

## Enhancing Foreign Students' Writing Skills through Visual Media: Addressing Vocabulary Acquisition Challenges

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### Abstract

**Background:**

Writing remains one of the most challenging skills for foreign language learners, particularly due to limited vocabulary knowledge and difficulties in organizing ideas into coherent texts. Although visual media have been widely recognized as effective tools in language learning, limited research has specifically examined how structured visual media support vocabulary development as a pathway to improving writing performance in authentic classroom contexts. This study aims to investigate how the classroom use of visual media enhances vocabulary acquisition and writing skills among foreign students.

**Methodology:**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design in an intermediate writing class at a private university in Indonesia, involving ten foreign students. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of students' written texts. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to vocabulary use and writing development.

**Findings:**

The findings showed that the use of visual media contributed positively to students' writing development. Students' average writing scores increased from 58.9 to 76.6, while the average number of vocabulary items used in their writing improved from 9 to 15 words. In addition, students became more confident in generating ideas and were able to organize their writing more coherently. The visual prompts provided contextual support that helped students retrieve vocabulary more easily and apply it more effectively in their writing tasks.

**Conclusion:**

The integration of structured visual media provides meaningful contextual scaffolding that helps learners bridge vocabulary knowledge and its practical application in writing, thereby improving writing performance in authentic EFL classroom settings.

**Originality:**

This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that the classroom integration of structured visual media supports vocabulary development as a critical mechanism for improving writing performance, addressing the underexplored link between vocabulary acquisition and actual writing outcomes among foreign students.

**Keywords** : Foreign Language Learner, Visual Media, Vocabulary Acquisition

<b>DOI</b>	: 10.24903/sj.v11i1.2363
<b>Received</b>	: March 2026
<b>Accepted</b>	: April 2026
<b>Published</b>	: April 2026
<b>How to cite this article (APA)</b>	: Zuindra, Z., Mayasari, M., Geubrina, M., Arshad, N. J., & Ramsa, N. I. B. (2026). Enhancing foreign students' writing skills through visual media: Addressing vocabulary acquisition challenges. <i>Script Journal: Journal of Linguistic and English Teaching</i> , 11(1), 200-222. <a href="https://doi.org/10.24903/sj.v11i1.2363">https://doi.org/10.24903/sj.v11i1.2363</a>
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learners, particularly those in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, frequently encounter substantial challenges in writing, primarily related to limited vocabulary knowledge. Insufficient lexical resources hinder students' ability to select appropriate words, express ideas precisely, and develop coherent written texts. As a result, learners often rely on repetitive and simplistic vocabulary, which restricts the depth and clarity of their writing. This limitation not only affects their ability to convey meaning effectively but also impacts the overall organization and quality of their written production. At the same time, cognitive and affective barriers such as low motivation, writing anxiety, and lack of self-confidence further hinder their ability to initiate and sustain writing tasks. Many learners also struggle with transforming ideas from their first language into appropriate target-language structures, which leads to issues in coherence, cohesion, and overall text quality (Ceylan, 2019; Bulqiyah et al., 2021). Recent studies further highlight that EFL students often fail to meet the goals of writing tasks due to inadequate exposure to academic writing conventions and limited opportunities for meaningful practice and feedback (Saleh et al., 2026). These challenges indicate that writing in a foreign language is not merely a linguistic activity but a complex process involving the integration of cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions.

In this context, the integration of visual media has emerged as a promising pedagogical approach to support students' writing development. By offering concrete representations of abstract concepts, visual input enables students to bridge the gap between ideas and language, thereby enhancing both content development and linguistic expression. Moreover, visual media can increase students' engagement and motivation, making writing activities more meaningful and less intimidating. Empirical studies have shown that video-mediated and visual-based instruction significantly improves students' integrated writing performance and helps them use language more effectively in context (Zirak et al., 2022). Therefore, incorporating visual media into writing instruction is not only relevant but essential in addressing the multifaceted difficulties experienced by foreign language learners in developing their writing skills.

The undergraduate students in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context at a private university in Indonesia who are required to produce academic writing as part of their coursework, yet still experience significant difficulties that require special attention. Although

they have learned basic grammar and vocabulary, many struggle to generate ideas, organize them coherently, and express them appropriately in English, often relying on literal translation from their first language and producing texts with weak structure and limited development, particularly in vocabulary, grammar, and organization (Alinda et al., 2024; Riadil et al., 2023). In the local classroom context, these problems are evident when students face writing tasks, as they tend to spend excessive time generating ideas, depend heavily on lecturer examples or online sources, and demonstrate low confidence and participation, which are also associated with writing anxiety and task complexity in EFL settings (Wu & Halim 2024; Aljoza, 2024). This situation indicates that writing difficulties are not only a general EFL issue but are also shaped by specific classroom practices, where limited exposure to meaningful input and lack of engaging instructional media make writing more abstract and challenging. Therefore, the integration of visual media and multimodal approaches becomes essential, as it has been shown to enhance students' writing performance, engagement, and idea development by providing concrete and contextualized input (Sukserm, 2023; Ajabshir, 2024).

