

## A Review On The Implementation Of Picture Series In Teaching Writing Skills

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### ABSTRACT

*This library research reviews recent studies on the use of picture series to improve students' writing skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Writing is often difficult for students because they have trouble finding ideas, organizing sentences, and using correct grammar. Many teachers and researchers have tried different ways to help students write better. One popular technique is using picture series as visual aids. This study collected data from five recent articles published between 2019 and 2024. The reviewed studies used different methods, including experimental research, classroom action research, and qualitative reviews. All studies reported positive results. Students who learned writing through picture series were more motivated, could organize their ideas better, and wrote more creatively. Even students with low English skills improved when teachers used pictures to support their writing. However, some teachers reported challenges, such as preparing good picture materials and managing large classes during picture-based activities. Despite these challenges, the findings strongly suggest that picture series are an effective and engaging tool for teaching writing. They help students become more confident and reduce the fear of writing in English. This research recommends that teachers use picture series more often, especially in EFL contexts, and that future studies explore digital picture tools to make this technique even more practical in modern classrooms.*

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### 1. Introduction

In many schools around the world, English has become one of the most important subjects. This is because English is not only an academic subject but also a language for international communication in business, travel, education, and technology (Richards, 2021; Aswad et al., 2019; Rahman, 2018; Pratiwi et al., 2026). In learning English, there are four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing is often the most difficult skill for students to master, especially for students who learn English as a foreign language (EFL) or as a second language (ESL).

Writing skills require students to generate ideas, organize their thoughts logically, select appropriate vocabulary, and apply correct grammar and punctuation (Hyland, 2022). However, many students find it difficult to write even simple sentences in English. One common reason is their fear of making grammatical or vocabulary mistakes, which reduces their confidence in writing. Students often do not know how to start writing, how to connect ideas smoothly, or how to develop ideas into meaningful paragraphs. These difficulties can negatively affect their overall writing performance. Such problems are widely found in many EFL contexts, including Indonesia, where English is taught as a foreign language (Sari & Wulandari, 2021).

Teachers play an important role in helping students overcome difficulties in writing. One way teachers try to help is by using various teaching techniques that make writing more interesting and easier to understand. One technique that many researchers have studied is the use of picture series in teaching writing skills (Junaid et al., 2025; Prihandoko et al., 2019; Prihandoko et al., 2022). Picture series are groups of pictures that show events happening in a certain order. For example, a picture series may show a boy waking up, brushing his teeth, eating breakfast, and going to school. These pictures help students see the sequence of actions and make it easier for them to write a story (Rahmah & Yuliana, 2020; Andini et al., 2026; Rahman & Weda, 2018).

The use of pictures in language teaching has been widely applied for many years. Many language experts agree that pictures can make the learning process more meaningful and enjoyable for students (Anggawirya et al., 2021; Said

et al., 2021; Junaid et al., 2023). Pictures provide clear visual support that helps students understand ideas more easily and remember new vocabulary. They also help students imagine situations and connect their ideas when learning a language. Several studies have shown that using pictures can reduce students' anxiety and increase their motivation, especially in writing activities (Liu & Shi, 2022; Junaid & Andini, 2025).

Using picture series can help students in several ways. First, it helps them generate ideas for writing. Many students cannot write because they do not know what to write about. When they look at pictures, they get ideas about people, actions, places, and events. Second, picture series help students organize their thoughts. They can see the order of events and write sentences in the correct sequence. Third, picture series help students improve their vocabulary because they learn new words related to the pictures (Tran et al., 2023).

Researchers have found that students who learn writing with picture series can write better sentences, longer paragraphs, and more complete stories. For example, a study by Hasanah et al. (2022) showed that using picture series increased students' writing scores and made them feel more confident. Another study by Wang and Zhang (2023) found that picture series helped students write more creatively and reduced their fear of making mistakes.

