



## LISTENING COMPREHENSION IN LITERATURE: EFL STUDENTS' USE OF VISUAL AIDS IN POETRY INTERPRETATION

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**Abstract** : This study explores the use of visual aids on listening comprehension in poetry interpretation among EFL students. It employs a descriptive qualitative research design. The participants of this study are fourth-semester students of the English Department at STIT Miftahul Midd Lumajang. In order to gain the data, it uses semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The findings indicate that visual aids profoundly elevate student engagement with poetic texts by making abstract concepts more accessible and relatable. The participants of this study reported that these resources not only fostered emotional connections to the material but also encouraged active participation and collaborative discussions. Additionally, visual aids were found to promote cultural awareness, enriching students' understanding of the literary themes explored in poetry. Overall, this research highlights the transformative potential of visual aids in enhancing the educational experience of EFL students, paving the way for more effective teaching practices. The study advocates for the integration of visual aids into EFL literature instruction to improve comprehension and appreciation of complex texts.

**Keywords** : Listening Comprehension; Literature; Visual Aids; Poetry Interpretation

**Abstrak** : Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan alat bantu visual pada pemahaman mendengarkan dalam interpretasi puisi di kalangan siswa EFL. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Partisipan dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester empat Jurusan Bahasa Inggris di STIT Miftahul Midd Lumajang. Untuk mengumpulkan data, penelitian ini menggunakan wawancara semi-terstruktur dan observasi kelas. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa alat bantu visual secara mendalam meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dengan teks puisi dengan menjadikan konsep-konsep abstrak lebih mudah diakses dan lebih relevan. Partisipan dari penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa sumber daya ini tidak hanya membangun koneksi emosional dengan materi, tetapi juga mendorong partisipasi aktif dan diskusi kolaboratif. Selain itu, alat bantu visual ditemukan dapat meningkatkan kesadaran budaya, memperkaya pemahaman siswa tentang tema-tema sastra yang dieksplorasi dalam puisi. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menekankan potensi transformatif dari alat bantu visual dalam meningkatkan pengalaman pendidikan siswa EFL, membuka jalan bagi praktik pengajaran yang lebih efektif. Penelitian ini mendukung integrasi alat bantu visual ke dalam pengajaran sastra EFL untuk meningkatkan pemahaman dan apresiasi terhadap teks-teks kompleks.

**Kata Kunci** : Pemahaman Mendengarkan; Sastra; Alat Bantu Visual; Interpretasi Puisi

## INTRODUCTION

Language acquisition is a complex and multifaceted process that involves not only the mastery of vocabulary and grammar but also the development of comprehension skills critical for effective communication (Mohseni-Far, 2007; Wen & Naim, 2023). In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process, listening comprehension emerges as a fundamental component that supports learners in navigating spoken discourse, interpreting meanings, and engaging with diverse literary texts. Particularly in the context of literature, listening comprehension becomes even more significant, as it requires learners to decode not only the literal meanings of words, but also the subtleties, emotions, and cultural references embedded within texts. Therefore, fostering effective listening skills is essential for EFL students to meaningfully engage with literature, allowing them to form deeper connections with the texts they encounter (Keshavarzi, 2012; Al-Desri, 2013; Ivone & Renandya, 2019; Basyoni, Bee & seng, 2020; Newton & Nation, 2020). Ultimately, this foundation strengthens their overall language proficiency and cultural literacy, preparing them for more nuanced interactions in both academic and real-world contexts.

The use of visual aids in educational contexts has been recognized as an effective pedagogical strategy that can enhance understanding and retention of complex material (Hung & Chen, 2018; Qasserras, 2024). In EFL settings, visual aids including images, videos, and infographics serve to provide contextual support that can facilitate learners' comprehension of intricate literary texts. When students engage with poetry, the abstract nature of poetic language can often hinder their ability to grasp meanings and appreciate the emotional depth of the work (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). By incorporating visual aids into poetry interpretation, lecturers can create a more immersive and supportive learning environment that aids EFL students in bridging the gap between the text and their existing knowledge and experiences. This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also encourages critical thinking and creative engagement with the material. Moreover, by offering visual representations, lecturers can help students visualize complex themes and emotions, making the interpretive process more accessible (Bailey & Van Harken, 2014). As a result, students are more likely to develop a deeper appreciation for the art of poetry, which is essential for their overall literary education.

