

## **A magical way for education: visual literacy**

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**Abstract** “Visual literacy is education that enhances understanding of the role and function of images in representation and communication, especially in the media.” (Newfield 2011:82). Debes (1969:27) said that; “ Visual Literacy refers to a group of vision-competences a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences.” Education of visual literacy is important for understanding of true meaning of messages in visual elements. Hobbs (2002 cited from Shurtleff 2006:13) claimed, “Epicureans believed that, in fact, the mind cannot think without images.” Samuels and Samuels (1975 cited from Shurtleff 2006:13) also claimed “the archeological record reveals that the first expressions of thought are visual, not vocal”. In our daily life, visual technology and media literacy has become increasingly popular in our world. We use when we give information, from websites, give PowerPoint presentations, and sketch on Smartboards to get our memories, ideas across. Teenagers, who have come of age in a technological world , they must learn how they can use visual literacy. Teachers should use, in our age, video games, eager consumers of graphic novels, illustrations, photos, diagrams, graphs, symbols, icons and other visual representations.

**Key Words:** Visual literacy, education, visuals.

**Sunto** “La *Visual Literacy (Alfabetizzazione Visiva)* è la disciplina che migliora la comprensione del ruolo e della funzione delle immagini nella rappresentazione e comunicazione, soprattutto nei media.” Newfield 2011:82). Debes scrive (1969:27) “La Visual Literacy si riferisce ad un gruppo di **-competenze visuali** che un essere umano può sviluppare **vedendo** e contemporaneamente avendo ed integrando altre esperienze sensoriali.” Con la diffusione delle tecnologie la Visual Literacy ha assunto notevole importanza. L'educazione all'alfabetizzazione visiva è importante per la

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comprensione del vero significato dei messaggi negli elementi visivi. “Per l'epicureismo la mente non può pensare senza immagini” (Hobbs). “Le prime espressioni di pensiero sono visive, non vocali.”(Samuels&Samuels). Le utilizziamo quando diamo informazioni, dai siti web, presentazioni PowerPoint. E' importante per i giovani apprendere e conoscere la Visual Literacy. Gli insegnanti d'altra parte dovrebbero utilizzare videogiochi, romanzi grafici, illustrazioni, fotografie, diagrammi, grafici, simboli, icone ed altre rappresentazioni visive.

**Key Words:** Alfabetizzazione Visuale, innovazione didattica, immagini.

## 1. Introduction

In our daily life, visual technology, visual literacy and media literacy has become increasingly popular in our world. In this research, we want to discuss visual literacy and how it can be use in lessons. In our new age, we began living in a world which have internet and more technology. In recent years, every day we are affected by posters, videos, pictures, structures, world of arts etc. Therefore, we need to read visual messages. But if we don't use our visual literacy skill, we can't understand true meanings from visuals. This paper discusses visual literacy and its potential for assessment as a core skill within the lessons.

According to Golubieski (2003); teaching for Visual Literacy is a multi modality story. Because when a person see visuals the person feel their voices dancing and swirling around each other. Sometimes voices cahenge. The voice singular, or solo. Often times several voices are singing together. We are impressed by their messages. Au and Raphael have stated rather strongly that, “while traditional reading instruction may have focused on reading the word on the printed page, in today's society—with its plethora of media and technologies—such an approach is limiting, at best, and detrimental, at worst” (Au and Raphael 2000 cited from Gerrard 2008:4). We use when we give information, from websites, give PowerPoint presentations, and sketch on Smartboards to get our memories, ideas

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across. Visuals help to engage students, to grab their attention and demonstrate how maths is relevant to their lives. And visual models are important tools in explaining how mathematical concepts work (Murphy 2011:1).

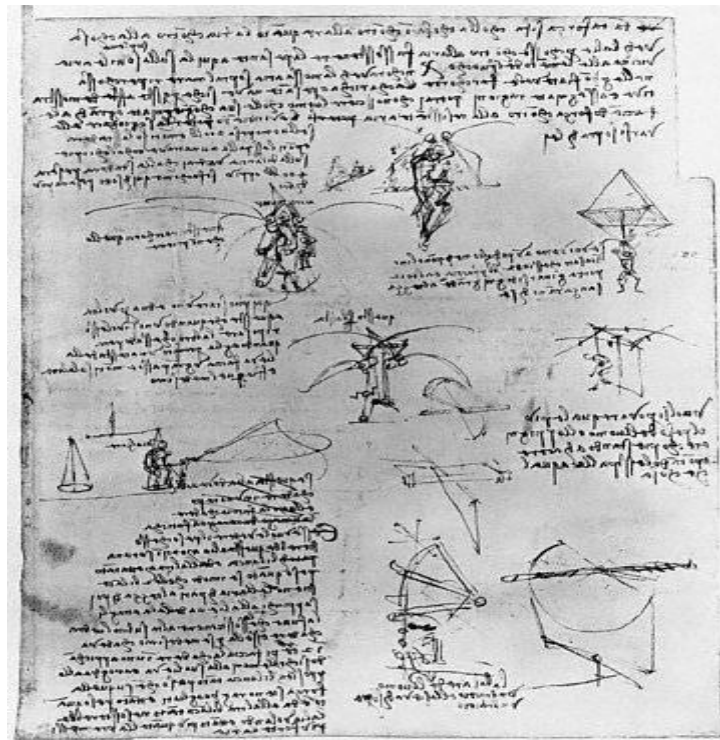


Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer*, 1572, Louvre Museum, Paris

In particular, on the growing role that transmission of the images has for teaching, both literary disciplines as scientific disciplines, and for the development of social relations with fast, pleasant and universal instruments. Visual literacy is discipline that had developed especially in recent times thanks to the development of technology. The aim is to include the role and function of the pictures in the presentation and communication, especially in media. Education of visual literacy is very important because is a instrument (tool) for

understanding the real meaning of object's message contained in the visual elements. On the other hand, this is easy way , a magical way for teaching difficult topics when students don't understand smoothly sometimes.

