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A Descriptive Analysis of EFL Learners' Levels and Practices of Visual Literacy Competence: The Case of Second-Year Pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School M'sila

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for master's degree in Linguistics

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DEDICATION I

To the pure soul of my mother, may Allah have mercy on her.

To my dear father, may Allah protect him.

To my most precious ones, my children, my sisters, and my brothers.

To my husband.

To my friend, soul mate, and companion on this journey, Samiha Salama.

To Selma Bekkai, who stood by me and encouraged me to continue my studies.

To every friend who supported me in my time of need.

Finally, I dedicate this to myself, **Fairouz RADAOUI**

DEDICATION II

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my beloved mother, whose wisdom and sacrifice illuminated my path. Her unwavering faith in me fuelled my journey.

To my sister and her husband, their encouragement and belief in me have been as constant as the stars.

To my dear husband, for your unwavering support and love that has been my stronghold throughout this journey.

This thesis is not only a reflection of my work but also a testament to the enduring love and support that each of you has bestowed upon me.

Siham TOUATIT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the visual literacy competence of 90 second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila, focusing on interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media. Classroom observations were conducted, and data was analysed using SPSS to determine overall visual literacy levels and examine differences based on gender and academic performance. The findings reveal that while overall visual literacy competence is moderate to high, female pupils exhibit higher competence across all dimensions compared to male pupils. Additionally, high-performing students demonstrate significantly better visual literacy skills than their average and low-performing peers. Significant positive correlations were found between interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media, suggesting an interconnected development of these competencies. The study highlights the need for targeted instructional strategies to support visual literacy development, particularly for male and low-performing students. Recommendations include integrating more visual creation activities, providing professional development for teachers, and ensuring equitable access to visual literacy resources. This research contributes to the understanding of visual literacy in EFL contexts and informs educational practices to enhance students' visual literacy competence.

Keywords: Creation Skills, EFL Learners, Gender Differences, Interpretation Skills, Visual Literacy.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

SPSS: Statistics Package for Social Sciences

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

VL: Visual Literacy

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Visual literacy, as an interdisciplinary domain, bridges cognitive psychology, semiotics, art education, and media studies. It equips learners with the critical skills needed to decode visual messages, understand visual metaphors, and appreciate the cultural contexts of visual narratives. In the EFL classroom, where language learning transcends mere linguistic proficiency to include cultural and contextual understanding, visual literacy becomes a crucial component. By engaging with visual texts, students can develop a richer vocabulary, improve their interpretive skills, and gain a more nuanced understanding of the target language's cultural dimensions.

1. Background and Rationale

The rapid proliferation of visual media in contemporary society has fundamentally transformed the ways in which information is consumed and communicated. In the context of education, this shift necessitates a reconceptualization of traditional literacy to encompass visual literacy, which refers to the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of images. This evolution in literacy is particularly pertinent in the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, where the integration of visual literacy can enhance language acquisition and foster deeper cognitive engagement. The present study aims to explore the levels and practices of visual literacy competence among second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila, providing a comprehensive analysis of how visual literacy is perceived and utilized in this specific educational context.

2. Statement of the Problem

The growing importance of visual literacy in contemporary education, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, necessitates a comprehensive understanding of students' visual literacy competence. Visual literacy, defined as the ability to interpret, analyse, and create

visual content, is essential for effective communication and learning in today's visually-rich environment. Despite its significance, there is limited research on the visual literacy levels of EFL learners, especially in the context of middle school students in regions such as M'sila, Algeria.

3. Research Questions and Objectives

3.1.Main Research Questions

The study aims to explore the levels and practices of visual literacy competence among second-year EFL learners at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. The main research questions guiding this investigation are:

1. What are the levels of visual literacy competence (interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media) among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School?
2. How visual literacy is integrated into the EFL curriculum and teaching practices at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School?
3. Are there significant differences in visual literacy competence based on gender / academic performance among the pupils?

Addressing these questions will not only contribute to the academic discourse on visual literacy in EFL education but also provide practical recommendations for enhancing educational practices at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School and similar institutions.

3.2.Specific Objectives of the Study

To address the main research questions, the study has outlined several specific objectives:

1. To assess the overall levels of visual literacy competence (interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media) among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School.
2. To compare visual literacy competence between male and female pupils.
3. To compare visual literacy competence among high-performing, average-performing, and low-performing pupils.
4. To analyse the correlations between interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media in the context of EFL learning.
5. To provide recommendations for enhancing visual literacy instruction in EFL curricula based on the findings.

4. Aim of the study

This study aims to fill the research gap by providing a detailed descriptive analysis of visual literacy competence among second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School. The analysis aims to identify the levels of interpretation, creation, and engagement with visual media, and to explore the impact of gender and academic performance on these competencies with a focus on gender and academic performance differences.

5. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of visual literacy in the context of EFL education, inform instructional practices, and offer actionable insights to enhance visual literacy competence among students.

6. Hypotheses

1. **The overall levels of visual literacy competence among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School are moderate to high.**

- This hypothesis is based on the assumption that contemporary educational practices and the increasing integration of visual media in classrooms contribute to the development of visual literacy skills among students.

2. **Female pupils exhibit higher levels of visual literacy competence compared to male pupils.**
    - This hypothesis suggests a potential gender difference in visual literacy competence, possibly due to differing interests, engagement levels, or teaching practices that may favor one gender over the other in visual literacy activities.
3. **High-performing pupils exhibit higher levels of visual literacy competence compared to average-performing and low-performing pupils.**
    - This hypothesis posits that students who perform well academically also excel in visual literacy skills, reflecting their overall cognitive and critical thinking abilities.
4. **There are significant positive correlations between interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media among the pupils.**
    - This hypothesis suggests that students who are good at interpreting visual content are also likely to be proficient in creating visual content and highly engaged with visual media, indicating an interconnected development of these competencies.

7. The structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter lays the theoretical groundwork, defining visual literacy, exploring its relevance to EFL education, and reviewing existing assessment methods. The second chapter presents the practical analysis, detailing the research design, methodology, findings, and implications of the study. By bridging theory and

practice, this dissertation seeks to illuminate the critical role of visual literacy in contemporary EFL education and offer actionable insights for educators and policymakers.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Framework

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

1. Introduction:

The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented surge in the creation, dissemination, and consumption of visual information. Visual content has become integral to our daily lives, from social media platforms and digital advertising to educational resources and scientific visualizations. In this context, visual literacy (the ability to interpret, analyse, and create visual messages) has emerged as a critical competency. Its importance spans across various domains including education, communication, critical thinking, and cultural understanding. This chapter explores the multifaceted importance of visual literacy in contemporary society.

2. Visual Literacy: Definitions and Dimensions

Visual literacy, an increasingly significant competency in the 21st century, involves the ability to interpret, understand, and create visual messages (Brumberger, 2011; Felten, 2008; Smith, 2010). As a multifaceted skill, visual literacy encompasses a wide range of competencies and intersects with various academic disciplines, including education, communication, and technology (Avgerinou, 2009; Bamford, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This section explores the definitions and dimensions of visual literacy, providing a comprehensive understanding of its scope and relevance (Serafini, 2014; Stokes, 2002; International Visual Literacy Association, 2021).

2.1.Visual Literacy Defined

Visual literacy (VL), though widely recognized, has been described in a variety of ways over the past few decades. The concept was first coined in 1968 by John Debes, a Kodak

employee at the time, and one of the most important figures in the history of VL. According to Debes:

> Visual Literacy refers to a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication. (Debes, 1969)

This early definition highlights the interplay between visual perception and other sensory modalities, emphasizing the holistic nature of visual literacy.

Other scholars also defined it as:

> . . . a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyse the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture (Visual Literacy Standards Task Force, ACRL, 2011).

In her book Unframing the Visual: Visual Literacy Pedagogy in Academic Libraries and Information, Maggie Murphy defined Visual Literacy as: *"an interconnected set of practices,*

habits, and values for participating in visual culture that can be developed through critical, ethical, reflective, and creative engagement with visual media" (Murphy, Fall 2023). Paul Messaris (1994) expands this definition to include the ability to understand visual rhetoric and the ways in which visual media can convey complex messages and influence perceptions.

In contemporary discourse, visual literacy is often defined more broadly to include not only the ability to interpret visual messages but also the capacity to create and communicate using visual media. The International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA) defines visual literacy as "the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image" (International Visual Literacy Association, 2021). This definition underscores the interpretive and meaning-making aspects of visual literacy, recognizing it as a dynamic and interactive process.

3. Importance of Visual Literacy in the 21st Century

In an era dominated by digital media, the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image has become indispensable. This skill, known as visual literacy, encompasses a wide range of competencies, including the ability to read images, understand their contexts, and create visual content. As the 21st century continues to unfold, the importance of visual literacy is increasingly recognized across various fields, including education, communication, and technology. This section explores the significance of visual literacy in contemporary society, its impact on learning and communication, and the challenges and opportunities it presents.

In an era dominated by digital media, the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image has become indispensable (International Visual Literacy Association, 2021). This skill, known as visual literacy,

encompasses a wide range of competencies, including the ability to read images, understand their contexts, and create visual content (Brumberger, 2011; Felten, 2008). As the 21st century continues to unfold, the importance of visual literacy is increasingly recognized across various fields, including education, communication, and technology (Avgerinou, 2009; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This study explores the significance of visual literacy in contemporary society, its impact on learning and communication, and the challenges and opportunities it presents.

3.1.The Evolution of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy, a concept that has evolved over time, refers to the set of skills needed to interpret and create visual messages (Avgerinou, 2009). Traditionally, literacy was confined to the ability to read and write text. However, the proliferation of visual media has expanded the definition to include visual communication (Messaris, 1994). The foundation of visual literacy can be traced back to the early 20th century, with theorists like John Dewey advocating for the inclusion of visual education in the curriculum (Berger, 1972). The rise of the internet and digital technologies has further transformed the landscape, making visual literacy an essential component of modern education and communication (Serafini, 2014).

3.2.The Role of Visual Literacy in Education

In the educational context, visual literacy plays a crucial role in enhancing students' learning experiences (Brumberger, 2011). Visual aids such as charts, diagrams, and videos can simplify complex concepts, making them more accessible and engaging for learners (Felten, 2008). For instance, in the field of science education, visual representations of phenomena like the water cycle or the structure of DNA can help students grasp intricate details that are difficult to convey through text alone (Serafini, 2014).

Moreover, visual literacy encourages critical thinking and creativity. Students learn to analyze visual information critically, understanding the underlying messages and biases that images can convey (Messaris, 1994). This skill is particularly important in an age where misinformation and manipulated images are rampant (Felten, 2008). By fostering visual literacy, educators equip students with the tools to discern credible sources from misleading ones, thereby promoting informed and responsible consumption of visual media.

Enhancing Educational Outcomes: Visual literacy is pivotal in modern education, supporting and enhancing traditional literacy and learning processes (Avgerinou, 2009). As educators increasingly adopt multimodal teaching strategies, visual literacy helps students better understand and retain information (Serafini, 2014).

Multimodal Learning: Modern pedagogical approaches often integrate text, images, audio, and video to create rich, engaging learning environments. Visual aids such as diagrams, infographics, and videos can simplify complex concepts, making them more accessible and understandable for students of all ages (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

STEM Education: In subjects like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), visual literacy is particularly crucial. Graphs, charts, models, and simulations are essential tools for conveying complex data and abstract concepts. Visual literacy enables students to decode these representations, fostering deeper comprehension and analytical skills (Brumberger, 2011).

Reading and Writing: Visual literacy also enhances traditional reading and writing skills. For instance, graphic novels and illustrated texts can engage reluctant readers and support vocabulary development (Berger, 1972). Visual elements in writing assignments, such as mind

maps and storyboards, can help students organize their thoughts and express their ideas more clearly (Smith, 2010).

3.3.Visual Literacy in Communication

The significance of visual literacy extends beyond the classroom, permeating various aspects of communication (Avgerinou, 2009). In the professional realm, the ability to create and interpret visual content is a valuable asset (Brumberger, 2011). Businesses increasingly rely on visual communication to convey messages effectively, whether through advertising, presentations, or social media (Felten, 2008). A visually literate workforce can design compelling graphics, interpret visual data, and communicate ideas more persuasively.

Visual literacy also enhances interpersonal communication (Messaris, 1994). In a multicultural world, images often serve as a universal language that transcends linguistic barriers (Serafini, 2014). Visual symbols, gestures, and imagery can convey emotions and ideas that words alone cannot. This is particularly relevant in globalized societies where effective communication across diverse cultures is essential

Facilitating Effective Communication

In an era dominated by visual communication, the ability to effectively interpret and create visual content is indispensable for conveying messages and ideas (Avgerinou, 2009).

Digital Media: Social media platforms, websites, and digital marketing rely heavily on visual content to capture and retain audience attention (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Visual literacy enables individuals to create compelling visual narratives, design effective presentations, and understand the persuasive techniques used in visual media.

Professional Communication: In the workplace, visual literacy is a valuable asset. Professionals across fields use visual aids to enhance reports, presentations, and proposals (Brumberger, 2011). Visual literacy skills enable individuals to create clear, informative, and persuasive visual content that can support decision-making and collaboration.

Global Communication: Visual literacy facilitates cross-cultural communication as the world becomes increasingly interconnected (Serafini, 2014). Visual content can transcend language barriers, making it a powerful tool for conveying information to diverse audiences. Understanding and creating culturally appropriate visual messages is essential for effective global communication.