Recent developments in language pedagogy emphasize the importance of multimodal learning environments in supporting language acquisition. Visual media—including images, videos, infographics, and digital storytelling—provide contextual cues that help learners associate words with concrete representations and meaningful contexts (Kizkapan, 2025). More specifically, visual media play a crucial role in supporting vocabulary use in writing, as they not only enhance vocabulary acquisition but also facilitate the retrieval and application of lexical items during text production. Studies show that visual input helps learners internalize word meanings, improve retention, and use vocabulary more appropriately in written contexts, leading to better lexical diversity and coherence in writing (Ridayani, 2024; Pratama & Hadi, 2023). In addition, the use of structured visual supports such as picture series and visual mapping has been found to assist learners in organizing ideas while simultaneously activating relevant vocabulary needed for writing tasks (Wibowo & Dewi, 2026). Therefore, visual stimuli not only stimulate learners' imagination but also serve as a bridge between vocabulary knowledge and its effective use in writing, enabling learners to produce more meaningful, coherent, and lexically rich texts.

Several empirical studies have demonstrated that visual prompts can significantly improve vocabulary retention and writing performance. For instance, Teng (2023) found that multimedia input combined with writing tasks enhanced learners' ability not only to acquire new vocabulary but also to apply it more accurately in written production. Similarly, Zhou &

Thompson (2023) reported that visual storytelling activities contributed to improved lexical development and writing creativity among EFL students. More specifically, recent studies indicate that visual media can facilitate vocabulary retention and support learners in retrieving and using appropriate lexical items during writing tasks, resulting in better coherence and lexical richness (Chung, 2023). However, these studies also reveal certain limitations. Most of them focus primarily on vocabulary acquisition or general writing improvement, without examining how learners strategically use vocabulary in composing texts or how visual input influences lexical choice and variation in specific writing contexts. In addition, many studies are conducted in controlled or experimental settings, which may not fully reflect authentic classroom practices in EFL context. Therefore, what remains unresolved is how visual media can be systematically integrated to support not only vocabulary learning but also the meaningful and context-appropriate use of vocabulary in students' actual writing processes, particularly in real classroom environments. This gap highlights the need for further investigation into the role of visual media in bridging vocabulary knowledge and its effective application in writing.

In addition, digital visual platforms such as social media, short videos, and picture-based learning materials have been increasingly incorporated into language classrooms. However, in this study, the focus is specifically placed on structured visual media, namely picture series, short instructional videos, and infographic-based materials, as these forms provide guided and context-rich input that directly supports vocabulary use in writing tasks. These visual resources offer authentic contexts that allow students to explore language meaning through both visual and textual modes (Nugraheni & Suryo, 2025). More importantly, picture sequences and infographics help learners organize ideas while activating relevant vocabulary, whereas short videos provide contextualized exposure to lexical items in use, thereby supporting both vocabulary retention and application in writing. Furthermore, studies on multimodal materials emphasize that well-designed visual inputs, particularly infographics, can guide learners in processing and structuring information, although their effectiveness depends on careful selection and instructional integration (Carcamo & Pino, 2025). Therefore, narrowing the scope to these specific types of visual media allows this study to more precisely examine how visual input facilitates vocabulary use and idea development in students' writing within a real classroom context.

Despite the growing body of research on visual media in language learning, limited studies have specifically explored how visual media support vocabulary acquisition in relation

to writing development among foreign students. Most existing studies focus primarily on general vocabulary learning or student perceptions of visual media, rather than examining how lexical development influences actual writing performance in foreign language contexts. While prior research has shown that visual media can enhance vocabulary retention and learner engagement, these studies often do not investigate how such vocabulary is applied in students' written texts, particularly in terms of lexical choice, variation, and coherence. Furthermore, many studies rely on experimental settings or self-reported data, which provide limited insight into how visual media are actually implemented in real classroom practices and how they affect students' writing products. Recent studies suggest that although visual supports can facilitate idea generation and vocabulary recall, their impact on the quality of written output remains underexplored and inconsistent across contexts (Islam & Manuhutu, 2025). Therefore, this study addresses this gap by focusing explicitly on the classroom use of structured visual media and its impact on students' writing products, particularly in relation to vocabulary use, lexical diversity, and coherence. By doing so, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how visual media not only support vocabulary acquisition but also facilitate its meaningful and context-appropriate application in students' writing within authentic EFL classroom settings.

Therefore, this study is intended to explore the role of visual media in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and writing skills among foreign students. In particular, the study is guided by three main research questions: (1) how visual media influences vocabulary acquisition among foreign students; (2) the extent to which visual media improves students' writing quality and coherence; and (3) students' perceptions toward the use of visual media in writing activities.

