Storytelling through Pictures in the Age of Visual Literacy

[1]Dr. Sewa Singh Bajwa
[1]Professor,
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,
Ch. Devi Lal University
Sirsa (Haryana)

[2]Dr. Surender
[2]Assistant Professor
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,
Central University of Haryana
Mahendergarh (Haryana)

Abstract- **Since we are surrounded by so many images and visuals in today's society, visual literacy is crucial. Understanding and discussing images and visuals are two aspects of visual literacy. Understanding them and how they impact us requires more than just looking at them. Because pictures can quickly communicate complicated concepts and emotions to us, visual literacy is crucial. They may captivate us and convey information to us that words alone are unable to. We can comprehend what images are trying to convey and the ideals they stand for when we have visual literacy skills. We can evaluate the images we view more critically thanks to visual literacy. We can ponder a picture's motivation for creation and whether it's attempting to affect us in any manner. We can examine elements like the composition of the image, the colors utilized, and what it represents. This makes us more knowledgeable about the images we view and less susceptible to being duped by phony or deceptive ones.**

*Key-words***: Images and Visuals, Pictures can communicate quickly, Composition of the Image, Convey Information.**

INTRODUCTION:

Being able to express one and interact with others through images is another aspect of being visually literate. Whether they be photographs, drawings, or charts, pictures allow us to communicate our ideas and experiences. People from all walks of life can understand visual literacy since it is similar to a universal language. Visual literacy is crucial in the classroom as well. We can better understand complex subjects with the aid of images. Visuals can be used by teachers to make lessons more engaging and participatory. Visual literacy allows us to produce our own visual content, which fosters creativity and deeper thought.

Pictures are prevalent in today's digital environment, especially on social media and websites. Visual literacy enables us to traverse this digital world and distinguish between authentic and fraudulent images. We can choose better what we view and share online. A key talent for understanding and communicating with visuals is visual literacy. It enables us to better express ourselves, comprehend the meaning of images, and think critically about them. Everyone should work on their visual literacy because there are visuals everywhere. It enables us to converse and comprehend others in more meaningful ways and aids us in making sense of the visual language that is all around us.

Visual literacy is the capacity to comprehend and decipher visual content. It requires a variety of abilities, including the ability to recognize what you are looking at, interpret visuals in a variety of ways, and analyze them critically. Both objective comprehension and subjective feelings and views are necessary for this kind of literacy. It begins with making sense of what you see based on facts and progresses to taking into account the creator's objectives, employing various thought processes, and acquiring data to back up your claims. Visual literacy experts use a specialized vocabulary to communicate their understandings. From simple images to sophisticated ones with hidden meanings, understanding various types of images requires a variety of skills.

Different levels of visual literacy can be attained; deeper interpretations result from experience and broader cognitive abilities. For the development of visual literacy, education and exposure to a variety of images across time are crucial. It is not enough to just be exposed to visuals; deliberate teaching is needed to learn how to use and comprehend them. Visual literacy also progresses via phases, from simple comprehension to more complicated knowledge. But at the moment, neither a formal structure nor a general understanding of the necessity of teaching visual literacy in classrooms or elsewhere exist. It would be helpful to understand the phases and procedures of visual literacy, comparable to reading, to aid people in developing these abilities. Visual literacy is a gradual, evolving process that calls for particular exposure and training. Each phase builds on prior knowledge and experiences.

Media and Visual literacy

Although there isn't much discussion regarding visual literacy and media literacy among specialists, it's crucial for me to choose which phrase best fits my setting. Frank Baker and Renee Hobbs, two qualified experts, share their opinions on the distinction. Visual literacy is a subset of media literacy, in Baker's opinion, which is a broader term. According to Hobbs, persons who specialize in art, psychology, and production are more likely to be media literate than those who specialize in sociology and communication. Although I largely concur with Hobbs, I think the distinction goes beyond viewpoint. Visual literacy embraces all forms of media, whereas media literacy concentrates on mass media. I also believe that comprehending actual visual signs and symbols is crucial

for deciphering messages in mass media. I believe that the phrase "visual literacy" is more comprehensive. Both illiteracies are applicable, particularly in formats that include text, sound, and visuals. The processes involved in deriving meaning from visual images are analogous to those in comprehending written or spoken material. My own definition of visual literacy is the capacity to acquire, analyze, evaluate, and transmit information in any visual form that requires cognitive processes, based on Hobbs' definition of general literacy. We frequently forget that visual ability is essential since before we become language beings, we are visual beings. Our school system places a high value on conventional literacy, yet visual literacy can help everyone become literate in language. We now have the opportunity to express ourselves visually, which has always been a part of who we are, thanks to technology.