Furthermore, the interpretive process of poetry is not solely a linguistic exercise; it demands a deeper emotional and cultural understanding (Hansen, 2004; Adorno, 2020). Visual aids can play a pivotal role in providing this necessary context, helping students to connect with the themes and emotions presented in poems. For instance, visual representations of imagery, historical contexts, or emotional tones can illuminate the meanings that may otherwise remain elusive in a purely auditory experience. This multidimensional approach not only enhances students' comprehension of the text but also enriches their overall literary experience, allowing them to engage with poetry on a more profound level. By facilitating a more interactive and engaging learning environment, visual

aids ultimately support students in developing the critical skills needed for effective literary analysis (Davies, et al., 2013). As students delve deeper into the emotional and cultural layers of poetry, they become more adept at articulating their interpretations and insights. This transformative learning process not only prepares them for academic success but also encourages a lifelong appreciation for literature and the arts.

The implications of improving listening comprehension through visual aids extend beyond academic performance; they also resonate with the broader goal of fostering intercultural understanding. In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to appreciate literature from diverse cultural backgrounds is essential (Nam & Fry, 2010; Cuccurullo & Cinganotto, 2010). However, as stated by Nahidin (2024), lecturers encounter various teaching challenges, such as managing the diverse linguistic backgrounds and skill levels of students, ensuring effective content delivery in multiple languages, and promoting meaningful interactions in both languages. As supported by Mahmawati & Mubayyinah (2024), education is undergoing continuous development in creating diverse learning models, encompassing strategies, methods, and administrative designs, which is the core of lectures to successfully achieve learning objectives. Thus, by engaging EFL students with poetry through visual aids, lecturers can equip them with the tools necessary to navigate and appreciate the rich tapestry of global literature. It not only enhances their linguistic abilities but also cultivates empathy and a deeper understanding of different cultural narratives, which are vital skills in today's multicultural society. Furthermore, this process encourages students to become active participants in their learning, enabling them to draw connections between their own experiences and those reflected in the texts. As such, this holistic approach underscores the importance of integrating cultural context into language learning through innovative teaching methods that prepare students for meaningful interactions in a globalized context.

Hence, this research addresses a significant gap in the field of EFL literature education by examining the interplay between listening comprehension and the use of visual aids in poetry interpretation, an area that presents unique challenges due to its often abstract and nuanced language. By focusing on the experiences and perceptions of EFL students, this study aims to provide valuable insights into how visual resources can enhance literary engagement and improve language skills. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to the development of more effective teaching methodologies in diverse learning environments, promoting a richer understanding of literature and language acquisition among EFL students. Through this exploration, it hopes to inspire lecturers to adopt more dynamic and integrative approaches in their teaching practices, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for EFL learners. In addition, by highlighting the transformative potential of visual aids, this research seeks to encourage pedagogical innovation that aligns with contemporary educational demands and fosters a deeper connection to literature.

## METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the use of visual aids in enhancing listening comprehension among EFL students during poetry interpretation. It investigates how these resources can elevate students' nuanced interpretation of poetic texts, ultimately enriching their literary experience. By focusing on the emotional resonance of visual aids, this research seeks to uncover their potential to transform students' interactions with poetry. The participants of this research are fourth-semester students of English Department at STIT Miftahul Midd Lumajang. By utilizing this approach, the study aims to gather rich, contextual data that reflects the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the integration of visual aids in their learning process. This qualitative framework allows for an in-depth exploration of individual perspectives, providing a comprehensive understanding of how these aids impact their engagement with poetry. It is As stated by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) that descriptive qualitative research emphasizes events occurring in natural settings, allowing for a true reflection of real-life experiences.

The data collection of this research involve semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Semi-structured interviews were onducted with selected students to gather their insights on how visual aids influence their comprehension of poetry, as well as their overall learning experiences. Additionally, classroom observations provide a contextual backdrop, allowing the researcher to witness firsthand the interaction between students and visual aids during poetry lessons. This combination of methods enable the collection of diverse data, fostering a deeper understanding of the dynamics involved in listening comprehension within the literary context.