By addressing these questions, this study contributes more precisely to the field of multimodal language learning by examining how the classroom use of structured visual media supports vocabulary development as a pathway to improving students' writing performance among foreign language learners. Specifically, the study provides empirical evidence on how visual input facilitates the selection, retention, and context-appropriate use of vocabulary in students' written texts, particularly in terms of lexical diversity and coherence. In addition, it offers practical insights for language educators by identifying implementable instructional strategies, such as the use of picture series, short videos, and infographic-based tasks, that can be systematically integrated into writing instruction to enhance students' vocabulary use and overall writing competence in EFL classroom contexts.

## **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **a. Writing Skills in Foreign Language Learning**

Writing is often considered one of the more demanding skills in second language learning, as it requires learners to manage several aspects at once, including vocabulary choice, grammatical accuracy, and the organization of ideas. In foreign language contexts, students are expected to bring these elements together at the same time in order to produce meaningful written texts (Lim & Kessler, 2024). In practice, however, many EFL learners still find writing difficult. One of the main reasons is their limited vocabulary and lack of exposure to how the language is used in real situations. When students do not have enough lexical resources, they often struggle to express their ideas clearly. This can result in writing that feels repetitive and underdeveloped (Anh, 2026). For this reason, vocabulary knowledge is often seen as a key factor that shapes both the quality of writing and students' ability to communicate effectively.

In response to these challenges, recent discussions in language teaching have begun to focus on the use of more varied and flexible teaching strategies to support writing development. For example, Rika et al. (2025) reported that multimodal learning approaches that combine textual and visual elements can enhance students' ability to organize ideas and develop more coherent written texts. Similarly, Eka & Rahmani (2024) found that multimodal learning environments significantly improve language acquisition by allowing learners to process information through multiple sensory channels. These findings suggest that writing instruction should move beyond traditional text-based approaches and incorporate multimodal learning strategies that support vocabulary development and idea generation.

### **b. Vocabulary Acquisition in Second Language Learning**

Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental component of language proficiency because it enables learners to express meaning accurately and effectively. Scholars argue that vocabulary knowledge not only involves knowing the meaning of words but also understanding their contextual usage and relationships with other lexical items (Xing & Zhang, 2025). Vocabulary learning is often seen as one of the more difficult parts of second language acquisition. Many learners still depend on memorizing word lists, but this approach does not always help them understand how words are actually used in context or remember them over time. As a result, students may be able to recognize certain words, yet find it difficult to use them appropriately when writing.

Foreign language learners in EFL contexts commonly experience writing difficulties that are closely linked to limitations in vocabulary knowledge. Rather than functioning merely

as a linguistic component, vocabulary plays a central role in shaping learners' ability to construct meaning, develop ideas, and produce coherent texts. Across the literature, a consistent pattern emerges showing that insufficient lexical resources restrict students' capacity to select precise words, vary expressions, and maintain cohesion in writing. This often results in repetitive, simplistic, and underdeveloped texts. Moreover, vocabulary limitations are not only associated with linguistic constraints but also influence cognitive processes during writing, such as idea generation and organization. When learners lack access to appropriate lexical items, they tend to struggle in transforming ideas into written language, which further affects the overall quality of their writing. These converging findings suggest that vocabulary-related challenges are a critical underlying factor in EFL writing difficulties, highlighting the need for instructional approaches that explicitly support both vocabulary development and its meaningful application in writing tasks.

Similarly, [Kizkapan \(2025\)](#) demonstrated that video-based multimodal learning environments can support incidental vocabulary acquisition by exposing learners to authentic language contexts. Through this kind of approach, learners are able to pick up new vocabulary in a more natural way, as they engage directly with both visual and auditory input. Instead of relying solely on memorization, they begin to understand how words are used in context, which makes the learning process more meaningful. In addition, a number of studies have pointed out that the use of visual aids can increase students' motivation and involvement in learning activities. For instance, visual-based strategies can spark students' curiosity and encourage them to participate more actively in the classroom. This active engagement, in turn, can support the development of stronger vocabulary knowledge over time.

### **c. The Role of Visual Media in Language Learning**

Visual media have become increasingly important in language education due to their ability to present information in a more engaging and meaningful way. Visual elements such as images, videos, infographics, and animations provide contextual cues that help learners interpret meaning and remember vocabulary more effectively.

The idea behind using visual media in learning can be linked to the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which suggests that people understand information more effectively when it is presented through both visual and verbal forms. When learners are exposed to multiple types of input, they are able to process information through different channels, which can support both comprehension and memory ([Teng 2023](#)). For this reason, the theory has often

been used to explain why visual media can be helpful in language learning, particularly in developing vocabulary and understanding meaning.

