

Analysis Of Basic Writing Ability Through Pictured Word Cards In Grade II Students Of MI Miftahusuar Nw Loloan

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze basic writing skills through picture word card media, identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in its use, and describe its impact on writing learning for second-grade students of MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan in the academic year 2025/2026. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach with 21 second-grade students, classroom teachers, and the school principal as subjects. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation from May 25 to June 15, 2026. The data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model (Data Reduction, Data Display, Conclusion Drawing) and validated through source, technique, and time triangulation. The findings reveal that the writing learning process using picture word card media proceeded systematically and in stages through seven phases: card preparation, image demonstration, writing words on the blackboard, student imitation, introduction to sentence construction, educational games, and individual guidance. The supporting factors include teacher creativity, student enthusiasm, availability of basic facilities, conducive learning environment, and principal support. The inhibiting factors include time constraints, differences in student cognitive and motor abilities, limited card numbers, and physical condition. The impact of using this media is highly positive and significant, including improved writing skills (neatness, correct letter formation, proper use of capital letters and punctuation), increased vocabulary, enhanced learning motivation and interest, increased self-confidence and active participation, as well as improved ability to compose simple sentences structurally. In conclusion, picture word card media is effective for basic writing instruction at the elementary level and is recommended for sustainable implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role as the primary foundation in developing quality human resources. Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, education is defined as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential. This potential includes spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by themselves, society, the nation, and the state. At the Elementary School (SD) or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level, education aims to instill basic knowledge and skills that are very useful for children's continued studies and their lives in society. This is in line with the operational guidelines of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency (2025), which emphasize mastery of basic literacy, especially for students in lower grades (Phase A).

The learning process is the heart of educational activities. According to Hamalik (2014), in a modern context that is still relevant to the current curriculum, learning is a well-organized combination of human elements, materials, facilities, equipment, and procedures that influence each other to achieve learning objectives. Learning activities will be meaningful when carried out in a comfortable environment and provide a sense of security for students. This conducive environment is crucial for meeting children's psychological needs, attracting interest, and optimally stimulating their talents, especially in mastering basic skills such as reading and writing (Slameto, 2019; Muri Yusuf, 2019).

Within the scope of Indonesian language learning in elementary schools, language skills encompass four fundamental aspects: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The process of learning a language is essentially learning to communicate. Therefore, Indonesian language learning, starting from the most basic level, is directed at improving students' ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. Writing is one of the most important productive language skills, yet also the most complex to master. Through writing, one can express ideas, thoughts, and feelings in written form systematically. Basic writing, or beginning writing, is the main foundation for students' academic development at subsequent levels. If students fail to master this skill in the lower grades, they will face serious learning difficulties in the upper grades (Khodhori et al., 2025).

Writing skills develop gradually along with a child's cognitive growth, language development, and motor development. Based on guidelines from the Compilation Team (2024) and Chowdhury et al. (2025), the stages of writing development for elementary school students can be classified into three main mechanical phases. First, the Mechanical Writing Stage (Foundation Stage). At this stage, the main focus is on smoothing hand movements to form letters and written symbols, practicing fine motor coordination, holding a pencil correctly, and copying letters from the blackboard. Second, the Word Writing Stage (Spelling and Vocabulary Stage). Students begin to use written language more accurately through mastery of spelling and vocabulary expansion. Third, the Idea Writing Stage (Expression Stage). At this stage, technical motor issues have been resolved, and students begin to focus on constructing coherent sentences to convey ideas or imagination (Department for Education, 2025; Truxius et al., 2024).

Specifically for second-grade students (in Phase A of the Independent Curriculum), the writing learning outcomes targets are beginning to become more structured. Students are expected to be able to produce neat and legible handwriting, write simple texts of around 3 to 5 sentences, use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and at the beginning of names, use punctuation (such as periods) correctly, and begin to construct simple sentences using the Subject-Predicate-Object (SPO) pattern (Sudarman et al., 2024). However, the reality on the ground shows that achieving these targets is not easy. The process of learning basic writing in lower grades often faces various complex obstacles.

Based on initial observations conducted in Class II of MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan, Bayan District, a number of empirical problems related to students' basic writing skills were identified. Cognitive and motoric difficulties were found in students in constructing simple sentences, a lack of vocabulary mastery, and low levels of student activity and interest during writing lessons. The conventional method, which is predominantly teacher-centered with writing activities on the whiteboard, makes students feel bored, unmotivated, and passive. This condition is in line with the opinion of experts that factors inhibiting writing skills are often caused by less varied learning methods, the lack of use of innovative learning media, and low intrinsic student interest (Zhang et al., 2025; Truxius et al., 2025).

