

Investigating the Use of Comic Strips Media on Developing Students' Narrative Writing Skills: A Case Study in Language Teaching

Elina Lulu Bimawati Rumapea¹, Ruty Jacoba Kapoh², Chatarina Novianti³, Yuniarsih⁴, Indah Permata Sari Harita⁵, Herman⁶, Nanda Saputra⁷

¹ Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Petra Bitung, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

² Universitas Negeri Manado, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

³ Universitas Flores, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

⁴ Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

⁵ Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

⁶ Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

⁷ Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Al-Hilal Sigli, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

comic strips media;
language teaching;
narrative;
writing skill

Article history:

Received 2025-03-08

Revised 2025-04-13

Accepted 2025-05-31

ABSTRACT

Eighth-grade EFL students often struggle with narrative writing due to unstructured ideas, limited vocabulary, and disengagement with traditional teaching methods. To address this, the study explores the use of comic strips as a visual and interactive instructional tool to enhance narrative writing skills. This quasi-experimental study used a non-equivalent pre-test and post-test control group design. Sixty purposively selected students were divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught narrative writing using comic strips, while the control group received conventional instruction. A 20-item narrative writing test was administered before and after the intervention. Data were analyzed through validity and reliability checks, tests for normality and homogeneity, and hypothesis testing using either an independent t-test or Mann-Whitney U test, depending on the data distribution. The experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in narrative writing performance, particularly in idea development, coherence, and creativity. The control group displayed only marginal progress. These results suggest that comic strips effectively support the organization of narrative structure and enhance expression. The findings underscore the pedagogical value of comic strips as a multimodal instructional medium. Their visual nature facilitates idea generation and supports narrative coherence, leading to more confident and creative student writing. Comic strips can be a valuable addition to EFL writing instruction. Teachers are encouraged to integrate this medium to improve students' narrative writing skills and overall engagement.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Herman

Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Indonesia; herman@uhnp.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Narrative writing skills are one of the essential elements in language education that provide students with the opportunity to express their ideas in a creative and structured way (Parry, 2010). Narrative writing involves not only the ability to construct coherent sentences but also the ability to develop stories that can captivate the attention of readers (Çiçolar & Bulut, 2025). In language learning, mastering narrative writing skills gives students the ability to communicate personal experiences, develop critical thinking skills, and imagine (Maldonado, 2022). However, although these skills are critical, many students face difficulties in developing their writing skills, especially in terms of constructing an engaging and well-structured storyline. Many factors influence this, including a lack of motivation to write, difficulty in organizing ideas logically, and lack of creativity in constructing stories (Indriastuti, 2019). Therefore, educators need to find effective teaching methods to help students overcome these challenges and improve their writing skills (Freire Cabrera & Perea Beltrán, 2024; Karadima, 2016).

As technology advances, teaching methods have also changed, with the increasing integration of digital media having a significant impact on the way students learn and interact with information (Oliveira, 2018). In this digital era, students are more familiar with various forms of visual media, such as images, videos, and comics, which can influence the way they think and learn (Belda-Medina, 2024). Language teaching is no exception when facing this change. Visual media, especially comic strips, have been considered as potential tools to improve students' narrative writing skills (Doepker, McGrail, & Rieger, 2018). Comic strips are a form of media that combines text and images in a simple and easy-to-understand format. Although comic strips are often used in entertainment contexts, many studies have shown that this medium has the potential to be used in educational contexts, especially in teaching language and writing skills. Comic strips can provide students with the opportunity to see and analyze story structures visually, as well as inspire them to develop their creative ideas in writing narratives (Muyassaroh, Asib, & Marmanto, 2019).

