

## **EXPLORING THE EFL STUDENTS' CRITICAL READING SKILLS IN MAKING INTERPRETATIONS AND ANALYZING BIAS USING MY SIDE BIAS IN VISUAL MESSAGE THROUGH MUSIC VIDEOS**

**M. Ardheka Nurhakim**

English Education Department, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

*mardhekanurhakim@gmail.com*

**Predari Siswayani**

English Education Department, Islamic State University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

*predari@uinsgd.ac.id*

**Nia Kurniawati**

English Education Department, Islamic State University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

*nia.kurniawati@uinsgd.ac.id*

### **Abstract**

This paper aims to: (1) examine the implementation of my-side bias to help EFL students make meaningful interpretations and analyze bias in visual messages via music videos; (2) evaluate students' ability to interpret meaning and analyze bias using this approach. This is a type of qualitative research that uses descriptive analysis. The participants were the EFL students in the 3rd semester of the English Education Study Program at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The researcher collected data by observing learning activities, document analysis, and interviews. The number of participants in the observation was 34. At the same time, in the interview, the researcher chose 6 people from 34 students based on the learning achievements that the students had achieved in the critical reading class. The results showed that, during the observation, the interpretation and analysis of bias in music videos were well implemented. However, there were some steps missed. The students could follow the learning activities and understand the application of my-side bias in analyzing bias and interpreting visual messages in music videos. In addition, student performance results showed that using my-side bias in analyzing bias and interpreting visual messages through music videos was in a good category. It aligns with the responses of students who felt a positive impact after using my side bias in analyzing bias and interpreting visual messages through music videos.

Keywords: Critical Reading, Making Interpretation, Analyzing Bias, My Side Bias, Visual Message, Music Video

### **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, technology is developing more rapidly. It is a common thing that its impact is felt in various aspects of the lives of every modern person. Education is one of the things that has a very significant impact. The presence of new technologies that are increasingly sophisticated gives birth to a variety of digital media in learning. Thus, an outline can be drawn that the most significant impact of the rapid improvement in the quality of technology is felt by Generation Zeru or GenZ students. GenZ's intelligence in using gadgets makes them need to be literate, especially in digital reading (digital literacy). Digital literacy is "the ability to understand and use information in various formats from various sources when presented through computers" and, particularly, through internet media (Gilster, 1997). Therefore, the high intensity of the use of GenZ students' devices can impact GenZ students' ability to interpret a reading's meaning and identify bias from a reading.

The prevalence of digital media in reading has led to many updates in improving the reading skills of GenZ students. One famous one is visual literacy. McLuhan (1982) identified that visual literacy had become a vital learning skill that involves creating multimodal meaning by integrating written text, visual images, and design elements from multiple perspectives. In determining how a message will be perceived, they articulate how its meaning can be socially and culturally mediated. GenZ increasingly recognizes the principle of visual literacy with the availability of various platforms for expressing a reading in the internet universe. The existence of webtoons, Instagram, YouTube, and other media makes GenZ students more astute in absorbing information quickly. As one of the things that began to develop, visual literacy media is now increasingly diverse. One of them is through music videos.

Interestingly, as something commonly known to people, a video in music can be used as a reference to train the critical reading skills of GenZ students. In school learning, researchers or lecturers usually only provide song lyrics to train students' critical reading skills in interpreting the meaning and identifying bias in reading. Meanwhile, Jain and Gada (2021) identified that music can help students find their learning zone and arouse their enthusiasm for learning. Readers must know that music is more than just a medium to train students' listening skills. However, music videos that explain the contents of the song lyrics can help train the critical reading skills of GenZ students.

The use of music videos to help train the critical reading skills of GenZ students certainly has a gap in the problems that arise for GenZ students. The right song selection is undoubtedly the primary concern in this case. The selection of music video topics must have issues related to the current GenZ world. It is intended that GenZ can thoroughly feel the message conveyed by the singer. In addition, the ambiguity of the clip depiction in the music video will give birth to several interpretations of meaning and bias from each individual. Therefore, GenZ students must know tips for making interpretations and identifying bias in existing music videos.

