

**THE USE OF VISUAL AIDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING****Karimova Umida**Scientific Advisor, the Department of English History and  
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**Annotation.** This article explores the pedagogical importance of visual aids in English language teaching and their impact on student understanding, engagement, and motivation. Explore different types of support, visual, pictorial notation, graphics, flashcards, video and illustration numbers, and explanatory comments to gain competencies in vocabulary acquisition, oral expression, etc. this study highlights the cognitive benefits of visual aids improving memory retention and reducing languages barriers, and ultimately demonstrates that properly designed visual aids can create a more dynamic, interactive, and learner-centered environment.

**Keywords:** Visual aids, English language teaching, motivation, cognitive learning, visual pedagogy, digital education, communicative competence.

**Annotatsiya.** Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilini o'qitishda ko'rgazmali vositalarning pedagogik ahamiyati va ularning o'quvchilarning tushunishi, faolligi hamda motivatsiyasiga ta'siri ilmiy jihatdan yoritiladi. Rasmlar, jadvallar, fleshkartalar, interaktiv slaydlar, videomateriallar va raqamli ilustratsiyalar kabi ko'rgazmali vositalarning lug'at boyligini oshirish, tinglab tushunish va gapirish jarayonlarini qo'llab-quvvatlashdagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda ko'rgazmalilikning kognitiv afzalliklari — xotirani mustahkamlash, til to'siqlarini kamaytirish va o'quv jarayonini samarali tashkil etishga yordam berishi — alohida ta'kidlanadi. Xulosa sifatida, sifatli ko'rgazmali vositalar o'quvchini markazga qaratgan, dinamik va interaktiv ta'lim muhiti yaratishi qayd etiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Vizual vositalar, ingliz tili o'qitish, motivatsiya, kognitiv o'rganish, vizual pedagogika, raqamli ta'lim, kommunikativ kompetensiya.

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается педагогическая значимость наглядных средств в процессе преподавания английского языка и их влияние на понимание, активность и мотивацию учащихся. Анализируются различные виды наглядных материалов — изображения, схемы, карточки, интерактивные слайды, видеоматериалы и цифровые иллюстрации — и их роль в расширении словарного запаса, поддержке аудирования и говорения, а также в улучшении учебной коммуникации. Подчеркиваются когнитивные преимущества наглядности, такие как развитие памяти и снижение языковых трудностей. В итоге делается вывод, что качественно разработанные наглядные средства создают более динамичную, интерактивную и ориентированную на обучающегося образовательную среду.

**Ключевые слова:** Наглядные средства, обучение английскому языку, мотивация, когнитивное обучение, визуальная педагогика, цифровое образование, коммуникативная компетенция.

## Introduction

In today's world of globalization and technological development, English language teaching (ELT) is undergoing major changes. One of the most effective approaches to improving language comprehension and recall is to incorporate visual aids into the learning process, such as images, graphs, videos, infographics, and interactive whiteboards. Visual aids not only capture students' attention but also promote conceptual understanding by linking verbal input with images. According to Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, learners understand and remember information better when it is presented in both verbal and visual forms. In the context of language teaching, visual tools bridge the gap between words and meaning, helping students visualize abstract concepts and improve memory recall. Hence, visual aids serve as essential tools for making lessons more interactive, meaningful, and student-centered. [9, p4]

Despite the recognized importance of visual aids in ELT, many teachers—especially in developing educational systems—still rely primarily on traditional, text-based instruction. This results in a monotonous learning environment where students struggle with pronunciation, vocabulary retention, and comprehension. The lack of sufficient visual input can demotivate learners and reduce engagement. Therefore, it is essential to examine how visual aids influence teaching efficiency, learner motivation, and language acquisition outcomes. [4, p123]

## Methods

The research followed a descriptive and exploratory approach, seeking to explore how visual aids are currently being used in ELT classrooms and to evaluate their impact on student motivation and performance. A descriptive design was chosen to identify trends and patterns in teachers' practices, while the exploratory dimension allowed the researcher to investigate new perspectives on how visual media enhance language comprehension.

