

A Scoping Review of Visual Aids in Teaching Literature to EFL Students

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Abstract: Using visual aids is known as an effective teaching approach with which to support EFL learning. Existing research on the interaction of EFL literature teaching and visual aids is fragmented and lacks a systematic overview. To address this research gap, the current study conducted a scoping review in order to provide a full knowledge of the use of visual aids in EFL literature classes. This synthesis provided an overview of instructional strategies of using visual aids in EFL literature teaching, and also included student feedback, the use of various forms of visual aids such as charts, photos, videos, and more. By offering a scoping review, the purpose of this research is to improve understanding of the application of visual aids in EFL literature education, thereby contributing to the advancement of innovative and effective teaching approaches in EFL English literature teaching.

1. Method

1.1 Scoping review research questions

The goal of Scoping Review is to identify gaps in the existing literature and provide an overview of the current state of knowledge on a topic. This information can then be used to inform future research or policy decisions. Above all, it is particularly useful for identifying research gaps, defining research questions, and informing systematic reviews or other types of research projects [1].

Scoping review framework helps to clarify this notion by identifying research gaps in the corpus of current literature. The first and fourth objectives were determined to be the most pertinent for this research synthesis. Five questions have already been prepared for the selection of data analysis of studies to be synthesized at the outset as follows:

- (1) What types of visual aids were used to convey themes and messages of literary texts to EFL students?
- (2) What were the teaching strategies and methods of using visual aids in teaching literature to EFL students?
- (3) How did EFL students perceive the visual aids used in literature teaching?
- (4) What were the challenges and limitations of using visual aids in EFL literature classes?
- (5) What were suggestions and recommendations of using visual aids in EFL literature classes?

1.2 Inclusion and exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria include the following items:

- (1) The study was published in the past ten years (2012-2022).
- (2) The study was published as a scientific, peer-reviewed journal article.
- (3) The study focused on the use of visual aids for learning literature or reading literary texts in EFL classroom practices.

The exclusion criteria include the following items:

- (1) Non-English major studies in the field were excluded.
- (2) Studies not based on an empirical study were excluded.
- (3) Studies not involving university EFL literature classes were excluded.

1.3 Charting the Data

Following the second evaluation, which included all of the aforementioned exclusion criteria, ten empirical studies were eventually chosen for comprehensive investigation, as shown in Figure 1.

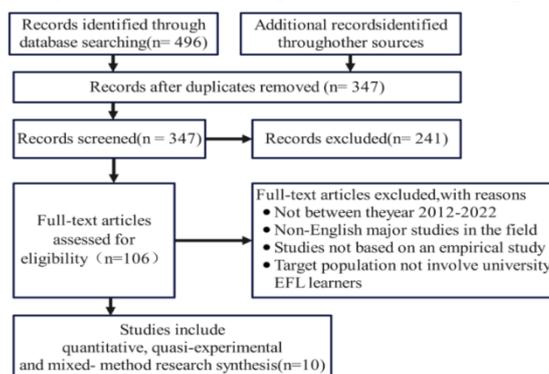


Figure 1: Flow chart of searching process for publications and selecting studies

2. Findings

After analyzing and reviewing the 10 research articles, the review questions are addressed in this part.

We can observe that the visual types mentioned in these articles include images, video recordings, PowerPoint, multimedia, technology videos, and so on. Among these, video-based visual aids are the most frequently used by teachers.

Then, we can find that EFL learners in the eight studies have a positive attitude towards the use of visual aids in EFL literature class on the whole, indicating that students are more inclined to use visual aids to help them carry out complex text interpretation when reading literary texts.