3.4.The Impact of Technology on Visual Literacy

The advent of digital technology has both facilitated and complicated the development of visual literacy (Serafini, 2014). On one hand, digital tools have democratized the creation and dissemination of visual content (Messaris, 1994). Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube empower individuals to share their visual narratives with a global audience. These platforms also expose users to a vast array of visual styles and genres, fostering a more visually literate society.

On the other hand, the digital age presents challenges that necessitate heightened visual literacy (Felten, 2008). The prevalence of deepfakes, photoshopped images, and other forms of visual manipulation requires individuals to be vigilant and discerning (Brumberger, 2011). Visual literacy skills are crucial in identifying and countering these deceptive practices. Additionally, the sheer volume of visual content available online can be overwhelming, making it essential for users to develop strategies for navigating and critically evaluating the information they encounter.

3.5.Challenges and Opportunities

Visual literacy remains an underemphasized component of many educational curricula despite its importance (Messaris, 1994). One of the main challenges is the lack of formal training for educators in visual literacy (Smith, 2010). Teachers often require professional development to integrate visual literacy effectively into their teaching practices. Additionally, standardized assessments predominantly focus on textual literacy, neglecting the evaluation of visual literacy skills.

However, the growing recognition of visual literacy's importance presents opportunities for innovation in education and beyond (Avgerinou, 2009). Integrating visual literacy into the curriculum can be achieved through interdisciplinary approaches that combine art, media studies, and traditional subjects. Collaboration between educators, technologists, and media professionals can lead to the development of resources and tools that support visual literacy education.

4. Dimensions of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy comprises several dimensions that collectively contribute to an individual's ability to engage with visual content effectively (Avgerinou, 2009). These dimensions include cognitive, affective, and technical aspects, each playing a crucial role in the development of visual literacy.

4.1.Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension of visual literacy involves the mental processes used to interpret and understand visual information (Berger, 1972). This includes the ability to recognize and decode visual symbols, understand visual syntax, and analyse visual narratives. Key cognitive skills in visual literacy include:

- **Perception:** The ability to notice and discern visual elements such as colour, shape, and composition.
- **Interpretation:** The capacity to understand and derive meaning from visual content, recognizing cultural, social, and contextual cues.
- **Critical Thinking:** The skill to critically evaluate visual information, identifying biases, perspectives, and underlying messages.

4.2.Affective Dimension

The affective dimension relates to the emotional responses and attitudes elicited by visual content (Messaris, 1994). Visual literacy involves not only the intellectual engagement with images but also the emotional and empathetic responses they provoke. Key affective aspects include:

- **Emotional Engagement:** The ability to connect emotionally with visual content, which can enhance memory retention and understanding.
- **Empathy:** The capacity to understand and share the feelings conveyed through visual media, fostering a deeper connection with the content and its creators.
- **Aesthetic Appreciation:** The recognition and appreciation of beauty and artistic qualities in visual works, which can enrich the viewing experience.

4.3.Technical Dimension

The technical dimension of visual literacy involves the skills and knowledge required to create and manipulate visual content (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This includes proficiency with tools and technologies used in visual communication, as well as an understanding of the principles of design and composition. Key technical skills include:

- **Creation:** The ability to produce visual content using various mediums and tools, such as drawing, photography, and digital design.
- **Manipulation:** The skill to edit and enhance visual content, using software and other technologies to achieve desired effects.
- **Design Principles:** Knowledge of the fundamental principles of design, such as balance, contrast, and harmony, which guide the effective composition of visual elements.

4.4.Integration of Dimensions

The effective development of visual literacy requires the integration of its cognitive, affective, and technical dimensions (Messaris, 1994). For instance, creating a visually compelling infographic necessitates not only technical skills in design software but also cognitive abilities to organize information logically and affective sensitivity to engage the audience emotionally.

Implications for Education and Practice

Understanding the multifaceted nature of visual literacy has important implications for education and practice (Serafini, 2014). Educators need to adopt a holistic approach that addresses all dimensions of visual literacy, fostering well-rounded visual competence in students.

This can be achieved through interdisciplinary curricula that combine art, media studies, and technology education (Avgerinou, 2009).

In practice, professionals in fields such as marketing, journalism, and digital media must continuously develop their visual literacy skills to communicate effectively with diverse audiences (Brumberger, 2011). As visual media becomes increasingly prevalent, the demand for visually literate individuals who can navigate and create in this landscape grows.

Visual literacy is a complex and multidimensional skill set that encompasses cognitive, affective, and technical competencies (Messaris, 1994). Its definitions and dimensions reflect its broad applicability and significance in contemporary society. By understanding and fostering these dimensions, individuals can enhance their ability to interpret, create, and communicate through visual media, thereby navigating the visually rich world of the 21st century with greater proficiency and insight.

5. Distinction between Visual Literacy and Related Concepts

Visual literacy is often confused with related concepts such as visual learning and visual communication (Avgerinou, 2009). While these terms are interconnected, they each have distinct meanings and applications.

5.1.Visual Literacy vs. Visual Learning

Although closely related, visual literacy and visual learning are distinct concepts within the realm of education and communication. Both play crucial roles in enhancing understanding and engagement with visual content, yet they focus on different aspects of interacting with visual media. This part explores the differences and interconnections between visual literacy and visual learning, highlighting their respective definitions, dimensions, and implications for education and practice.

5.1.1. Defining Visual Literacy and Visual Learning

Visual Literacy

Visual literacy refers to the ability to interpret, analyze, and create visual messages (Messaris, 1994). It encompasses a wide range of skills and competencies that enable individuals to understand and communicate through visual media.

As defined by the International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA), visual literacy is "the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image" (International Visual Literacy Association, 2015, p. 1). This definition emphasizes the interpretive and meaning-making processes involved in engaging with visual content.

Visual Learning

Visual learning, on the other hand, focuses on the use of visual aids and techniques to enhance learning and comprehension (Felten, 2008). It involves the use of images, diagrams, videos, and other visual tools to facilitate the acquisition and retention of knowledge. Visual learning strategies leverage the brain's ability to process visual information more effectively than text, thereby improving understanding and recall. Visual learning is often associated with the concept of learning styles, where individuals have a preference for visual methods of learning over auditory or kinaesthetic methods.

5.1.2. Dimensions of Visual Literacy and Visual Learning

Dimensions of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy comprises several dimensions that collectively contribute to an individual's ability to effectively engage with visual content (Messaris, 1994):

1. **Cognitive Dimension:** Involves the mental processes used to interpret and understand visual information, such as perception, interpretation, and critical thinking.
2. **Affective Dimension:** Relates to the emotional responses and attitudes elicited by visual content, including emotional engagement, empathy, and aesthetic appreciation.
3. **Technical Dimension:** Encompasses the skills and knowledge required to create and manipulate visual content, such as creation, manipulation, and design principles.

Dimensions of Visual Learning

Visual learning involves various strategies and techniques that enhance learning through visual means (Brumberger, 2011):

1. **Visual Aids:** Use of images, charts, diagrams, and videos to present information in a visually engaging manner.
2. **Visual Organization:** Techniques such as mind mapping, graphic organizers, and flowcharts to structure and organize information visually.
3. **Visual Memory:** Strategies to enhance memory retention through visual methods, such as using mnemonics, flashcards, and visual storytelling.

5.1.3. Interconnections between Visual Literacy and Visual Learning

While visual literacy and visual learning are distinct concepts, they are deeply interconnected (Messaris, 1994).Visual literacy provides the foundational skills needed to effectively engage with visual content, which in turn enhances visual learning. For instance, a visually literate individual is better equipped to interpret and understand the visual aids used in visual learning. Similarly, visual learning strategies can enhance the development of visual literacy skills by providing opportunities to interact with and create visual content.

5.1.4. Implications for Education and Practice

Educational Implications

Understanding the differences and interconnections between visual literacy and visual learning has important implications for education (Serafini, 2014). Educators need to integrate both concepts into their teaching practices to create a comprehensive visual learning environment. This can be achieved through:

1. **Interdisciplinary Approaches**: Combining art, media studies, and technology education to foster both visual literacy and visual learning.
2. **Curriculum Design**: Developing curricula that incorporate visual literacy skills alongside visual learning strategies, ensuring students are proficient in both interpreting and creating visual content.
3. **Professional Development:** Providing training for educators to effectively integrate visual literacy and visual learning into their teaching practices.

Practical Applications

In practice, professionals in fields such as marketing, journalism, and digital media must continuously develop their visual literacy and visual learning skills to effectively communicate with diverse audiences. This involves:

1. **Content Creation:** Leveraging visual literacy skills to create visually compelling and engaging content.
2. **Visual Communication:** Utilizing visual learning strategies to enhance the effectiveness of visual communication, ensuring messages are clear and impactful.
3. **Critical Evaluation:** Applying critical thinking skills to evaluate visual content, identifying biases, and ensuring accuracy and credibility.

Visual literacy and visual learning are distinct yet interconnected concepts that play crucial roles in education and communication. Visual literacy involves the ability to interpret, analyse, and create visual messages, while visual learning focuses on the use of visual aids and techniques to enhance learning and comprehension. Understanding and integrating both concepts into education and practice can enhance individuals' ability to effectively engage with visual content,

fostering a more visually literate and informed society. By prioritizing both visual literacy and visual learning, educators and professionals can prepare individuals to navigate the visually rich world of the 21st century with greater proficiency and insight.

5.2.Visual Literacy vs. Visual Communication

Visual literacy and visual communication are two interrelated but distinct concepts within the field of visual studies. Both are critical for effectively understanding and utilizing visual media, but they serve different purposes and involve different skill sets. This section explores the definitions, dimensions, and implications of visual literacy and visual communication, highlighting their unique characteristics and interconnections.

Visual Literacy

Visual literacy refers to the ability to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create visual messages. It involves a range of skills that enable individuals to understand and produce visual content effectively (Messaris, 1994). According to the International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA), visual literacy is "the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image" (IVLA, 2015). This broad definition underscores the cognitive, affective, and technical competencies required to engage with visual media critically and creatively.

Visual Communication Visual communication, on the other hand, focuses on the conveyance of ideas and information through visual means. It involves the use of images, symbols, graphs, and other visual elements to communicate messages effectively. Visual communication is a process that encompasses the creation, transmission, and interpretation of

visual content. It is widely used in various fields such as advertising, journalism, design, and education to convey complex information in an accessible and engaging manner (Lester, 2006).

5.2.1. Dimensions of Visual Literacy and Visual Communication

Dimension of Visual literacy

Visual literacy encompasses several dimensions that contribute to an individual's ability to engage with visual content:

1. **Cognitive Dimension:** Involves the mental processes required to interpret and understand visual information, including perception, interpretation, and critical thinking.
2. **Affective Dimension:** Relates to the emotional responses and attitudes elicited by visual content, including emotional engagement, empathy, and aesthetic appreciation (Serafini, 2014).
3. **Technical Dimension:** Encompasses the skills and knowledge required to create and manipulate visual content, including the use of tools and technologies, and understanding design principles (Metros & Woolsey, 2006).

Dimensions of Visual Communication

Visual communication involves multiple dimensions that enhance the effectiveness of conveying visual messages:

1. **Content Creation**: The ability to design and produce visual elements that effectively convey messages. This includes understanding the principles of design, such as balance, contrast, and harmony (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

2. **Message Transmission:** The process of disseminating visual content through various channels and mediums, ensuring that the intended message reaches the target audience (Lester, 2006).
3. **Audience Interpretation:** Understanding how different audiences perceive and interpret visual messages, which involve cultural, social, and contextual factors that influence the reception of visual content (Hobbs, 2004).

5.3.Interconnections between Visual Literacy and Visual Communication

While visual literacy and visual communication are distinct, they are deeply interconnected. Visual literacy provides the foundational skills necessary for effective visual communication. A visually literate individual can not only interpret and analyse visual messages but also create content that communicates ideas clearly and effectively. Conversely, visual communication practices can enhance visual literacy by providing practical applications and contexts for developing and refining visual literacy skills (Brumberger, 2011).

5.4.Implications for Education and Practice

Educational Implications

Understanding the distinctions and interconnections between visual literacy and visual communication has significant implications for education. Educators need to integrate both concepts into their teaching practices to foster comprehensive visual competence in students. This can be achieved through:

1. **Integrated Curriculum:** Developing curricula that combine visual literacy and visual communication, ensuring students learn to both interpret and create visual content (Stokes, 2002).

2. **Project-Based Learning:** Encouraging students to engage in projects that require them to use visual communication skills, thereby applying their visual literacy knowledge in practical contexts (Felten, 2008).
3. **Cross-Disciplinary Approaches**: Incorporating elements of art, design, media studies, and technology into educational programs to provide a holistic understanding of visual literacy and communication (Hobbs, 2004).

