

The basics of Arete: Measuring the visual

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Abstract

Visual literacy is to determine the core meanings of images and to display a set of skills in this long process. These named skills can be varied until the ability to make contextual, metaphoric and philosophic understanding can be the interpretation level and can identify the complexity of an image. The ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from visual information as presented in an image, on a diagram, or on a single photo may go a long way in a modern liberal education. All kind of images, who saturate our daily lives through social media require a heightened level of visual literacy from both sides, this of the teacher and that of the educated to be.

Social sciences and health sciences, rely heavily on images as data sources and require a serious level of visual literacy to understand the scientific world. On the other hand arts, literature, film use the conventions of visual language – symbols, images, sound – and suppose to make them accessible almost to everyone.

To analyze authentic film messages requires interpretive comprehension skills such as making inferences on cause and effect, logic and impact, identifying point of view, and considering the specific techniques used to construct an arete, meaning an arete, as defined in ancient Greek paideia. People of modern world, as personalities and active citizens, instead of being passive recipients of media, can be creative and actively engaged with the medium of picture.

Visuals appear to be both as proposition and as evidence; on the other hand, they are used to document, to design, to model, to experience virtually and to show the visible and non-visible. Using visuals in scientific studies requires solid research, interpretation and evaluation skills particular to the innovative visual materials.

Keywords: arete; modern education; teaching skills; film; data

1 Introduction

The theory that visual imagery could and probably has to encourage both specific cognitive development and also a distinctive view of the whole of the world, seems more of a general reflection of similar beliefs regarding both textual and verbal communication, most of the time expressed by linguists (Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, 1992).

This perspective can be traced to theories associated with Marshall McLuhan, who links cognition to the technical characteristics of varying media.

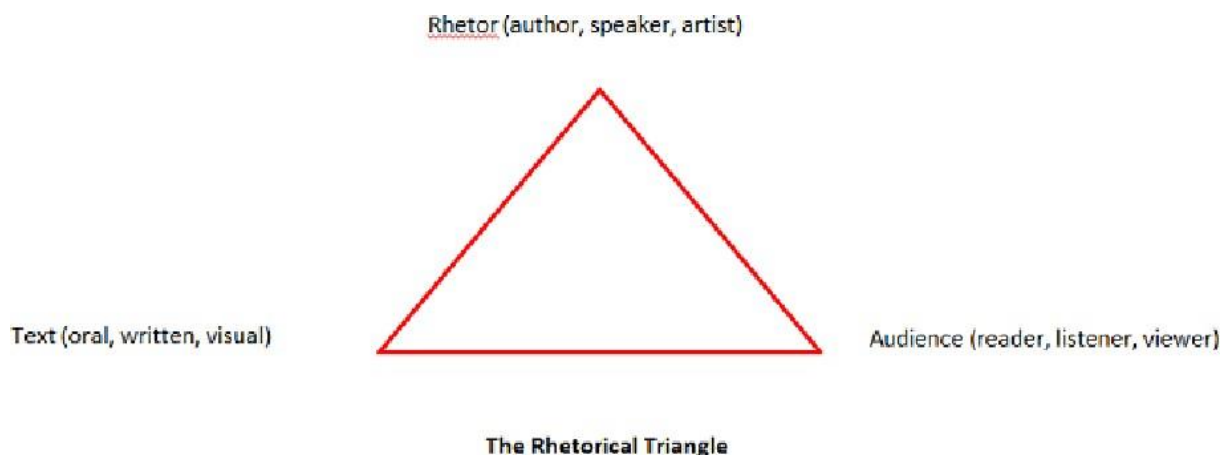
For example, the television-based teaching may, in all probability, have a positive effect on a number of areas of cognition, such as the formation of an analytic reasoning and spatial intelligence. The ability to envision mentally what a shape might look like from various angles, could be one of these areas. It is also suggested that exposure to certain visual media, such as advertisements that apply metaphors, may encourage and develop abstractive and analogical thinking.

Arete refers to an ancient greek word which means the excellence or virtue. The arete of something is the highest quality state that can be reached. Using arete as a principle of a lifestyle, means that the person is focused on the quality of everything and experience, more then quantity. This practically means that chooses actions that focus on arete an avoid actions that lack it. It is not about moral, but also about the way of describing quality, as if a beautiful painting can have arete, even though it isn't ethically superior to a plane painting.

2 This case study – Searching for the whole of the moon

Kaplan and Mifflin (2000) describe three levels of meaning: superficial, concrete, and abstract. Also Panofsky mentions that iconology, the abstract level draws upon analytical abilities and intellectual elements can only be expressed in words, requiring “a particular set of sensibilities and skills, and a knowledge base that, like facility with history and must be learned”. Expertise of the conventions and technology of visual perception, requieres an expression of a particular medium. To interpret the meaning of images, it is necessary to be familiar with cultural codes in a postmodern milieu, that seems far away from the holistic approach of arete and at the same time so close.