Based on the problems that arise, students' ability to interpret meaning and identify bias is the core problem of this study. Interpretation is the act of explaining, reframing, or demonstrating one's understanding of an issue (Beck et al., 2002). In this case, the ability to interpret meaning refers to the ability of students to capture and record back in their memory the visible or invisible message or intention in the given music video. Meanwhile, it is necessary to know that the term bias in reading is the ability of learners to process information through the tendency to support or oppose an idea or ideology to their beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. Bias occurs when people search for, interpret, and remember evidence to confirm their pre-existing beliefs and reject views that differ from their views (Wang, 2020).

In previous research, Wang (2020) examined a person's recognition bias through their perspective on their pre-existing beliefs and social stigma. These pre-existing beliefs are also called my side biases, while social stigmas are social biases.

Therefore, the gap between this study and previous studies can be seen from the media in measuring students' critical reading skills in interpreting meaning and identifying these biases. The use of myside bias as a support for students in determining bias and interpreting meaning is still used to determine how influential their pre-existing beliefs are on the message musicians want to convey. Then, researchers used music videos as visual literacy media. The music videos used are related to social issues that arise among GenZ so that they can apply their bias to the fullest.

Gen Z's frequent use of the internet now makes it necessary to pay more attention to the urgency of GenZ students' understanding of receiving reading information so that it becomes useful for their lives. The first step is to instill excellent critical reading comprehension in GenZ students so that they can determine the interpretation of meaning and identify bias as a whole and according to their abilities. In line with this, Romero and Bobkina (2021) conducted research on critical and visual literacy for 21st-century students as reflective viewers and

thinkers who can read digital texts. This study aimed to explore and identify the needs of our 21st-century EFL/ESL learners' views and thinking through memes in the EFL/ESL classroom. The results from this study indicate the need for emphasis on critical thinking and visual literacy skills in the EFL/ESL classroom. As images dominate the world around them, university EFL students must be exposed to materials such as memes, stimulating their understanding of the people and events that shape today. As printed monomodal texts still dominate the reality of higher education curricula, engaging students in new strategies, vocabulary, and processes is crucial to enhancing students' critical visual literacy skills and global understanding.

In this study, researchers aimed to research English language education students at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung who were studying critical reading courses. It is intended because, as one of the students who has experienced the lecture phase in the related course. Researchers need help interpreting messages from readings containing heavy content, such as social or political issues. In addition, researchers also feel that the ability of Gen Z students to analyze bias in reading still needs to be improved so that students can become wise and critical readers to produce helpful knowledge. Based on the background above, there are two research questions as follows: 1) How is the implementation of my side bias to EFL students in making meaningful interpretations and analyzing bias using my side bias of visual messages through music videos? 2) How does the EFL student's ability to make meaningful interpretations and analyze bias using my side bias of visual messages by using my side bias through music videos?

## **METHOD**

This research adopts a qualitative methodology for data collection. Creswell (2012) defines qualitative study methodology as a design that allows researchers to discover and interpret events via a positive experiential lens. Furthermore, Hancock et al. (2009) assert that qualitative research methods produce in-depth and comprehensive findings that provide insights and ideas for future research. Furthermore, according to Patton (2015), conducting qualitative research includes immersing oneself in the subject matter to collect, evaluate, and interpret data. As a result, the qualitative technique provides a rich and in-depth understanding of digital storytelling implementation in a junior high school. Researchers examined the use of my-side bias in exploring Gen Z's critical reading skills in interpreting meaning and analyzing bias in visual messages. Rather than producing generalizable results, qualitative research seeks to generate precise and comprehensive accounts of social processes (Merriam, 2009).

The study employs a case study technique. Creswell (2012) defines case studies as "a detailed, in-depth, and complete account and analysis of a specific event that allows for a deep understanding of its complexities." When performing case study studies, the researcher may examine ways individuals, groups, and their surroundings interact to gain insight into complex processes (Thomas, 2016). The phenomenon examined in this study is the relationship between the use of own-side bias and Gen Z students' ability to interpret messages and analyze bias in visual texts.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study explores students' ability to analyze bias and interpret meaning in visual messages through music videos. This study has two research questions and three research instruments. The first part implements my bias on EFL students' ability to interpret visual messages through music videos collected through observation and document analysis. The second part concerns EFL students' ability to analyze bias using my-side bias through music videos, the data of which is collected through interviews and document analysis.