To address these issues, pedagogical innovation is needed through the use of interactive learning media that align with the psychological characteristics of children aged 7-8 years. Picture word cards offer a promising alternative solution. Picture word cards are sized cards containing visualizations (images) of objects, animals, or real-life situations, accompanied by representative text (words) underneath or on the reverse side. According to Arsyad (2017) and reaffirmed in various recent studies (Hidayati, 2021), visual media can combine facts and ideas concretely,

stimulate thinking, and quickly trigger students' mental associations. The use of this media, based on games and visualization, can attract interest, focus attention, and create meaningful learning experiences.

The importance of using pictorial media in early literacy has also been demonstrated by several previous studies. Ahmad Fauzi (2021) found in his research that the use of picture cards had a significant positive impact on improving basic literacy skills, both reading and writing, in elementary school students. Nur Aini (2021) examined the use of word cards and concluded that they effectively helped students construct simple sentence syntax. Sri Wahyuni (2020) also demonstrated that students became significantly more active and motivated when visual media was incorporated into simple writing activities. Meanwhile, research by Irma Heryani and Jimat Susilo (2021) demonstrated that picture cards can spark students' creative ideas and imaginations in expressing experiences in written form. More recently, Irsanti et al. (2024) emphasized that structuring beginning-writing instruction according to well-defined developmental phases, as outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum, helps teachers select learning media that match students' current writing stage, from technical letter formation to increasingly independent sentence construction. In a similar vein, V. and Cempena (2019) demonstrated that the use of appropriate instructional media has a direct positive effect on the overall quality of elementary students' literacy, further reinforcing the theoretical rationale for adopting visual-verbal media such as picture word cards in this study.

Starting from the phenomena, theoretical studies, and research gaps above, this research has a high urgency to be implemented. In contrast to previous research, which tends to be quantitative and experimental, this research uses a descriptive qualitative lens to deeply explore the processes, dynamics, and meanings behind the use of these media. Therefore, this research aims to: (1) Analyze how the process and development of basic writing skills through the use of picture word cards media in class II MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan; (2) Identify and analyze supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of learning using these media; and (3) Comprehensively describe the impact of the use of picture word cards media on students' writing skills, motivation, and learning behavior.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research is a method based on post-positivism philosophy, used to conduct research in natural settings. In this case, the researcher acts as the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out through triangulation (combination), data analysis is inductive, and the research results emphasize meaning rather than mere statistical generalization (Moleong, 2021). The descriptive approach was chosen because the main objective of this study is to describe, explain, and analyze in depth the phenomenon of basic writing learning through picture word cards, the data of which consists of spoken words, written documents, and subject behavior (Husnul Abdi, 2021).

The location of this research is Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Miftahusuar NW Loloan, located in Loloan Hamlet, Bayan District, North Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The selection of this location was based on considerations of suitability with the problems studied as well as the contextual uniqueness of the madrasah, which is trying to integrate visual media amidst limited facilities. The research was conducted for a period of approximately three weeks, namely from May 25, 2026 to June 15, 2026. The subjects in this study were determined using a purposive sampling technique, involving 21 second-grade students (consisting of 11 male students and 10 female students) as the main subjects of observation, as well as Mrs. Suriani, S.Pd. as the second-grade teacher, and Mrs. Nasari, S.Pd. as the Principal, as the main informants.

The data sources in this study are classified into primary and secondary data (Hardani et al., 2020). Primary data were obtained directly from the field through observation and interviews with informants. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from literature, journals, supporting

articles, and official school documents. The data collection techniques used include three complementary methods: (1) Participatory observation, where the researcher was directly present in the classroom during the learning process to observe class dynamics, student activity levels, and the implementation of picture word cards, guided by an observation sheet covering four indicators, namely students' letter/word imitation accuracy, correctness of letter and word spelling, neatness of handwriting (including letter spacing and capitalization), and students' ability to construct simple sentences independently, each rated qualitatively on a scale from Not Yet Visible to Consistently Visible; (2) In-depth interviews, conducted semi-structured with the principal, teachers, and student representatives using an interview guideline organized around four main themes, namely the process of preparing and implementing picture word cards, students' progress in writing skills, supporting and inhibiting factors, and students' motivation and engagement, to explore their views, perceptions, supporting/inhibiting factors, and motivation; and (3) Documentation studies, in the form of collecting Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP), student worksheets/writings, attendance lists, and photo documentation of classroom activities (Rachmat Kriyanto, 2020).