A number of studies have also provided evidence of the benefits of visual media in language classrooms. [Dewi et al., \(2026\)](#), for instance, found that the use of video-based materials helped young EFL learners improve their vocabulary. In a similar way, [Al-jumaily et al. \(2025\)](#) reported that visual approaches can support students' ability to understand and produce language, especially when the materials provide clear and meaningful context.

Along with these developments, digital visual platforms—such as social media and multimedia storytelling tools—are now more commonly used in language learning environments. These platforms offer new ways for students to interact with language in a more engaging and context-rich setting. [Pratiwi & Trisanti \(2025\)](#) observed that students prefer multimodal learning materials because they make language learning more interactive and enjoyable.

These findings indicate that visual media can serve as powerful pedagogical tools that support language learning by combining visual stimuli with linguistic input.

#### **d. Integrating Visual Media into Writing Instruction**

Integrating visual media into writing instruction has gained increasing attention in recent years, particularly in the context of multimodal pedagogy. Using visual prompts such as pictures, videos, and digital storytelling can make a noticeable difference in how students approach writing tasks. When learners are given something concrete to look at, they tend to find it easier to imagine situations and develop ideas. These visual elements provide a kind of support that helps students move from simply thinking about what to write to actually putting their ideas into words.

Several studies have highlighted similar patterns. For example, [Rika et al. \(2025\)](#) observed that students working in multimodal learning environments were able to produce writing that was more organized and easier to follow. The presence of visual cues seemed to guide students as they developed their ideas, making their texts more structured. A similar point is raised by [Sophia et al. \(2026\)](#), who found that multimodal instruction can strengthen students' vocabulary use. When learners engage with language through different modes—such as visual, audio, and text—they are more likely to process information more deeply. This, in turn, helps them express their ideas more clearly in writing.

Activities that involve multimodal composing, including digital storytelling, also appear to support both accuracy and creativity. [Lim & Kessler \(2024\)](#) argue that when students

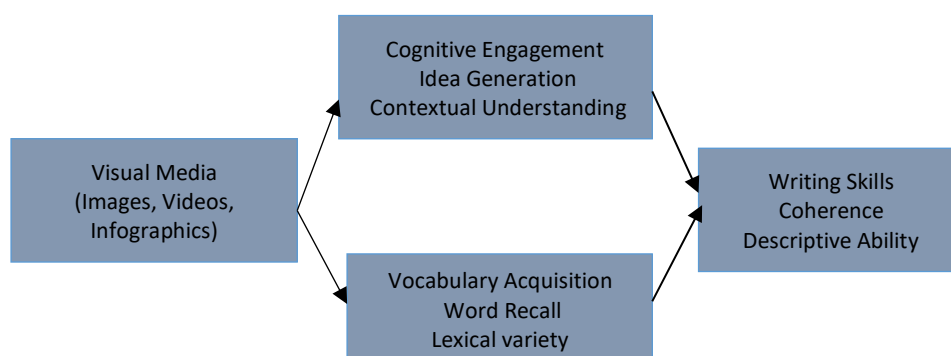
combine visual and textual elements, they are not only using language but also actively constructing meaning. This process can lead to more developed and expressive writing. In addition, research on multimodal writing suggests that visual support can reduce the mental effort often required when starting a writing task. [Puspitasari et al. \(2025\)](#) explain that visual scaffolding helps learners grasp abstract ideas more easily, which can make the transition from thinking to writing less demanding. Even with these benefits, traditional teaching practices are still commonly used in many classrooms. Instruction often focuses heavily on grammar rules and memorization, with less attention given to meaningful communication. As a result, the potential of visual media is not always fully explored.

While previous studies have shown that visual and multimodal approaches can enhance vocabulary learning, most research treats vocabulary as an isolated outcome or focuses on general writing improvement. There is still limited understanding of how vocabulary is actually used in the writing process and reflected in students' written products, particularly in terms of lexical choice, variation, and coherence. This reveals a clear gap between vocabulary acquisition and its practical application in writing, highlighting the need to examine how instructional approaches support the effective use of vocabulary in authentic writing contexts.

**Table 1. Visual Media into Writing Instruction**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Visual Media	Images, videos, and infographics used as instructional tools.
Cognitive Engagement	Visual stimuli help learners generate ideas and understand contexts.
Vocabulary Acquisition	Students associate visual cues with new words and expressions.
Writing Skills	Improved vocabulary supports better writing coherence and expression.