Furthermore, the analysis of the data followed a systematic framework based on the three phases outlined by Ary et al. (2010): familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing, and interpreting and representing. In the first phase, the researcher immersed themselves in the data to identify key themes and patterns. The second phase involved coding the data to categorize responses and observations, streamlining the information for further analysis. Finally, the interpreting and representing phase synthesized the findings, allowing for a comprehensive interpretation of how visual aids influence EFL students' listening comprehension in poetry. This structured approach ensures that the analysis is thorough and meaningful, leading to insights that can inform future educational practices.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section elaborates the findings and discussions derived from the study, and explained into two subsections.

### 1. Result

The results of this research reveal several key themes regarding the integration of visual aids on EFL students' listening comprehension in poetry interpretation. Through semi-

structured interviews, students expressed a heightened engagement with the poetic texts when visual aids were integrated into their learning process. Most of the students reported that visuals, such as images and videos, helped them connect emotionally with the themes of the poems, making the abstract language more tangible and relatable. This emotional engagement was frequently cited as a crucial factor in enhancing their overall comprehension and enjoyment of poetry. Ultimately, it suggests that visual aids not only improve understanding but also cultivate a deeper appreciation for the art of poetry. Furthermore, they noted that this emotional connection often inspired them to explore the poems further, encouraging independent analysis and interpretation beyond the classroom.

The observations conducted in the classroom provided additional insights into how visual aids functioned during poetry lessons. In sessions where visual resources were utilized, students demonstrated increased participation and collaborative discussions. They were observed actively analyzing the visual elements in conjunction with the text, which facilitated a deeper exploration of poetic meanings. Moreover, students frequently referenced the visuals during their discussions, indicating that these aids served as anchors for their interpretations, enabling them to articulate their thoughts more clearly and confidently. This dynamic interaction illustrates the vital role of visual aids in fostering an engaging and collaborative learning atmosphere. In addition, this active engagement also fostered a supportive learning environment, where students felt more comfortable sharing their ideas and interpretations with peers.

Based on the results of semi-structured interviews and observations discussed above, it revealed that the use of visual aids not only aided comprehension but also fostered a sense of cultural awareness among the students. Most of students noted that visuals depicting cultural contexts or historical backgrounds related to the poems enriched their understanding of the texts. This integration of cultural elements allowed students to appreciate the nuances in poetry that they might have otherwise overlooked. Consequently, visual aids emerged as essential instruments for enhancing both linguistic and cultural literacy in poetry interpretation. As a result, visual aids were perceived as valuable tools for bridging the gap between language and culture, ultimately enhancing the interpretive process. Students indicated that this newfound cultural insight inspired them to engage more critically with literary texts, prompting a broader exploration of global literature.

In addition, the findings of this study underscore the significant role of visual aids in improving listening comprehension among EFL students during poetry interpretation. By providing emotional context, fostering active participation, and promoting cultural awareness, these resources contribute to a more immersive and effective learning experience. This multifaceted approach highlights the potential of visual aids to transform traditional literature instruction into a more engaging and relevant practice. The insights gained from this research suggest that incorporating visual aids into EFL literature instruction can lead to

improved understanding and engagement with complex texts, encouraging lecturers to adopt more innovative teaching practices in the classroom. Ultimately, this study advocates for a more dynamic and integrative approach to literature education, which can significantly benefit EFL students' overall language acquisition and appreciation of literary art.

## 2. Discussion

Concerning the findings elaborated above, this research highlights the critical role of visual aids in enhancing EFL students' engagement and comprehension during poetry interpretation. The participants reported that visuals, such as images and videos, made the abstract language of poetry more accessible, thereby fostering a deeper emotional connection to the texts. This connection not only enriches their understanding but also encourages a more profound appreciation for the artistry of poetry (Furniss & Bath, 2013). As students become more engaged, they are also more likely to collaborate and share insights, which further enhances the learning experience. This collaborative environment promotes a sense of community among learners, making the exploration of poetry a shared journey. Additionally, it fosters open dialogue, allowing students to express their thoughts freely. Such interactions can lead to diverse interpretations and deeper discussions about the text. It aligns with the previous studies conducted by Pugh & Bergin (2015) that emphasize the importance of emotional engagement in learning, suggesting that students who can connect emotionally with the material are more likely to retain and understand the content. By integrating visual aids, lecturers can transform poetry from a potentially daunting challenge into a relatable and enjoyable experience, ultimately leading to a more profound understanding of literary themes (Katz-Buonincontro, 2015).