The data analysis technique used refers to the interactive data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2021). This model consists of three simultaneous activity streams. First, Data Reduction, which is the process of selecting, simplifying, focusing, and abstracting raw data obtained from field notes, interview results, and documents. Second, Data Display, which is arranging the reduced information into a logical and systematic narrative description, thus facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the events. Third, Conclusion Drawing and Verification, which involves formulating the essence of the data presented, which is then continuously verified throughout the research to obtain final and valid conclusions.

To ensure that the data and findings of this study are scientifically sound, the researcher conducted a data validity (rigor) test. The credibility test (internal validity) was conducted through extended field observations, increased diligence, and triangulation techniques. The triangulation applied included source triangulation (comparing information from teachers, students, and the principal), technical triangulation (cross-checking observational data with interviews and documents), and time triangulation. Furthermore, the researcher ensured transferability, dependability (process reliability), and confirmability (result objectivity) through systematic recording and intensive guidance (Moleong, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Research Location

This research was conducted at MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan, North Lombok Regency. This madrasah is an Islamic-based elementary education institution under the auspices of the Nahdlatul Wathan Education Foundation. Physically, the madrasah environment is quite beautiful, quiet, and far from the noise of the main road, thus creating a conducive atmosphere for students to concentrate on learning. Although the facilities and infrastructure are relatively simple, the commitment of the teaching and educational staff at this madrasah is very high in facilitating students' learning needs. Based on the Independent Curriculum guidelines (Educational Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency, 2025), second-grade students at this madrasah are in Phase A, where basic literacy (reading and writing) is the main learning achievement target.

Basic Writing Learning Process Using Picture Word Cards

Based on classroom observations, document reviews (RPP), and in-depth interviews, it is clear that the implementation of picture word cards in Indonesian language lessons in second grade was not done instantly, but rather through a systematic, gradual, and structured procedural process. There are seven crucial stages implemented by teachers in the learning process:

First, the media preparation stage. Teachers independently plan and design picture cards (handmade) to suit the current thematic learning theme, such as animals, fruits, or objects found

around the classroom. Teachers use cardboard and simple coloring tools to create visually appealing media for young children.

Second, the Demonstration and Apperception Stage. The teacher begins the core activity by showing pictures to the front of the class without first showing the accompanying text. The children are asked to guess and name the objects in the pictures collectively. This serves as a cognitive trigger to activate students' prior knowledge.

Third, the Visual Writing Stage. After students have successfully named the object, the teacher sticks the card on the board and demonstratively writes the correct spelling of the word directly below or next to the picture, while pronouncing each letter (for example: K-U-C-I-N-G).

Fourth, the Imitation Stage. In this mechanical stage, students are asked to copy or imitate the writing on the board into their workbooks. The teacher walks around to monitor how students hold their writing tools, the direction of their strokes, and the neatness of their spacing.

Fifth, the Sentence Construction Stage. Once students have mastered copying words, the teacher gradually increases the cognitive level of the task by guiding students to construct simple sentences involving the words. For example, from the word "book," develop it into "This is a new book" or "Budi reads a book."

Sixth, the Educational Games (Gamification) Stage. To ward off boredom and improve memory retention, teachers incorporate interactive games. Some game models used include "guess the word," "matching a picture card with a random word card," and "a quick writing contest on the whiteboard."

Seventh, the Individual Guidance Stage. For students identified as being slow in stringing letters, teachers provide special assistance (scaffolding) in between classes, or implement a peer-tutoring strategy by assigning advanced students to mentor their peers.

Regarding this implementation process, the class II teacher (Mrs. Suriani, S.Pd.) in the interview session confirmed:

"Picture cards are concrete. Second-grade children still need real objects to visualize words. If I say 'cat,' they won't necessarily remember the shape of the letters. But if I show a picture of a cat, then I write the word CAT, they understand more quickly. This media also makes them active, not just listening silently. They can see, touch, and write... It's all gradual, not rushed. I pay attention to each child's abilities."