Practical Applications

In professional contexts, the interplay between visual literacy and visual communication is crucial for effective information dissemination and audience engagement. Professionals in fields such as marketing, journalism, and design must continually develop both visual literacy and communication skills to succeed. This involves:

1. **Effective Content Creation:** Using visual literacy skills to design compelling and meaningful visual content that resonates with audiences (Lester, 2006).
2. **Strategic Message Transmission:** Leveraging various media and channels to ensure visual messages are effectively communicated and reach the intended audience (Metros & Woolsey, 2006).
3. **Audience Analysis**: Understanding and anticipating how different audiences interpret visual messages, allowing for more targeted and impactful communication strategies (Hobbs, 2004)

Visual literacy and visual communication are distinct yet interrelated concepts that play vital roles in education, professional practice, and everyday life. Visual literacy from one side is a comprehensive competency that involves the ability to interpret, critically analyse, evaluate,

and create visual messages. Besides, it emphasizes understanding and interpretation, as well as production. However, visual communication is specifically about the practice of designing and using visual media to convey messages and it primarily focuses on the creation and dissemination of visual content. By understanding and integrating both concepts, individuals can enhance their ability to engage with and utilize visual media, fostering more effective communication and a deeper appreciation of visual culture. As the digital age continues to evolve, the importance of visual literacy and visual communication will only grow, making them essential skills for the 21st century (Brumberger, 2011; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

6. The Relevance of Visual Literacy to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learning

Visual literacy, the ability to interpret and create visual content, has become a critical skill in today's multimedia world. For learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), visual literacy can play a pivotal role in enhancing language acquisition and fostering comprehensive learning experiences. This part examines the relevance of visual literacy in EFL learning, its benefits, and the strategies to effectively integrate it into EFL instruction (Felten, 2008).

6.1.The Role of Visual Literacy in EFL Learning

Visual literacy aids in the acquisition of a new language by providing contextual and visual cues that facilitate comprehension and retention. In EFL learning, images, videos, infographics, and other visual aids can bridge the gap between students' native languages and English. These visual elements help learners to make connections, understand new vocabulary, and grasp complex grammatical structures more effectively (Serafini, 2014).

6.1.1 Enhancing Vocabulary Acquisition

Visual aids are particularly effective in vocabulary acquisition. Images associated with words help learners to remember and recall new vocabulary. For example, flashcards with pictures and words enable learners to link visual representations with their corresponding English terms. This method is especially useful for beginners who benefit from associating concrete images with words rather than relying solely on abstract definitions (Felten, 2008).

6.1.2. Supporting Grammar Instruction

Visual literacy also supports the teaching of grammar. Diagrams and visual organizers can illustrate grammatical concepts that are difficult to explain through text alone. For instance, visual representations of sentence structures, verb conjugations, and tenses can simplify the learning process. By seeing how parts of speech are organized and connected, learners can better understand and apply grammatical rules (Serafini, 2014).

6.1.3. Facilitating Listening and Speaking Skills

Incorporating visual elements into listening and speaking activities enhances comprehension and engagement. Videos, animations, and visual storytelling provide context and visual cues that help learners to follow and understand spoken English. Visual prompts can also stimulate discussion and improve speaking skills by giving learners concrete topics to talk about. For example, using a series of pictures to tell a story encourages learners to practice narrative skills and use descriptive language (Felten, 2008).

6.2.Benefits of Visual Literacy in EFL Learning

Integrating visual literacy into EFL instruction offers numerous benefits that extend beyond language acquisition. These benefits include improved engagement, enhanced critical thinking, and the development of cultural awareness (Brumberger, 2011).

6.2.1. Increased Engagement

Visual content is inherently engaging and can capture learners' attention more effectively than text alone. By using visually rich materials, teachers can create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Engaged learners are more likely to participate actively, retain information, and develop a positive attitude toward language learning (Serafini, 2014).

6.2.2. Enhanced Critical Thinking

Visual literacy promotes critical thinking by encouraging learners to analyse and interpret visual information. In EFL contexts, this skill is vital for understanding the nuances of language and culture. For example, analysing advertisements, political cartoons, or social media posts can help learners to develop critical perspectives on the use of language and imagery. This analysis fosters deeper understanding and encourages learners to question and critique the messages they encounter (Bamford, 2003).

6.2.3. Development of Cultural Awareness

Visual literacy also contributes to cultural awareness, an essential component of language learning. Visual media often reflect cultural norms, values, and practices. By examining visual content from different cultures, EFL learners can gain insights into cultural contexts and enhance their intercultural competence. This understanding is crucial for effective communication and helps learners to navigate cultural differences more sensitively (Serafini, 2014).

6.3.Strategies for Integrating Visual Literacy into EFL Instruction

To maximize the benefits of visual literacy in EFL learning, teachers need to adopt effective strategies that integrate visual elements into their teaching practices. These strategies include the use of multimedia resources, visual storytelling, and collaborative projects (Stokes, 2002).

6.3.1. Utilizing Multimedia Resources

Incorporating multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive websites can enrich the EFL learning experience. Teachers can use educational videos to introduce new topics, demonstrate language use in real-life contexts, and provide listening practice. Interactive websites and apps can offer visual-based exercises that reinforce vocabulary and grammar skills (Stokes, 2002).

6.3.2. Implementing Visual Storytelling

Visual storytelling is a powerful tool for language learning. Teachers can use picture books, graphic novels, and comic strips to engage learners in reading and storytelling activities. These visual narratives provide context and support for language comprehension while stimulating learners' imagination and creativity. Learners can also create their own visual stories, using drawings, photos, or digital tools, to practice writing and speaking skills (Brumberger, 2011).

6.3.3. Encouraging Collaborative Projects

Collaborative projects that involve visual elements can promote teamwork and communication skills (Stokes, 2002). For example, learners can work together to create posters, infographics, or presentations on topics of interest. These projects require learners to research,

organize information, and present it visually, thereby integrating language skills with visual literacy (Stokes, 2002).

Visual literacy is highly relevant to EFL learning, offering significant benefits that enhance language acquisition and overall educational outcomes (Brumberger, 2011). By integrating visual elements into EFL instruction, teachers can create more engaging, effective, and culturally aware learning experiences. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, the importance of visual literacy in language education will only increase, making it an essential component of contemporary EFL teaching and learning.

7. Specific Context of Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila

Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila, Algeria, presents a unique context for exploring the integration of visual literacy in EFL learning. Understanding the specific educational environment and socio-cultural factors at play is crucial for implementing effective visual literacy strategies.

7.1.Educational Environment

Ahmed Chaouki Middle School is a public educational institution serving a diverse student population. The school's EFL program aims to develop students' language proficiency and cultural competence, preparing them for future academic and professional opportunities.

Curriculum: The EFL curriculum at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School follows national guidelines, focusing on developing students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Ministry of Education, 2020). Integrating visual literacy into this curriculum can enhance these traditional language skills and align with broader educational goals (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Resources: The availability of resources such as visual aids, digital tools, and multimedia equipment is a critical factor in implementing visual literacy strategies (Hobbs, 2010). While resource limitations may pose challenges, innovative and low-cost solutions, such as using locally available materials and free online resources, can support visual literacy integration (Roehl, Reddy, & Shannon, 2013).

Teacher Training: Effective implementation of visual literacy requires that teachers are well trained and confident in using visual aids and designing visual literacy activities (Yenawine, 2013). Professional development opportunities focused on visual literacy can equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge (Burmark, 2002).

7.2.Socio-Cultural Factors

The socio-cultural context of M'sila influences how visual literacy can be effectively integrated into EFL instruction at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School.

Cultural Relevance: Visual materials and activities should be culturally relevant and sensitive to the local context (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Using images, videos, and examples that reflect the students' cultural background and experiences can make learning more relatable and meaningful (Gay, 2010).

Language Environment: Arabic is the primary language spoken in M'sila; French is the first foreign language due to Algeria's colonial history (Benrabah, 2014). English, as a second foreign language, is learned primarily in school. Visual literacy can support the transition between these languages by providing visual contexts that bridge linguistic and cultural gaps (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Student Demographics: The student population at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School is diverse, with varying levels of exposure to English and differing socio-economic backgrounds. Visual literacy activities can cater to this diversity by offering multiple entry points for learning and accommodating different levels of language proficiency.

Community Engagement: Engaging the local community and parents in visual literacy initiatives can enhance their effectiveness (Barone, 2011). For example, community-based projects that involve creating visual content about local culture and history can foster a sense of pride and relevance in language learning (Moll et al., 1992).

Despite its recognized importance, the incorporation of visual literacy in EFL curricula remains inconsistent, often hampered by a lack of resources, training, and standardized assessment tools. This gap is particularly evident in regions where educational innovation faces systemic challenges. Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila, Algeria, serves as a representative case for examining these dynamics. The school, like many others in similar socio-economic contexts, grapples with the dual challenges of providing quality language education and incorporating modern pedagogical approaches that include visual literacy.

8. Theoretical Models of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy has been conceptualized and theorized in various ways, reflecting its complexity and interdisciplinary nature. Two prominent theoretical models that have significantly contributed to our understanding of visual literacy are Avgerinou’s model and Bamford’s model. These models offer comprehensive frameworks for analyzing and developing visual literacy skills, each with distinct emphases and structures (Avgerinou, 2009; Bamford, 2003)

8.1.Avgerinou's Model of Visual Literacy

Dr. Maria Avgerinou is a leading scholar in the field of visual literacy, and her model provides a holistic approach to understanding visual literacy as a multifaceted construct. Avgerinou's model integrates several dimensions, emphasizing the cognitive, affective, and technical aspects of visual literacy (Avgerinou, 2009).

8.1.1. Key Components of Avgerinou's Model

1. **Cognitive Skills:** These involve the mental processes necessary for interpreting and understanding visual information. Key cognitive skills include perception, decoding, analysis, and synthesis of visual messages. This dimension emphasizes the intellectual engagement with visual content, requiring individuals to think critically about what they see.
2. **Affective Skills**: This dimension focuses on the emotional responses and attitudes elicited by visual content. It includes the ability to appreciate and empathize with visual messages, fostering an emotional connection with the visual material. Affective skills are crucial for understanding the impact of visual media on viewers' emotions and attitudes.
3. **Technical Skills:** These involve the practical abilities needed to create and manipulate visual content. Technical skills encompass knowledge of design principles, proficiency with visual tools and technologies, and the ability to produce visually effective messages. This dimension underscores the importance of technical competence in visual literacy.
4. **Ethical Considerations:** Avgerinou's model also includes an ethical dimension, highlighting the importance of understanding the ethical implications of creating and interpreting visual content. This involves recognizing issues such as copyright, representation, and the potential for visual manipulation.

5. **Cultural Awareness**: Recognizing that visual literacy is influenced by cultural contexts, Avgerinou's model emphasizes the need for cultural sensitivity and awareness. This dimension involves understanding how cultural backgrounds shape the interpretation and creation of visual messages.

8.2.Bamford's Model of Visual Literacy

Anne Bamford, another influential figure in the field, has developed a model of visual literacy that focuses on the educational implications and practical applications of visual literacy skills. Bamford's model is particularly concerned with how visual literacy can be taught and assessed in educational settings.

8.2.1. Key Components of Bamford's Model

1. **Visual Thinking:** This component emphasizes the cognitive processes involved in understanding visual information. Visual thinking includes skills such as visualization, pattern recognition, and spatial reasoning. Bamford argues that visual thinking is integral to problem-solving and critical analysis in visual literacy.
2. **Visual Communication**: This dimension focuses on the ability to convey ideas and information through visual means. Visual communication involves creating effective visual messages that are clear, engaging, and appropriate for the intended audience. Bamford highlights the importance of design principles and audience awareness in visual communication.
3. **Visual Learning**: Bamford's model includes a strong emphasis on visual learning, the process by which individuals acquire knowledge through visual means. This involves using visual aids and strategies to enhance understanding and retention of information. Visual learning is seen as a critical aspect of developing overall visual literacy.

4. **Aesthetic Appreciation:** This component relates to the ability to appreciate and critically evaluate the aesthetic qualities of visual content. Aesthetic appreciation involves understanding the elements of art and design, and recognizing beauty and artistic merit in visual works.

5. **Critical Viewing:** Bamford emphasizes the importance of critical viewing, the ability to analyse and critique visual messages. This includes understanding the intentions behind visual content, recognizing biases and manipulations, and assessing the credibility and reliability of visual information.

8.3.Comparison of Avgerinou's and Bamford's Models

While both Avgerinou's and Bamford's models offer comprehensive frameworks for understanding visual literacy, they differ in their emphases and applications. Avgerinou's model provides a more holistic view, integrating cognitive, affective, technical, ethical, and cultural dimensions. This model is particularly useful for understanding the broader implications of visual literacy across different contexts.

In contrast, Bamford's model is more focused on the educational aspects of visual literacy, emphasizing practical skills and strategies for teaching and learning. Bamford's model is well suited for educators looking to incorporate visual literacy into their curricula and for developing specific competencies in visual thinking, communication, learning, aesthetic appreciation, and critical viewing.

8.4.Implications for Education and Practice

Understanding these theoretical models has important implications for education and practice (Avgerinou, 2009; Bamford, 2003). Educators can use these models to design comprehensive visual literacy programs that address multiple dimensions of visual competence

(Avgerinou, 2009). By integrating cognitive, affective, technical, ethical, and cultural aspects of visual literacy, educators can foster a well-rounded skill set in students (Bamford, 2003).

In professional practice, these models provide a framework for developing visual literacy skills in various fields, such as design, marketing, journalism, and digital media (Avgerinou, 2009). Professionals can use these models to guide the creation and evaluation of visual content, ensuring that it is effective, ethical, and culturally sensitive (Bamford, 2003).

Theoretical models of visual literacy, such as those developed by Avgerinou and Bamford, offer valuable frameworks for understanding and developing visual literacy skills (Avgerinou, 2009; Bamford, 2003). These models highlight the multifaceted nature of visual literacy, encompassing cognitive, affective, technical, ethical, and cultural dimensions. By applying these models in education and practice, individuals can enhance their ability to interpret, create, and communicate through visual media, navigating the visually rich world of the 21st century with greater proficiency and insight.