Teaching writing in the context of first or second language acquisition in schools has always been a challenge (Anida, 2019). In recent years, we have seen an increasing variety of media using comics as a learning tool, raising questions such as how much educators and students can actually learn from comics as a medium for language teaching. In particular, there are few qualitative studies on how the process of creating comic strips can help young second-language learners improve their narrative writing skills. Unfortunately, academic educators have been slow to catch on to the trend of comic books as a potentially effective narrative teaching tool. Driven by the scarcity of available literature, as well as the obstacles we faced during implementation, we decided to evaluate the usefulness of comic strips in the context of school language teaching and focus our discussion on the writing aspect by using two lesser-known semantic qualifiers called 'behavioural verbs' and 'thought verbs' as data types (Akbar, 2019). However, although the use of comics in education is increasingly popular, there is still a limitation in the literature that examines in depth how comic strip media can specifically improve students' narrative writing skills (NU, 2023). Several existing studies highlight the use of visual media in general or using comics as a tool to improve reading or speaking skills (Rahayu & Widiastuti, 2019). However, the use of comic strips specifically to develop narrative writing skills has not been widely studied. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap in the literature by explicitly exploring how the use of comic strips can help students develop their narrative writing skills.

The problem to be addressed in this study is related to the difficulties faced by students in writing narratives. Many students experience a dead end when starting a story, constructing an organized plot, and developing strong characters (Irhan, 2025). These difficulties often stem from a limited understanding of how the elements in a story relate to each other or from a lack of creativity in imagining how the story should develop (Mayasari, 2020). Although conventional approaches to teaching writing, such as structured writing exercises or narrative text analysis, can help students in some aspects, these methods often fail to arouse students' interest and creativity in writing (Deligianni-Georgaka & Pouroutidi, 2016). Therefore, the introduction of comic strips as a learning medium can offer a new, more effective solution to overcome these problems (Widiarti, 2024). Comic strips not only teach students about narrative

structures—such as character introduction, timing, and conflict development—but also provide them with visual experiences that can enhance their understanding of these concepts (Tatsanajamsuk, 2024). Through the use of comic strips, students can easily see how story elements such as plot, characters, and settings are combined in a simple form, making it easier for them to compose their own stories (Sukavatee & Khlaisang, 2023).

The urgency of this research is critical, considering the increasing need to develop teaching approaches that are more interesting and relevant to the needs of today's students. In the context of language education, good narrative writing skills are important not only for academic purposes but also for students' future personal and professional development (Seo, 2024). In a world that increasingly prioritizes creativity and communication skills, the ability to write engaging and compelling narratives is essential (Pongsapan & Patak, 2021). The use of comic strips in language teaching offers a more interesting and interactive approach, which can increase students' interest in writing and develop their creativity. In addition, in today's digital era, students are more familiar with visual media forms, and therefore, they tend to be more interested and motivated when invited to learn through media that they know and like (Listyani, 2019). Therefore, this research is not only relevant in the context of language education but also in the context of pedagogical development in general, as it can help create more adaptive and innovative teaching methods.

The main objective of this study is to analyze how the use of comic strip media can improve students' narrative writing skills. This study aims to explore whether the introduction of comic strips in language teaching can help students overcome narrative writing difficulties, such as developing story ideas, coherent narrative structures, and creativity in writing. This study will also assess how comic strips can motivate students to be more involved in the writing process, which is often considered tedious or difficult. By using this method, students can gain a better understanding of the structure and important elements of narrative writing, thereby improving the quality of their writing. In addition, this study also aims to provide insight into how the use of visual media in language teaching can increase students' interest and engagement in learning and how this method can be practically applied in language classes.

Previous literature reviews on the use of visual media in education show that the use of images, graphics, and videos can improve students' understanding of the material being taught (Korosidou & Griva, 2024). Research on the use of comics in education has also shown that comics can help students understand various language and literary concepts, as well as improve their critical and analytical thinking skills (Iravani, 2023). For example, comics are used to teach reading and speaking skills, as well as to analyze various literary elements, such as plot and character (Flores-González, Flores, & Hernández, 2024). However, although there are a number of studies showing the success of using visual media in education, most of these studies have not explicitly assessed the use of comic strips to improve narrative writing skills (Eryilmaz, 2023). Existing research focuses more on the use of comics in teaching reading or speaking skills, while their influence on narrative writing skills has not been widely studied. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the existing literature by examining in depth the use of comic strips in teaching narrative writing.