This model demonstrates that visual media serves as a learning stimulus that triggers students' cognitive processes, consequently enhancing vocabulary acquisition and writing proficiency

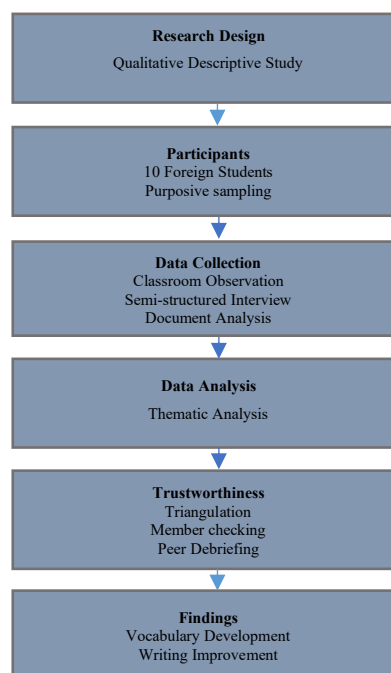


**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Visual Media in Writing Instruction**

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore how visual media support vocabulary acquisition and improve writing performance among foreign students. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to examine participants' experiences, perceptions, and learning processes in a natural classroom setting.

Qualitative descriptive studies aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of phenomena through detailed descriptions of participants' perspectives and contextual learning processes (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the qualitative design enabled the researcher to investigate how visual media influence vocabulary use, idea generation, and writing development during classroom activities.



**Figure 2. Methodological Framework**

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive design with a classroom-based inquiry to investigate how structured visual media support vocabulary development as a pathway to improving students' writing performance. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate as it allows for an in-depth exploration of learners' writing processes, particularly how vocabulary is selected, retrieved, and applied in authentic writing contexts. The study was conducted within a natural classroom setting to ensure ecological validity.

### **3.2 Participants**

The participants consisted of ten undergraduate students enrolled in an intermediate-level writing course at a private university in Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who demonstrated observable difficulties in vocabulary use and writing performance. All participants had a similar English proficiency level (intermediate) based on institutional placement criteria, ensuring relative homogeneity for analytical consistency.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

Data were collected over a series of classroom sessions through three primary instruments to ensure methodological triangulation. First, non-participant classroom observations were conducted using a structured observation protocol to document how visual media (i.e., picture series, short videos, and infographic-based materials) were integrated into writing instruction and how students interacted with these inputs. Second, semi-structured interviews were administered to explore students' experiences in using visual media to support vocabulary selection and writing processes; the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Third, document analysis was carried out on students' written texts produced during the intervention to examine vocabulary use in terms of lexical choice, variation, and coherence. Field notes and instructional materials were also collected to support contextual interpretation.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis framework involving familiarization, initial coding, theme development, and refinement. Observation and interview data were coded both inductively and deductively to identify patterns related to vocabulary development and writing processes. For textual data, a focused analysis was conducted on lexical features, including lexical diversity (e.g., type-token ratio), appropriateness of lexical choice, and cohesion markers, to assess how vocabulary was utilized in students' writing products. To enhance analytical rigor, data triangulation was applied by comparing findings across observations, interviews, and written texts.

### **3.5 Trustworthiness**

To ensure the quality of the study, several strategies were employed. Credibility was established through prolonged engagement and data triangulation. Dependability was ensured by maintaining an audit trail of data collection and analysis procedures. Confirmability was addressed through systematic coding and peer debriefing, while transferability was supported by providing thick descriptions of the research context and participants.

Overall, the methodological framework provides a clear representation of the research process and demonstrates how each stage contributes to the development of meaningful findings related to the use of visual media in language learning.

**Table 2. Methodological Framework Components**

<b>Research Component</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Purpose in the Study</b>
Research Design	Qualitative descriptive approach used to explore students' experiences and learning processes.	To understand how visual media influence vocabulary acquisition and writing development.
Participants	Ten foreign students enrolled in an intermediate writing course, selected using purposive sampling.	To obtain data from learners who directly experienced visual-based writing instruction.
Data Collection	Classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of students' written texts.	To collect comprehensive data about classroom interaction, students' perceptions, and writing outcomes.
Data Analysis	Thematic analysis used to identify patterns and themes from qualitative data.	To interpret the relationship between visual media use and writing improvement.
Trustworthiness	Triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing.	To ensure credibility, validity, and reliability of the research findings.
Research Findings	Evidence of vocabulary development and improvement in writing coherence.	To demonstrate the pedagogical impact of visual media in writing instruction.

#### **4. FINDINGS**

This section presents the findings of the study regarding the impact of visual media on foreign students' vocabulary acquisition and writing performance. The findings are organized into three major themes that emerged from the thematic analysis: visual media as vocabulary triggers, increased writing confidence, and improved writing coherence.

The results are supported by classroom observations, interview data, and document analysis of students' written texts.

##### **a. Students' Writing Performance Improvement**

To examine the impact of visual media on students' writing development, the researcher analysed students' writing scores before and after the implementation of visual-based writing activities. The results indicate a noticeable improvement in students' writing performance after the integration of visual media in writing instruction. To examine students' writing development, the researcher compared students' writing scores before and after the implementation of visual media in writing instruction. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Students' Writing Scores Before and After Using Visual Media**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Writing Score Before Visual Media</b>	<b>Writing Score After Visual Media</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
S1	55	72	+17
S2	58	75	+17
S3	60	78	+18
S4	57	74	+17
S5	62	80	+18
S6	59	76	+17
S7	61	79	+18
S8	56	73	+17
S9	63	82	+19
S10	58	77	+19

Table 3 presents the comparison of students' writing scores before and after the use of visual media in writing activities. The table clearly shows that all ten foreign students demonstrated improvement in their writing performance after visual materials were integrated into the learning process.