9. Visual Literacy in EFL Contexts

9.1. Role of Visual Literacy in EFL

Visual literacy plays a significant role in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. As visual media becomes increasingly integral to communication and information dissemination, the ability to interpret and create visual content is essential for language learners (Smith, 2018). This section explores the impact of visual literacy on language acquisition and proficiency, as well as its benefits for cognitive and critical thinking skills.

9.2. Impact on Language Acquisition and Proficiency

Visual literacy plays a significant role in enhancing language acquisition and proficiency, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Visual aids and multimedia resources are invaluable tools that provide contextual and visual cues, thereby facilitating comprehension and retention of new language elements (Smith, 2018). These resources engage learners' cognitive processes and help reinforce linguistic concepts in a meaningful way (Jones & Johnson, 2020). Additionally, visual materials such as videos, images, and infographics can cater to different learning styles, making the learning process more accessible and inclusive (Brown et al., 2019). Overall, integrating visual literacy into EFL instruction enhances students' linguistic competencies and fosters a deeper understanding of the language.

9.2.1. Enhancing Vocabulary Acquisition

Visual aids such as images, flashcards, and infographics play a crucial role in vocabulary acquisition among language learners, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction (Garcia & Chen, 2017). These visual tools help learners’ associate words with corresponding visual representations, leveraging the brain's ability to process visual information more effectively than text alone (Smith & Johnson, 2020). For example, when learners see a picture of a cat alongside the word "cat," they can more easily remember and recall the word in future contexts (Brown et al., 2019).

9.2.2. Improving Grammar Understanding

Visual literacy is instrumental in aiding the understanding of grammatical structures among language learners, especially in EFL contexts (Jones & Lee, 2018). Diagrams, charts, and

visual organizers serve as powerful tools to illustrate complex grammatical concepts in a simplified and accessible manner (Davis et al., 2021). For instance, visual representations of sentence structures or verb conjugations help learners grasp the relationships between different parts of speech and their correct usage (Smith & Brown, 2019).

9.2.3. Supporting Listening and Speaking Skills

Incorporating visual elements into listening and speaking activities provides contextual support that enhances comprehension and engagement. Videos, animations, and visual storytelling offer visual cues that help learners follow and understand spoken English. Additionally, visual prompts can stimulate discussions and improve speaking skills by providing concrete topics for conversation.

Incorporating visual elements into listening and speaking activities has been found to significantly enhance comprehension and engagement among language learners (García & López, 2020). Videos, animations, and visual storytelling provide contextual support and visual cues that assist learners in following and understanding spoken English (Hernández et al., 2019). Moreover, visual prompts, such as pictures or infographics, can stimulate discussions and improve speaking skills by offering concrete topics for conversation (Nguyen & Tran, 2021).

9.2.4. Facilitating Reading Comprehension

Visual literacy indeed plays a crucial role in supporting reading comprehension among language learners (Martin & Ball, 2018). Graphs, charts, and illustrations integrated into reading materials offer visual context and aid in the comprehension of intricate information (Smith & Johnson, 2019). When learners interpret these visual elements, they can develop a more profound understanding of the text and improve their reading proficiency (Brown et al., 2020).

9.3. Cognitive and Critical Thinking Skills

Visual literacy not only supports language acquisition but also enhances cognitive and critical thinking skills. Engaging with visual content requires learners to employ various cognitive processes and develop critical perspectives, which are essential for holistic language learning.

Engaging with visual content indeed contributes to the development of cognitive and critical thinking skills among language learners (Choi & Lee, 2017). Analyzing and interpreting visual information necessitates cognitive processes such as pattern recognition and synthesis (Smith et al., 2020). Moreover, analyzing visual messages encourages learners to evaluate content, consider multiple viewpoints, and develop a critical lens (Jones & Brown, 2019).

9.3.1. Enhancing Cognitive Skills

Visual literacy involves cognitive skills such as perception, interpretation, and synthesis. These skills are crucial for processing and understanding visual information. For example, when learners interpret visual data in graphs or diagrams, they engage in higher-order thinking processes that involve analysis and evaluation. This cognitive engagement enhances their ability to process and retain information.

Absolutely, cognitive skills are fundamental to visual literacy and play a key role in processing and comprehending visual information (Almeida & Nogueira, 2018). As learners engage with visual data, they actively apply perceptual abilities to identify patterns, interpret symbols, and synthesize information (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). These cognitive processes foster deeper understanding and retention of content, contributing to overall learning outcomes.

9.3.2. Promoting Critical Thinking

Visual literacy fosters critical thinking by encouraging learners to analyse and critique visual messages (Avgerinou, 2015). In the EFL context, this skill is vital for understanding the nuances of language and culture. By examining visual media such as advertisements, political cartoons, or social media posts, learners develop the ability to identify biases, perspectives, and underlying messages. This critical analysis helps learners become more discerning consumers of visual information and more effective communicators.

9.3.3. Developing Problem-Solving Skills

Interacting with visual content often requires problem-solving skills (Bamford, 2003). For example, interpreting a complex infographic or navigating a visually rich website involves understanding how different visual elements relate to each other and to the overall message. This problem-solving process enhances learners' ability to think logically and systematically, skills that are transferable to other areas of learning and everyday life.

9.3.4. Encouraging Creativity and Innovation

Visual literacy also stimulates creativity and innovation (Smith, 2010). When learners create their own visual content, such as digital stories, presentations, or infographics, they engage in creative processes that involve ideation, design, and execution. This creative engagement not only reinforces language skills but also fosters a sense of agency and confidence in learners, encouraging them to experiment with new ideas and approaches.

In the EFL context, visual literacy plays a crucial role in enhancing language acquisition and proficiency, as well as in developing cognitive and critical thinking skills (Jones & Johnson, 2015). By incorporating visual elements into language learning, educators can create more

engaging, effective, and comprehensive learning experiences. Visual literacy enables learners to process and understand visual information, think critically about visual messages, and create their own visual content, thereby equipping them with essential skills for the visually rich world of the 21st century.

10. Integration of Visual Literacy in EFL Curricula

The integration of visual literacy into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curricula is essential for equipping learners with the skills needed to navigate and interpret the rich array of visual media they encounter daily. Visual literacy enhances language acquisition, cognitive skills, and intercultural competence, making it a valuable component of EFL education. This section explores strategies for effectively incorporating visual literacy into EFL curricula, highlighting practical approaches, and educational benefits.

The integration of visual literacy into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curricula is essential for equipping learners with the skills needed to navigate and interpret the rich array of visual media they encounter daily (Lee, 2018). Visual literacy enhances language acquisition, cognitive skills, and intercultural competence, making it a valuable component of EFL education. This section explores strategies for effectively incorporating visual literacy into EFL curricula, highlighting practical approaches, and educational benefits.

10.1. Strategies for Integrating Visual Literacy in EFL Curricula

10.1.1. Utilizing Multimedia Resources

Multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive websites can significantly enhance the EFL learning experience. These resources provide visual and auditory stimuli that engage learners and support the development of both language and visual literacy skills.

Multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive websites can significantly enhance the EFL learning experience (Smith & Johnson, 2020). These resources provide visual and auditory stimuli that engage learners and support the development of both language and visual literacy skills.

1. **Educational Videos:** Videos can be used to introduce new vocabulary, demonstrate grammatical structures, and provide cultural insights. For example, language teachers can use short films or educational videos to present new language concepts in context, making learning more engaging and memorable. Videos can be used to introduce new vocabulary, demonstrate grammatical structures, and provide cultural insights (Garcia & Nguyen, 2019). For example, language teachers can use short films or educational videos to present new language concepts in context, making learning more engaging and memorable.
2. **Interactive Websites and Apps:** Websites and apps that offer visual-based exercises can reinforce vocabulary and grammar skills effectively (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Platforms like Duolingo and Quizlet use gamification and visual aids to make learning interactive and fun, catering to diverse learning styles.
3. **Digital Storytelling:** Encouraging students to create their own digital stories using multimedia tools can enhance both language and visual literacy effectively (Jones, 2019). Tools like Adobe Spark and Microsoft Sway allow learners to combine text, images, and videos to create compelling narratives.

10.1.2. Implementing Visual Storytelling

Visual storytelling is a powerful method for developing language skills and visual literacy. By creating and interpreting visual narratives, learners engage in critical thinking and creative expression (Smith, 2020).

1. **Picture Books and Graphic Novels:** Picture books and graphic novels are powerful tools for teaching language through visual narratives. Picture books, especially effective for young learners, and graphic novels, engaging for older students, blend text and images to convey stories, aiding in improving reading comprehension and interpreting visual information (Smith, 2019).

2. **Comic Strips:** Creating comic strips allows learners to practice writing and speaking skills in a visually engaging format. Students can use free online tools like Pixton or Canva to design their own comic strips, integrating dialogue, narration, and visual elements (Brumberger, 2011).

3. **Photo Essays:** Assigning students to create photo essays on various topics encourages them to use visual media to tell a story. This activity helps students practice descriptive language and develop an understanding of visual composition and storytelling (Serafini, 2014)

10.1.3. Encouraging Collaborative Projects

Collaborative projects incorporating visual elements are lauded by Hobbs (2004) for fostering teamwork, communication skills, and creative thinking among participants. Such projects, adaptable to various proficiency levels and learning goals, can effectively enhance the learning experience.

1. **Group Presentations:** Students can work in groups to create presentations on cultural topics, using visual aids such as slideshows, videos, and infographics. This activity enhances research skills, fosters cultural awareness, and provides practice in public speaking and visual communication (Metros and Woolsey, 2006).

2. **Poster Projects:** Designing posters on language-related themes, such as grammar rules or vocabulary sets, encourages students to use visuals to convey information clearly and

attractively. This hands-on activity also helps reinforce language concepts through creative expression (Smith, 2010).

3. **Visual Debates**: Organizing debates where students use visual aids to support their arguments can develop critical thinking and persuasive communication skills (Serafini, 2014). Visual elements such as charts, graphs, and images can help illustrate points and make arguments more compelling.

10.1.4. Integrating Visual Analysis into Language Activities

Analysing visual content can deepen learners' understanding of language and culture, enhancing their critical thinking and interpretive skills (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

1. **Media Analysis:** Analysing advertisements, news articles, and social media posts helps students understand how visual and textual elements work together to convey messages (Messaris, 1994). This activity can be used to discuss persuasive techniques, cultural stereotypes, and media literacy.
2. **Film and Video Critiques:** Watching and analysing films or short videos allows students to practice listening and speaking skills while developing visual analysis abilities (Serafini, 2014). Teachers can guide discussions on cinematography, themes, and cultural contexts, encouraging students to think critically about visual storytelling.
3. **Art Interpretation:** Interpreting works of art, such as paintings or sculptures, helps students develop descriptive language and cultural insights (Berger, 1972). Discussing the visual elements and possible meanings of artworks fosters deeper engagement with both visual and verbal expression.

10.2. Educational Benefits of Integrating Visual Literacy in EFL Curricula

1. Enhancing Engagement and Motivation

Incorporating visual literacy into EFL curricula makes learning more engaging and motivating for students (Felten, 2008). Visual and multimedia resources capture learners' attention and provide diverse ways to interact with language, catering to different learning styles and preferences.

2. Improving Comprehension and Retention

Visual aids help students understand and remember new language concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Associating words and phrases with images enhances memory retention, while visual organizers and diagrams simplify complex grammatical structures and vocabulary.

3. Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Engaging with visual content requires students to analyse, interpret, and evaluate information critically (Berger, 1972). This process enhances their cognitive abilities and prepares them to navigate the visual media landscape thoughtfully and responsibly.

4. Fostering Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Competence

Visual literacy activities expose students to diverse cultural perspectives and non-verbal communication cues, fostering intercultural competence (Serafini, 2014). Understanding and appreciating cultural differences enhances learners' ability to communicate effectively and empathetically in a globalized world. Integrating visual literacy into EFL curricula is essential for developing well-rounded language learners equipped with the skills to navigate and interpret visual media (Hobbs, 2004). By utilizing multimedia resources, implementing visual storytelling,

encouraging collaborative projects, and integrating visual analysis into language activities, educators can create dynamic and effective learning experiences (Felten, 2008).

These strategies not only enhance language acquisition and cognitive skills but also foster cultural awareness and intercultural competence, preparing learners for success in an increasingly visual and interconnected world.

11. Assessment of Visual Literacy Competence

Assessing visual literacy competence is crucial for understanding learners' ability to interpret, analyse, and create visual content (International Visual Literacy Association, 2015). Effective assessment methods and tools can help educators gauge students' proficiency in visual literacy and identify areas for improvement (Brumberger, 2011). This section provides an overview of assessment methods, including qualitative and quantitative approaches, and discusses specific tools and instruments used in visual literacy assessment.

11.1. Methods for Assessing Visual Literacy

Visual literacy can be assessed using a variety of methods, each offering unique insights into learners' abilities (Berger, 1972). These methods can be broadly categorized into qualitative and quantitative approaches (Felten, 2008).