The gap in this literature shows that there is still a lack of research exploring the influence of comic strip media on students' narrative writing skills. Although many studies discuss the use of visual media in general, research that focuses more on the use of comic strips in the context of teaching narrative writing is still minimal. This study aims to fill this gap and provide new contributions to the development of more effective and engaging language teaching methods. Thus, this study is expected to provide valuable solutions for educators in improving students' narrative writing skills, as well as enrich the existing literature on the use of visual media in education. The novelty of this study lies in the application of comic strips as a medium that combines text and images to teach narrative structures directly. Comic strips offer a more interactive and fun approach, combining visual and text understanding so that students can understand and apply narrative elements more practically and intuitively. This study also emphasizes the importance of creativity in narrative writing, which can be fostered more interestingly through the

use of visual media. Therefore, this study has the potential to make a significant contribution to the world of education, both in language teaching and in the field of pedagogy, more broadly.

2. METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, specifically the Nonequivalent Control Group Design. Quantitative research is a method where the researcher relies on mathematical analysis of numerical data (de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara, López-Martínez, Navarro-Navarro, & Cuéllar-Santiago, 2023). The choice of this design is based on practical and ethical considerations, considering that researchers do not have the full authority to randomize subjects in the context of formal education. The quasi-experimental design allows for the measurement of the effect of treatment on the experimental group and a comparison with the control group, although neither is randomly selected. This design is suitable for use in educational research where class conditions have been formed administratively and cannot be re-randomized without disrupting the teaching and learning process.

Table 1. Quasi-Experimental Research Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental	Q1	X	Q2
Control	Q3	Y	Q4

The population in this study were all students of grade VIII at SMP Negeri 3 Pematangsiantar, with a total of 330 students consisting of 11 classes. From this population, a sample of 60 students was selected and divided into two classes, namely the experimental class and the control class, each consisting of 30 students. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which considered the equality of academic characteristics between classes, teacher readiness, and the availability of time and facilities that support the implementation of the treatment. The experimental class was given narrative writing learning using comic strip media, while the control class followed conventional narrative writing learning according to the curriculum without the help of additional visual media.

Table 2. Sample of the research

No	Group	Class	Number of Students
1	Experimental	VIII-1	30
2	Control	VIII-2	30
Total			60

The research instrument used was a narrative writing ability test, which was compiled based on writing skill indicators that were adjusted to the curriculum and characteristics of grade VIII students. The test consisted of 20 short essay questions that reflected abilities in various aspects of narrative, including (1) orientation (description of setting, characters, and time), (2) plot arrangement (beginning, conflict, climax, and resolution), (3) cohesion and coherence between paragraphs, (4) selection of diction and narrative language style, and (5) originality of ideas and creativity in story delivery. The following are examples of test instrument questions: 1. Create an opening paragraph of a story that describes the morning atmosphere in a village; 2. Write the central conflict of a story about a student who experiences a dilemma between family and friendship; 3. Complete the following story with an unexpected but logical ending, 4. Arrange the storyline based on five random pictures given (pictures provided by the researcher), 5. Describe the main character in your favorite story using in-depth narrative sentences. (A total of 20 questions will be developed with variations of visual context, short texts, and other narrative descriptions).

The data analysis in this study includes several statistical tests to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments. A validity test was conducted using the Pearson product-moment correlation formula. If the calculated r -value exceeds the critical r -value from the table, the item is considered valid. Construct validity was assessed using IBM SPSS 27, by comparing the output value of r_{xy} in the "Annates" with the critical r at a 5% significance level, using the degrees of freedom ($df =$

N=2).

Reliability was tested to confirm the consistency of the instrument. An instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeds 0.60; otherwise, it is deemed unreliable. The reliability calculation in this study employed the Cronbach alpha formula.

To determine whether the data followed a normal distribution, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used, conducted via IBM SPSS 25. The decision rule was: if the p-value > 0.05 , the data is normally distributed (H_0 accepted); if $p \leq 0.05$, the data is not normally distributed (H_0 rejected).

A homogeneity test was performed to assess whether the data from different groups had similar variances. If the p-value > 0.05 , the variances are considered homogeneous (H_0 accepted); if $p \leq 0.05$, they are heterogeneous (H_0 rejected).

The choice of hypothesis testing depended on the outcomes of the normality and homogeneity tests. If data were not normally distributed or homogeneous, non-parametric tests were used; otherwise, parametric tests were applied.

