

Email Interviews in Practice: A Multi-Site, Qualitative Case Study from the ACRL Visual Literacy Task Force

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Topics of discussion

ACRL Visual Literacy Task Force

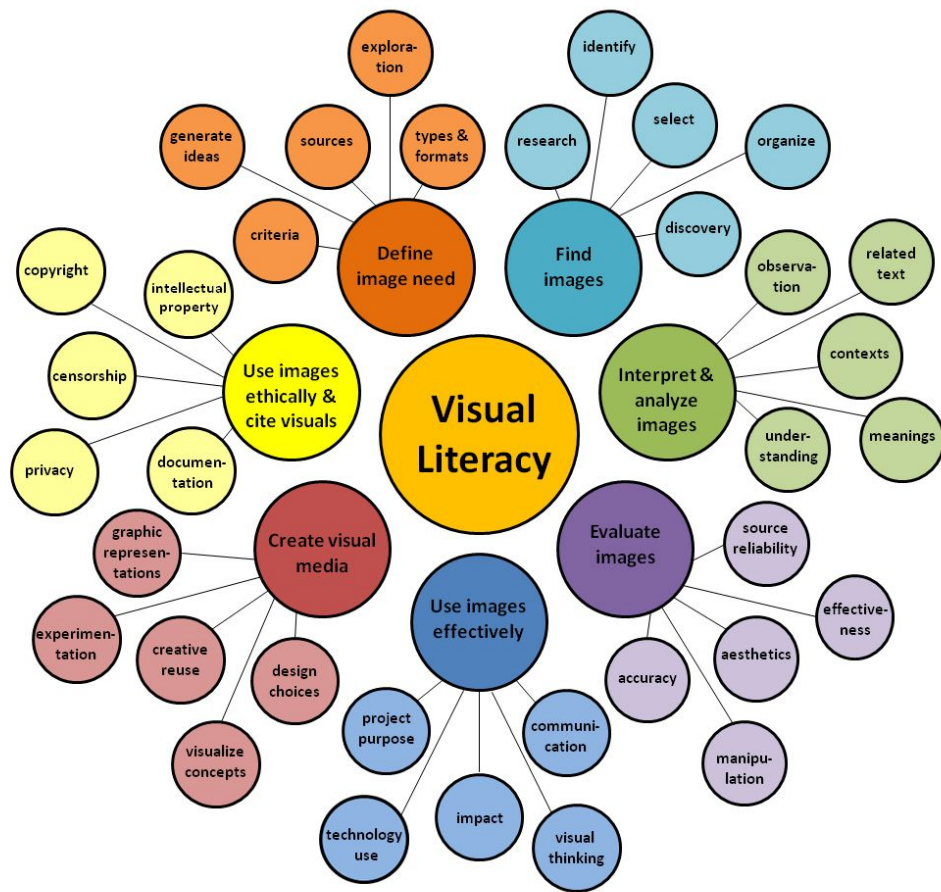
Empirical Research Study

Multi-site Considerations



Visual Literacy

- Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media.
- Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials.
- A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture (ACRL 2011).



Visual Literacy Array



ACRL Visual Literacy Standards (2011)

In an interdisciplinary, higher education environment, a visually literate individual is able to:

- Determine the nature and extent of the visual materials needed
- Find and access needed images and visual media effectively and efficiently
- Interpret and analyze the meanings of images and visual media
- Evaluate images and their sources
- Use images and visual media effectively
- Design and create meaningful images and visual media
- Understand many of the ethical, legal, social, and economic issues surrounding the creation and use of images and visual media, and access and use visual materials ethically



Standard One

The visually literate student determines the nature and extent of the visual materials needed.

Performance Indicators:

1. The visually literate student defines and articulates the need for an image.

Learning Outcomes:

- a. Defines the purpose of the image within the project (e.g., illustration, evidence, primary source, focus of analysis, critique, commentary)
- b. Defines the scope (e.g., reach, audience) and environment (e.g., academic environment, open web) of the planned image use
- c. Articulates criteria that need to be met by the image (e.g., subject, pictorial content, color, resolution, specific item)
- d. Identifies key concepts and terms that describe the needed image
- e. Identifies discipline-specific conventions for image use

