn from mistakes and improve their writing. These improvements had a positive impact on the classroom atmosphere, making it more conducive, participative, and building students' confidence in writing words. One student stated: "I enjoy learning with pictures, because now it's easier for me to remember the words I have to write."

Cycle II Test Results

After the implementation of actions in cycle II, all students took the word writing test again, consisting of five fill-in-the-blank questions. The test was completed individually within the allotted time, and all students appeared more confident and able to understand the instructions well. The assessment results showed a significant increase compared to the previous cycle. The highest student score was 100, while the lowest was 60. The average student score in cycle II was 85.67, a sharp increase from cycle I. Of the 20 students, 18 (90%) achieved individual mastery, while only 2 (10%) did not reach the minimum mastery score. Class mastery also increased to 90%, exceeding the research target. These results reflect the success of the improvements made in cycle II, especially through the use of picture media, which was able to significantly improve the word writing ability of grade II students. A student remarked: "Now I'm not afraid of making mistakes anymore, because after learning with pictures, writing words becomes much easier." According to the researcher's observations, after the second cycle, almost all students became more active and confident in writing words from pictures.

Table 3. Progress in Average Scores and Class Mastery

Phase	Average Score	Class Mastery (%)
Pre-action	55.33	20
Cycle I	64.33	45
Cycle II	85.67	90

Table 3 clearly shows a consistent trend of improvement in both average scores and class mastery percentages throughout the study. In the pre-action phase, the average student score was only 55.33,

with class mastery at 20%. After actions in cycle I, the average score increased to 64.33, and class mastery rose to 45%. However, these results still did not meet the minimum class mastery criteria of 80%. After improvements in cycle II, there was a very significant increase in both scores and mastery percentage. The average student score jumped to 85.67, and class mastery reached 90%. This means that almost all students successfully achieved the expected mastery score. These findings confirm that the application of picture media in word writing lessons had a very positive impact on improving the writing ability of grade II students at SD Kristen 1 Seira. As one student expressed: "Now I like writing lessons, because the pictures help me think about what words I should write."

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the use of picture media significantly improves the word writing skills of second-grade students at SD Kristen 1 Seira. Improvements occurred in both the average score and the percentage of students achieving mastery, where only 20% of students reached mastery in the pre-action stage, then increased to 45% in the first cycle, and reached 90% in the second cycle. This finding is consistent with Angriani's (2014) research at SDN Wata, which also reported similar improvement after the implementation of picture media. Positive results were also supported by Suranto & Asiah (2023), who found an increase in learning mastery after using picture media in word writing instruction.

The use of picture media has proven to be effective not only in teaching word writing but also in writing essays and poetry. Pahrin (2021) highlighted that picture media can enhance various aspects of descriptive essay writing, such as structure, coherence, word choice, and spelling, making it easier for students to express their ideas systematically and creatively. Meanwhile, Maulidah (2020) demonstrated that picture media can stimulate imagination and help students write poetry with more varied word choices and styles. Theoretically, the success of picture media aligns with the cognitive development stages described by Piaget, in which second-grade elementary students are still in the concrete operational stage and therefore require visual stimuli to better understand learning materials.

The implementation of picture media also transforms the classroom atmosphere into one that is more active, interactive, and enjoyable. Students who were initially passive and confused when doing writing tasks became more enthusiastic, confident, and directly engaged in the learning process. Teachers also became more effective in managing the classroom and guiding students. The significance of this study lies in its ability to provide an easy, low-cost, and adaptable literacy learning solution for schools with limited resources, especially in underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost (3T) areas. This study also reinforces the important role of picture media in supporting early literacy learning, both in cognitive and affective aspects. Nevertheless, the limitations of this study include a narrow scope of subjects, a short research duration, and a focus solely on word writing skills. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve a broader range of subjects, a longer duration, and further exploration into other aspects of writing, such as sentence, paragraph, or creative writing skills.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the use of picture media significantly improves the word writing ability of second-grade students at SD Kristen 1 Seira. Over the course of two cycles of action research, there was a consistent increase in both the average scores and the percentage of students achieving mastery, starting from only 20% in the pre-action phase, rising to 45% in the first cycle, and reaching 90% in the second cycle. The implementation of picture media not only facilitated students' concrete and engaging understanding of word writing concepts but also enhanced their motivation, participation, and self-confidence in the learning process. These findings are in line with previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of visual media in developing early literacy at the primary school level, especially in environments with limited resources.

Based on the research results, picture media is highly recommended as a primary alternative for innovative writing instruction in elementary schools, particularly in underprivileged (3T) areas with minimal facilities. However, this study is limited by the number of subjects and the scope of writing

material covered. Therefore, further research is suggested to involve a larger sample, a longer duration, and to explore other aspects of writing such as sentences, paragraphs, or creative writing, so that the results may be more comprehensive and widely applicable in the context of basic education.

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