Finally, the N-Gain test was used to measure students' learning improvement by comparing pre-test and post-test scores. The N-Gain score categorized the level of improvement as high, medium, or low.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This section provides an overview of each variable, which will be explained through descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics summarise the variables studied using sample data. Statistical data will be presented as a table containing the average value, maximum score, minimum score, standard deviation, and subject categorization. This is done to clarify the picture of the sample data but will not be used to draw broader conclusions.

Table 3. The results of the distribution of pre-test and post-test data for the control VS experimental class

Class	N	Pre-test	Post-test	Mean	D	d ²	Min Score	Max Score
Control	30	69.03	74.44	6.36	191	1623	45	72
Experimental	30	70.23	84.57	10.64	326	4858	65	83

This section provides an overview of each variable, which will be explained through descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics summarize the variables studied using sample data and are essential for understanding the general trends and distribution before conducting inferential analysis. Statistical data are presented in the form of a table containing the mean score, minimum and maximum scores, standard deviation, and the categorization of subjects based on their performance levels. This step is necessary to illustrate the characteristics of the data distribution for both the control and experimental groups; however, it does not serve as a basis for broader generalizations or inferential claims. From the descriptive table, it can be observed that the control group, which received conventional narrative writing instruction, had a pre-test mean score of 69.03 and a post-test mean score of 74.44. This indicates a relatively modest improvement of 6.36 points. The minimum and maximum scores in the post-test were 45 and 72, respectively, suggesting a moderate spread in student performance. The values of $D = 191$ and $d^2 = 1623$ reflect the cumulative and squared differences in scores, which contribute to further understanding of the group's variability. In contrast, the experimental group, which received instruction using comic strip media, showed a more substantial improvement. The pre-test mean score of 70.23 increased to a post-test mean of 84.57, resulting in a gain of 10.64 points. The minimum score in the post-test was 65, while the maximum reached 83, indicating a narrower range of scores and overall better performance. The values $D = 326$ and $d^2 = 4858$ further reinforce the magnitude of learning

gains and dispersion within the experimental group. These descriptive statistics suggest a noticeable difference in the post-test performance between the control and experimental groups. The experimental group not only showed more significant improvement in average scores but also displayed a more consistent level of achievement, as reflected in their narrower score range. However, as this section is descriptive in nature, these trends are not yet interpreted as statistically significant differences; such interpretation will be addressed in the inferential analysis section that follows.

Table 4. Normality Test Results

Shapiro-Wilk	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Experiment	Control	Experiment	Control
Sig.	.077	.0367	.134	.243
α	Sig. > 0.005 (5%)			
Description	Data is normally distributed			

To assess whether the data were normally distributed, the Shapiro–Wilk test was employed, as it is considered one of the most reliable methods for small to moderate sample sizes ($n < 50-100$). The test was conducted for both the pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental and control groups. The significance level (α) used was 0.05 (5%), meaning that if the Sig. (p-value) is greater than 0.05, the data are considered to follow a normal distribution. Based on the table, the experimental group's pre-test score yielded a p-value of 0.077, which is greater than the α level of 0.05. This indicates that the pre-test data in the experimental group are normally distributed. However, the pre-test score in the control group showed a p-value of 0.0367, which is less than 0.05, suggesting that the data in this group deviate from a normal distribution. For the post-test data, both the experimental and control groups had p-values of 0.134 and 0.243, respectively, both exceeding the significance threshold of 0.05. Therefore, the post-test scores for both groups are normally distributed. In summary, although the pre-test data for the control group do not meet the assumption of normality, the remaining datasets—including both post-tests and the experimental group's pre-test—are typically distributed. This has implications for the choice of statistical tests in the next stage. Because not all the data meet the normality assumption, particularly the control group's pre-test data, the analysis will consider both parametric and non-parametric options to ensure robustness. If data homogeneity is also met, a parametric test (Independent Samples t-test) will be used; otherwise, a non-parametric alternative (Mann–Whitney U test) will be applied.