Visual literacy is important.
We come across images every day in places like newspapers, television, billboards, and social media. It's intriguing that the majority of us were unaware of the traditions and impact of pictures. Images can strongly influence us and society, eliciting feelings and forming societal perception. Visuals are frequently more persuasive to us than text, yet they can also be twisted to not accurately depict reality. Therefore, before utilizing or disseminating photographs, it's crucial to analyze and assess them.
In addition to being widely used in contemporary society, visuals are also being employed more frequently for communication across a range of media and platforms. According to research, utilizing both words and images together can improve learning over using just words. Unfortunately, verbal language abilities often take precedence over visual language skills in our educational system. Since we respond more readily to visuals, we could find it simpler to communicate our ideas through words than through images. In the current digital world, where we are constantly exposed to visual information through media channels, visual literacy is crucial. To comprehend the significance and influence of pictures, movies, and graphics, one must analyse and analyse them. Beyond just viewing images, visual literacy enables us to understand messages, identify strategies, and make sense of our surroundings.
Visuals can successfully communicate complex concepts and feelings. Gaining an understanding of graphics' intended messages and the values they represent is made possible by developing visual literacy abilities. It enables us to assess the visual features used to manipulate meaning, identify biases, and critically analyze media portrayals. Visual literacy is crucial in an age of misinformation to distinguish between authentic and altered images. By improving our visual literacy, we can recognize alteration techniques and assess the reliability of media content.
In addition to fostering empathy and understanding, visual literacy exposes us to various viewpoints. By exploring various cultures and societal challenges through visual media, we may deepen our awareness of the world and strengthen our sense of interconnectedness. Our ability to appreciate media as art is improved by visual literacy. Visual literacy enables us to interact with media's creative decisions, aesthetics, and storytelling strategies in the same way that we analyze text or music. In the age of overabundant media today, visual literacy is crucial. It gives us the ability to interact critically with, navigate, and analyze visual messages. By acquiring visual literacy abilities, we may actively engage in the media environment, comprehend biases, and recognize the influence of images on perception. By facilitating meaningful expression through images and effective communication, visual literacy benefits both media users and artists.

Perception and Visualization
It takes more than simply light entering our eyes for us to see things. Our brain aids in making sense of the information that our eyes actively gather. We have the ability to avert our gaze, separate foreground from background, and categorize what we see into objects, forms, and colors. Although scientists are still learning about how the brain processes visual information, psychologists have long been interested in how it occurs.

Visual literacy and Semitic Theory:
The warnings we encounter at work can affect how people act in terms of safety. Signs can be used to convey a variety of meanings. A designer can make a sign that emphasizes the possible hazard if behavior is not considered dangerous. Similar to this, a designer can design a new sign to make a behavior that is not trendy seem more enticing. Semiotics, the study of signs, can assist us in analyzing images and creating signs that appeal to particular target markets.
We must first comprehend the meanings associated with signs, including their connotations and underlying ideas, in order to alter someone's attitude or behavior. We can establish new associations by experimenting with these meanings. For instance, advertising for shoes might have a Rolls-Royce beside the shoes to represent the shoes and the automobile while also representing riches and a privileged lifestyle.

Photography and Visual Literacy
Because it enables us to comprehend and value the messages in images, visual literacy is crucial in photography. It enables photographers to communicate their thoughts and experiences with various individuals, regardless of their language or cultural background. We can evaluate photographs more critically by using visual literacy. We can inquire as to the purpose of a photograph, consider its significance in culture, and assess its effect. We can better comprehend what a photograph is attempting to express by paying close attention to the components and stories it contains. Developing our visual literacy also enables us to comprehend and relate to other photographic viewpoints. The experiences and cultures depicted in the photos are easier for us to comprehend and relate to. People can connect through photography, which also improves intercultural communication.
Through photography, we can creatively express ourselves thanks to visual literacy. It provides us with more alternatives for picture-taking, lighting, and narrative development. We may produce more meaningful and impactful images that reflect our own ideas and experiences by developing our visual literacy. Visual acuity enhances our appreciation of photography as an art form. It enables us

to understand the technical and creative methods that photographers employ. We can investigate the narratives and feelings that images evoke. To comprehend and appreciate photography fully, one must have a strong sense of visual literacy.

It aids in our comprehension of the components of photographs and how they interact. We may actively connect with photography, express ourselves creatively, and comprehend the world around us better if we increase our visual literacy.