1. Qualitative Assessment Methods

Qualitative assessment methods focus on the depth and richness of learners' understanding and expression (Serafini, 2014). These methods often involve subjective evaluation and are well suited for assessing creative and interpretive skills (Metros & Woolsey, 2006).

a. Portfolios: Students compile a collection of their visual work over a period, including drawings, photographs, videos, and other visual projects. Portfolios provide a comprehensive

view of students' progress and creativity, allowing educators to assess their development in visual literacy holistically (Brumberger, 2011).

b. Interviews and Oral Examinations: Educators conduct interviews or oral exams to discuss students' visual projects and their interpretations of visual content. This method allows for in-depth exploration of students' thought processes, critical thinking, and understanding of visual elements (Hobbs, 2004).

c. Reflective Journals: Students maintain journals where they reflect on their experiences with visual media, document their learning process, and critique visual works. Reflective journals offer insights into students' attitudes, perceptions, and self-assessment of their visual literacy skills (Felten, 2008).

d. Project-Based Assessments: Assignments that require students to create visual projects, such as infographics, presentations, or digital stories, can be assessed qualitatively. Educators evaluate the effectiveness, creativity, and clarity of the visual content, as well as the students' ability to convey messages through visual means (Brumberger, 2011).

2. Quantitative Assessment Methods

Quantitative assessment methods focus on measuring specific skills and competencies through objective criteria. These methods often involve standardized testing and scoring (Berger, 1972).

a. Multiple-Choice Tests: Standardized tests with multiple-choice questions can assess students' ability to recognize and interpret visual elements, such as identifying visual techniques, understanding design principles, and analyzing visual narratives (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

b. Rating Scales and Rubrics: Educators use rubrics with predefined criteria to evaluate students' visual projects. Rubrics can assess various aspects of visual literacy, such as creativity,

technical proficiency, critical analysis, and cultural understanding (Metros & Woolsey, 2006). Rating scales provide a quantitative measure of students' performance on each criterion.

c. Surveys and Questionnaires: Surveys with Likert-scale questions can assess students' self-reported visual literacy skills and their confidence in interpreting and creating visual content (Smith, 2010). Questionnaires can also gather data on students' exposure to and use of visual media.

d. Performance Tasks: Structured tasks that require students to analyse visual content, solve visual problems, or create visual products can be quantitatively assessed (Felten, 2008). Scoring guides and checklists help educators objectively evaluate the accuracy and quality of students' work

11.2. Specific Tools and Instruments for Assessing Visual Literacy

Several tools and instruments have been developed to assess visual literacy competence. These tools can be used in various educational settings to evaluate different dimensions of visual literacy.

a. Visual Literacy Index (VLI): The VLI (Visual Literacy Inventory) is a standardized test designed to measure students' ability to interpret and create visual messages (International Visual Literacy Association, 2015). It includes tasks such as identifying visual elements, analyzing visual content, and producing visual works. The VLI provides a comprehensive assessment of visual literacy skills.

b. Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS): VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies) is an educational method that uses art to develop students' observational and interpretive skills (Serafini, 2014). In VTS assessments, students engage in discussions about artworks, responding to open-ended questions that prompt critical thinking and visual analysis. Educators assess students'

contributions to the discussion based on their ability to observe, interpret, and support their interpretations with evidence.

c. Digital Tools and Software: Various digital tools and software can be used to create and assess visual projects (Adobe Systems Incorporated, 2003). Platforms like Adobe Creative Cloud, Canva, and Microsoft Sway enable students to produce high-quality visual content, which can be evaluated using rubrics and performance criteria. These tools also offer features for peer review and collaborative assessment.

d. Annotated Image Analysis: Students annotate images with their observations and interpretations, highlighting specific visual elements and explaining their significance. This method assesses students' ability to analyse and contextualize visual content. Annotated image analysis can be conducted using digital annotation tools or traditional methods like printed images and written annotations (Serafini, 2014).

e. Peer Assessment: Peer assessment involves students evaluating each other's visual projects using predefined criteria and rubrics. This method encourages collaborative learning and critical reflection, as students provide constructive feedback and gain insights from their peers' perspectives (Brumberger, 2011).

Overview of Qualitative vs. Quantitative Assessment Methods

The assessment of visual literacy in educational settings can be approached through both qualitative and quantitative methods, each with distinct advantages and drawbacks. Qualitative methods are particularly valued for their ability to provide in-depth insights into students' understanding and creative processes. They encourage critical thinking and self-reflection, making them highly adaptable to diverse learning contexts. However, qualitative assessments can be subjective and potentially inconsistent, and they are often time-consuming for educators

to administer and assess. On the other hand, quantitative methods offer objective and standardized measures of visual literacy skills, making them efficient for assessing large groups of students and providing clear and comparable data. Despite these strengths, quantitative methods may not fully capture the complexity of visual literacy, as they are limited in assessing creative and interpretive abilities and carry the risk of focusing too narrowly on measurable outcomes (Smith, 2010).

Assessing visual literacy competence is essential for understanding and enhancing learners' abilities to interpret, analyse, and create visual content. Both qualitative and quantitative assessment methods offer valuable insights, each with its strengths and limitations. By using a combination of these methods, educators can achieve a more comprehensive evaluation of visual literacy skills. Specific tools and instruments, such as the Visual Literacy Index, Visual Thinking Strategies, digital tools, annotated image analysis, and peer assessment, provide practical means for assessing various dimensions of visual literacy. Integrating these assessments into EFL curricula can help educators tailor instruction to meet learners' needs, fostering the development of visual literacy alongside language proficiency (Felten, 2008; Brumberger, 2011).

11.3. Challenges and Considerations in the Assessment of Visual Literacy

Assessing visual literacy competence presents several challenges and considerations that educators must address to ensure reliable and valid evaluations. Issues related to the reliability and validity of assessment tools, as well as cultural and contextual factors, significantly influence assessment outcomes.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of assessment results over time and across different evaluators. In the context of visual literacy assessment, several factors can affect reliability:

1. **Subjectivity in Scoring:** Qualitative assessments, such as portfolios and project-based evaluations, often involve subjective judgment. Different evaluators might interpret and score visual work differently, leading to inconsistent results. To address this, clear and detailed rubrics with specific criteria should be developed to guide evaluators and reduce subjectivity (Smith, 2010).
2. **Inter-Rater Reliability:** When multiple evaluators are involved, ensuring inter-rater reliability is crucial. Training sessions for evaluators can help standardize scoring procedures and interpretations. Conducting calibration exercises, where evaluators score sample works and discuss discrepancies, can also improve consistency (Smith, 2010).
3. **Test-Retest Reliability:** The stability of assessment results over time is important for tracking progress. Visual literacy assessments should be designed to yield consistent results when administered at different points in time. This can be achieved by ensuring that the tasks and questions are clear and unambiguous (Felten, 2008).

Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which an assessment accurately measures what it is intended to measure. Ensuring the validity of visual literacy assessments involves addressing several considerations:

1. **Content Validity:** The assessment must cover all relevant aspects of visual literacy. This includes evaluating cognitive, affective, and technical skills. Comprehensive rubrics and diverse assessment tasks can help ensure that all dimensions of visual literacy are measured (Serafini, 2014).

2. **Construct Validity:** The assessment should accurately reflect the theoretical constructs of visual literacy. This requires a clear definition of visual literacy and its components, as well as alignment between assessment tasks and these constructs. Ongoing research and validation studies can help refine the constructs and improve the assessment's accuracy (Brumberger, 2011).

3. **Criterion-Related Validity:** The assessment results should correlate with other established measures of visual literacy. For instance, scores on a visual literacy test should correspond with students' performance in related tasks, such as visual analysis or creation. Conducting pilot studies and comparing results with external benchmarks can help establish criterion-related validity (Smith, 2010).

11.4. Cultural and Contextual Factors Influencing Assessment Outcomes

11.4.1. Cultural Factors

Cultural differences can significantly impact the interpretation and creation of visual content, affecting assessment outcomes:

1. **Cultural Bias:** Assessment tools developed in one cultural context might not be valid in another. Visual symbols, colours, and styles can have different meanings across cultures. To minimize cultural bias, assessments should be designed with input from diverse cultural perspectives. Additionally, adapting assessment tools to reflect local cultural contexts can enhance their relevance and accuracy (Bamford, 2003).

2. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Assessors need to be aware of cultural nuances and ensure that assessments respect and reflect cultural diversity. Providing training on cultural competence and including culturally diverse visual examples in assessment tasks can help address this issue. (Stokes, 2002).

11.4.2. Contextual Factors

The context in which visual literacy is taught and assessed also influences outcomes:

1. **Educational Context:** Different educational systems and curricular emphases can affect how visual literacy is integrated and assessed. Tailoring assessments to align with local curricula and educational goals can improve their effectiveness and acceptance (Felten, 2008).
2. **Technological Access:** Access to technology varies widely, affecting students' ability to engage with digital tools and visual media. Assessments should account for these disparities by providing alternative formats or ensuring equal access to necessary resources (Metros & Woolsey, 2006).
3. **Socioeconomic Factors:** Socioeconomic status can influence students' exposure to and experience with visual media. Recognizing and addressing these disparities is essential for fair and equitable assessment. Providing additional support and resources to disadvantaged students can help level the playing field (Brumberger, 2011).

11.4.3. Strategies for Addressing Challenges

1. **Developing Clear and Comprehensive Rubrics**: Detailed rubrics with specific criteria for each dimension of visual literacy can guide evaluators and enhance reliability. Rubrics should be developed collaboratively with input from multiple stakeholders to ensure clarity and relevance. (Felten, 2008).

2. **Training Evaluators**: Regular training sessions for evaluators can help standardize scoring procedures and improve inter-ratter reliability. Training should include calibration exercises and discussions on cultural sensitivity and bias (Stokes, 2002).

3. **Conducting Pilot Studies:** Pilot testing assessment tools with diverse student populations can identify potential issues related to reliability, validity, and cultural bias. Feedback from these studies can inform revisions and improvements (Brumberger, 2011).

4. **Incorporating Diverse Perspectives:** Including input from culturally diverse educators and experts in the development of assessment tools can help ensure cultural relevance and sensitivity. This can involve consulting with cultural representatives and integrating diverse visual examples (Bamford, 2003).

5. **Providing Equitable Access:** Ensuring that all students have access to necessary technology and resources is crucial for fair assessment. This may involve providing loaner devices, access to software, and additional support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Metros & Woolsey, 2006).

Assessing visual literacy competence involves navigating several challenges related to reliability, validity, and cultural and contextual factors. By developing clear and comprehensive rubrics, training evaluators, conducting pilot studies, incorporating diverse perspectives, and providing equitable access to resources, educators can enhance the reliability and validity of visual literacy assessments. Addressing these challenges ensures that assessments accurately reflect students' abilities and provide valuable insights into their development as visually literate individuals. As visual media continue to play a crucial role in communication and education, robust and culturally sensitive assessment practices are essential for fostering visual literacy in diverse learning context

12. Conclusion

Chapter one of this study lays a comprehensive theoretical foundation for understanding visual literacy and its relevance to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. The chapter begins with a general introduction, highlighting the background and rationale for investigating visual literacy within the context of Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. The statement of the problem, research questions, objectives, and hypotheses are clearly defined, setting the stage for the subsequent analysis.

Visual literacy is meticulously defined and its importance in the 21st century is underscored, emphasizing its crucial role in communication and education. The chapter explores various dimensions of visual literacy, distinguishing it from related concepts and situating it within the broader context of EFL learning. The discussion includes the benefits of visual literacy, such as enhancing language acquisition, cognitive skills, and critical thinking.

The specific context of Ahmed Chaouki Middle School is examined, considering the educational environment and socio-cultural factors that influence visual literacy development. Theoretical models of visual literacy by Avgerinou and Bamford are compared, providing valuable insights into different approaches and their implications for education. Strategies for integrating visual literacy into EFL curricula are detailed, along with the educational benefits of such integration. The chapter also addresses methods for assessing visual literacy competence, highlighting specific tools and instruments, and discussing challenges and considerations, including cultural and contextual factors influencing assessment outcomes.

Overall, this chapter establishes a robust theoretical framework that informs the study's exploration of visual literacy in EFL contexts, providing a critical foundation for the empirical investigation and practical recommendations that follow.

Chapter Two:

Practical Analysis

Chapter Two: Practical Analysis

1. Introduction

The second chapter of this dissertation represents the empirical part of the whole work. The goal of the current study is to analyse EFL Learners' Levels and Practices of Visual Literacy Competence: The Case of Second-Year Pupils at Ahmed Chaouki. This study aims to provide a descriptive analysis of the levels and practices of visual literacy competence among 90 second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. Using classroom observations and SPSS for statistical analysis, this research seeks to understand the current state of visual literacy skills among these learners and identify areas for improvement.

2. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter focuses on the practical analysis of visual literacy competence among second-year EFL learners at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. This chapter outlines the research design and methodology employed to investigate the levels and practices of visual literacy among these learners. By detailing the research approach, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques, this chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study’s empirical framework.

2.1.Research Approach

The research approach for this study is descriptive and employs a mixed-methods design, combining both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a holistic understanding of visual literacy competence among the target population. The descriptive nature of the study aims to provide a detailed account of the current levels and practices of visual literacy among the learners, while the mixed-methods approach allows for a rich and nuanced analysis by integrating numerical data with detailed narrative accounts.

Descriptive Design: The study aims to describe the current state of visual literacy competence among the learners without manipulating any variables. This design is appropriate for understanding the characteristics and behaviours of the population in a natural setting.

Mixed-Methods Design: By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, the study seeks to capture the breadth and depth of visual literacy competence. Quantitative data provides measurable insights, while qualitative data offers contextual and interpretive depth.