Table 5. Homogeneity Test Results

Lavene Statistic	Pre-test	Post-test
Sig.	0.473	0.631
α	Sig. > 0.005 (5%)	
Description	Homogenic Data	

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was conducted to determine the homogeneity of variance between the control and experimental groups. This test is commonly used to assess whether the variances of two or more groups are statistically equal, which is one of the key assumptions for applying parametric tests such as the Independent Samples t-test. The significance level (α) used in this test is 0.05 (5%). Based on the table, the pre-test data show a significance value of 0.473, and the post-test data have a significance value of 0.631. Both values are more significant than the α level of 0.05, indicating that the variances between the control and experimental groups are statistically equal for both pre-test and post-test scores. This result confirms that the data meet the assumption of homogeneity of variance, thus fulfilling one of the critical conditions for conducting a parametric test. Therefore, combined with the earlier results of the normality test (where most of the data were normally distributed), it is appropriate to proceed with the Independent Samples t-test to compare the means of the two groups. However, alternative non-parametric tests will still be considered if other assumptions are violated or as part of a robustness check.

Table 6. T Test Results

	Pre-test (T-test)	Post-test (T-test)
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.581	0.000
α		0.005 (5%)
Description	H1 is rejected	H1 is accepted

An Independent Samples t-test was conducted to test the hypothesis regarding the effect of using comic strip media on students' narrative writing skills. This test was chosen based on the results of previous assumption tests, which confirmed that the data for both groups are normally distributed and homogeneous in variance—thus fulfilling the criteria for parametric analysis. From the pre-test comparison, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.581, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the initial narrative writing abilities between the control and experimental groups before the treatment. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is retained, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected at this stage. This finding suggests that both groups started from a relatively equal baseline in terms of their writing skills. In contrast, the post-test result shows a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This confirms that there is a statistically significant difference in post-treatment scores between the two groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This means that the use of comic strip media in the experimental group had a significantly positive effect on student's ability to write narrative texts compared to the control group, which received conventional instruction. These results strongly support the effectiveness of comic strip-based instruction as a pedagogical tool for enhancing narrative writing skills. The statistically significant improvement observed in the experimental group highlights the potential of integrating visual media to scaffold the writing process, stimulate imagination, and help students organize story elements more effectively.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the use of comic strip media has a significant positive impact on the development of students' narrative writing skills. The experimental group, which received instruction using comic strips, demonstrated notable improvements in various aspects of narrative writing, including story structure, idea development, coherence, and creativity, as evidenced by higher post-test scores compared to the control group. These results align with the theoretical framework of multimodal learning, particularly Paivio's Dual Coding Theory, which posits that information processed both visually and verbally is more likely to be retained and understood. In the context of narrative writing, comic strips offer dual channels of information—images and texts—that help learners visualize the progression of a story and translate that visualization into coherent written form (Doepker et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the use of comic strips as visual scaffolding resonates with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of mediated learning and the role of tools in supporting learners' cognitive development (Hardiansyah, Zainuddin, Sukitman, & Astutik, 2023). Comic strips serve as cognitive tools that enable students to engage with narrative elements more meaningfully. The structured visual sequence inherent in comic strips supports students in constructing narratives with clear orientation, complication, and resolution, which are essential components of compelling storytelling (Hardiansyah, 2022). The visual prompts also reduce the cognitive burden of idea generation, allowing students to focus more on linguistic expression and narrative coherence. These theoretical perspectives help explain the empirical results observed in this study and affirm the pedagogical value of integrating visual media into writing instruction.

The results are also consistent with previous empirical studies. For instance, research by (Hardiansyah, 2022) has shown that comics enhance students' motivation and language comprehension, especially in EFL contexts. Although much of the prior research has focused on receptive skills such as reading and vocabulary acquisition, this study extends those findings to

productive skills, particularly narrative writing. (Seo, 2024) also emphasized that comics encourage storytelling by providing students with a ready-made narrative structure, a notion that this study confirms. The improvement in students' narrative writing performance suggests that comic strips are not only effective in aiding comprehension but also in facilitating the construction of original written texts.