**The EFL Student's Ability to Make Meaningful Interpretations and Analyze Bias Using My Side Bias of Visual Messages by Using Side Bias through Music Videos**

Therefore, as the next step, the researcher analyzed the results of bias analysis and interpretation of meaning in visual messages through music videos carried out by students during the learning process. The following are the results of students' analysis in interpreting the meaning in the visual message of the music video Female Robbery popularized by the neighbourhood:

**Table 1. Student Score in Interpreting Visual Messages**

No	Students Name	Competencies				Final Score
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
1	S1	18	18	15	0	51
2	S2	25	20	20	22	87
3	S3	20	18	20	18	76
4	S4	20	18	22	24	84
5	S5	20	18	20	0	58
6	S6	0	0	0	0	0
7	S7	18	20	20	18	76
8	S8	18	18	20	24	80
9	S9	0	0	0	0	0
10	S10	25	22	10	25	82
11	S11	15	15	20	20	70
12	S12	18	15	20	0	53
13	S13	19	20	16	16	71
14	S14	15	18	20	20	73
15	S15	15	20	22	18	75
16	S16	18	18	20	18	74
17	S17	20	16	20	18	74
18	S18	18	15	20	20	73
19	S19	18	15	20	18	71
20	S20	18	18	20	20	76
21	S21	18	15	22	20	75
22	S22	25	24	25	23	97
23	S23	17	15	17	10	59
24	S24	15	20	23	23	81
25	S25	20	20	18	18	76
26	S26	18	15	15	0	45
27	S27	24	20	20	17	81
28	S28	21	25	16	15	77
29	S29	18	20	20	18	76
30	S30	18	20	22	20	80
31	S31	18	15	20	20	73
32	S32	15	25	18	18	76
33	S33	18	22	20	20	80
34	S34	18	20	20	0	58

In this study, the researcher used the assessment rubric inspired by Paul and Elder (2008) as a reference to determine student performance in analyzing bias and interpreting meaning in visual messages through the music video Female Robbery popularized by The Neighbourhood. In addition, as a reference for assessment, the researcher categorized the results of student analysis with various levels of achievement, as stated by Paul and Elder (2008). The researcher used the criteria for student analysis results to distinguish student writing results that exceeded course expectations, met course expectations, needed to be completed to meet course expectations, and did not meet course expectations.

Using this scoring system, the researcher aimed to gain insight into the performance of students of different achievement levels in analyzing bias and interpreting meaning in visual messages through music videos, thus allowing the researcher to analyze the study results more comprehensively. The results of categorizing students' performance in interpreting meaning in visual messages through music videos can be seen in below.

**Table 2. Category of Students in Interpreting Visual Messages**

No	Students Name	Final Score	Category
1	S1	51	Developing
2	S2	87	Competent
3	S3	76	Competent
4	S4	84	Competent
5	S5	58	Developing
6	S6	0	Beginning
7	S7	76	Competent
8	S8	80	Competent
9	S9	0	Beginning
10	S10	82	Competent
11	S11	70	Developing
12	S12	53	Developing
13	S13	71	Developing
14	S14	73	Developing
15	S15	75	Competent
16	S16	74	Developing
17	S17	74	Developing
18	S18	73	Developing
19	S19	71	Developing
20	S20	76	Competent
21	S21	75	Competent
22	S22	97	Accomplished
23	S23	59	Developing
24	S24	81	Competent
25	S25	76	Competent
26	S26	45	Beginning
27	S27	81	Competent
28	S28	77	Competent
29	S29	76	Competent

30	S30	80	Competent
31	S31	73	Developing
32	S32	76	Competent
33	S33	80	Competent
34	S34	58	Developing

Accomplished = 90 to 100 points

Competent = 75 to 89 points

Developing = 50 to 74 points

Beginning = 0 to 49 points

In this study, accomplished students are students who strongly fulfil the needs of the course. That is, students can correctly, precisely and relevantly describe the results of their interpretation of the meaning in the visual message through the music video. Students' answers are said to be correct, precise and relevant if they give answers that are not too general or specific.