Storytelling through Pictures in the Age of Visual Literacy

Visual storytelling is an effective method of conveying ideas through stories and graphics. We require visual literacy abilities in order to comprehend and value the significance of visual storytelling. Understanding the messages, feelings, and ideas that pictures represent is an important part of visual literacy. We can better understand the storytelling tactics utilized in pictures by increasing our visual literacy. By carefully selecting images, colors, and compositions, visual storytelling captivates our interest and elicits our feelings. It enables a closer connection between us and the story. We may analyze and comprehend the themes and intended meanings of the pictures with the aid of visual literacy. The capacity of visual storytelling to transcend linguistic barriers is a crucial feature. Words are not necessary for universal communication when using images. They are able to elicit feelings and express intricate concepts. We can appreciate and comprehend graphics from many cultures and backgrounds because to visual literacy.

In industries like marketing, advertising, and social media, visual storytelling is becoming more and more significant. In order to engage users, platforms like Instagram and TikTok mainly rely on visual content. Our ability to tell engaging stories that connect with our target audience is made possible by our proficiency in visual literacy. Visual storytelling has a big impact on schooling. It involves students in the learning process and aids in their understanding of difficult ideas. Students that are visually literate are more creative and analytical thinkers.

Individuals are empowered to offer their own ideas and tales through visual storytelling. Anyone may create content by using resources like photography and graphic design. Effective communication of our experiences and ideas is made possible by visual literacy. Visual literacy and visual storytelling go hand in hand. Visual literacy enables us to comprehend and relate to the tales that are delivered through images. Learning visual literacy is crucial for effective communication as visual communication becomes increasingly common. We may take an active role in influencing the visual narratives of our society by grasping the value of visual storytelling and developing our visual literacy.

Visual literacy's significance in the digital age:

In the digital age, visual literacy is crucial because we are continuously exposed to images, movies, and graphics that influence how we perceive the world. It alludes to our capacity to decipher and evaluate visual cues in the context of the digital world. From memes to commercials, the majority of information shared online is visual. We may comprehend the meaning behind visuals and grasp the concepts and emotions they express by increasing our visual literacy skills. The capacity to assess the dependability and authenticity of pictures is a crucial component of visual literacy. Images can easily be changed using digital editing tools, making it difficult to distinguish between real and artificial content. Visual literacy enables us to recognize manipulation-related red flags, such as altered lighting or distorted dimensions, and assesses the veracity of visual content.

Understanding the impact of visual strategies utilized in digital media is made possible by visual literacy. Composition, color, and typography are examples of design elements that affect how we view and react to images. We can better understand the messages and emotional solicitations that graphics convey if we are aware of these approaches. With this knowledge, we can more critically evaluate digital media and understand how biased or manipulative images might be. In the digital sphere, visual literacy also fosters creativity and self-expression. With so many people having access to digital tools, anyone can make and share graphics. Our ability to successfully express our ideas and experiences depends on our ability to comprehend visual language and storytelling strategies. By enabling us to make thoughtful decisions in our creations, visual literacy helps us produce digital material that is more meaningful and compelling.

Our capacity to understand and interact with the vast amount of visual content that is available online is improved by visual literacy. Visual literacy enables us to comprehend the aesthetics and artistic decisions made by producers, whether they are presenting their work via virtual reality experiences or art exhibitions. It gives us the chance to investigate the breadth and complexity of visual storytelling, enhancing our enjoyment of digital media. In the digital age, visual literacy is crucial. It facilitates navigating and comprehending web graphics. We can interpret meanings, spot manipulation, and assess the impact of visual tactics by increasing our visual literacy skills. It gives us the ability to creatively express ourselves and actively interact with images. For people to prosper and actively participate in the visually rich digital environment, visual literacy is necessary.

Using visual literacy in advertising

Advertising relies heavily on visual communication since it makes it easier to grab audiences' attention and deliver messages clearly. Visuals have the ability to stand out and leave a lasting impression in an age where there are so many commercials vying for our attention. Images, colors, and design components are used in visual communication to convey ideas and arouse feelings. Advertisers may effectively communicate a brand's identity and the advantages of their products by selecting graphics that are consistent with those ideals and the desired emotional response. Visuals aid in brand remember and awareness. Consistent use of visual elements, such as colors and logos, makes it simpler for customers to recall and recognize a brand. Over time, this fosters loyalty and trust. Additionally, visual communication enables advertising storytelling. Advertisers have the ability to interact with viewers through carefully created graphics. Visuals have the power to pique interest and tell a story.