In terms of practical impact, the findings contribute significantly to both theoretical and pedagogical domains. From a theoretical standpoint, this study reinforces the relevance of multimodal literacy in EFL learning. The convergence of visual and linguistic modalities offers a richer learning experience, supporting the notion that literacy today goes beyond traditional text-based skills (Tatsanajamsuk, 2024). In modern classrooms, students must be able to interpret and produce meaning across different modes of communication, including visual, oral, and digital forms. Comic strips naturally blend these modalities, making them an ideal tool for fostering integrated language skills, especially narrative writing, which inherently depends on temporal and causal sequencing.

From a pedagogical perspective, the study provides empirical support for incorporating visual media—especially comic strips—into the writing curriculum. Language teachers often struggle to engage students in writing tasks, which are frequently perceived as challenging or uninspiring (de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara et al., 2023). The use of comic strips not only stimulates interest but also provides learners with concrete visual cues to organize their thoughts and narratives. By bridging the gap between abstract story elements and concrete representation, comics serve as a meaningful pre-writing strategy that supports idea development, vocabulary recall, and sentence construction (Eryilmaz, 2023). Teachers can use comic-based tasks to scaffold students' writing, gradually moving them from guided visual input to more autonomous composition.

Moreover, the findings imply that curriculum designers and policymakers should consider integrating media literacy and visual learning strategies into language teaching frameworks. This includes the development of instructional materials that incorporate comic strips and teacher training programs that emphasize multimodal instruction; in EFL contexts where students often struggle with language production, strategies that reduce linguistic pressure while increasing engagement can make a substantial difference in learning outcomes. As such, this study highlights an effective and practical approach to improving students' writing skills using a medium that is both accessible and pedagogically sound.

However, this study is not without limitations. One of the primary limitations lies in the sampling scope. The research was conducted in a single school with only two classes, totaling 60 students. While the quasi-experimental design and purposive sampling were appropriate for the educational context, the limited sample size and localized setting restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future studies involving a more extensive and diverse sample across multiple schools or regions would provide more robust conclusions and improve the external validity of the results. Another limitation is the duration of the intervention, which spanned only a few weeks. While the results demonstrate a significant improvement in students' narrative writing skills within this short period, it is unclear whether these gains would be sustained over time or whether they would transfer to other genres of writing or language skills. A longitudinal study would be beneficial to explore the long-term impact of comic strip-based instruction on students' literacy development.

Additionally, the study focused exclusively on cognitive outcomes—namely, students' narrative writing performance—without incorporating affective variables such as motivation, engagement, or attitudes toward writing. While anecdotal classroom observations suggested increased student enthusiasm, systematic data on learners' perceptions and experiences were not collected. Future research could adopt a mixed-method approach to capture both the quantitative gains in writing performance and the qualitative dimensions of learner experience, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical impact of comic strips.

Given these limitations, several recommendations for future research can be made. First, subsequent studies should aim to replicate this research across different educational contexts, including

rural and urban schools, varying proficiency levels, and diverse cultural backgrounds. This would help determine the universality of the comic strip approach in enhancing narrative writing. Second, future research could explore the integration of technology, such as digital comic creation tools, which further enhance student engagement and creativity. Investigating how digital storytelling platforms influence writing skills would extend the current findings and address the increasing role of technology in education. Third, more in-depth qualitative studies are needed to examine how students interact with comic strips during the writing process. Classroom discourse analysis, student think-aloud protocols, and interviews could yield insights into the cognitive strategies students employ when interpreting and composing narratives based on visual stimuli. Such investigations would deepen our understanding of the mechanisms through which comic strips facilitate learning. Finally, the use of comic strips in language instruction has essential social and ethical implications. In an age where students are inundated with digital and visual media, fostering visual literacy is not only pedagogically relevant but socially necessary. The ability to interpret and produce visual narratives equips students with essential 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, digital communication, and creative expression (Huang, Zhang, & Hudson, 2019). These competencies are increasingly valued in both academic and professional domains.

Ethically, educators must be cautious in selecting visual content that is culturally appropriate, inclusive, and aligned with educational goals. Comic strips, especially those drawn from online or popular media sources, may contain implicit messages or representations that need to be contextualized or modified for classroom use. Teachers must serve as critical mediators, guiding students not only in how to use visual media but also in how to interpret its social and cultural significance. The study thus underscores the importance of integrating ethical considerations into media-based instruction, ensuring that educational innovation remains aligned with inclusive and responsible pedagogical practices.

