

# The effect of using picture series in contextual grammar teaching on student's writing skill

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of contextual grammar teaching using picture series on high school students' writing skills. While contextual grammar approaches and visual media have been widely discussed, limited studies integrate both to enhance writing skill. This study employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research design. The population consisted of 16 tenth-grade students at SMA NWDI Pringgabaya in the 2024/2025 academic year. Data were collected through writing tests, consisting of a pre-test and a post-test. The data analysis showed that mean pre-test score was 55.38, while the post-test mean score increased to 66.88. A paired sample t-test analysis showed that a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating a significant difference between the students' pre-test and post-test results. Therefore, it can be concluded that contextual grammar teaching using picture series is effective in improving high school students' writing skills.

**Keywords:** Contextual Grammar Teaching, Picture Series, Writing Skills

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most essential skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to communicate ideas, organize thoughts, and demonstrate language proficiency in both academic and real-life contexts. Compared to other language skills, speaking, listening, and reading. Writing is often regarded as the most challenging. This is because it requires the integration of multiple components of language knowledge such as vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and organization to produce coherent and meaningful texts (Luthfiyati et al., 2023). In the era of globalization, writing skill becomes even more important, not only as a means of communication but also as a crucial requirement for success in higher education, business, and professional communication (Sri Andayani, 2022). Writing is recognized as one of the core skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning (Bhowmik, 2021; Nurdianingsih et al., 2024) because it enables students to express ideas, communicate knowledge, and demonstrate their language proficiency in written form (Hosseini et al., 2013). These skills are not only important for academic success such as completing assignments, exams, and written works but also for students' professional future, where the ability to write reports, proposals, and correspondence in English is very important and needed (Wiederhold & Riva, 2013).

One of the approaches used in this learning is contextualized grammar teaching (Aziz & Dewi, 2019). This contextual approach teaches grammar through real situations (Yildiz & Senel, 2017). Thus, grammar learning is not only about memorizing rules, but also to improve language skills that can be expressed in writing (Prihatini & Pangesti, 2023). So, learning grammar is not only about memorizing rules, but to improve language skills that can be expressed in writing.

Writing skills need to be taught sustainably and contextually so that students are more confident in expressing ideas in writing (Ariyanti, 2016; Fahmi & Rachmijati, 2021). This skill also needs special attention at the senior high school level as a provision for facing higher

academic demands (Hajan et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of teaching approaches, such as contextualized grammar teaching coupled with picture series that explicitly support the development of academic writing skills in secondary education.

However, many EFL students still face challenges in writing due to limited vocabulary, lack of grammatical accuracy, and difficulties in organizing ideas. In Indonesia, these challenges are often intensified because grammar instruction is usually given in isolation, focusing on memorization of rules rather than practical application in writing tasks (Murtisari et al., 2020).

In addition, to support learning and improve student understanding in writing, visual media such as picture series are used (Ayu et al., 2020; Montang et al., 2023). Combining contextualized grammar teaching with serialized picture media can create a more interesting and meaningful learning atmosphere for student. Through this approach, students not only learn sentence patterns separately, but also apply them directly in writing activities based on the sequence of pictures presented. The use of serialized pictures in teaching writing can improve the accuracy of grammar use and help students in composing coherent and structured paragraphs (N.L.P.J. Rany et al., 2021). Thus, grammar teaching becomes more functional because it is directly related to the context of communication, not just rules.

Based on the problems formulated above, this study aims to find out whether contextual grammar teaching by using picture series is effective in teaching writing skill. In addition, it seeks to determine the extent to which contextual grammar teaching by using picture series affects students' writing skills

## METHOD

This study was a pre-experimental design, specifically the one-group pre-test and post-test design. In this design, there are three main steps to be conducted: (1) administering a pre-test to measure the dependent variable, (2) providing an experimental treatment to the same group of participants, and (3) administering a post test to measure any changes in the dependent variable.

The population of this study was all tenth-grade students of NWDI Pringgabaya High School in the 2024/2025 academic year consisted of 16 students. This class was selected as the research sample using purposive sampling. This class was selected as a research sample using purposive sampling technique, because the researcher considered that the students were new learners who needed basic English language skills, so that it was relevant to the research objectives.