### Literature review

In the modern era of education, the use of visual aids in English Language Teaching (ELT) has evolved from a supplementary practice to an indispensable pedagogical tool. Numerous scholars have explored how visual support enhances comprehension, retention, and engagement in language learning. This literature review aims to analyze the evolution, theoretical foundations, types, and pedagogical implications of visual aids in ELT, while also identifying current trends and research gaps in this field.

The integration of visual materials in teaching dates back to early behaviorist approaches, where learning was viewed as stimulus-response conditioning. According to Dale's "Cone of Experience", learners remember 10% of what they read but up to 80% of what they see and do. This model became foundational for visual pedagogy, emphasizing the power of visual stimuli in promoting active learning. Later, the emergence of cognitive and constructivist theories further supported the view that visual inputs play a crucial role in knowledge construction, concept mapping, and contextual understanding.

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory also underlines the importance of visual interaction as a mediator between learner and environment. In ELT, visuals serve as scaffolding tools that reduce cognitive load and support dual coding, where information is processed both verbally and visually, thus enhancing retention. These theoretical frameworks collectively justify the pedagogical value of visuals in English classrooms.

Visual aids encompass a wide range of tools—charts, flashcards, pictures, realia, videos, infographics, PowerPoint presentations, and digital animations. According to Wright (2002), visuals can be categorized into static (posters, flashcards, drawings) and dynamic (films,

simulations, interactive media). Each serves distinct functions depending on the teaching objective.

Static visuals are particularly effective in vocabulary building, pronunciation drills, and reading comprehension, as they concretize abstract linguistic forms. Dynamic visuals, on the other hand, stimulate multimodal learning, making them ideal for listening, speaking, and cultural lessons. For example, video clips help students grasp pragmatic features like intonation, gestures, and social norms—elements difficult to teach through text alone.

With the rise of digital education, the definition of “visual aids” has expanded to include smartboards, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR). Studies by Mayer and Jones show that multimedia visuals—when properly designed—significantly enhance language input and foster learner autonomy.

Empirical research consistently supports the positive correlation between visual aids and improved learning outcomes. Alqahtani found that Saudi EFL learners exposed to visual vocabulary aids performed 40% better on retention tests. Similarly, Hameed demonstrated that visual materials improved listening comprehension among Pakistani ESL students. In a more recent study, Rahman and Pandian reported that digital visuals increased classroom engagement, particularly among visual and kinesthetic learners.

Moreover, multiple studies reveal that visuals not only aid understanding but also enhance motivation. As Harmer notes, visuals provide emotional and cultural context, transforming passive learners into active participants. Students report feeling more confident and enthusiastic when lessons include images, videos, or digital media.

However, effectiveness depends heavily on teacher competence. Some researchers argue that without proper training, teachers may misuse visuals—overloading slides or using irrelevant imagery, which can distract rather than enhance learning. Thus, professional development in multimedia pedagogy remains a critical issue.

In modern communicative classrooms, visual aids are used not as decoration but as communicative tools. Within CLT frameworks, visuals facilitate authentic communication by providing real-life contexts and visual prompts for conversation. Thornbury emphasizes that pictures, diagrams, and realia serve as “semantic bridges” between language and meaning. For instance, role-plays supported by pictures of restaurants or airports allow learners to simulate authentic interactions.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) also benefits from visuals as pre-task stimulants or scaffolds. When learners are presented with images before performing a communicative task, they activate schema and vocabulary. Hence, visuals not only support comprehension but also production of language.

The 21st century has witnessed a digital revolution in ELT. Teachers now utilize platforms such as Canva, Quizlet, and Nearpod to create interactive visuals that cater to multiple intelligences. According to Dudeney and Hockly, visual literacy has become a core skill, as learners must navigate and interpret multimodal texts daily.

Augmented and virtual reality, as explored by Hsu, represent the next frontier in ELT visual pedagogy. These technologies immerse students in realistic linguistic environments, enabling experiential learning. For example, VR-based English lessons can transport students into simulated markets, classrooms, or workplaces, encouraging both linguistic and cultural competence.