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide compelling evidence that the use of comic strip media significantly enhances students' narrative writing skills in EFL settings. Through the integration of visual and textual elements, comic strips offer an effective scaffold for students to structure their thoughts, develop plotlines, and express ideas creatively. While limitations exist, the pedagogical and theoretical contributions of this study are substantial. Future research should explore multimodal and media-based approaches in language education, with a focus on long-term outcomes, learner perspectives, and technological integration. Moreover, the responsible use of visual media in classrooms must remain a priority, balancing innovation with ethical and cultural sensitivity.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the challenges students face in writing narrative texts and to explore the effectiveness of comic strips as a supportive instructional medium in this area. Focusing on eighth-grade students at a junior high school, the research demonstrated that comic strips not only captured students' interest through humorous, engaging, and visually dynamic stories but also served as an effective scaffold for organizing ideas into coherent narratives. The process of rearranging images and events in proper sequence helped students internalize the structure of narrative writing, enabling them to develop plots with greater fluency and creativity. The study highlighted that comic strips, by offering a non-monotonous and visually stimulating format, facilitated students' ability to generate and express ideas in sentence form. Based on preliminary trials, the use of comic strips as learning instruments—paired with observation and dialogue transcription—proved valid and appropriate. Students were able to draw upon their experiences or imaginations, translate them into sketches, and transform these visuals into written narratives that reflected their personal style and linguistic capacity. Consequently, comic strips emerged not only as a motivational learning tool but also as an effective medium for fostering narrative writing skills. This research supports the integration of comic strips into English language instruction as a means to enhance students' ability to construct stories, express ideas, and enjoy the writing process. It is hoped that teachers will be inspired to adopt comic strips as part of their

teaching strategy to help learners articulate their thoughts more confidently and creatively in narrative text formats.

Acknowledgements: In this section, you can acknowledge any support given, which is not covered by the author's contribution or funding sections. This may include administrative and technical support, or donations in kind (e.g., materials used for experiments).

Conflicts of Interest: Declare conflicts of interest or state "The authors declare no conflict of interest." Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interests that may be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results.

REFERENCES

- Akbar, A. P. (2019). *Using English Comic Strips to Help Senior High School Students Write Narrative Text and Improve Their Writing Achievement*. FKIP Sastra Inggris.
- Anida, N. (2019). *The Use Of Comic Strips To Improve The Students' Reading Comprehension Of Narrative Text (An Action Research At The Seventh Grade Students Of MTsN 3 Medan In Academic Year 2019/2020)*. Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara.
- Belda-Medina, J. (2024). Inclusive Education through Digital Comic Creation in Higher Learning Environments. *Social Sciences*, 13(5), 272.
- Çiçolar, R., & Bulut, B. (2025). The Effect of the use of Educational Digital Comics in Primary School Fourth Grade Turkish Course on Students' Writing Skills and Self-Efficiency. *Türk Akademik Yayınlar Dergisi (TAY Journal)*, 9(1), 68–96.
- de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara, M. I., López-Martínez, O., Navarro-Navarro, V., & Cuéllar-Santiago, F. (2023). Writing, creativity, and artificial intelligence. ChatGPT in the university context. *Comunicar*, 31(77), 47–57. <https://doi.org/10.3916/C77-2023-04>
- Deligianni-Georgaka, A., & Pouroutidi, O. (2016). Creating digital comics to motivate young learners to write: A case study. *Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning*, 7(1), 233.
- Doepker, G. M., McGrail, E., & Rieger, A. (2018). Using comic books to improve three elementary students' reading and writing skills: a multi-case study analysis. *Read an Online Journal for Literacy Educators*, 3(6).
- Eryılmaz, R. (2023). Opinions of Students Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language on the Use of E-Portfolio in Writing Lessons. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 11(4), 85–97. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.11n.4p.85>
- Flores-González, N., Flores, V. C., & Hernández, M. Z. (2024). The Influence of E-Comics on English Lexical Competence in Virtual Higher Education. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 12(2), 149–172. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.12.2.07>
- Freire Cabrera, M. F., & Perea Beltrán, M. F. (2024). *The Use of Comics to Develop EFL Students' Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Acquisition*.
- Hardiansyah, F. (2022). Snowball Throwing: A Method To Uplift Elementary School Students' Responsibility on Environment. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(3), 3853–3864. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1966>
- Hardiansyah, F., Zainuddin, Z., Sukitman, T., & Astutik, C. (2023). Development Of Learning Media Smart Book To Improve Understanding Of Elementary School Students In Science Learning. *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan*, 26(1), 72–87. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24252/lp.2023v26n1i7>
- Huang, X., Zhang, J., & Hudson, L. (2019). Impact of math self-efficacy, math anxiety, and growth mindset on math and science career interest for middle school students: the gender moderating effect. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 34, 621–640.
- Indriastuti, M. O. (2019). *Improving the Students' Writing Skills of Narrative Text Through Textless Comic at SMK Tritech Informatika Medan*. Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara.
- Iravani, N. (2023). The Effect of Task-Based Writing Instruction on Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL

- Learners' Self-Efficacy and Epistemic Beliefs. *Educational Considerations*, 49(1).
<https://doi.org/10.4148/0146-9282.2354>
- Irhan, M. J. (2025). *Using Comic Strips to Increase Students' Narrative Ability*. Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan.
- Karadima, A.-I. (2016). *The use and effect of comic book reading on the reading attitudes and reading habits of Greek (typically developed and dyslexic) EFL learners in a mixed ability EFL classroom*. University of Bolton, New York College Athens.
- Korosidou, E., & Griva, E. (2024). Fostering Students' L2 Writing Skills and Intercultural Awareness Through Digital Storytelling In Elementary Education. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 16(5), 585–597. <https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2024.355>
- Listyani. (2019). The use of a visual image to promote narrative writing ability and creativity. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 2019(80), 193–224. <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2019.80.10>
- Maldonado, P. (2022). *It's Comical! A mixed-method study of EFL teachers' experiences using comic books at the upper secondary level*.
- MAYASARI, D. (2020). *THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMIC STRIPS TO FACILITATE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ON NARRATIVE TEXT AT THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE NINTH GRADE OF SMP MMT BANGUN JAYA MESUJI LAMPUNG IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020*. UIN Raden Intan Lampung.
- Muyassaroh, M. N., Asib, A., & Marmanto, S. (2019). The Teacher's Beliefs and Practices on the Use of Digital Comics in Teaching Writing: A qualitative case study. *International Journal of Language Teaching and Education*, 3(1), 45–60.
- NU, M. (2023). *THE EFFECT OF COMIC STRIPS ON STUDENTS WRITING RECOUNT TEXT AT EIGHT GRADE OF MTs. STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY*.
- Oliveira, E. S. S. (2018). *Comic strips as a multimodal teaching tool to promote literacies*. Universidade do Porto (Portugal).
- Parry, B. (2010). Moving stories: Exploring children's uses of media in their story telling and the implications for teaching about narrative in schools. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 9(1), 58–72.
- Pongsapan, N. P., & Patak, A. A. (2021). Improving content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics using movie trailer media. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 10(2), 728–737. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v10i2.21162>
- Rahayu, N. S., & Widiastuti, R. (2019). The use of comic picture in improving student's ability in writing narrative text. *ELang | An English Language Education Journal*, 4(2), 36–42.
- Seo, J. Y. (2024). Exploring the Educational Potential of ChatGPT: AI-Assisted Narrative Writing for EFL College Students. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 43, 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2024.43.01>
- Sukavatee, P., & Khlaisang, J. (2023). A Survey of Research into English Teaching Approaches and Instructional Media in Thailand. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 16(2), 752–769.
- Tatsanajamsuk, P. (2024). Unpacking the Roles of Reading-to-Write and Writing-Only Approaches: A Comparative Case Study of Thai Undergraduate Students. *REFlections*, 31(1), 199–234.
<https://doi.org/10.61508/refl.v31i1.272763>
- Widiarti, Y. (2024). Canva and Comic Strips: Facilitate on Teaching Writing Instruction. *International Journal of Contemporary Studies in Education (IJ-CSE)*, 3(3), 245–255.