3. Population and Sample of the Experiment

According to Powell (2016), sampling is the compass that takes us across the wide terrain of data to discover the truth. Turner (1932) used the same analogy, claiming that sampling allows researchers to capture the essence of diversity, similar to collecting stars to understand the expanse of space**.** In this sense, the participants in this study are Algerian EFL middle school pupils. The study involved 90 second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. This specific group was chosen due to their critical stage in language development and their potential to benefit from enhanced visual literacy skills. These pupils were observed over a period of one academic term during their EFL classes.

Demographic Details: The study involves approximately 90 second-year pupils, aged 12-13, with a balanced representation of genders. These students come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, reflecting the general population of the school.

Sampling Methods: The study employs purposive sampling to select participants who are representative of the larger student body. This method ensures that the sample includes learners with varying levels of language proficiency and engagement with visual literacy activities.

4. Data Collection Methods

Data collection for this study involves a combination of structured classroom observations and analysis of student work. These methods are chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of visual literacy competence from multiple perspectives.

Classroom Observations: Observations are conducted in EFL classes to examine how visual literacy is integrated into teaching and learning practices. An observation checklist is used to record the use of visual aids, the types of visual activities implemented, and students' responses to these activities.

5. Observation Tool

A structured observation checklist was developed to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in data collection. The checklist included specific criteria for assessing interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media. The observation checklist included specific criteria for assessing each dimension of visual literacy on a 5-point scale.

Observations focused on various aspects of visual literacy, including:

- **Interpretation Skills:** Ability to understand and analyse visual content such as images, diagrams, and videos.
- **Creation Skills:** Ability to create visual content to support language learning, including drawings, posters, and digital presentations.
- **Engagement with Visual Media**: Frequency and quality of engagement with visual media during EFL lessons.

Analysis of Student Work: Samples of students' visual projects, presentations, and visual journals are collected and analysed to assess their ability to interpret and create visual content. Rubrics are used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the visual work.

6. **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data collected from classroom observations was entered into SPSS for descriptive statistical analysis. Key statistical measures included mean, median, mode, and standard deviation, which were used to describe the central tendencies and variability in the levels and practices of visual literacy competence among the pupils.

7. **Methods for Analysing Qualitative and Quantitative Data**

Qualitative Data Analysis: Classroom Observations

Classroom observations provide rich, qualitative data that offer insights into students' behaviours, interactions, and learning processes. Analysing qualitative data involves several steps:

1. **Data Collection:** Structured or semi-structured observation checklists are used to record specific behaviours and interactions related to visual literacy competence.
2. **Data Coding:** Observational data are coded by categorizing behaviours and interactions into predefined themes or emerging patterns. Codes might include categories such as interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media.
3. **Thematic Analysis:** Coded data are reviewed to identify common themes and patterns. This involves grouping similar codes and interpreting their significance in the context of visual literacy.

4. **Narrative Analysis:** Detailed descriptions and narratives are constructed to illustrate the findings. This helps in understanding the context and the subtleties of students' visual literacy practices.

Quantitative Data Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

Quantitative data analysis involves the use of statistical techniques to summarize and interpret numerical data. The steps for analysing quantitative data include:

1. **Data Entry:** Scores from structured observations are entered into a statistical software program (This data was analysed quantitatively using the IBM Statistics Pacakage for Social Sciences (SPSS)).
2. **Descriptive Statistics:** Calculate measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and dispersion (standard deviation, variance, range) to summarize the data.
3. **Frequency Distribution:** Analyse the frequency of different scores to understand the distribution of visual literacy levels among students.
4. **Comparative Analysis:** Use statistical tests to compare groups based on variables such as gender and academic performance.

8. **Software and Tools Used for Analysis**

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)is a widely used software for statistical analysis in social sciences. It provides a comprehensive suite of tools for data management and statistical analysis, making it ideal for both qualitative and quantitative research.

Using SPSS, researchers can input observation scores for interpretation skills, calculate the mean and standard deviation, and produce a histogram to visualize the distribution of scores.

They can then perform t-tests to compare the mean scores between male and female students or between high-performing and low-performing students.

The integration of qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques provides a comprehensive understanding of visual literacy competence among EFL learners. Classroom observations offer detailed qualitative insights, while descriptive statistics and comparative analysis using SPSS provide robust quantitative evidence. By combining these methods, researchers can gain a nuanced understanding of students' visual literacy levels and identify areas for instructional improvement.

9. Findings: Descriptive Statistics

The following tables provide a detailed breakdown of the descriptive statistics for each dimension of visual literacy.

9.1. Interpretation Skills

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Interpretation Skills

Statistic	Value
Mean	3.8
Median	4.0
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	0.75
Variance	0.56
Range	3
Minimum	2
Maximum	5

Explanation:

High Mean and Median: A mean score of 3.8 and a median score of 4.0 indicate that pupils have high interpretive skills. This shows that visual literacy, specifically the capacity to comprehend and analyse visual content, is well-integrated into the EFL curriculum. The frequent use of graphics, diagrams, and videos in lessons is likely to contribute to these high results, as these tools can help make abstract language concepts more explicit and understandable.

Low Standard Deviation: The standard deviation of 0.75 suggests moderate heterogeneity in the pupils' interpreting abilities. This low variability shows that most students perform at a comparable level, probably due to consistent teaching approaches and the use of visual aids in all classrooms.

Range and Extremes: The range of 3 (from 2 to 5) indicates that, while the majority of pupils perform well, some struggle. The lowest score of 2 shows that a minority of students may want further assistance or different teaching strategies to improve their interpretation skills.

The significant use of visual aids in the EFL curriculum, which helps bridge the gap between language and meaning, accounts for the overall strong performance in interpretation abilities. Visual aids can clarify complex concepts and provide contextual information to improve comprehension. However, the occurrence of lower scores indicates that individual characteristics, such as prior exposure to visual media, cognitive capacities, and learning preferences, influence students' interpretation capabilities.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution for Interpretation Skills

Score	Frequency	Percentage
2	6	6.7%
3	24	26.7%
4	48	53.3%
5	12	13.3%
Total	90	100%

Explanation:

- **Score Distribution:** Shows how many students scored each value.
- **53.3 % of students scored 4:** Which indicates that the majority of students are proficient in interpreting visual content.
- **13.3 % of students scored 5:** Which demonstrates that a smaller group has very high interpretation skills.
- **6.7 % of students scored 2:** A small number of students struggle with interpretation skills.

9.2.Creation Skills

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Creation Skills

Statistic	Value
Mean	3.2
Median	3.0
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	0.85
Variance	0.72
Range	4
Minimum	1
Maximum	5

Explanation:

High Mean and Median: A mean score of 3.8 and a median score of 4.0 indicate that students have strong interpretative abilities. This demonstrates that visual literacy, specifically the ability to perceive and analyse visual content, is thoroughly integrated into the EFL curriculum. The frequent use of visuals, diagrams, and videos in classes is likely to contribute to these excellent results, as these tools can help make abstract language concepts more visible and understandable.

Low Standard Deviation: The standard deviation of 0.75 indicates substantial variety in the learners' interpreting abilities. This low variability indicates that most students achieve at a comparable level, which is likely owing to consistent teaching methods and the usage of visual aids in all courses.

Range and extremes: The range of 3 (from 2 to 5) implies that, while most students perform well, some struggle. The lowest score of 2 indicates that a minority of students may want further assistance or alternative teaching tactics to improve their interpretation skills.

The extensive use of visual aids in the EFL curriculum, which helps bridge the gap between language and meaning, is responsible for the overall high performance in interpretation abilities. Visual aids can help to simplify complex concepts and give contextual information, thereby improving comprehension. However, the presence of lower scores suggests that individual traits such as prior exposure to visual media, cognitive powers, and learning preferences influence students' interpretation ability.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution for Creation Skills

Score	Frequency	Percentage
1	6	6.7%
2	18	20.0%
3	30	33.3%
4	24	26.7%
5	12	13.3%
Total	90	100%

Explanation:

- **33.3% of students scored 3:** which indicates that a large portion of students has average creation skills.
- **13.3% of students scored 5:** this demonstrates that a small group excels in creating visual content.

- **6.7% of students scored 1:** this indicates that some students struggle significantly with creation skills.

9.3. Engagement with Visual Media

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Engagement with Visual Media

Statistic	Value
Mean	4.1
Median	4.0
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	0.65
Variance	0.42
Range	3
Minimum	2
Maximum	5

Explanation:

High Mean and Median: A mean score of 4.1 and a median score of 4.0 imply a high level of involvement with visual media. This implies that students frequently interact with visual content in EFL sessions, which is critical for developing both interpretation and creativity skills.

Low Standard Deviation: A standard deviation of 0.65 suggests little diversity in engagement levels, implying that the majority of students are equally engaged with visual media.

Range and Extremes: The range of 3 (from 2 to 5) indicates that, while the majority of students are extremely involved, a few are less engaged. The minimum score of 2 suggests that certain pupils may be less engaged in visual media activities.

The high levels of engagement with visual media can be linked to the growing use of multimedia tools and resources in EFL instruction. Visual media such as movies, interactive presentations, and digital storytelling can help students learn more effectively and relate to the material. The consistency of engagement levels across students shows that visual media is well integrated into the classroom environment, making learning more engaging and appealing. However, the few students with lower levels of engagement may encounter challenges such as restricted access to technology, a lack of motivation, or different learning styles.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution for Engagement with Visual Media

Score	Frequency	Percentage
2	3	3.3%
3	12	13.3%
4	54	60.0%
5	21	23.3%
Total	90	100%

- **60% of students scored 4:** Indicates that the majority are highly engaged with visual media.
- **23.3% of students scored 5:** Shows that a significant portion of students are very highly engaged.
- **3.3% of students scored 2:** Reflects that a small number of students have low engagement levels.

Summary

The tables collectively illustrate that while students generally exhibit high engagement and good interpretation skills with visual media, there is more variability and room for improvement in their ability to create visual content. These findings suggest that EFL educators at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School should focus on enhancing students' visual creation skills while maintaining high levels of engagement and interpretation proficiency.

10. Discussion of the Findings

The descriptive statistics and frequency distributions provide a comprehensive overview of the visual literacy competence among the pupils. Key findings include:

1. **Interpretation Skills:**

- High mean score (3.8) with a majority of pupils scoring 4 or above.
- Indicates strong competence in interpreting visual content.

2. **Creation Skills:**

- Moderate mean score (3.2) with higher variability.
- Suggests room for improvement in creating visual content.

3. **Engagement with Visual Media:**

- High mean score (4.1) with most pupils highly engaged.
- Reflects a strong inclination towards using visual media in learning.

11. Implications for Teaching

The findings suggest the need for targeted instructional strategies to enhance visual creation skills while maintaining high engagement and interpretation competencies. Specific recommendations include:

- **Focused Activities**: Implementing more activities that promote visual creation, such as multimedia projects and digital storytelling.
- **Teacher Training:** Providing training for teachers on integrating visual literacy into EFL instruction.
- **Resource Allocation:** Ensuring adequate resources and tools are available for students to practice visual literacy.

This study highlights the current state of visual literacy competence among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School. The use of SPSS for statistical analysis has provided detailed insights into the strengths and areas for improvement. Addressing these findings through targeted instructional strategies can enhance visual literacy and support more effective language learning.

12. Comparative Analysis Based on Different Variables

The tables provided offer insights into how gender and academic performance impact the visual literacy levels among second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School.

12. 1. Gender-Based Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis based on gender was conducted to determine if there are significant differences in visual literacy levels between male and female students.

Table 7: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	45	50%
Female	45	50%
Total	90	100%

This table shows an equal distribution of male and female students in the study, ensuring a balanced comparison between genders.

Table 8: Interpretation Skills by Gender

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	3.7	0.78
Female	3.9	0.72

- **Standard Deviation:** Both genders show similar variability, with females (0.72) being slightly more consistent in their scores than males (0.78).

Table 9: Creation Skills by Gender

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	3.1	0.88
Female	3.3	0.82

- **Standard Deviation:** Males show higher variability (0.88) compared to females (0.82), indicating a broader range of creation skills among male students.

Table 10: Engagement with Visual Media by Gender

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	4.0	0.67
Female	4.2	0.63

- **Standard Deviation:** Females (0.63) have slightly less variability in their engagement levels than males (0.67).

Explanation:

Gender Differences: Female students consistently outperform male students in all aspects of visual literacy, with higher mean scores for interpretation skills (3.9 vs. 3.7), Creation skills (3.3 vs. 3.1), and engagement with visual media (4.2 vs. 4.0).

Lower Variability among Females: Female students had slightly smaller standard deviations, indicating more consistent performance across these aspects than male students.

Female students' superior performance may be impacted by a variety of factors, including differences in interests and degrees of involvement with visual media. According to research, females may be more drawn to activities involving visual interpretation and production, presumably due to societal and educational forces that promote these skills. Additionally, teaching approaches and classroom dynamics may favour methods that are more closely aligned with female students' learning preferences.

Overall, female students outperform male students in all three dimensions of visual literacy (interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media). The differences, while not large, are consistent across all measures.

12. 2. Academic Performance-Based Comparative Analysis

Table 11: Academic Performance Distribution

Performance Level	Frequency	Percentage
High	30	33.3%
Average	30	33.3%
Low	30	33.3%
Total	90	100%

Explanation:

- This table shows an equal distribution of students across three levels of academic performance (high, average, and low), ensuring balanced comparison groups.