2. The visually literate student identifies a variety of image sources, materials, and types.



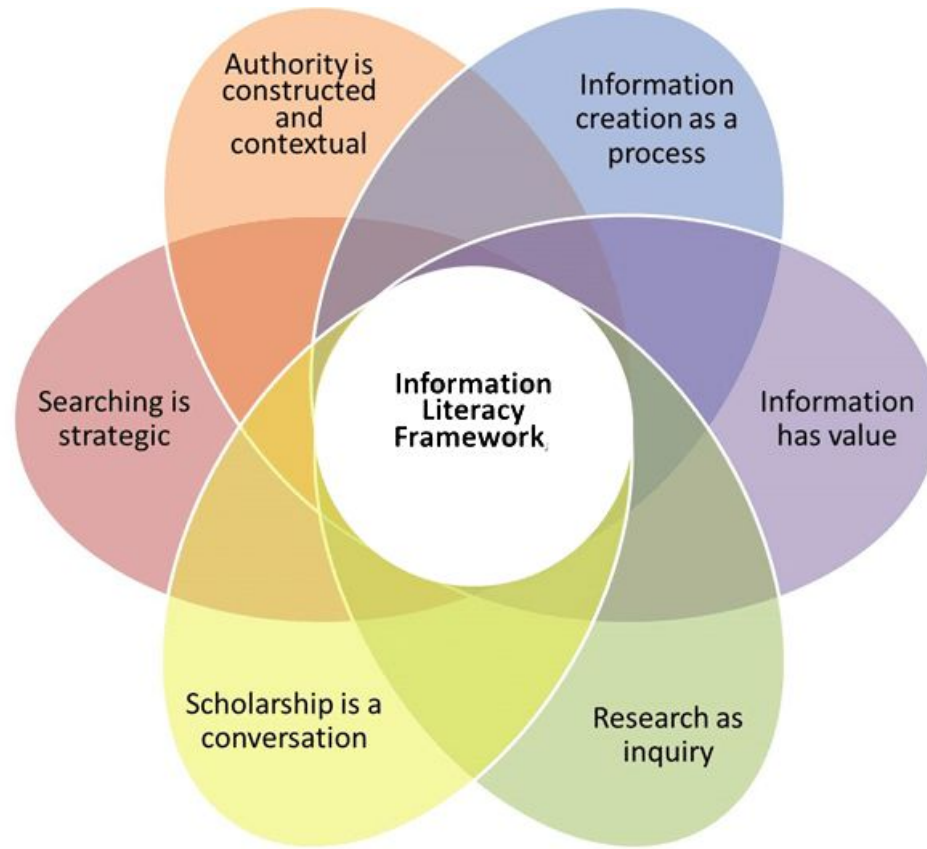
Visual Literacy Taskforce

- Original Task Force (2010 - 2016)
 - Denise Hattwig, Ann Medaille, Joanna Burgess, and Kaila Bussert
- Current Task Force (2018 - present)
 - Millicent Fullmer, Tiffany Saulter, Katie Greer, Sara Schumacher, Stephanie Beene, Mary Wegmann, Maggie Murphy, and myself



Current VLTF charge

The Board for the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL), in coordination with the Image Resources Interest Group (IRIG) convened the Visual Literacy Task Force in February 2018, to update the original 2011 [ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#) and align them with the 2016 [ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#).



ACRL Framework for Information Literacy

Vis Lit Standards 3:4b. Seeks expert and scholarly opinion about images, including information and analysis found in reference sources and scholarly publications

Framework: question traditional notions of granting authority and recognize the value of diverse ideas and worldviews

- SARA'S VERSION 1: Recognize ways in which certain creators and interpretations are privileged through access to technology and differences in cultural, design, and scholarly practices
 - Google comment: KATIE: Should something be added to this about critically evaluating how authority is granted/upheld/understood in these contexts?
- SARA'S VERSION 2: DISPOSITION “question ways in which certain creators and interpretations are privileged through access to technology and differences in cultural, design, and scholarly practices”
 - ADDED “evaluate the ways authority is granted and perpetuated in social systems throughout the process of production, dissemination, and consumption of visual materials.”



The need for empirical research

- Need for outsider perspective (beyond librarianship and the arts)
- Technology changes
 - Memes, deepfakes, disinformation on social media
- Social justice issues
 - Equity and representation
- The definition problem of visual literacy
 - How has the definition changed over time?
 - How do instructors currently define visual literacy?
 - How does the group's definition differ from other fields?



Purpose of the study - From IRB

To identify visual literacy trends and challenges as they pertain to academic institutions across a variety of disciplines to inform the development of the revised Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education



Significance of the study - From IRB

In an era of rapidly advancing technologies, proliferating information and disinformation, new and social media, augmented and virtual realities, the new Visual Literacy Task Force seeks to reconsider what it means to be visually literate in the twenty-first century. In addition to conducting this work internally within the Task Force, [we are also engaging the wider community of stakeholders – soliciting input via this empirical research study, and working to build support and consensus for the revision we produce.](#)

By interviewing visual literacy scholars, the Task Force will gain a better understanding of how they use images and visual media in their work, how they are defining visual literacy and educating others about visual literacy, and what skills and competencies they see as crucial in order for their students to be considered visually literate.