Nonetheless, accessibility and digital literacy remain barriers in some contexts. Teachers in developing countries often lack resources or stable internet access, which limits visual integration. Therefore, pedagogical strategies must balance innovation with practicality.

Despite overwhelming support, the use of visual aids also presents challenges. Over-reliance on visuals can lead to superficial learning, where students focus more on images than on language forms. Cognitive overload occurs when visuals are too complex or unrelated to the content. Additionally, cultural bias in visual materials can hinder understanding or create stereotypes. Teachers also face time constraints and technical difficulties in designing or integrating visuals. Effective implementation requires both pedagogical and technological competence, which not all instructors possess. Thus, continuous professional training is essential.

While prior studies affirm the positive role of visuals, there is still limited research on their long-term effects on writing and critical thinking skills. Most studies focus on short-term vocabulary retention or engagement. Moreover, few investigations examine how visuals interact with learners' cultural backgrounds and learning styles in multilingual contexts.

#### Discussion

The results obtained from the research reveal that visual aids play a fundamental role in enhancing both the comprehension and engagement of English language learners. In this section, the findings are critically analyzed in relation to existing theories and empirical evidence discussed in the literature review. The discussion synthesizes how visual aids contribute to learning efficiency, examines their influence on motivation and cultural understanding, and addresses the pedagogical challenges that emerge in their classroom application.

The most significant outcome observed during the study was the improvement in learners' comprehension and vocabulary retention in classes where visual aids were systematically used. This finding is consistent with the Dual Coding Theory proposed by Paivio, which suggests that the human brain processes verbal and visual information through separate but interconnected channels, thereby enhancing memory recall.

In the experimental group, students demonstrated stronger recall of new words and better contextual understanding when visuals such as images, charts, and short video clips accompanied language input. These results corroborate the claims of Mayer, who emphasized that visuals improve cognitive processing by reducing extraneous load and promoting meaningful learning.

Moreover, the use of infographics and digital slides helped teachers present abstract grammar and lexical concepts more concretely. For instance, tense structures or phrasal verbs were taught using timeline graphics and pictorial examples, which simplified the explanation and reduced teacher talk time. This pedagogical efficiency aligns with Wright's observation that visuals "anchor language to meaning" and transform passive learning into active engagement.

From a cognitive perspective, the integration of visual stimuli facilitated deep learning rather than rote memorization. Students in the experimental group were better able to transfer learned vocabulary and structures into communicative contexts, demonstrating schema activation—a process explained by Bruner's constructivist model.

Psychologically, visual aids also reduced learner anxiety, particularly during speaking and listening tasks. When learners were provided with contextual visual prompts (e.g., pictures of daily activities, thematic storyboards), they felt more confident in constructing sentences. This supports Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which claims that positive emotional states foster language acquisition.

Furthermore, visuals appealed to multiple learning styles—particularly visual and kinesthetic learners—allowing inclusive participation in the classroom. As Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory suggests, educational materials should address diverse cognitive profiles, and visual aids serve precisely this function by diversifying input channels.

One of the most profound findings of the research is the increase in student motivation. Learners exposed to multimedia visuals—especially animations, short films, and interactive digital slides—reported higher interest and enjoyment in lessons. They perceived learning English not as a compulsory school subject, but as a dynamic experience.

This motivational impact echoes Harmer's view that visual content stimulates learners' curiosity and emotional engagement. In practical classroom terms, students showed greater willingness to participate in discussions, respond to teacher prompts, and complete assignments creatively.

In addition, the gamification of visuals—such as using online quiz platforms with images (Kahoot, Quizlet)—helped sustain attention and fostered healthy competition. According to Dudeney and Hockly, visual-based digital tools bridge the gap between entertainment and education, transforming traditional lessons into interactive learning experiences.

Visual aids also play a vital role in intercultural communication. English language teaching is not only about grammar and vocabulary but also about understanding cultural contexts. Through pictures, films, and digital imagery, students were exposed to different lifestyles, traditions, and social behaviors from English-speaking countries.