Before the implementation of visual media, students' writing scores ranged from **55 to 63**, indicating that most students still had difficulties in developing ideas and using appropriate vocabulary in their writing. Before the use of visual media, most students tended to write in a fairly simple way. Their sentences were often short, and descriptions were limited, which made their writing feel less developed. This is also reflected in the average score of 58.9, suggesting that their writing ability was still at a moderate level at that stage.

Once visual materials such as images and short video clips were introduced during the pre-writing activities, a noticeable change began to appear. Students seemed to find it easier to start writing, and their ideas developed more naturally. This change was reflected in their scores, which increased to a range between 72 and 82, with an average of 76.6. The improvement suggests that visual input gave students something concrete to work with, helping them recall relevant vocabulary and shape their ideas more clearly.

Looking more closely at the data, each student showed an increase of around 17 to 19 points. What is interesting here is not only the improvement itself, but also how consistent it was across all participants. This pattern indicates that the use of visual media was not only helpful for a few students, but had a broader impact on the class as a whole. In their later writing, students began to use more varied vocabulary, provide richer descriptions, and organize their ideas in a more logical way.

Taken together, the results in Table 3 suggest that visual media can play a meaningful role in supporting students' writing development. Rather than simply adding variety to

classroom activities, visual prompts appear to help students engage more actively with the writing process and express their ideas with greater clarity.

By providing visual context, students were able to connect ideas with appropriate vocabulary and produce more coherent and descriptive written texts. These results were further supported by classroom observations and interview data, which revealed that visual prompts helped students recall vocabulary and organize their ideas more effectively during writing activities.

#### **b. Vocabulary Development Through Visual Media**

The analysis of students' written texts revealed that visual media played a significant role in enhancing students' vocabulary usage. The use of images and short video clips as prompts appeared to make a difference, as students were able to recall vocabulary more easily and express their ideas in a more descriptive way.

This pattern was also noticeable during classroom observations. Students often picked up vocabulary directly from the visual materials and used it in their texts. For instance, when they were asked to write about a traditional market based on an image, many of them included words like *vendors*, *vegetables*, *crowded*, *traditional stalls*, and *fresh products*. These kinds of words had rarely appeared in their earlier writing, where their vocabulary choices tended to be more limited.

This finding suggests that visual media help learners associate words with concrete representations, which facilitates vocabulary recall during writing activities.

**Table 4. Vocabulary Usage in Students' Writing Before and After Using Visual Media**

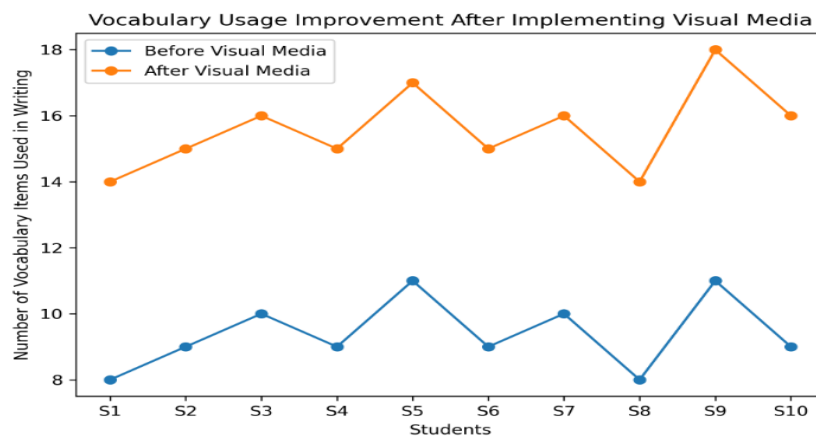
<b>Student</b>	<b>Vocabulary Items Before</b>	<b>Vocabulary Items After</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
S1	8	14	+6
S2	9	15	+6
S3	10	16	+6
S4	9	15	+6
S5	11	17	+6
S6	9	15	+6
S7	10	16	+6
S8	8	14	+6
S9	11	18	+7
S10	9	16	+7

Table 4 presents the number of vocabulary items used by students in their writing before and after the implementation of visual media. The vocabulary items refer to the variety of descriptive words used by students when describing objects, situations, or events in their writing tasks.