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Use of Picture Word Cards

The success of a pedagogical intervention is inseparable from the ecosystem that surrounds it. Data analysis identified several factors that directly contribute as supporting factors and inhibiting factors.

Supporting factors encompass several essential aspects. Internally, the enthusiasm, curiosity, and intrinsic motivation of second-grade students were at a very high level when faced with media with attractive colors and visual forms. Externally, the creativity and dedication of teachers were the main driving forces. Teachers did not rely only on printed materials, but were willing to invest their time and energy in creating demonstration instruments independently. Furthermore, the school leadership's policies were very accommodating. The principal (Mrs. Nasari, S.Pd.) explicitly stated her institutional support:

"We always support teachers in using innovative and creative learning media. The school provides funding for the production of media, such as cardboard, colored markers, and other stationery. Teachers are also given the freedom to be creative... I see firsthand that the children are more enthusiastic and less bored."

On the other hand, there are inhibiting factors that present unique challenges for educators. Time constraints are a classic obstacle; designing a classroom dynamic based on card games requires longer time for discipline and student turn allocation compared to a one-way lecture method. The second challenge is the diversity of students' cognitive and motor skills. Within a single class, there is a significant range of differences in writing speed. Some students are able to copy quickly and neatly, while a small number of others still struggle with spelling syllables. The third obstacle relates to logistical limitations, namely the number or set of card media created is still limited to certain themes, so sometimes they must be used in rotation.

However, these obstacles can be adaptively mitigated by teachers through instructional differentiation and personal guidance (Sudarman et al., 2024).

The Impact of Learning to Write Through Picture Word Cards

Weeks of longitudinal observation and evaluation of student assignment documents revealed significant transformations thanks to this visual media intervention. The positive impacts were comprehensive, encompassing cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

In the technical and psychomotor domains, there was an accelerated improvement in writing quality. Evaluations showed that students' spelling became significantly more accurate. Confusion in distinguishing letters with similar shapes (such as b and d, or p and q) decreased dramatically because students could immediately confirm their spelling in the text on the cards. Furthermore, the neatness of handwriting, the proportion of capital letters, and the habit of spacing between words showed significant improvements (Truxius et al., 2024).

In the cognitive linguistic realm, exposure to pictorial media increases vocabulary acquisition exponentially. The most encouraging aspect is the developmental transition from mechanical writing (copying words) to expressing ideas (composing sentences). Students, initially passive, gradually become able to combine subjects, predicates, and objects into simple, grammatically complete and meaningful sentences.

In the affective and psychological domains, there was a massive increase in student engagement. Play-based learning methods eliminated academic tension. Students no longer felt like they were being tested, but rather like they were playing. This boosted their self-efficacy to step up to the front of the class, respond to teacher questions, and collaborate with their peers. One student shared this candid testimony:

"I like learning using colorful pictures, but sometimes I get bored if I only use writing on the board. I like it because there are lots of interesting pictures so I can easily understand the meaning of the pictures."

Discussion (Theoretical Discussion)

The synthesis of all empirical findings at MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan provides strong theoretical justification for various grand theories in educational psychology and language. The operationalization process of these picture-word cards is highly correlated with Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development. According to Piaget, children aged 7 to 8 years (the average age of second-grade students) are in the transition phase towards the concrete operational stage. Their thinking capacity is closely tied to the manipulation of physical objects and visible visual representations. They are not yet fully capable of processing abstract information (such as a series of pure alphabet letters) without any anchors to reality. Picture word cards act as a cognitive bridge that connects abstract entities (written text) with concrete reality (images of objects) (Khodhori et al., 2025; Compilation Team, 2024).

Furthermore, the success of this media integration can be examined through the lens of Dual Coding Theory, proposed by Allan Paivio (1971) and reconfirmed in recent research by Zhang et al. (2025). This theory posits that human cognition processes information through two independent but interconnected systems: the visual subsystem (for images/non-verbal) and the verbal subsystem (for language/text). When MI Miftahusuar students see a card depicting an "apple" next to the words "A-P-E-L," their brains process the memory through two pathways simultaneously. As a result, the resulting memory or cognitive trace becomes much stronger, more durable, and easier to retrieve than long-term memory. This explains why students remember word spellings more quickly when learning with picture cards compared to rote-learning (blind memorization) on a blackboard.