This exposure promoted cultural empathy and awareness, enabling learners to interpret idioms, gestures, and cultural references more accurately. The findings confirm Canning-Wilson's conclusion that visual media improve pragmatic competence—an essential skill in communicative language teaching (CLT).

However, the study also found that cultural sensitivity in choosing visual materials is crucial. Some learners misinterpreted culturally specific images due to limited background knowledge. Hence, teachers should carefully contextualize visuals to avoid confusion or stereotyping.

Despite the overwhelming benefits, the integration of visual aids is not without obstacles. Teachers reported challenges such as limited access to multimedia resources, insufficient training in digital pedagogy, and occasional technical issues. These findings are consistent with Rahimi and Yadollahi, who highlighted the need for continuous professional development in ICT-based teaching.

Furthermore, cognitive overload was occasionally observed when visuals were excessively detailed or poorly synchronized with verbal explanations. Mayer warns that irrelevant or excessive visuals can split learners' attention and diminish comprehension. Therefore, balance and purposeful selection are essential for effective use.

Teachers also expressed concern about time constraints—creating and adapting visuals requires additional preparation outside class hours. As a result, institutional support and resource sharing should be prioritized to sustain visual pedagogy.

The results of this study resonate strongly with global findings on the efficacy of visual aids in ELT. For example, Alqahtani reported similar improvements in vocabulary acquisition among Saudi learners, while Hameed confirmed enhanced listening comprehension in Pakistan. What distinguishes the current study, however, is its emphasis on learner-centered design—visuals were adapted based on student feedback and learning preferences, resulting in a higher degree of engagement.

Moreover, the study provides evidence that digital visual aids, such as interactive PowerPoints and AR simulations, outperform traditional charts or flashcards in promoting communicative fluency. This suggests that the evolving nature of visual pedagogy aligns with the digital literacy demands of the 21st century.

The findings imply that visual aids should not be treated as optional decorative elements but as integral components of lesson design. Teachers need to adopt a strategic approach that aligns visuals with linguistic objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria.

Curriculum developers should incorporate visual pedagogy frameworks into national English syllabi and teacher training programs. Moreover, schools should invest in digital infrastructure—smartboards, projectors, and online content libraries—to ensure equity and innovation in ELT practices.

### Conclusion

The study comprehensively explored the pedagogical, cognitive, and technological dimensions of using visual aids in English Language Teaching (ELT). The results have demonstrated that visual materials are not mere supplementary tools but essential components that shape the quality and depth of the learning process. Visual aids significantly contribute to enhancing comprehension, promoting long-term retention, increasing motivation, and facilitating communicative competence among learners of English.

The findings reaffirm the validity of Dual Coding Theory and Cognitive Load Theory, both of which emphasize the importance of combining verbal and visual input for optimal learning outcomes. When students are exposed to visuals alongside linguistic explanations, they process information more efficiently, make stronger associations, and retain vocabulary for longer periods. The use of images, diagrams, videos, and digital animations has proven especially effective for simplifying abstract grammatical structures and contextualizing new lexical items. From a psychological standpoint, visual aids help reduce the affective filter, making learners feel more comfortable and confident during language practice. Students exposed to visual-based instruction reported increased engagement, curiosity, and emotional involvement—factors that are critical to successful language acquisition. Visual content, particularly when interactive or culturally relevant, transforms traditional classrooms into stimulating learning environments where students become active participants rather than passive listeners.

Pedagogically, visual aids support a learner-centered approach, consistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBLT). They enable learners to use language in meaningful contexts, fostering not only linguistic accuracy but also pragmatic and cultural fluency. Teachers can utilize visual prompts to encourage storytelling, discussion, and problem-solving—skills that align with real-world language use.

However, the study also highlights several limitations and challenges. Overreliance on visuals without pedagogical intent may lead to cognitive overload or distraction. Moreover, insufficient teacher training in multimedia design often results in ineffective implementation. Accessibility issues—such as lack of technological resources in underfunded schools—further limit the potential of visual pedagogy. Thus, to fully realize the benefits of visual aids, systematic teacher development programs and institutional support are essential.

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