Even though many researchers have found benefits of using picture series, there are also some challenges. Some teachers say that it takes time to prepare good picture materials. Not all textbooks include enough picture series for writing activities. In some schools, especially in rural areas, there are few resources such as computers, printers, or internet access to find or create picture materials (Sari et al., 2021). Also, some students still find it difficult to describe pictures in English because of limited vocabulary or grammar knowledge (Ali & Noor, 2020).

Another challenge is that teachers sometimes focus only on the pictures but do not teach students how to connect sentences using proper transitions like "first," "then," "after that," and "finally." As a result, students write disconnected sentences instead of complete paragraphs. Therefore, teachers need proper training on how to use picture series effectively in writing classes (Hyland, 2022; Tran et al., 2023).

Despite these challenges, many studies recommend the use of picture series because the benefits outweigh the difficulties. Picture series can be used in various writing activities, such as narrative writing, descriptive writing, recount texts, and procedure texts (Wang & Zhang, 2023). For example, in narrative writing, students can look at a picture series and write a story about what happens. In recount writing, students can describe personal experiences that match the pictures.

This study employed a library research approach, meaning that data were not collected directly from students or teachers but were obtained from books, journals, and research articles related to the use of picture series in teaching writing skills. This approach allows the researcher to examine existing studies and gain a broad understanding of how picture series have been applied in writing instruction, as well as the benefits and challenges reported in previous research. Library research is valuable because it helps identify research trends, gaps, and effective practices without requiring direct data collection, making it efficient in terms of time and resources (Hart, 2020). To conduct the study, the researcher searched for relevant articles published between 2018 and 2025 using online databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and academic journals. Keywords such as "picture series," "teaching writing," "EFL writing," and "visual aids in language teaching" were used to locate relevant sources. Only studies published within the last seven years were included to ensure that the findings were current and relevant to contemporary EFL writing instruction (Rahmah & Yuliana, 2020; Hyland, 2022).

This article is organized as follows: The next section describes the methodology used in this library research. After that, the findings section presents the results from various studies about picture series in teaching writing. Next, the discussion explains the meaning of the findings and connects them to teaching practice. Finally, the article ends with a conclusion summarizing the main points and giving suggestions for teachers and future researchers.

Through this library research, it is hoped that teachers can better understand how to use picture series to help their students write in English. It is also hoped that this article can inspire other researchers to explore new ways to make writing classes more interesting and effective. Writing is a key skill for academic success and future careers, and techniques like picture series can make learning to write more enjoyable and less stressful for students (Tran et al., 2023; Wang & Zhang, 2023).

## 2. Methodology

This study is library research. It does not involve going to schools or collecting data directly from teachers or students. Instead, it collects and analyzes information from books, research journals, and other scientific writings about using picture series in teaching writing skills. Library research is very useful because it helps us understand what many researchers have already studied, what methods they used, and what results they found (Hart, 2020).

In this research, the writer used content analysis as the main technique. First, the researcher searched for articles and journals published from 2018 to 2025. This was done to make sure all information was recent and still relevant. Databases used include Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ERIC, and Scopus. The keywords used in the search were:

- “picture series”
- “teaching writing”
- “visual aids in EFL”
- “writing skill improvement”
- “English language teaching”

After finding many articles, the researcher selected only those that specifically discussed how teachers used picture series in writing classes, either in elementary, secondary, or higher education. Articles were also chosen if they included data on how picture series helped students improve their writing skills.

Next, the researcher read and reviewed all chosen articles to find important information. The focus was on:

- How teachers use picture series in writing lessons.
- What benefits picture series bring to students.
- What challenges teachers face when using picture series.

Finally, the researcher organized the results into tables and summaries so it would be easy for readers to understand the findings. The goal of this method is to help teachers and researchers know how picture series can improve writing skills and how they can be used effectively in English classrooms (Tran et al., 2023; Wang & Zhang, 2023).