Figure 1: The Rhetorical Triangle



Source: <https://thevisualcommunication.org.uk/rhetoric/coverview/the-rhetorical-triangle/>

Visual literacy is usually defined in bibliography as the abilities with visual representations that emerge when seeing and integrating sensory experiences (Chauvin 2003). Visual literacy is also considered to be the key to multimodal literacies. Visually literate individuals have imaginative capabilities to create, amend, re-code and re-produce images (Thoman & Jolls 2005).

UNESCO defines information literacy as the skills and capabilities obtained for critical reception, assessment and use of information in peoples' personal or professional lives (Frau-Meigs & Torrent 2009). Someone who is functionally literate can engage in all those domain activities in which literacy is required for effective action, obviously measured. Functional literacy may be defined as the ability to comprehend and use communication media (Bereiter & Scardamalia 2005). All set of skills such as searching, using, adapting, creating and reflectively understanding the multilevel information for communication and action in daily life which is full of technology (Rosenblatt 1995, 2005). Digital literacy represents a person's ability to perform tasks in the digital environment (Thoman & Jolls 2005) so media literacy encompasses abilities in a wider media-culture context.

2.1. Methodology

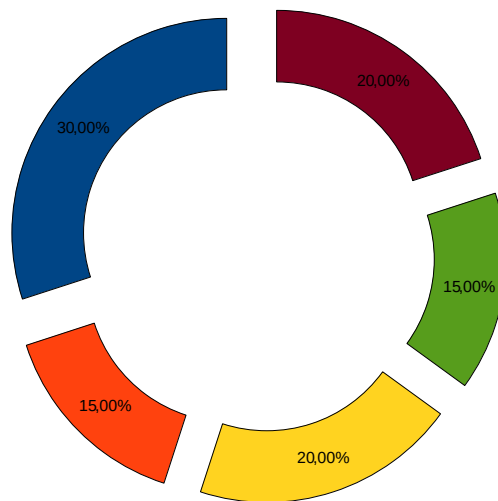
The purpose of this study was to examine university students' visual literacy skills and use of images in the context of a general sense of courses like cinema and theatre in a post crisis country. It is actually an academic work on the road to be a phd thesis.

The study aimed to explore the types of visual resources being used in students' academic papers and presentations and the ways in which students select, evaluate, and process images. The following questions guided the research inquiry:

RQ1: What types of resources do students want to use in their art courses, in a priority order.

RQ2: What are students' skills and competencies in analyzing, evaluating, and creatively thinking ?

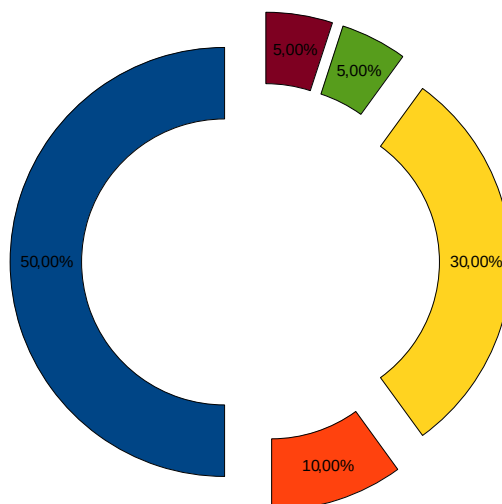
RQ3: Following the students' information practices in regard to selecting, creating, organizing, and processing of visual resources, culture has a role, in an on off basis ?



RQ1: What types of resources do students want to use in their art courses, in a priority order.

- A. extra curriculum activities
- B. trips
- C. experiential studies
- D. innovation skills
- E. alternative way of teaching

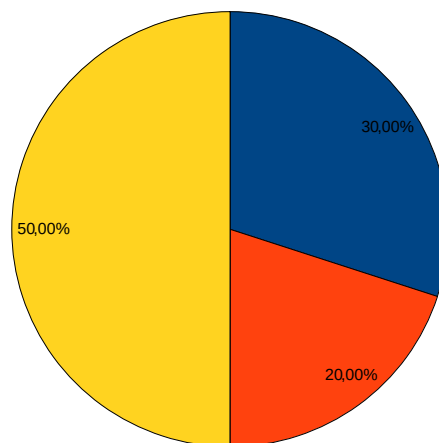
20	A
20	B
30	C
15	D
15	E



RQ2: What are students' skills and competencies in analyzing, evaluating, and creatively thinking ?