Designing a research project

Considered our collective prior experience

Content analysis, Survey, Face to Face interviews

Considered the type of information we wanted to gather

Exploratory, Nuanced, Personal



Qualitative vs Quantitative (Minichiello et al 1990)

| | Qualitative | Quantitative |
|----------------|--|--|
| Conceptual | Concerned with understanding human behavior from the informant's perspective | Concerned with discovering facts about social phenomena |
| | Assumes a dynamic and negotiated reality | Assumes a fixed and measurable reality |
| Methodological | Data are collected through participant observation and interviews | Data are collected through measuring things |
| | Data are analyzed by themes from descriptions by informants | Data are analysed through numerical comparisons and statistical inferences |
| | Data are reported in the language of the informant | Data are reported through statistical analyses |



Qualitative data collection

Face to Face vs Skype vs Email Interviews

Time (length of time it takes to conduct interviews)

Time zones of and distance between participants and investigators

Transcription concerns

Costs of professional transcription

DIY methods can be complex and problematic



Email interviews (in a nutshell)

Online, asynchronous, in-depth interviewing is, *unlike e-mail surveys*,

semi-structured in nature and

involves **multiple email exchanges** between the interviewer and interviewee

over an extended period of time.



Current Step - Email interviews

Benefits

- No transcription costs
- No need for synchronous interview times
- Can interview more than 1 participant at a time
- Allows for thoughtful response from potentially otherwise shy participants who may not speak their mind fully in a face to face situation

Challenges

- Time period from start to finish
- Privacy of participants and confidentiality of data
- Lack of feedback cues
- Lack of ability to clarify questions immediately
 - Need for follow up emails

1. How do images and/or visual media figure into your work or research?
2. Describe your own path to visual literacy.
 - a. Did you receive formal training in how to read, interpret, and contextualize visual materials? Whether yes or no, please elaborate.
3. How do you define visual literacy?
4. Consider the following definition of visual literacy:

Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture.

 - a. Is this definition sufficient for 21st-century learners? If not, how would you improve it?
5. Does educating others figure into your work?
 - a. If so, how?