Table 1: Teaching strategies of using visual aids in literature teaching

Strategies	Studies
Pre-reading Visuals	Wang et al.(2021), Freyn(2017), Abdullah et al.(2017),Hii (2021), Chen (2012)
Setting Visualization	Yunus et al.(2016)
Visual Analysis and Critique	Freyn(2017),Wong et al.(2017), Hii (2021)
Graphics and Visual Summaries	Khalid and Muhammad (2012)
Collaboration and storytelling	SARIÇOBAN and Yürük (2016)

As can be seen from Table 1, these ten studies provide five teaching strategies on the use of visual aids in EFL literature classrooms, respectively Pre-reading Visuals; Setting Visualization; Visual Analysis and Critique; Graphics and Visual Summaries and Collaboration and storytelling.

By introducing important concepts, characters, and places, these visual aids help increase students' comprehension and attention. Students can generate early impressions and talk about their expectations by creating a character collage using images and symbols that represent the key characters [2][3]. Students can critically examine choices made and consider how these visuals enhance or hinder from their comprehension of the text by engaging in visual analysis and critique of book covers, artwork, or other relevant visuals. Graphics and visual summaries offer succinct representations of vital data and topics, assisting students in understanding difficult ideas and helping them to remember crucial aspects [5][8].

Table 2: Limitations of using visual aids in EFL literature teaching

Limitations	Studies
Interpretation and Authenticity	Wanget al. (2021),Hii (2021)
Cultural Relevance	John et al. (2018)
Accessibility and Availability	John et al. (2018),Freyn(2017),Wong et al. (2017), Hii(2021)
Over reliance on Visuals	Khalid and Muhammad (2012)

As we can be seen from Table 2, these ten studies provide four limitations on the use of visual aids in EFL literature classrooms.

It's important to use visual aids carefully to prevent restricting pupils' interpretations and capacity for critical thought [6][7]. They shouldn't force their own interpretation or stray from the text's main point [9]. Giving the essential context may improve comprehension and assist narrow cultural differences [8].

For the problem of Accessibility and Availability, According to Freyn (2017), due to resource shortages or technology limitations, some EFL classrooms may have trouble locating the right visual aids. Additionally, As Khalid and Muhammad (2012) mentioned that using visuals too much might result in passive learning and dependence on them.

There are three main suggestions that these studies have mentioned as follows:

(1) Pick Relevant Visuals. Pick visuals that reflect the students' cultural backgrounds and experiences while also being pertinent to the literary material being taught [13].

(2) Encourage Class conversation and Interpretation. Use visual aids as conversation starters. Encourage students to discuss their analyses, viewpoints, and unique connections to the illustrations and the written text. This encourages critical thinking and makes it easier to go further into the subject matter [10][11].

(3) Reflection and Evaluation. Encourage them to assess how well the illustrations have improved their comprehension of the text and to provide suggestions for changes or new strategies. [4][12].

3. Discussions

This scoping review reports critical findings by answering five research questions and yields three major ideas for discussion. Firstly, the results of this review indicate that the majority of visual aids used in EFL literature teaching still adhere to traditional formats, with only two articles mentioning the use of VR and YouTube as instructional tools.

Secondly, visual aids in literature teaching are actually applicable across various educational levels, from primary to secondary to higher education. Therefore, considering the extensive and universal use of visual aids, for further research, it is essential to consider not only students' attitudes and feedback towards visual aids but also teachers' attitudes towards utilizing visual aids

in literature teaching in future research.

Thirdly, existing studies have not yet clarified the role of visual elements in EFL literature class. Further research is needed to determine the nature and function of visual features in EFL literature classes, including whether they are complimentary or supplemental.

4. Conclusion

Using visual aids is known as an effective teaching approach with which to support an EFL literature learning environment. These findings align with previous studies conducted by Sivapalan & Wan (2010) revealed that visual aids are very important to encourage the students to study literature and engage with it.

In conclusion, the goal of this scoping review was to fill in the knowledge gaps on the function and value of visual aids in teaching EFL literature. The study examined teaching tactics and included student feedback to offer a thorough knowledge of the use of visual aids. Charts, pictures, and movies among other visual aids were investigated. The advantages and disadvantages of employing visual aids in EFL literature lessons were also underlined in the review. These findings may contribute to the existing body of research on effective instructional strategies for English literature classes in EFL settings.

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