Before the use of visual media, the number of vocabulary items used by students ranged from 8 to 11 words. Most students tended to repeat simple and familiar words in their writing, which limited the richness of their descriptions. After visual materials such as images and short video clips began to be used in writing activities, a clear change could be seen in students' vocabulary use. Instead of relying on a limited set of words, students started to include a wider range of descriptive vocabulary in their writing. In most cases, they used between 14 and 18 different descriptive words, which was noticeably higher than before.

This change suggests that visual prompts gave students something concrete to work with. Rather than trying to recall words in isolation, they could connect what they saw with the language they used. As a result, their vocabulary use became more varied and more appropriate to the context of their writing.

Looking at the data more closely, each student showed an increase of around 6 to 7 additional vocabulary items. What stands out here is the consistency of this improvement across all participants. It appears that visual media did not just help a few students, but supported the class as a whole. The images seemed to act as a bridge, helping students link ideas with the words needed to express them in writing.



**Figure 2. Vocabulary Usage Improvement After Implementing Visual Media**

Figure 2 illustrates the improvement in students' vocabulary usage after the implementation of visual media in writing activities. The chart shows a clear increase in the number of vocabulary items used by students in their written texts. Before the use of visual media, most students used a limited range of vocabulary, with the number of vocabulary items ranging from 8 to 11 words. Before visual materials were introduced, students often relied on simple and repetitive words when describing objects or situations in their writing. Their vocabulary choices were quite limited, which made their texts feel less detailed and somewhat repetitive. Once images and short video clips began to be used as prompts, a noticeable

change started to appear. Students gradually used a wider range of vocabulary, and their descriptions became more varied. In many cases, they included between 14 and 18 descriptive words in their writing, which shows a clear shift from their earlier work.

This pattern suggests that visual input helped students connect ideas with appropriate words more easily. Instead of struggling to recall vocabulary on their own, they could draw directly from what they saw, which encouraged them to use more varied and meaningful expressions in their texts.

Overall, the chart demonstrates that visual media played an important role in supporting vocabulary development among foreign students, which consequently contributed to improvements in their writing performance.

### **c. Increased Writing Confidence**

Another important finding of the study is the increase in students' confidence in writing. Many participants initially reported difficulties in writing due to limited vocabulary and lack of ideas. However, the use of visual media helped students generate ideas more easily.

One participant stated:

*"When I see pictures, I know what I want to write. The picture helps me remember words and describe the situation."*

Similarly, another student explained:

*"Before using pictures, writing was difficult because I didn't know what to write. But with visual prompts, it is easier to start writing."*

These responses indicate that visual media reduce students' writing anxiety and encourage them to express their ideas more freely.

### **d. Improvement in Writing Coherence**

Document analysis also revealed improvements in students' ability to organize their writing more coherently. Before the implementation of visual-based instruction, many students produced short and fragmented sentences.

For example:

Before using visual media

*I go to market. Many people there. I buy food.*

After using visual prompts, students produced more detailed and coherent texts:

After using visual media

*Last weekend I visited a traditional market where many people were selling fresh vegetables and fruits. The market was crowded, and I bought some fresh food for my family.*

This improvement demonstrates that visual prompts help students structure their ideas and connect sentences more logically.

**e. Summary of Key Findings**

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of visual media in writing instruction has a positive impact on foreign students' writing development. The results can be summarized as follows:

**Table 5. Key Findings**

<b>Key Finding</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Vocabulary development	Students used more varied and descriptive vocabulary after visual prompts.
Writing confidence	Students felt more confident generating ideas and writing longer texts.
Writing coherence	Students were able to organize their writing more logically.
Writing performance improvement	All 10 students showed improvement in writing scores.

Entirely, the findings suggest that visual media provide meaningful contextual support that helps foreign students overcome vocabulary limitations and improve their writing skills.

**5. DISCUSSION**

This study aimed to examine how the integration of structured visual media supports vocabulary acquisition and improves writing performance among foreign language learners. The findings revealed a consistent improvement across participants, particularly in writing scores, vocabulary use, coherence, and confidence. Students' average writing scores increased from 58.9 to 76.6, while vocabulary usage expanded from approximately 9 to 15 lexical items. These results indicate that visual media provide meaningful support that enables learners to move from limited lexical use toward more elaborated and coherent written expression.

These findings are consistent with recent research emphasizing the effectiveness of multimodal and visual input in language learning. For instance, [Xing & Zhang \(2025\)](#) argue that multimodal input significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition by allowing learners to process linguistic information through multiple channels. Similarly, [Eka & Rahmanu \(2024\)](#) highlight that multimodal immersion environments improve language acquisition by facilitating deeper cognitive processing. In addition, [Sophia et al., \(2026\)](#) demonstrate that enriched multimodal learning models contribute to stronger lexical competence, particularly in productive language skills such as writing. The present study extends these findings by

showing that vocabulary gains are not only internalized but also actively applied in learners' written texts, particularly in terms of lexical variety and coherence.