The teacher's teaching methodology, which incorporates games, praise, and peer collaboration at the front of the class, resonates with Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Second-grade students are highly susceptible to modeling. When one student steps up to the front of the class, correctly arranges the cards, and receives applause from the teacher, other students will imitate that proactive behavior. This type of positive reinforcement creates a dynamic, healthy, competitive classroom climate that remains psychologically calming for the children.

Furthermore, from a pragmatic pedagogical perspective, these findings extend and confirm the results of previous research. The finding that flashcards improve reading and writing literacy is consistent with a study by Ahmad Fauzi (2021). Similarly, the observation that picture cards stimulate the syntactic construction of simple sentences aligns with the studies of Nur Aini (2021) and Sri Wahyuni (2020). Complementing previous research that generally focuses on test results (output), this study contributes to scientific knowledge by mapping in detail the environmental factors and sociological processes within the classroom (processes, barriers, and enablers) that contribute to the success or failure of the media. However, a critical reading of these previous studies also reveals an important limitation that this research helps to address. Ahmad Fauzi (2021), Nur Aini (2021), and Sri Wahyuni (2020) predominantly relied on quantitative pre-test/post-test designs that measured aggregate literacy scores, which tend to treat picture-word-card media as a uniformly effective "black box" intervention without accounting for classroom heterogeneity. The present findings suggest a more nuanced picture: the positive impact of the media at MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan was not automatic, but was contingent on teachers actively compensating for resource constraints (a limited number of theme cards) and wide variation in students' motor and cognitive readiness through differentiation and peer tutoring. This indicates that Dual Coding Theory and Piaget's concrete-operational framework, while explaining why the media works in principle, do not by themselves guarantee success in the field; teacher agency and adaptive classroom management appear to function as a necessary mediating factor that the largely outcome-focused quantitative studies above did not examine. This critical distinction underscores the added scientific value of a qualitative lens for this particular research problem. Ultimately, this study proves that basic literacy competencies—as mandated by the Independent Curriculum (Phase A)—can be brilliantly implemented by rural madrasas with modest infrastructure, provided they are accompanied by appropriate pedagogical innovations from teachers.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on a series of observations, data collection, in-depth analysis, and theoretical discussions, three comprehensive conclusions can be drawn. First, the process of learning basic writing skills through picture word cards in Class II of MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan took place in a very systematic, structured, and effective manner. This learning was orchestrated by the teacher through seven essential stages: starting from the preparation of theme-based demonstrations, visual apperception, writing demonstration, the mechanical imitation stage, escalation towards composing simple sentences, integration of educational games (gamification), and individual guidance interventions for students with special needs (slow writing).

Second, the implementation of this learning innovation was supported by a constellation of strong supporting factors, namely the students' explosive motivation and curiosity, the teachers' tireless creativity in creating media, and a supportive school atmosphere with regulatory and financial support from the principal. Behind this success, challenges remained in the form of limited teaching time allocation, the wide level of differentiation in students' motor intelligence, the limited number of theme cards, and students' physical fatigue. These obstacles were successfully overcome adaptively through time adjustments and the implementation of peer tutoring.

Third, the impact of implementing picture-word cards is very positive and transformative. A paradigm shift has occurred from passive to active (student-centered) learning. This media intervention has empirically been able to stimulate improvements in the mechanical quality of writing (neatness, letter form, punctuation), expand vocabulary, sharpen the ability to weave basic sentences, and psychologically boost students' courage, self-efficacy, and academic enthusiasm. Based on these conclusions, this study recommends that a pedagogical approach using applied visual media such as picture word cards be adopted consistently, modified with various contemporary themes, and mainstreamed into basic literacy learning strategies (Phase A) in other elementary education institutions.

Research Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the number of subjects was relatively limited, involving only 21 second-grade students along with the class teacher and the principal as informants at a single research site, so the findings cannot be statistically generalized to other classes or schools with different characteristics. Second, this research was conducted at only one madrasah (MI Miftahusuar NW Loloan), which has its own particular institutional culture, resources, and teacher competencies; the process, supporting and inhibiting factors, and impacts identified here may differ in other madrasahs or schools with different infrastructure, socio-economic contexts, or teacher capacities. Third, the relatively short duration of the study, approximately three weeks, means that the observed improvements in students' writing skills reflect only short-term developmental trends and may not capture the sustainability of these gains over a longer period, such as a full semester or academic year. Future studies are encouraged to involve a larger and more varied number of subjects across multiple schools, and to be conducted over a longer duration, in order to strengthen the transferability and robustness of these findings.

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