- A. Memorizing
- B. Critical thinking
- C. Social sensibility
- D. Self-action
- E. Innovation

5	A
10	B
5	C
50	D
30	E



RQ3: Following the students' information practices in regard to selecting, creating, organizing, and processing of visual resources, culture has a role, in an on off basis ?

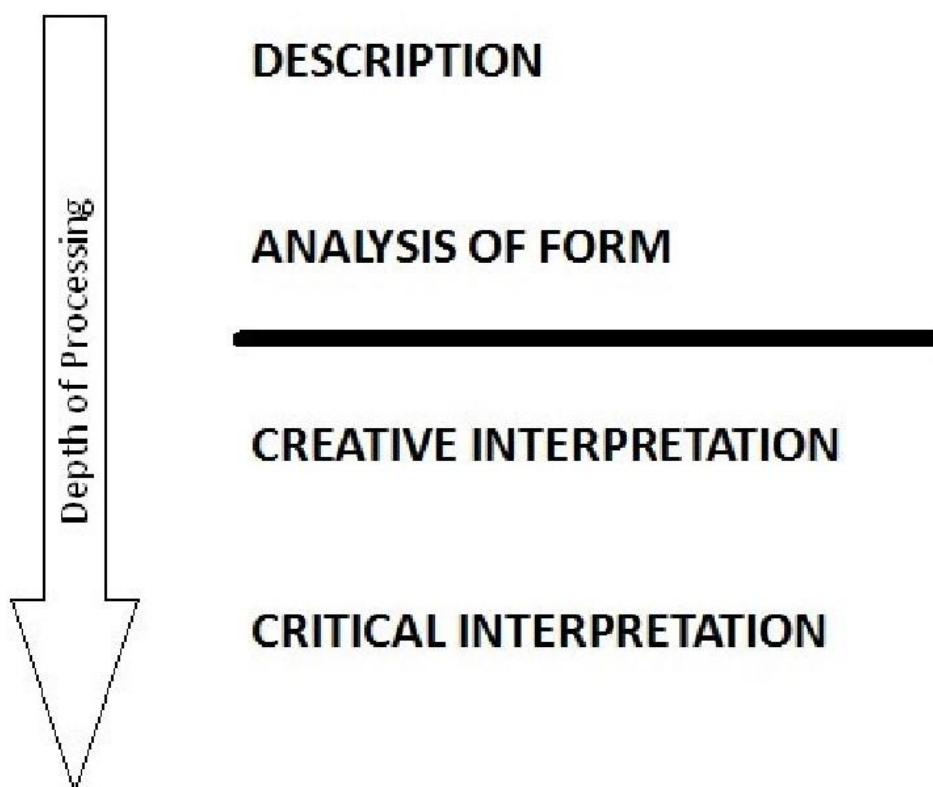
- A. the first
- B. the second
- C. define the term, again

50	A
30	B
20	C

3. Discussion, as a temporary conclusion

“Because we’re flooded with images and they’re so available. You can copy and paste them in a second, you can throw it on your Facebook wall and nobody’s stopping you” (Participant M, Interview).

Research on visual literacy in higher education emphasizes the need to teach visual literacy through disciplines and embed it into core curricula. According to a recent publication, Michelle D. Ervine notes that, despite many efforts, higher education has not fully embraced visual literacy. The importance of integrating visual literacy into instructional design programs identifies five categories of strategies for teaching visual literacy at academic institutions. It also includes a variety of instructional scaffolds aimed at supporting students in developing visual literacy skills on their own. Case studies provide insight into faculty instructional designs and include examples of embedded activities or seminars, or even conferences like this one, specifically aim to develop students’ visual literacy skills. The core value of this modern arete concept could be a sketch like this, already known.



In this study, even when teaching faculty had not actively discouraged image use in papers, students intuited that it would be frowned upon. The lack of faculty encouragement and also the limited instruction in how to use images in academic work support arguments that higher education has a

long way to do for the most of the visual literacy. The higher education is slow to change and academia still prefers more traditional modes of scholarly work, leading to a continued reliance on text-heavy assignments, acknowledged though that practices may differ across academic disciplines and contexts.

Using Google as a primary source and limited efforts in checking originating sites seems to be a dominant pattern in student image-seeking behavior. Scientists all around the world mention that a possible answer is not to condemn students for using such sources, but to teach them to use the resources they are already using with a critical eye and attention to context.

The importance of teaching visual literacy concepts and competencies not only through library instruction sessions, but also in the context of practical workshops.

Photography, cinema or other forms of art tended to have a deeper understanding of visual literacy concepts and paid more attention to image integrity, could work to this direction, so it has to be measured.

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<https://www.film.auth.gr/en/tmima/prosopiko/ioannis-kolaxizis>

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