From a cognitive perspective, the results support the principles of multimedia learning, where the integration of visual and verbal input enhances comprehension and retention. Visual media such as images, videos, and infographics provided contextual scaffolding that helped students generate ideas and structure their writing more effectively. This aligns with [Puspitasari et al. \(2025\)](#), who found that multimodal scaffolding reduces cognitive load and facilitates idea development in language tasks. Likewise, [Lim & Kessler \(2024\)](#) argue that multimodal composing enables learners to construct meaning more effectively by integrating visual and linguistic elements. In this study, visual prompts functioned not only as sources of input but also as cognitive tools that supported the organization and expansion of ideas in writing.

The improvement in vocabulary use further supports the argument that contextualized input enhances lexical development. Rather than learning vocabulary in isolation, students in this study were able to associate words with concrete visual representations, which facilitated both retention and retrieval during writing tasks. This finding is in line with [Anh \(2026\)](#), who emphasizes that meaningful exposure to contextualized language significantly improves vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, [Dewi et al. \(2026\)](#) show that visual-based learning environments can enhance vocabulary mastery by increasing engagement and contextual understanding. The current study contributes to this body of research by demonstrating that such vocabulary gains are directly reflected in students' written output.

The significance of these findings lies in the role of visual media as an integrated pedagogical tool that addresses linguistic, cognitive, and affective dimensions of writing. Linguistically, visual media support vocabulary expansion and more appropriate lexical choice. Cognitively, they facilitate idea generation and text organization. Affective benefits are also evident, as students reported increased confidence and reduced anxiety when engaging in writing tasks. This is consistent with findings by [Wu et al. \(2024\)](#), who identify emotional factors such as anxiety and task complexity as key determinants of writing performance. By providing concrete and engaging input, visual media appear to reduce these barriers and encourage more active participation in writing activities.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study involved a relatively small sample of ten participants within a single classroom context, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the duration of the intervention was relatively short, making it difficult to assess long-term impacts of visual media on writing

development. Future research should consider larger and more diverse samples, as well as longitudinal designs, to examine the sustained effects of visual media integration across different learning contexts.

Importantly, this study addresses a critical gap in the literature. While previous research has extensively explored visual media in relation to vocabulary acquisition or learner engagement (Ajabshir, 2024; Sukserm, 2023), limited attention has been given to how vocabulary gained through visual input is applied in actual writing performance. This study provides empirical evidence that structured visual media not only support vocabulary acquisition but also facilitate its meaningful and context-appropriate use in writing. Therefore, it contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how multimodal instruction can bridge the gap between vocabulary knowledge and writing proficiency in authentic EFL classroom settings.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the use of visual media gave a positive contribution to the development of students' writing skills, particularly in vocabulary use, idea development, and writing coherence. The students showed better performance after visual materials were introduced into the writing activities. This can be seen from the increase in their average writing score, which improved from 58.9 to 76.6, showing that the students were able to produce writing with clearer ideas and better organization after receiving visual support.

A similar pattern was also found in students' vocabulary use. Before the implementation of visual media, students tended to use a limited number of words and often repeated the same vocabulary in their writing. After the use of images and short videos, however, the number of vocabulary items increased from an average of around 9 words to 15 words, indicating that the students were able to use more varied vocabulary to express their ideas. This suggests that visual prompts helped learners connect ideas with appropriate words, making it easier for them to develop richer and more meaningful written texts.

Another important point found in this study is that visual media helped students feel more confident in writing. At the beginning, many students had difficulty starting their writing because they lacked ideas and were unsure of the vocabulary they needed. When visual prompts were provided, they appeared to find it easier to begin writing and to continue developing their ideas. This change was reflected not only in the quality of their written work but also in their classroom participation, where students became more active and less hesitant during writing tasks.

These findings suggest that visual media can be used as practical support in writing instruction, especially for learners who still struggle with vocabulary and idea generation. Through visual input, students are given concrete contexts that help them organize ideas and choose relevant vocabulary more easily. In this way, visual media support not only the technical aspect of writing but also the learning process that helps students become more confident writers.

Although the results of this study show encouraging outcomes, the research was conducted with a limited number of participants and within a relatively short period of time. Because of this, the findings cannot yet be generalized to wider contexts without further investigation. Future studies involving more participants and longer classroom implementation may provide a broader understanding of how visual media contribute to writing development over time.

Overall, the findings of this study show that visual media can play an important role in helping foreign students improve their writing ability. By helping learners expand vocabulary, generate ideas, and organize their writing more clearly, visual media create opportunities for students to write more effectively. For this reason, the integration of visual media in writing instruction can be considered a useful strategy to support the development of students' writing skills in foreign language classrooms.

#### **Declaration of Generative AI**

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used AI-assisted tools, including ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot, to support language editing and improve grammatical accuracy. The authors carefully reviewed and edited the output generated by these tools and take full responsibility for the content of the manuscript.

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