The illustration and content of the lyrics of the related music video can be described thoroughly without any discrepancies in opinion. Furthermore, competent students have sufficiently fulfilled the course needs in interpreting the meaning of visual messages through music videos. Students' answers are quite good if they answer questions relevantly, but not yet correctly and precisely according to the illustrations and lyrics of the related music video. Furthermore, developing students are students who need to meet the needs of the course. Developing students' answers contains descriptions of interpretations that are correct but not precise and relevant to the content of the illustrations and lyrics of the songs in the related music videos. Then, beginning students are students who need to meet the needs of the course. Beginning students need help interpreting the music video correctly, precisely and relevantly.

In addition to analyzing the results of student performance in interpreting meaning in visual messages through music videos. In this study, researchers also analyzed students' critical reading skills in analyzing bias using their my-side bias towards visual messages through the music video of the song Female Robbery popularized by The Neighbourhood. The results of students' performance in analyzing bias in visual messages through music videos using students' my-side bias can be seen below.

**Table 3. Student Score in Analyzing Bias in Visual Messages**

No	Students Name	Competencies				Final Score
		C	A	S	E	
1	S1	0	0	0	0	0
2	S2	25	25	25	25	100
3	S3	18	22	18	24	82
4	S4	20	22	25	25	92
5	S5	25	22	20	20	87
6	S6	25	24	25	23	97
7	S7	0	0	0	0	0
8	S8	24	23	18	25	90
9	S9	25	25	25	25	100
10	S10	25	24	25	20	94
11	S11	0	0	0	0	0
12	S12	23	23	18	23	87
13	S13	22	18	18	19	77
14	S14	0	0	0	0	0

15	S15	15	18	20	20	73
16	S16	0	0	0	0	0
17	S17	0	0	0	0	0
18	S18	18	22	24	23	87
19	S19	0	0	0	0	0
20	S20	18	23	18	23	82
21	S21	18	18	23	20	79
22	S22	25	25	24	18	92
23	S23	0	0	0	0	0
24	S24	15	20	23	23	81
25	S25	22	20	22	22	86
26	S26	17	18	15	17	67
27	S27	20	20	0	0	40
28	S28	10	10	10	10	40
29	S29	18	18	15	15	66
30	S30	15	20	15	18	68
31	S31	18	22	18	24	82
32	S32	15	18	15	0	48
33	S33	18	22	18	23	81
34	S34	0	0	0	0	0

C = Comprehension

A = Analysis

S = Synthesis

E = Evaluation

The comprehension component in analyzing bias using my side bias is used to find the author's idea. Then, the analysis component was used to find the arguments the author conveys in the music video. Synthesis in this study was used to analyze the arguments found in the music video. Meanwhile, evaluation is a step in making bias based on students' my side bias after reading, listening and watching music videos.

Through the scores obtained above, the researcher categorizes students into several categories to facilitate researchers in analyzing the results of student performance in analyzing bias in visual messages through music videos using my-side bias students. Below are the categories of students based on the scores obtained by students.

**Table 4. Student Categories in Analyzing Bias in Visual Messages**

No	Students Name	Final Score	Category
1	S1	0	Beginning
2	S2	100	Accomplished
3	S3	82	Competent
4	S4	92	Accomplished
5	S5	87	Competent
6	S6	97	Accomplished
7	S7	0	Beginning
8	S8	90	Accomplished
9	S9	100	Accomplished

10	S10	94	Accomplished
11	S11	0	Beginning
12	S12	87	Competent
13	S13	77	Competent
14	S14	0	Beginning
15	S15	73	Developing
16	S16	0	Beginning
17	S17	0	Beginning
18	S18	87	Competent
19	S19	0	Beginning
20	S20	82	Competent
21	S21	79	Competent
22	S22	92	Accomplished
23	S23	0	Beginning
24	S24	81	Competent
25	S25	86	Competent
26	S26	67	Developing
27	S27	40	Beginning
28	S28	40	Beginning
29	S29	66	Developing
30	S30	68	Developing
31	S31	82	Competent
32	S32	48	Beginning
33	S33	81	Competent
34	S34	0	Beginning

Accomplished = 90 to 100 points

Competent = 75 to 89 points

Developing = 50 to 74 points

Beginning = 0 to 49 points

In this study, accomplished students are students who greatly fulfil the needs of the course. That is, students are able to describe the results of their bias analysis of the meaning of visual messages through music videos correctly, precisely and relevantly. Students' answers are said to be correct, precise and relevant if they give answers that are not too general and not too specific. So that the illustration and content of the lyrics of the related music video can be described thoroughly without any imbalance of opinion.