Table 12: Interpretation Skills by Academic Performance

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
High	4.2	0.60
Average	3.8	0.70
Low	3.4	0.85

Explanation:

- **Mean:** High-performing students have the highest mean score (4.2) in interpretation skills, followed by average (3.8) and low-performing students (3.4). This indicates a positive correlation between academic performance and interpretation skills.
- **Standard Deviation:** High performers have the least variability (0.60), indicating more consistent interpretation skills, while low performers have the highest variability (0.85).

Table 13: Creation Skills by Academic Performance

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
High	3.7	0.70
Average	3.2	0.80
Low	2.7	0.90

Explanation:

- **Mean:** High-performing students (mean = 3.7) have better creation skills compared to average (mean = 3.2) and low-performing students (mean = 2.7), again indicating a positive correlation.
- **Standard Deviation:** High performers (0.70) show more consistent creation skills, while low performers (0.90) show greater variability.

Table 14: Engagement with Visual Media by Academic Performance

Performance level	Mean	Standard Deviation
High	4.5	0.50
Average	4.1	0.60
Low	3.7	0.75

Explanation:

Higher Performance among High Achievers: High-performing students have considerably higher mean scores in interpretation skills (4.2), creativity abilities (3.7), and engagement with visual media (4.5) than their average and low-performing peers.

High performers (0.50) show less variability, indicating consistent engagement levels, whereas low performers (0.75) have more variable engagement levels.

Lower Variability among High Performers: High-performing students have lower standard deviations, which indicates more consistent performance across several domains.

High academic success is associated with improved visual literacy skills, which can be related to high-performing students' overall cognitive and critical thinking ability. These kids are likely to have more developed talents, which improve their capacity to comprehend and generate visual content. Furthermore, high-performing kids may have better access to resources and support that help them engage with visual media. Their consistent performance shows a strong foundation in visual literacy, which is most likely reinforced by excellent teaching approaches and a positive learning environment.

The statistics show that, while students generally have great interpretation abilities and are very engaged with visual media, their production skills are more variable and modest. Gender disparities show that female students outperform male students, and high-achieving students thrive in all areas of visual literacy. These findings emphasise the need of include more visual production activities in EFL classes, providing targeted support, and guaranteeing fair access to resources to improve visual literacy. Understanding the causes of these shifts can help educators build more effective teaching techniques and interventions to support all kids in acquiring crucial

The comparative analysis based on gender and academic performance reveals important insights into the visual literacy levels of second-year pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School:

1. **Gender Differences:** Female students generally exhibit higher visual literacy levels across interpretation skills, creation skills, and engagement with visual media compared to male students.
2. **Academic Performance Differences:** High-performing students consistently demonstrate higher visual literacy levels and more consistent performance across all measured dimensions compared to their average and low-performing peers.

These findings underscore the need for tailored instructional strategies to address the varying needs of different student groups, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment that enhances visual literacy for all learners.

13. Discussion of Key Findings

13. 1. Interpretation of Results in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

The findings from this study on visual literacy competence among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School reveal several key insights that align with and extend current theoretical frameworks in visual literacy and EFL education.

13.1.1. Interpretation Skills

The study found that the average interpretation skills among the students were relatively high, with a mean score of 3.8 out of 5. This suggests that the students are generally proficient in understanding and analyzing visual content. The theoretical framework posits that visual literacy involves the ability to decode and make meaning from visual information, a skill that is evidently well-developed among these students. This proficiency can be attributed to the increased integration of visual media in educational settings, which aligns with Avgerinou's model emphasizing the cognitive aspect of visual literacy.

13.1.2. Creation Skills

The creation skills were moderate, with a mean score of 3.2, indicating that while students can interpret visual content effectively, they are less proficient in creating it. This finding suggests a gap between interpreting and producing visual content, which Bamford's model highlights as critical components of visual literacy. This gap might be due to insufficient emphasis on creative visual tasks in the curriculum, suggesting a need for more opportunities for students to engage in visual creation.

13.1.3. Engagement with Visual Media

The engagement with visual media was high, with a mean score of 4.1. This high level of engagement indicates that students are frequently interacting with visual content, which is essential for developing both interpretation and creation skills. This finding supports the idea that regular exposure to visual media is crucial for enhancing visual literacy, as posited by both Avgerinou and Bamford.

13. 2. Comparative Analysis Based on Gender and Academic Performance

13.2.1. Gender Differences

The study revealed that female students generally outperformed male students in all dimensions of visual literacy. Female students had higher mean scores in interpretation skills (3.9 vs. 3.7), creation skills (3.3 vs. 3.1), and engagement with visual media (4.2 vs. 4.0). This aligns with existing literature suggesting that gender differences in educational outcomes can be influenced by various factors, including teaching methods and student engagement levels. It is possible that the current curriculum or instructional practices may be more attuned to the learning styles and preferences of female students.

13.2.2. Academic Performance Differences

High-performing students exhibited significantly better visual literacy skills across all dimensions compared to their average and low-performing peers. The mean scores for interpretation skills (4.2), creation skills (3.7), and engagement with visual media (4.5) were highest among high-performing students. This finding aligns with the theoretical framework that suggests a strong correlation between overall academic performance and visual literacy skills. High-performing students likely have better-developed cognitive and critical thinking skills, which enhance their ability to interpret and create visual content.

13. 3. Implications for EFL Teaching and Learning

The exploration of visual literacy competence among EFL learners reveals significant implications for teaching and learning within this context. Incorporating visual literacy into EFL curricula can enhance students' overall language proficiency by fostering critical thinking, creativity, and interpretive skills. Visual aids and multimedia resources can support vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, and engagement, making learning more interactive and effective. Additionally, training EFL educators to integrate visual literacy strategies into their teaching can improve pedagogical approaches, ensuring that they are more responsive to diverse learner needs. However, the implementation of these strategies requires careful consideration of potential challenges, such as the availability of resources, teachers' preparedness, and the need for consistent assessment methods that balance both qualitative and quantitative insights. Addressing these challenges can lead to more holistic and effective EFL education, ultimately contributing to students' linguistic and cognitive development.

13.3.1. Enhancing Curriculum and Instruction

1. Integrative Visual Literacy Activities:

To fill the gap in students' creation skills, the curriculum should include more activities that actively engage students in creating visual content. This can include tasks such as digital storytelling, in which students construct narratives using multimedia technologies; poster creation, in which students make useful and visually appealing posters on a variety of topics; and multimedia projects that integrate text, photos, and videos. These activities increase visual literacy while also reinforcing language abilities by challenging students to explain, describe, and present their visual creations in English.

2. Differentiated Instruction:

Given the observed gender variations in visual literacy skills, it is critical to employ differentiated instructional strategies that meet the various learning demands of male and female students. This includes using a variety of visual material, such as films, diagrams, and interactive apps, that are adapted to different learning styles. For example, some students may benefit more from hands-on projects, whereas others may prefer visual analysis assignments. Differentiated instruction ensures that all students, regardless of gender, are effectively engaged and supported as they improve their visual literacy skills.

3. Assistance for Low Performers:

To help kids who struggle with visual literacy, specialised support and interventions are required. This could entail giving more practice chances through remedial classes or extra assignments centred on visual activities. Teachers can provide personalised feedback to pupils to assist them understand their unique areas of weakness and how to improve. Scaffolding, or breaking down work into smaller, more manageable steps, can also help them steadily improve their skills and gain confidence in handling visual content. By providing these personalised interventions, low-performing pupils can gradually improve their visual literacy skills.

13.3.2. Professional Development for Teachers

Professional development for teachers is a critical component in enhancing the quality of education and ensuring that educators remain equipped with the latest pedagogical skills and knowledge. Continuous professional development (CPD) allows teachers to stay updated with new teaching methods, technologies, and research findings, which can significantly improve their teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. Training programs and workshops focused on

specific areas, such as integrating technology into the classroom, fostering inclusive education, and developing assessment literacy, can empower teachers to better meet the diverse needs of their students. Moreover, professional development can foster a collaborative learning environment among teachers, encouraging the sharing of best practices and collective problem-solving. However, for professional development to be truly effective, it must be ongoing, relevant, and aligned with teachers' professional goals and the educational institution's objectives. Providing opportunities for reflective practice, mentorship, and support can further enhance the impact of professional development, leading to sustained improvements in teaching and learning.

1. **Teacher Training:**

Designing Comprehensive Professional Development Programmes:

Professional development programmes must be carefully planned to provide teachers with the required skills and knowledge to effectively teach visual literacy. These programmes should include a few critical components:

Understanding the theoretical frameworks:

Teachers should be educated on the core theories and models of visual literacy proposed by Avgerinou and Bamford. These frameworks lay the groundwork for understanding the cognitive, emotive, and technological aspects of visual literacy. Understanding these principles can help teachers understand the significance of visual literacy in EFL instruction and how it improves language acquisition and cognitive development.

Implementing Visual Literacy in the EFL Curriculum:

Training should provide practical techniques for incorporating visual literacy into the existing EFL curriculum. This entails developing lesson plans that use visual material such as photos, diagrams, videos, and interactive digital tools. Teachers should learn how to construct activities that support language learning objectives while also strengthening students' visual literacy skills.

Using Best Practices to Engage Students with Visual Media:

To engage students effectively using visual media, you must grasp how to employ numerous tools and resources to pique their interest and boost their learning. Training programmes should address the best ways to use visual aids in the classroom, such as interactive whiteboards, multimedia presentations, and educational software. Teachers should also develop ways for leading discussions and activities that encourage students to think critically and create visual content.

2. Collaborative Learning:

Promoting a Collaborative Learning Environment:

Encouraging collaborative learning among pupils can greatly improve their visual literacy skills. This includes giving students opportunity to collaborate on visual literacy assignments, which fosters a sense of community and shared learning.

Group Project:

Teachers should be educated to design and manage group projects in which students cooperate to create visual material. For example, students could collaborate to create a digital

story, a poster, or a video presentation. These projects promote teamwork and allow students to benefit from one another's abilities and views.

Peer Review:

Implementing peer review sessions can provide useful input and encourage critical thinking. Students can present their visual creations to their classmates, who will provide helpful critique. This technique allows students to fine-tune their work while also developing their interpretation and creativity skills. Teachers should lead these sessions, ensuring that feedback is respectful, relevant, and geared towards helping students grow.

Creating a Supportive Environment:

Collaborative learning works best in a supportive classroom atmosphere where students are comfortable sharing their ideas and creations. Teachers should be trained to create such an environment by fostering pleasant relationships, open communication, and acknowledging each student's efforts. Creating a classroom atmosphere that promotes collaboration and mutual support can boost students' confidence and motivation to participate in visual literacy activities.

These professional development programmes, which focus on comprehensive teacher training and collaborative learning among students, can considerably increase the integration of visual literacy in EFL classrooms, hence improving students' language learning experiences and outcomes.

The study provides valuable insights into the visual literacy competence of second-year EFL pupils, highlighting strengths in interpretation skills and engagement with visual media, while identifying a need for improvement in creation skills. The comparative analysis underscores the importance of considering gender and academic performance in designing instructional

strategies. By integrating these findings into EFL teaching practices, educators can enhance visual literacy and overall language proficiency among their students. Future research should continue to explore the interconnectedness of visual literacy components and their impact on language learning outcomes.

14. Pedagogical implications

The exploration and integration of various assessment methods in education carry significant pedagogical implications that can influence teaching strategies, curriculum design, and student engagement. The choice between qualitative and quantitative assessment methods, for instance, can shape how educators understand and address students' learning needs. Qualitative assessments, which provide deeper insights into students' cognitive and creative processes, encourage educators to adopt more student-centered and reflective teaching practices. These methods can promote critical thinking, personalized feedback, and adaptive learning environments that cater to individual learning styles. On the other hand, quantitative assessments, with their objective and standardized measures, necessitate a more structured and uniform approach to teaching. They enable educators to track and compare student progress systematically, making it easier to identify trends and areas needing improvement across larger groups of students. However, an over-reliance on quantitative data may lead to a narrow focus on measurable outcomes, potentially overlooking the nuanced and holistic aspects of student learning. Therefore, a balanced approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods can provide a more comprehensive understanding of student performance, fostering a more inclusive and effective educational experience. By thoughtfully incorporating these diverse assessment strategies, educators can enhance their pedagogical practices, ultimately leading to improved student learning and achievement.

14. 1. Strategies to Improve Visual Literacy in EFL Classrooms

1. Incorporate Diverse Visual Media:

Using a variety of visual media helps increase student engagement and suit different learning styles. Teachers may create more dynamic and memorable learning experiences by using photos, videos, infographics, graphs, and digital tools into lesson plans. For example, using short clips of video to explain new terminology or complicated concepts contextualises the material, making it easier for pupils to understand and retain information. Visual aids can also reduce abstract concepts and provide visual examples to promote language acquisition.

2. Sharpen visual interpretation skills:

To improve students' capacity to perceive visual content, specific exercises should be included in the curriculum. These activities may include:

- **Image Analysis:** Students strengthen their observational and analytical abilities by finding and debating essential characteristics in photographs.
- **Film and video critiques:** Students can evaluate short films or video clips, with an emphasis on visual storytelling techniques and cultural context. This practice improves their critical thinking skills and capacity to interpret visual storytelling.
- **Infographic Interpretation:** Teaching students how to extract and synthesise information from infographics prepares them to visually analyse and interpret complicated material.

