

---

## READING VISUAL LITERATURE

SHAHUL HAMEED. M.P , MUHAMMED ALIMK

---

**Abstract:** The concerned research article titled as Reading Visual Literature focuses on the issues in reading visual elements in films and the article also gives some informative steps to read a visual content with the help of a visual item. The paper gives importance for the steps in reading a visual content. It includes interpreting the internal content of the visuals, reading the visuals as a whole, reading the ideology behind the constructors of the visuals. The article is pertinently questions in the culture of visuals and the complexities in reading these visuals individually and an image as a whole. In reading visual elements in films and other visual literature, the ideology of the visual constructor plays a pivotal role because all signs, visuals are also signs, constructed with certain interest behind it. These hidden interests may be purely commercial or ideological and to peel out all these elements together a collective study of visual literature is needed in a techno-thriven post-millennial world. The article gives a glimpse of post-millennial literature and its form and structures in a nut shell.

**Keywords :** Visual Literature, reading visual contents, culture of visuals, visuals and signs.

---

Literature, as a branch of human art, originated from human creative bend of mind and from centuries onwards the form and structure of literature is put in front of change. Literature is nothing but a combined form of human creative thoughts on the realities around him/her. In the beginning, the form and structure of literature sidelined with the form and structure of those sections of the society they were the hoisters of art and literature. However, in different nations and in different language, the change of flood began to appear because of the changing of human attitude towards human life and its other paraphernalia. Visual literature is one amongst them. Literature in visual forms and structures can be possible to name as visual literature. In print literature the ideas and conceptions are created with such forms of the combination of words and sentences in creative manner. However, in visual literature, the scope of print words; words are nothing but combination of different phonemes in sound and letters in writing, are withering because of the prominence of visual elements in it. It is, somewhat, very easy to read and interpret the world behind print words and expressions. However, reading the visual elements are somewhat is a herculean task because of the complexity remains in visual structure and forms. As the complexity of print literature, because of the cultural and linguistic complexity, visual literature too confronts the problems of national, cultural, and regional differences. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia defines visual literacy: Visual Literacy is the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image, extending the meaning of literacy, which commonly signifies interpretation of a written or printed text. Visual literacy is based on the idea that pictures can be “read” and that meaning can be communicated through a process of reading. Visual literature is a

new modified name to those visual arts like painting, collage, dance, and other Medias like film and documentaries. The research article focuses on the challenges and scope of studying film as a new genre of art. Film as a new branch of art follows its own form and structure and a particular form of narrative style. Usually, a film follows the path of a good script. It is said that a good film is the combined form of all art and literature. In it, a spectator can feel elements of story, poetry, drama, dance, and other art elements. The genre also brings our attention to the world of technology and art. Film is the new prominent medium that uses technology profusely. However, the over application of technology scatter a good creative story in film. The genre of film usually constructed with the scenes and shots or simply visuals. Studying a film comes across different steps and patterns. The following visual is being used to explain the different steps in studying a visual. Interpreting the internal content of the film or visuals. In these steps the spectator or those who are going to study the film cortically analyze the different form and structure s in the shots or visuals. Here, the film critic observes on the similarity and dissimilarity between different forms and structures and a microscopic study of the dichotomy indifference between two or other visuals in the programme. In these steps, the radiosopic analysis of individual visuals is also demanded. It means the cultural and semiotic study of visuals. In such a case a critic should be familiarized with the cultural and visual cultural elements of the society on which the film is being made. In the given visual, the film critic is going to study the five visuals as individually. The first visual signifies a cross or a lamp post and the second visual, without any doubt, signifies a scare crow whereas the third and fourth signifies birds in sitting posture on the scare crow and flying. The fifth symbol signifies a field or a wall parallel to the cross and