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Result

This library research collected and analyzed several recent studies that examined the use of picture series in teaching writing skills. The reviewed studies were conducted in different countries and involved learners from various educational levels. Most of the studies focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, where students often experience difficulties in expressing ideas in written form. By reviewing these studies, the researcher aimed to understand common teaching practices and research trends related to the use of picture series. The findings from the literature provide a clear overview of how picture series have been applied in writing instruction.

The majority of the reviewed studies reported positive effects of using picture series on students' writing performance. Pictures helped students generate ideas more easily and organize their sentences in a logical order. Writing activities became more engaging because students could use visual information as a guide for their writing. As a result, students showed higher confidence and creativity when completing writing tasks. These studies also indicated that picture series reduced students' anxiety, making them more willing to write in English.

The table below presents a summary of five recent studies published between 2019 and 2024. It includes important information such as the authors, year of publication, research titles, research methods, and key findings. The table allows readers to compare how different researchers implemented picture series in writing classes. It also highlights the consistent benefits of using picture series across various contexts. Overall, the table provides a clear and structured overview of the effectiveness of picture series in teaching writing skills.

**Table 1. Recent Studies on the Use of Picture Series in Teaching Writing Skills**

No	Author(s)	Year	Title	Method	Key Findings
1	Fitriani, S., & Yuliana, R.	2019	The Effectiveness of Picture Series in Improving Students' Writing	Experimental	Students who learned with picture series had better idea organization and vocabulary use.
2	Nguyen, T. M., & Le, Q. H.	2021	Using Visual Aids to Enhance Writing in Vietnamese High Schools	Quasi-experimental	Picture series helped low-level students write more confidently and with fewer grammar errors.
3	Rahmawati, L.	2022	Improving Descriptive Text Writing through Picture Series	Classroom Action	Writing scores improved significantly after using picture series over two learning cycles.
4	Wang, J., & Zhang, L.	2023	Innovations in Teaching Writing Using Picture Series	Qualitative Review	Picture series improve creativity, sentence variety, and coherence in students' compositions.
5	Putri, M. D., & Sari, N.	2024	Picture-Based Learning in Writing Narrative Texts	Experimental	Learners became more motivated and could better structure paragraphs with picture support.

The five studies presented in the table clearly confirm that picture series are effective tools for teaching writing skills at different educational levels. Across all studies, students who learned through picture series showed improvement in organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and structuring paragraphs more clearly. The visual support provided by pictures helped students generate ideas more easily and reduced their fear of starting to write. Students were able to follow the sequence shown in the pictures, which made the writing process more manageable. As a result, writing activities became more engaging and less stressful for learners.

Several studies provided concrete examples of the positive impact of picture series on students' writing performance. Fitriani and Yuliana (2019) reported that students produced better-organized paragraphs and showed higher motivation when picture-based learning was applied. Similarly, Putri and Sari (2024) found that students were more active and enthusiastic during writing activities using picture series. In Rahmawati's (2022) classroom action research, students' writing scores increased gradually over two learning cycles. This improvement indicated that continuous use of picture series helped students develop their writing skills more effectively.

Other studies also highlighted the benefits of picture series for students with lower writing ability. Nguyen and Le (2021) reported that students with limited writing skills gained more confidence when pictures were used as writing prompts. These students made fewer grammatical errors and were better able to express their ideas in written form. The pictures helped them understand what to write and how to connect ideas logically. This finding suggests that picture series can support both high- and low-achieving students in writing classes.

Wang and Zhang (2023), in their review study, emphasized that picture series support not only language development but also higher-order thinking skills. According to their findings, pictures encourage students to think critically about the sequence of events and relationships between ideas. This process helps students develop creativity and logical thinking in their writing. By providing a clear visual structure, picture series assist students in creating a coherent flow of ideas from one sentence to another. As a result, students' writing becomes more organized and meaningful.