Furthermore, competent students are students who have sufficiently met the course needs in analyzing bias in visual messages through music videos. Students' answers are said to be good enough if students answer questions relevantly, but not yet correct and appropriate but in accordance with the illustrations and lyrics of the related music video. Furthermore, developing students are students who do not meet the needs of the course.

Developing students' answers describes the results of bias analysis that are correct but not precise and relevant to the content of the illustrations and song lyrics in the related music video.

Then, beginning students are students who do not meet the needs of the course. That is, beginning students are unable to describe the results of their bias analysis of the music video correctly, precisely and relevantly. Student answers are declared inappropriate if the student

answers outside the path contained in the visual message conveyed through the related music video. To know student performance results clearly, below are some of the student performance results adjusted to the scores they achieved and categorized based on these scores.

## CONCLUSION

The three phases are very important in helping students adopt the use of my-side bias because it helps students understand the music video's content; students cannot be assigned to analyze bias and interpret visual messages through music videos. Students must understand the steps in analyzing bias and interpreting visual messages first. The steps of analyzing bias using my-side bias are examining ideas, detecting arguments, analyzing arguments, and making students my-side bias. Meanwhile, the step of interpreting the meaning is answering several questions describing students' interpretation of the music video they watched. The questions include: 1. What does the music video mean? 2. Who is the target reader of the music video? 3. In what way does the illustration relate to the text? 4. How should you understand the music video from your point of view? 5. The steps are designed to help students understand the use of my-side bias and its application to tasks that involve creating material on analyzing bias and interpreting meaning progressively and efficiently.

Based on the results of the writing, the excellent students showed abilities that greatly met the needs of the course in both analyzing bias and interpreting meaning in visual messages through music videos. In this project, students had to analyze bias and interpret meaning in visual messages through the music video of the song Female Robbery by The Neighborhood. Based on the understanding, students who are categorized as accomplished and competent can link their my-side bias with the results of bias analysis and interpretation of visual messages well and accurately.

The student response paradigm emphasizes value, positivity, and evaluation in determining how students perceive and engage with learning activities. Students highly value this learning and assignment as it improves their ability to understand the bias and meaning in visual messages, especially in music videos. They have positive opinions about the learning materials and researchers' teaching strategies. The values of engagement and critical thinking are supported by active involvement and awareness of the importance of the course. Students' understanding of the learning materials and activities positively evaluated the application of my-side bias in this study. Thus, this study emphasizes the factors that can influence students' experience and students' benefits in adopting my-side bias into bias analysis and meaning interpretation in the future.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beck, L., Cable, T. T., & Tilden, F. (2002). The meaning of interpretation. *Journal of Interpretation Research*, 7(1), 7-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109258720200700102>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Domínguez Romero, E., & Bobkina, J. (2021). Exploring critical and visual literacy needs in digital learning environments: The use of memes in the EFL/ESL university classroom. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 40, 100783. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2020.100783>
- Gilster, P. (1997). *Digital literacy*. Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Hancock, B., Ockleford, E., & Windridge, K. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research*. The NIHR RDS for the East Midlands / Yorkshire & the Humber. <https://dl.icdst.org/pdfs/files3/315d0c3a18c9426593c9f5019506a335.pdf>
- Jain, M., & Gada, J. (2019). Impact of music on student's academic performance. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, 6(2). [http://ijrar.org/viewfull.php?p\\_id=IJRAR19K8263](http://ijrar.org/viewfull.php?p_id=IJRAR19K8263)

- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- McLuhan, M. (1962). *The Gutenberg galaxy: The making of typographic man*. University of Toronto Press.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2007). *Critical thinking competency standards*. Foundation for Critical Thinking Press.
- Thomas, G. (2016). *How to do your case study: A guide for students and researchers* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Wang, Q., & Jeon, H. J. (2020). Bias in bias recognition: People view others but not themselves as biased by preexisting beliefs and social stigmas. *PLOS ONE*, *15*(10), Article e0240232. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0240232>