The observed improvement in student participation and collaborative discussions during lessons incorporating visual aids underscores the significance of active learning strategies. As the study conducted by Johnson & Johnson (2018) indicates, collaborative learning environments enhance critical thinking and engagement, as students benefit from exchanging ideas and perspectives. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of community in the classroom, where diverse viewpoints enrich the learning experience. They asserted that the use of visual resources served as a catalyst for discussion, enabling students to analyze both the visual elements and the text concurrently. Similarly, according to Hidayat & Rifdah (2024), providing students with opportunities to discuss, read, write, and assess collaboratively fosters active communication and promotes their development. Such dynamic interactions not only improved their comprehension but also contributed to a supportive classroom atmosphere where students felt empowered to express their interpretations. This finding reinforces the idea that active engagement through collaborative learning can significantly impact language acquisition and literary analysis. It is in line with Yusuf (2024), who indicates that literary translations serve as a means to convey a country's culture, whether it is done implicitly or explicitly. Here, grammar is posed as the basic structure of

language, offering rules and guidelines for sentence construction and effective communication of meaning (Novitaningrum, 2024).

Besides, this study elucidates that visual aids foster a sense of cultural awareness among EFL students. By providing cultural contexts and historical backgrounds relevant to the poems, these aids enrich students' understanding and appreciation of the texts. This cultural awareness equips students with the tools necessary to navigate and interpret literature from diverse perspectives. Consequently, they become more adept at recognizing and valuing the intricacies of various cultures reflected in literary works. As supported by Chen and Sivo (2021), integrating cultural elements into language instruction enhances students' critical engagement with literature. The students' newfound cultural insights prompted them to explore broader literary landscapes, indicating that visual aids can serve as bridges between language and culture. Such insights not only deepen students' comprehension of specific texts but also cultivate an appreciation for diverse cultural narratives, essential in a globalized educational context. Moreover, this broader understanding encourages students to critically examine their own cultural assumptions, fostering a more inclusive and reflective learning environment. Ultimately, by linking language learning with cultural exploration, lecturers are able to promote a richer, more meaningful educational experience that resonates with students' lives.

Moreover, this study advocates for the incorporation of visual aids as a fundamental strategy in EFL literature instruction, particularly in poetry interpretation. By providing emotional context, facilitating active participation, and promoting cultural awareness, visual resources create a more immersive learning experience that enhances listening comprehension (Yang, et al., 2020; Lee, Yang & Wu, 2024). Implementing such strategies can significantly transform traditional teaching methods, making literature more relevant and engaging for students. In addition, according to Novitaningrum & Agustin (2024), encompassing multimodal learning is able to encourage the incorporation of different forms of representation verbal, visual, and kinesthetic to accommodate various learning styles. This relevance encourages students to take ownership of their learning, fostering a more proactive approach to their educational journey. The findings suggest that lecturers should adopt innovative teaching practices that integrate visual aids into their curricula, thereby fostering deeper engagement with complex literary texts. This approach not only improves students' understanding and enjoyment of literature but also contributes to their overall language acquisition and cultural competence, preparing them for a more interconnected world.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant impact of visual aids on enhancing listening comprehension among EFL students during poetry interpretation, demonstrating that these resources play a crucial role in facilitating emotional engagement, active

participation, and cultural awareness. By making abstract poetic language more accessible and relatable, visual aids not only deepen students' understanding of literary themes but also inspire them to explore texts beyond the classroom, fostering independent analysis and critical thinking. The findings underscore the importance of integrating visual resources into literature instruction, as they create a more immersive learning experience that encourages collaborative discussions and enriches students' appreciation of diverse cultural contexts. As lecturers seek to adopt more innovative teaching methodologies, this research advocates for a dynamic approach that leverages visual aids to cultivate a holistic understanding of poetry, ultimately contributing to EFL students' overall language acquisition and their ability to navigate the complexities of literary art in a globalized world.

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