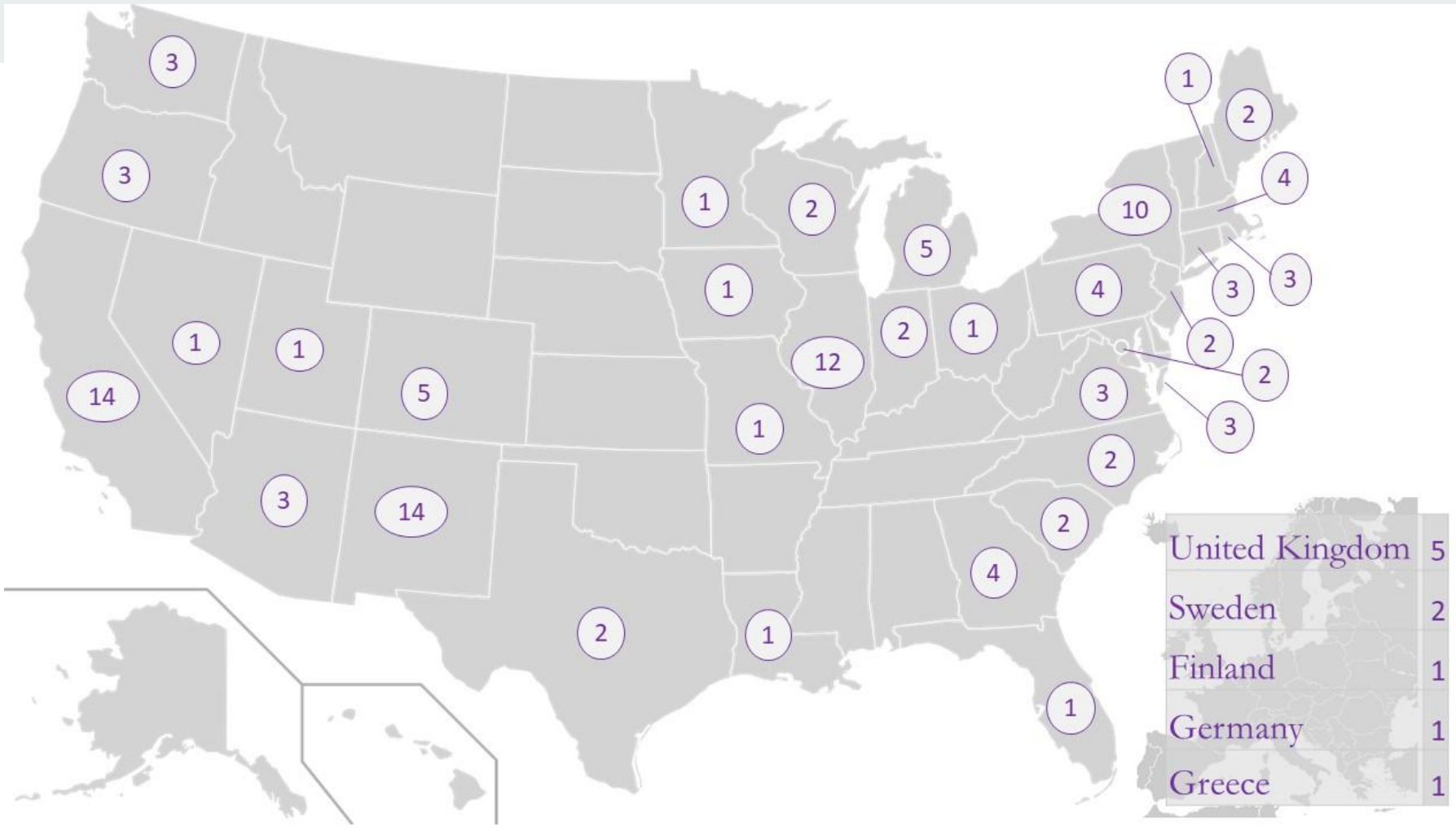
Participants

- Identified by:
 - Bibliography created by Visual Literacy Task Force
 - Stakeholder organizations
- Total contacted:
 - 127 people
 - 115 of the 127 work at Colleges or Universities (91%);
76 are at Academic Libraries (60%)



Employment Information

- Other (museums, non-academic art libraries, federal agencies) = 12
- Education/Assessment/Instructional Design = 11
- Fine Arts/Art History/Photography/Architecture = 8
- Visual Resources = 7
- Media/Communication/Film/TV = 6
- Information, Library & Museum Sciences = 5
- Math and Sciences = 2



3

3

14

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2

3

2

3

2

3

United Kingdom 5

Sweden 2

Finland 1

Germany 1

Greece 1

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|
| Agreed to Participate | 63 | 50% |
| Returned Initial Questionnaire | 58 | 46% |
| Received Follow up Questions | 52 | 41% |
| Returned Follow up Questions | 36 | 28% |

66% of
returned
questionnaires
from Academic
Librarians

Current Status



Next Step - Coding decisions

Awareness of interrater reliability

Partnering

Inductive vs. Deductive

Using a grounded theory approach

Textual Analysis

Sentiment analysis or TF-IDF analysis



Multi-site considerations - Co PI's

Divvying up responsibilities

Playing to individual strengths

Availability to “run” meetings

Someone is there to catch the slack



Multi-site considerations - IRB processes

Choosing principal investigators

Experience, time, willingness

Determining which institution / IRB to go with

Stringent requirements @ research institutions

Gathering CITI documentation

Group members without it and their roles



Multi-site considerations - Group members

Continuity of group members over time

- Changes in institutions or even complete career change

Contributions of group members

- Time/other obligations and constraints



Multi-site considerations - Coordination

Coordinating meetings, interviews, and tasks

Zoom / Doodle polls

Google Drive, Docs, Sheets, and Slides

Email



Resources - General

Applied Thematic Analysis

by Greg Guest, Kathleen M. MacQueen, and Emily E. Namey (2012)

Collective Qualitative Data: A Field Manual for Applied Research

by Greg Guest, Emily E. Namey, and Marilyn L. Mitchell (2013)

How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide

by Arlene Fink (2008)

The Mixed-Methods Reader

by Vicki L. Plano Clark and John W. Creswell (2008)



Resources - Library Centric

*Enhancing Library and Information Research Skills: A Guide for Academic Librarians
by Lili Luo, Kristine R. Rancolini, and Marie R. Kennedy (2017)

Research Methods for Librarians and Educators: Practical Applications in Formal and Informal
Learning Environments
by Ruth V. Small and Marcia A. Mardis (2018)

Using Qualitative Methods in Action Research: How Librarians Can Get to the Why of Data
by Douglas Cook and Dr. Lesley S. J. Farmer (2011)

The Librarian Parlor <https://libparlor.com/>



Questions?

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