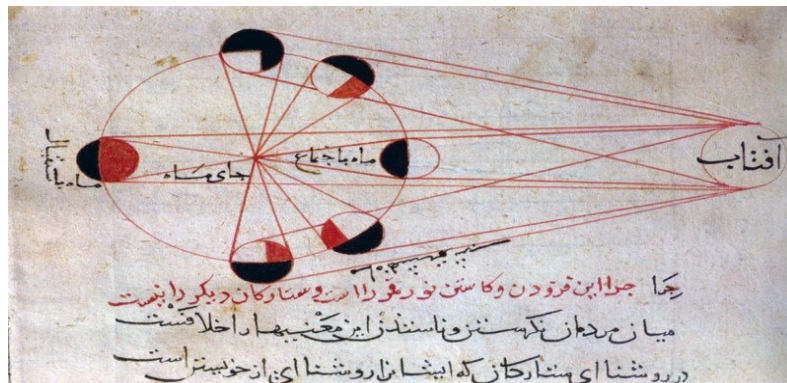
Leonardo da Vinci used drawings, graphics and shemas for keeping informations and solving problems. Nowadays, even our age, we want to understand his paint's secrets.



*Leonardo da Vinci's Draws.*

Also, the famous Turkish-Islam scholars, used visuals in their works. For example; Beyruni worked about, sun, moon and worlds movements, solar eclipse, measuring of the world's diameter.He used draws too (Kuvvetli 2008: 25-27).

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*Beyruni's Draws*

“Humans always have used images as one important tool for making meaning. That composition studies, and indeed most academic disciplines, are only now beginning to take visual representation seriously reflects a failure of many academics to understand human learning rather than a radical change sparked by technology and culture. To train students to see critically and to create in multiple modes should be an essential component of a liberal education. That will require not only reenvisioning our curricula and teaching practices but also supporting faculty, librarians, and others in learning to both value and use visual representations in working with students (Felten 2008: 63).

## 2. Goals of the visual education

According to Messaris (1994: 1-40), visual education had four important goals:

“1. To enhance the comprehension of visual media across a range of visual forms, including diagrams, graphs, editing and other technological effects.

2. To enhance cognitive abilities through the specific properties of the visual, for example, spatial relationships.
3. Awareness of visual manipulation, distortion and misinformation in advertising, political campaigns and propaganda.
4. Aesthetic appreciation of the visual arts and of visual skills in all forms of visual communication.” ( Messaris 1994 cited from Newfield 2011:82).

“The need to convince policy-makers, educators, parents and other stakeholders of the value (to instruction as well as other equally important areas, such as students’ personal enjoyment) of visual literacy appears pressing. Only when these influential sectors of society become convinced of the importance of visual literacy will we begin to see changes on a larger, more effective scale in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of reading taking place in classrooms today” (Gerrard 2008:2).

Today, a lot of scientist agree that, visual literacy can use for every lessons. But visuals aren’t aim, they are for tool for a lesson. According to Sims, O’Leary, Cook, Butland (2002); “An operational definition of visual literacy has been identified and an argument made that visual literacy skills are required for effective learning and teaching. Increasingly, computer mediated communication (CMC) tools such as email and discussion boards are being used as a means for developing tutor-student and student-student relationships. Effective visual messages can help bridge the gap between face-to-face and mediated communication by providing visual information and cues to augment text. Clearly it can be argued that to use information and communication technology effectively both tutors and students need to be empowered to communicate visually. Equally, the use of technology may contribute to the development of visual literacy skills by providing increased and flexible access to resources.”

Visual literacy already has been using in lessons. We can improve our visual literacy skills with some activitys. So if a teacher use visuals in lessons, students can develop their visual literacy skills. Nowadays not only verbal literacy, but also visual literacy should be use.

For mathematics lessons according to Murphy (2011:7); “Visuals can be used to show the relationship between linear equations and their graphs, to indicate proportion and scale, and to clarify the area and volume of three-dimensional shapes. Models can be created to demonstrate processes, such as the representation and analysis of complex data and the determination of the relationships within triangles. Students can discuss visual models, how they interpret them, and what they mean.”

Visuals use also language lessons. When students read a story, we can show pictures or we can make videos with students together about the story. Then we can discuss with students the story’s thinks, main idea ( Shurtleff 2006: 20).

Visual literacy is more important for education in our new age. Teachers may use visuals if students could not understand some topics. In this way, students easily learn the topic with the help of visuals. Because visuals have a global speech for humanity. Visual literacy like a magical way for students and teachers.

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