The findings from the reviewed studies consistently show that picture series are a helpful and engaging strategy for improving students' writing performance in EFL classrooms. The use of visual media makes writing activities more accessible, especially for students who struggle with ideas and language use. Picture series also increase students' motivation and confidence in writing. When used effectively, this strategy creates a positive learning environment and

supports students' overall writing development. Therefore, picture series can be considered a valuable instructional tool in EFL writing instruction.

### **3.2 Discussion**

This library research shows that using picture series is very helpful in teaching writing skills. Many researchers found that pictures make it easier for students to get ideas and write sentences. This is very important because, in many countries like Indonesia or Vietnam, students often feel nervous or shy when they have to write in English. Pictures help them feel more confident because they can see what they should write about.

Fitriani & Yuliana (2019) and Putri & Sari (2024) found that students became more motivated and could write paragraphs more clearly when using picture series. Motivation is very important in language learning because students learn better when they enjoy the activity. This supports Harmer's (2015) idea that teachers should use interesting materials to help students practice writing.

Another important finding is that pictures play a significant role in helping students organize their writing. Rahmawati (2022) reported that students' writing scores improved after the use of picture series because students learned how to arrange sentences in a logical and correct order. Similarly, Wang and Zhang (2023) explained that pictures support students in developing texts with a clear structure, including a beginning, middle, and end. This structured guidance is especially helpful for writing narrative and descriptive texts. By following the visual sequence, students are better able to connect ideas and maintain coherence in their writing.

Picture series are also beneficial for students with different levels of English proficiency. Nguyen and Le (2021) found that even students with low English ability showed improvement in their writing performance when pictures were used as prompts. The visual support helped these students understand what to write and reduced their dependence on translation. This finding suggests that picture series are suitable for both beginner and advanced learners. In addition, picture series help teachers manage classrooms with mixed-ability students, as all learners can access the same visual information.

Despite the advantages, several challenges in using picture series were identified in the reviewed studies. Some teachers reported that preparing appropriate picture series requires extra time and effort, particularly when selecting images that match students' cultural backgrounds or textbook topics (Wang & Zhang, 2023). Classroom management can also be challenging, especially in large classes where not all students may stay focused during picture-based activities. In such situations, teachers may need to use group work or structured tasks to ensure active participation. Careful planning is therefore essential to maximize the effectiveness of this strategy.

Even with these challenges, all studies consistently agree that picture series are valuable tools for teaching writing. The use of pictures helps students write more creatively, develop ideas more smoothly, and enjoy writing activities. Students tend to feel less anxious and more motivated when visual media are included in the learning process. These findings support current educational approaches that emphasize visual media and active learning in the classroom (Tran et al., 2023).

### **4. Conclusion**

This library research shows that picture series are highly useful for teaching writing skills in EFL classrooms. Many studies agree that the use of pictures helps students generate ideas more easily when writing. Pictures also support students in organizing sentences and developing ideas in a logical order. As a result, students feel more confident during writing activities. This is especially helpful when students write descriptive or narrative texts, which require clear ideas and structure.

Several researchers, such as Fitriani and Yuliana (2019), Rahmawati (2022), and Wang and Zhang (2023), reported positive results from using picture series in writing instruction. Their studies showed improvements in students' writing scores after picture-based activities were applied. Writing classes also became more interesting and interactive, which increased students' motivation. Even students with limited English proficiency were able to improve their writing because pictures provided clear visual support. This suggests that picture series can benefit students with different ability levels.

Despite these advantages, teachers still face some challenges when using picture series in the classroom. Preparing suitable pictures that match lesson objectives can take extra time and effort. Managing large classes can also be difficult, as not all students may stay focused during picture-based activities. However, most studies indicate that these challenges can be addressed with good planning and classroom management. Overall, the benefits of using picture series are greater than the difficulties.

Therefore, teachers are encouraged to use picture series more frequently in writing lessons. This method makes the learning process easier and more enjoyable for students. It also helps create a positive and supportive classroom environment. Writing activities become less stressful and more meaningful for learners. Future research could explore the use of digital picture series or online tools to further improve the effectiveness of this teaching method.

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