scare crow. In such manner, in these steps, the critic is pausing different moving visuals superlatively and finding its ambiguity and the cultural cannons behind it. Interpreting the internal construction of the different visuals or shots. In these steps, the film critic is evaluating the construction of the different visuals and shots in a combined manner. It means the critic is going to analyze the connection between these shots and the cultural discourse of these visuals together. Here, the given visual, altogether, signifies in a common reading a cross or a lamp post and scare crow in a field or nearby a wall and two birds in the space. Here, the critic is evaluating the mood of the visuals and the proximity of these visuals with each other. The collective reading of the culture and semiotic elements are applying in these steps. It should be questioned here, the connection between a cross and a scare crow or the lamp post and scare crow. If it is a wall or a field, what these visuals signifies behind it. Is there any connection between the animate (birds) and inanimate (scarecrow and cross) visuals here? In such a manner, step two demands a collective reading of the given contents in the visual. Bringing the world of external to the internal content of the visuals. In these steps, the critical viewer have penetrate in to the world around the visuals, not in the visuals, and should find a sociological, historical, anthropological or religious similarity or stigmatized connection between the visual world of the director and the real world around the creative visuals. In such a manner, these steps demands a historical or sociological analysis of the back ground on which the visuals are being made upon. In the given visuals, a film critic can ask questions like the possibility of pylon (lamp post) and a scare crow in a rustic field. The same visuals may also hints upon the clash oriented world of cross and the world of mockery behind black walls. The visuals also bring the attention of the critic towards the mockery in two prominent visuals (cross and scare crow) and the lively nature of the birds. In such manner, these steps demand an external reading of the internal content of the visuals. Reading the ideology of the visual constructors. Visual is a

**References:**

1. Bordwell, David & Kristin Thompson. ( 2004). *Film Art: An Introduction*. Newyork: McGraw-hill.
2. Braudy, Leo & Marshall Cohen. (2004). *Film theory and Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated.
3. Considine, Davide M & Haley, Gail E. (1999). *Visual Messages: Integrating Imagery into*

language and like all language, visual language too represents signs. It means, the visual signs should be evaluated in par with the ideology of the visual constructor. Sometimes, the profile of a director helps a critic too much, because of the ideological threading of the visual constructor points towards the ideology behind the visuals. In the given visuals, the constructor may be a supporter of rustic scenes and natural representatives of human life or a critic against religion. Reading all visual elements as a whole. The meaning behind visual elements cannot be possible to read with a simple analysis of particular visuals. It demands the extensive analysis and radioscopic penetration in to all visual elements in the given film or visual form. In short, reading a film is like reading a linguistic item. For instance the word “cat” is the combination of three sounds in spoken form and three letters in written form. In the study of this word, the linguist should concentrate on the pronunciation of these three sounds individually and the pronunciation of these three sounds together. The sound /k/ is voiceless velar plosive, /a/ is front back vowel and /t/ is voiceless alveolar plosive. However, in English the word symbolize an animal, the same word with a slight change in vowel pronunciation in an Indian Language, Malayalam, signifies “wind”. In such a manner, Visual language should be read with its importance to individual visuals and the background or ideology behind the visuals. Film studies, or in more realistic terms visual studies, is a branch in many modern research units and departments. However, the field lack in serious studies because of the overhauling of the lucrative – direct commercial films. When art-visual focus on the more hidden and unknown areas of human visual realm, the commercial films’ visual hierarchy brings the attention on the hero-centered visual ingredients and voluptuous slapsticks. The world of Indian movie is swaying to this part and parcel of hidden agenda-stricken genre of visual world by calling it new names like “new generation” movies. It is essential to read these modern films and visuals in the aspects of the mentioned above steps.

- Instruction. 2nd edition. Englewood, Colo: Teachers Ideas Press.
4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual\\_literacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_literacy)
5. Quin, Rod, Barrie McMohan & Robyn Quin. (1995). *Teaching Viewing and Visual Texts: Secondary English Curriculum and Teaching Program*. Australia: Curriculum Corporation.

\*\*\*

Phd Research ScholarS,The Department Of English,  
Maulana Azad National Urdu University,(A Central University),Hyderabad,  
[shameed472@gmail.com](mailto:shameed472@gmail.com), [salimmanuu@gmail.com](mailto:salimmanuu@gmail.com)