The instrument used in this study was a writing test. This test was designed to measure students' ability to write descriptive text based on a series of images. The writing task required students to construct a complete paragraph consisting of 5–7 sentences, guided by four interrelated images. Both the pre-test and post-test used the same format, but different series of images were presented.

The treatment was given over two meetings (2 x 90). In each meeting, the researcher introduced contextual grammar material combined with a picture series. The learning steps included: (1) showing a series of pictures and guiding students to describe events, (2) emphasizing the use of grammatical structures such as past tense, subject verb agreement, conjunctions in the context of the pictures, (3) practicing constructing sentences collaboratively, and (4) constructing simple short texts individually. Students' writing was assessed using an analytical rubric covering five aspects: grammar, organization, vocabulary, content, and mechanics. Each aspect was scored on a scale of 1–5, resulting in a total score ranging from 5–25, which was then converted to a percentage.

The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test results were analyzed quantitatively to determine the effect of contextual grammar teaching using picture series on students' writing ability. The analysis technique that was used a paired sample t-test, as the data come from the same group before and after the treatment. This analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre test and post-test results. The test

consisted of a writing task that required students to compose a paragraph or short text based on the picture series provided

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are based on pre-test and post-test results conducted on 16 tenth-grade students at NWDI Pringgabaya High School after the implementation of contextual grammar teaching using picture series.

Tabel 1 The result of Descriptive Statistics

|           | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean  | Std. Deviation |
|-----------|----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Pre-test  | 16 | 44      | 70      | 55,38 | 7,684          |
| Post-test | 16 | 42      | 80      | 66,88 | 9,30           |

Based on Table 1 above, the average writing score of students increased from 55.38 (SD = 7.68) in the pre-test to 66.88 (SD = 9.38) in the post-test. The Shapiro-Wilk test confirmed that the data were normally distributed (pre-test:  $p = 0.649$ , post-test:  $p = 0.051$ ), and the Levene test showed that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met ( $p = 0.927$ ).

Table 2 Paired Samples Test

|                           | t      | Df | Sig 2 tailed |
|---------------------------|--------|----|--------------|
| Pair 1 Pre-test post-test | -9.237 | 15 | .000         |

The paired-sample t-test showed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results,  $t(15) = -9.24$ ,  $p < .001$ . This finding indicates that contextual grammar teaching using picture series significantly improved students' writing ability.

The findings of this study indicate that contextual grammar teaching using picture series is effective in improving students' writing skills. The descriptive statistics showed an increase in the average writing score from 55.38 in the pre-test to 66.88 in the post-test after the implementation of the treatment. Furthermore, the results of the paired sample t-test confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant, with a t-value of -9.237 and a significance level of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). These results demonstrate that the use of picture series in contextual grammar instruction provides meaningful learning experiences that enhance students' ability to organize ideas and apply grammar rules in writing. Therefore, this method can be considered an effective strategy in teaching writing skills at the classroom level.

In terms of the extent of the effect, the improvement of 11.5 points in students' average scores reflects a substantial positive impact on their writing performance. The integration of picture series not only supported students in understanding grammatical structures in context but also helped them generate ideas and develop coherent narratives more effectively. This significant gain suggests that contextual grammar teaching, when supported by visual aids like picture sequences, enhances both the accuracy and fluency of students' written output.

These findings also support Hyland (2003) theory, which emphasizes that writing is not simply a linguistic process but also a social activity influenced by context. Through the use of picture sequences, students are able to follow the storyline, which helps them apply grammatical structures more naturally and contextually. This also aligns with Erniwati (2023) research, which concluded that the use of visual media such as picture sequences helps students generate ideas, visualize events, apply correct grammar, and structure their writing more coherently.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that contextual grammar teaching using picture series media is effective in improving students' writing skills. This approach helps students understand grammar meaningfully and contextually, enabling them to generate ideas, structure and create paragraphs more accurately, and be motivated in learning English. Therefore, picture series media can be recommended as an alternative grammar teaching strategy to improve students' writing skills at the high school level

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