Advertising images can cut through linguistic and cultural divides. They make it simpler to communicate ideas that are widely known to a variety of audiences. Visuals have the power to arouse emotions, communicate the advantages of a product, and form associations that connect with a variety of viewers. Advertising relies heavily on visual communication since it grabs viewers' attention, effectively transmits messages, helps people recognise brands, allows for storytelling, and cuts across language

boundaries. Advertisers must use the strength of images to build captivating ads that connect with their target audience in today's visually-driven society. They may leave a lasting impression and encourage consumer involvement and action by utilising visual communication tactics.

Future Potential of Visual Literacy

Given how much more visual our world is becoming, the future of visual literacy is crucial. Understanding and communicating through images and videos is referred to as visual literacy. Understanding them and how they impact us is just as important as looking at them. Because there is so much more visual content available now, visual literacy is crucial. Everywhere we look, especially on social media and in virtual reality, we see pictures and movies. Visual literacy enables us to make sense of all this data and distinguish between authentic and fraudulent graphics. Additionally, the importance of visual literacy for communication is rising. Nowadays, people's attention spans are shorter, and there is a lot of information to take in. Visuals are a potent tool for grabbing attention and conveying information rapidly. The ability to communicate visually will be crucial in a variety of future industries, including social media marketing, business, and education.

The way we engage with images is also changing as a result of technology. A higher level of visual literacy is needed for augmented reality and virtual reality, which are both growing increasingly popular. We must comprehend and maneuver through these virtual worlds. Making the most of these technologies for creativity, education, and enjoyment will be made possible through visual literacy. Visual literacy will assist us in the future in navigating issues like bogus images and false information. It's critical to be able to distinguish between actual and fake photographs and videos because technology makes it simpler to change them. The ability to evaluate and validate the legitimacy of visual content will aid in the fight against misinformation.

Additionally supporting innovation and creativity is visual literacy. Strong visual literacy abilities will provide people an advantage in creative areas like design and advertising in a world where visuals are highly valued. By pushing the boundaries of creativity and innovation, visual literacy enables people to express their thoughts and viewpoints in visually captivating ways. For the future, visual literacy is crucial. It supports us in navigating our visual environment, communicating clearly, and overcoming obstacles like false information. Additionally, it promotes invention and creativity. By improving our visual literacy, we may participate confidently and actively in the visual environment of the future.

REFERENCES:
1. Chauvin, B.A. (2003) Visual or media literacy? Journal of Visual Literacy
2. Pettersson, R. (2013). Information Design 3. Image Design. Tullinge: Institute for Infology
3. Avgerinou, M. & Ericson, J. (1997). A review of the concept of visual literacy. British Journal of Educational Technology
4. Benson, P. J. (1997). Problems in picturing text: A study of visual/verbal problem solving. Technical Communication Quarterly, 6(2), 141-160. Retrieved December 26, 2001, from EBSCOhost database (Professional Development Collection).
5. Branton, B. (1999). Visual literacy literature review. Retrieved December 26, 2001, from http://vicu.utoronto.ca/staff/branton/litreview.html
6. Chanlin, L. (1997). The effects of verbal elaboration and visual elaboration on student learning. International Journal of Instructional Media, 24(4), 333-339. Retrieved December 26, 2001, from EBSCOhost database (Academic Search Elite).
7. Renkl, A., &Scheiter, K. (2017). Studying visual displays: How to instructionally supportlearning. Educational Psychology Review, 29, 599-621. doi: 10.1007/s10648-015-9340-4
8. W.J. Thomas Mitchell, Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2–15; W.J. Thomas Mitchell, "Visual Literacy or Literary Visualcy?" in Visual literacy, ed. James Elkins (New York: Routledge, 2007), 15–16; Mitchell Stephens, The Rise of the Image, the Fall of the Word (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 11.
9. MATUSIAK, Krystyna K. et al. Visual Literacy in Practice: Use of Images in Students' Academic Work. College & Research Libraries, [S.l.], v. 80, n. 1, p. 123, jan. 2019. ISSN 2150-6701. Available at: <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/16950/19370>. Date accessed: 05 june 2023. doi:https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.1.123.
10. Ryan, L. (2016). Visual communication and literacy. In *The visual imperative*. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-803844-4.00006-6
11. Welsh, T. S., & Wright, M. W. (2010). Media literacy and visual literacy. In *information literacy in the digital age*. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-1-84334-515-2.50009-3