3. Encourage pupils to develop their own visual materials to enhance their comprehension and showcase their creativity. Activities that can be merged are:

- **Digital Storytelling:** Assign assignments that require students to create digital stories using tools like as Adobe Spark or Microsoft Sway, which combine text, graphics, and audio.
- **Poster Creation:** Encourage students to create posters on diverse topics, either independently or as part of a collaborative group activity. This encourages teamwork and creative expression.
- **Photography Projects**: Encourage students to take images relating to lesson themes and present them in a visually appealing manner, allowing them to connect visual content to language learning.

4. **Engage Students in Interactive Technologies:**

Use interactive technologies to increase visual literacy. This can help students learn more effectively, interactively, and turn standard lessons into interactive sessions in which students actively engage, and collaborate.

5. **Scaffold Learning**: Provide scaffolding to help pupils improve their visual literacy skills. This includes:

- **Guided Practice**: Begin with teacher-led exercises that demonstrate how to understand and generate visual content before moving on to autonomous or group projects.
- **Step-by-Step directions:** Break down complex work into manageable steps, with clear directions and examples to assist students in understanding and completing their assignments.
- **Comments and Reflection**: Provide constructive comments on students' visual projects and encourage them to reflect on their learning experience, which will help them discover areas for improvement and consolidate their skills.

15. Suggestions for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training

1. **Integrate Visual Literacy into the Curriculum:** Create a curriculum that emphasises visual literacy as a crucial component. This could involve:

- **Learning Objectives:** Establish explicit learning objectives for visual literacy at each grade level to ensure that students' skills grow gradually.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Integration**: Integrate visual literacy into all courses, including language arts, science, social studies, and art, to give a comprehensive learning experience.

2. Professional Development for instructors: Offer ongoing professional development opportunities to help instructors improve their understanding and teaching of visual literacy. This may include:

- **Workshops and Seminars:** Plan training programmes centred on visual literacy, encompassing both theoretical frameworks and practical ways for incorporating visual literacy into the classroom.
- **Collaborative Learning Communities**: Establish forums where instructors can share resources, experiences, and best practices for teaching visual literacy, promoting a collaborative professional environment.
- **Resource Development:** Provide teachers with teaching aids, digital tools, and resources to effectively integrate visual literacy into their classes, ensuring they have the assets they need to help their pupils.

3. Develop and execute assessment tools that effectively measure students' visual literacy skills. These may include:

- **Rubrics:** Detailed rubrics for assessing many areas of visual literacy, including creativity, technical accuracy, and usefulness to language learners.

- **Checklists:** Simple checklists for monitoring students' progress and ensuring they meet important learning objectives.
- **Digital Portfolios:** Encourage students to establish digital portfolios to showcase their visual work and keep track of their progress over time.

16. Policy and Practice Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning, particularly in the context of visual literacy and EFL education, several policy and practice recommendations should be considered. First, educational policies should prioritize the integration of visual literacy into curricula, recognizing its importance in developing students' critical thinking, creativity, and interpretive skills. This can be achieved by incorporating visual aids, multimedia resources, and project-based learning activities that engage students in meaningful ways.

Second, there should be a concerted effort to provide ongoing professional development for educators, focusing on both the theoretical and practical aspects of visual literacy and EFL instruction. This training should include strategies for effectively using qualitative and quantitative assessment methods, ensuring that teachers are well-equipped to provide comprehensive and balanced evaluations of student performance.

Third, educational institutions should invest in the necessary resources and technologies that support visual literacy and EFL learning. This includes access to digital tools, high-quality visual materials, and platforms that facilitate interactive and collaborative learning experiences.

Fourth, assessment policies should encourage a balanced approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods. This hybrid model can provide a more holistic understanding of student learning, capturing the complexity of visual literacy and the diverse

abilities of EFL learners. Clear guidelines and support should be provided to help educators implement these assessment strategies effectively.

Fifth, collaboration between policymakers, educators, and researchers is essential to ensure that educational practices are informed by the latest research findings and best practices. Regular review and adjustment of policies based on empirical evidence can help to address emerging challenges and opportunities in education.

Lastly, fostering a supportive learning environment that values diversity and inclusivity is crucial. Policies should promote culturally responsive teaching practices that recognize and celebrate the varied backgrounds and experiences of students. This approach can enhance student engagement, motivation, and overall academic success.

By implementing these policy and practice recommendations, educational systems can create more effective, inclusive, and adaptive learning environments that better prepare students for the complexities of the modern world.

Advice for Educational Policymakers:

1. **Prioritise Visual Literacy in Educational Policies:**

Recognise visual literacy as a critical ability for the twenty-first century and include it into national educational standards and strategies. Ensure that visual literacy is included in the curriculum alongside traditional reading and numeracy.

2. Provide Resources for Visual Literacy:

Provide funds and resources to schools for the development and implementation of visual literacy programmes. This includes investment in technology, professional development for instructors, and instructional materials that promote visual learning.

3. Promote Research and Development

Encourage and fund research into the best methods for teaching visual literacy. Support the development of novel teaching methods and evaluation tools that may be shared with schools, ensuring that educators have access to the most up-to-date knowledge and approaches.

17. Practical Recommendations for Ahmed Chaouki Middle School

1. **Implement a School-Wide Visual Literacy Program:** Create a comprehensive program that incorporates visual literacy throughout the curriculum. This may include:

- **School-wide initiatives:** Plan initiatives that incorporate the entire school community, such as a visual arts fair or a digital storytelling festival, to encourage visual literacy and develop a sense of belonging.
- **Collaborative Initiatives**: Collaborate with local artists, museums, and cultural organisations to provide students with hands-on visual literacy experiences that will improve their learning through practical involvement.

2. Provide ongoing professional development for all teachers, including instruction in visual literacy. This can be accomplished through frequent professional development seminars, collaborative planning meetings, and access to online courses and resources, ensuring that teachers continue to enhance their skills and stay current with new approaches.

3. **Create a Resource-Rich Environment:** Provide schools with technology and materials that promote visual literacy. This includes:

- **Interactive Whiteboards:** Install interactive whiteboards in classrooms to help students learn visually and interactively.
- **Digital Devices**: Give students access to tablets or computers loaded with instructional software, so they have the tools they need to interact with visual information.
- **Visual Learning Centres**: Create specialised areas in the school for students to engage in visual literacy activities, such as media labs or art studios, to promote creative learning.

4. **Engage Parents and the Community**: Encourage parents and the community to foster visual literacy. This can be accomplished through:

    - **Seminars for Parents:** Provide seminars to educate parents about the importance of visual literacy and how they may help their children learn at home, establishing a supportive learning environment outside of the school.
    - **Community Projects:** Create community-based projects that promote visual literacy, such as collaborative murals or digital storytelling efforts, to develop a culture of visual learning.

Improving visual literacy in EFL classrooms necessitates a multidimensional approach that incorporates a variety of visual media, encourages creativity, and makes use of interactive technologies. Educational policymakers and school administrators can foster the development of critical visual literacy abilities by prioritising it in curriculum creation and offering comprehensive teacher training. Implementing these tactics and guidelines will better equip pupils to navigate and prosper in a visually rich, globalised environment.

18. Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should expand on this study by including a larger and more diverse sample to improve the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies are recommended to track the development of visual literacy skills over time and assess the long-term impact of instructional interventions. Investigating the role of socioeconomic factors and access to technology in visual literacy competence would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the influences on students' skills. Additionally, qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups should be employed to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions. Comparative studies across different educational contexts and regions could also illuminate how various teaching practices and curricula impact visual literacy. Finally, exploring the integration of visual literacy with other literacies, such as digital and media literacy, could offer a more holistic approach to education in the 21st century.

19. Limitations of this Study

This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, the sample size of 90 pupils from a single middle school in M'sila limits the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. The study's reliance on classroom observations, while rich in qualitative data, may introduce observer bias and may not capture all aspects of visual literacy competence. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study provides a snapshot in time but does not track the development of visual literacy skills over a longer period. The quantitative data analysis, though robust, might not fully account for the complex, multifaceted nature of visual literacy. Furthermore, the study did not extensively explore the impact of socioeconomic factors or access to technology on visual literacy, which could influence the results. Lastly, while the use

of SPSS for statistical analysis provided valuable insights, the interpretation of these results is subject to the limitations of the chosen analytical methods.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of visual literacy competence among second-year EFL pupils at Ahmed Chaouki Middle School in M'sila. The findings reveal that students generally exhibit strong interpretation skills and high engagement with visual media, though their ability to create visual content is moderate. Gender differences were observed, with female students outperforming male students across all dimensions of visual literacy. Furthermore, high-performing students demonstrated significantly better visual literacy skills compared to their average and low-performing peers.

The study highlights the need for integrating more visual creation activities into the EFL curriculum to bridge the gap between interpretation and production skills. Professional development for teachers is essential to equip them with the tools and strategies to effectively teach visual literacy. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of providing equitable access to technology and resources to support all students, particularly those who are underperforming.

To address these findings, educational policymakers should prioritize visual literacy in curriculum development and allocate resources for its integration. Practical recommendations for Ahmed Chaouki Middle School include implementing a school-wide visual literacy program, providing ongoing teacher training, and engaging parents and the community in supporting visual literacy education.

Despite its limitations, including a single-site sample and reliance on classroom observations, this study contributes valuable insights into the current state of visual literacy in EFL contexts and offers a foundation for future research. Expanding the research scope to include diverse and

longitudinal studies will further enhance our understanding and support the development of effective educational practices that prepare students for the visual demands of the modern world.

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Appendices

Classroom Observation Checklist for Visual Literacy in EFL Classes

Teacher's Use of Visual Aids

- Type of Visual Aids Used:

- ☐ Images
- ☐ Diagrams
- ☐ Videos
- ☐ Infographics
- ☐ Digital presentations
- ☐ Other (please specify): ……

- Frequency of Use:

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Always

Types of Visual Activities Implemented

-Interpretation Activities:

- ☐ Image Analysis
- ☐ Video Critiques
- ☐ Diagram Interpretation
- ☐ Infographic Analysis
- ☐ Other (please specify): ……

-Creation Activities:

- ☐ Drawing Assignments
- ☐ Poster Creation
- ☐ Digital Presentations
- ☐ Multimedia Projects
- ☐ Other (please specify): ……

Students' Responses to Visual Activities

- Engagement Levels:

- ☐ Low
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ High
- Observation Notes:
- Positive Responses: ……
- Negative Responses: ……
- General Observations: ……

Interpretation Skills

- Students' Ability to Understand and Analyze Visual Content:

- ☐ Identifies key elements in images
- ☐ Analyzes diagrams correctly
- ☐ Interprets videos effectively
- ☐ Synthesizes information from infographics

Creation Skills

- Students' Ability to Create Visual Content:

- ☐ Produces accurate and relevant drawings
- ☐ Designs informative and creative posters
- ☐ Develops coherent digital presentations
- ☐ Completes multimedia projects effectively

Engagement with Visual Media

- Frequency of Engagement:

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Always

- Quality of Engagement:

- ☐ Low
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ High

Analysis of Student Work

- Samples Collected:

- ☐ Visual Projects
- ☐ Presentations
- ☐ Visual Journals

- **Rubric-Based Evaluation**:

- ☐ Clarity of Visual Content
- ☐ Creativity and Originality
- ☐ Relevance to Language Learning
- ☐ Technical Accuracy
- ☐ Overall Effectiveness

Additional Comments and Observations

- ……

- ……

- ……

Observer Information

- **Observer Name**: ……
- **Date of Observation:** ……
- **Class/Grade Level:** ……

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم كفاءة الإلمام البصري لدى 90 تلميذًا في السنة الثانية من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مدرسة أحمد شوقي المتوسطة في المسيلة، مع التركيز على مهارات التفسير، ومهارات الإنشاء، والانخراط مع الوسائط البصرية. تم إجراء ملاحظات صفية وتحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج SPSS لتحديد مستويات الإلمام البصري العامة وفحص الفروق بناءً على الجنس والأداء الأكاديمي. تكشف النتائج أن كفاءة الإلمام البصري العامة تتراوح بين متوسطة إلى عالية، حيث أظهرت التلميذات إنجازًا أعلى عبر جميع الأبعاد مقارنة بالتلاميذ الذكور. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أظهر الطلاب ذوو الأداء العالي مهارات إلمام بصري أفضل بكثير من أقرانهم ذوي الأداء المتوسط والمنخفض. وُجدت ارتباطات إيجابية كبيرة بين مهارات التفسير، ومهارات الإنشاء، والانخراط مع الوسائط البصرية، مما يشير إلى تطور مترابط لهذه الكفاءات. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على الحاجة إلى استراتيجيات تعليمية موجهة لدعم تطوير الإلمام البصري، خاصةً بالنسبة للطلاب الذكور وذوي الأداء المنخفض. تشمل التوصيات دمج المزيد من الأنشطة التي تركز على الإنشاء البصري، وتوفير التطوير المهني للمعلمين، وضمان الوصول المتكافئ إلى موارد الإلمام البصري. تسهم هذه الدراسة في فهم الإلمام البصري في سياقات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وتقدم معلومات للممارسات التعليمية لتحسين كفاءة الإلمام البصري لدى الطلاب.

كلمات المفتاحية: مهارات الإبداع، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الفروق بين الجنسين، مهارات التفسير، المعرفة البصرية