Enhancing Student Vocabulary Proficiency through the Effective Implementation of Multimodal Approaches

Riya Nadia
University Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: ✉ nadiariya02@gmail.com

	ABSTRACT
	Language barriers in educational settings can hinder effective communication and impede language learning, particularly when students cannot speak English fluently, and teachers struggle to understand the students' native languages. This study explores the efficacy of multimodal approaches to overcome language barriers and enhance vocabulary learning in a school with limited English language instruction. The identified problem encompasses students lacking vocabulary and English speaking abilities due to the language barrier and insufficient language learning opportunities. To address these challenges, a solution involving multimodal techniques through pictures, bingo games, mix-and-match games, PowerPoint presentations, and Google Translate was implemented. The research adopts a Class Action Research (CAR) methodology, allowing collaborative efforts with participants to implement multimodal strategies effectively. Observations and assessments were conducted to measure changes in students' vocabulary proficiency and language skills after the intervention. Additionally, qualitative data was gathered through interviews with ten students from the highest rank to gain insights into their experiences with multimodal approaches.
Kata Kunci	*Vocabulary, Multimodal, Language Barrier*

INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, it is widely known that English has become one of the important compulsory subjects taught in school. English is used widely in the world as a medium for communication. Moreover, vocabulary is one essential aspect that plays an important role in language learning, Vocabulary cannot be detached from other facets of English language learning. Vocabulary is the basic component that must be mastered by learners so as to develop other language proficiencies like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To have good English proficiency, the learners must have ample vocabulary. (Ajisoko, 2022) Without sufficient vocabulary, people cannot communicate and express their feelings both in the form of 70 words spoken and written effectively. The more people master vocabulary the more they can speak, write, read, and listen as they want. Wilkins in Thornbury states that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can

be conveyed. (Thornbury, 2002)   It means that even if someone has good grammar but it will be useless if they do not know many vocabularies. so mastering the vocabulary is needed.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of multimodal techniques in overcoming language barriers and improving vocabulary acquisition in a school with minimal English language instruction. Language barriers in educational contexts can limit efficient communication and language acquisition, especially when students do not speak English effectively and teachers do not comprehend the students' original languages.

The highlighted issue includes students who lack vocabulary and English speaking abilities as a result of the language barrier and a lack of language learning chances. To solve these issues, a multimodal solution including graphics, bingo games, mix-and-match games, PowerPoint presentations, and Google Translate was built.

The aim of this publication is to investigate the possibilities of multimodal techniques as a solution to the language barrier and to improve vocabulary acquisition. To add a deeper comprehension and retention of linguistic concepts, multimodal approaches integrate many sensory modalities, such as images, audio aspects, and tactile sensations. The major goal of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of using multimodal strategies to help students with poor English competence enhance their vocabulary.

The study employs a Class Action Research (CAR) strategy to experimentally assess the efficacy of various multimodal strategies. This method provides for a collaborative effort between the researcher and the participants, establishing an environment of active engagement and strategy execution. The study aims to examine the improvements in the students' vocabulary competence and English language skills following the intervention using observations and assessments.

In order to give a comprehensive analysis, ten students from the highest rank will be interviewed. These interviews will aid in the collection of useful qualitative insights into students' experiences with the multimodal method and their assessments of its impact on their language learning journey.

Overall, this publication is an investigation of the potential of multimodal approaches in breaking down language barriers and improving vocabulary acquisition in an educational context with minimal English language instruction. The findings of this study seek to provide significant knowledge in the area of language education and provide practical insights for educators working to develop inclusive and successful language learning settings.

RESEARCH METHODE

Research Subject

The subject of this research was the students of the fourth-grade primary school of Thammislam School in Thailand. The class which is used in this research is only class IV- A. The number of students in the class are 22 students.

Research Design

In this research, the researcher used **qualitative research.** this Qualitative research will produce descriptive data in the form of written words or oral from the subject and its behavior that can be observed, therefore the goal of the research is an individual understanding and background completely. It means that in this research the researcher would describe and explain the research by using written words.

Data gathering Technique

a. Class Action Research

The study aims to address the communication challenges in learning English in Thai students who experience a language barrier due to their English language limitations and minimal understanding of the Indonesian language in teachers. This study uses the Class Action Research (CAR) method with data collection techniques in the form of observations at the beginning of the study and tests English vocabulary.

In the early stages of the study, teachers perform observations by inviting students to speak English and introduce themselves. The observation results showed that most students had difficulties speaking English, indicating the presence of a significant language barrier.

To obtain more data related to students' English language skills, the researchers conducted a test by showing several English vocabulary according to their level of proficiency. Test results showed that only about 2 percent of students had a good understanding of English vocabulary.

The study lasted one month, and the researcher used a variety of multimodal media to assist students to understand and grasp the English language. This approach leverages various types of modalities such as:

- PowerPoint: Using PowerPoint as a learning medium seeks to make knowledge more engaging and visually appealing. To help pupils understand, teachers provide learning materials in the form of slides with visuals and sentence samples.
- bingo games and mix and match games: As interactive games, mix and match and bingo are used to engage pupils in actively matching English words with their meanings. The game seeks to increase students' memory and ability to memorize language.

- google translate: To address language differences between teachers and students, Google Translate is used as a simple translator tool that can help interact and articulate ideas and messages more clearly.
- picture: The use of images as a learning medium helps students to visualize and understand English vocabulary. Images that are relevant to the words taught are used to strengthen student understanding.

This one-month observation aims to observe student responses and progress in learning English with a multimodal approach. The data collected included student interactions with the media, the level of participation in the game, and the development of English language skills during the observation period.. The results of these observations are used to assess the effectiveness of multimodal approaches in helping students understand and master English vocabulary.

In assessing the student's progress in vocabulary mastery while observation, there were four major standards employed by the researcher. The standards, used by the researcher, were based on Bachman and Palmer (Brown, 2006). The four standards would be elaborated in a table as follows:

The students understand the meaning of the new words.	70 % of students understand the meaning of the new words
The students are able to memorize the new words better.	70% of students are able to memorize the new words better
The students are able to pronounce the new words correctly.	70% of students are able to pronounce the new words correctly.
The students are able to use the words in a real context.	50% of students are able to use the words in a real context.

b. Interview

Interviews were conducted with 10 randomly selected students, with a composition of 5 top-ranking students and 5 lower-ranked students. The aim of this interview is to gain a deeper insight into the experience of students in using multimodal approaches, as well as to find out to what extent this approach is effective in helping them understand and master English.

The results of the observations and interviews are expected to provide complete and comprehensive information on the effectiveness of multimodal approaches in learning English in a wide range of students. These data will serve as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of multimodal approaches and can provide input for the development of more adaptive and inclusive language learning strategies in a cross-cultural educational environment.

No	Question	The amount of students	
		Yes	No
1.	Do you like study english? (คุณชอบเรยนภาษาองั กฤษไหม)	9	1
2.	Is it difficult to memorize and remember English vocabulary? (ท่องและจ าค าศพั ทภาษาองั กฤษยากไหม?)	3	7
3.	Does learning using pictures on a laptop (power point) make it easier for you to learn English vocabulary? (การเรยนรูโ้ ดยใชร้ ูปภาพบนแล็ปท็อป (พาวเวอรพ์ อยต)์ ชว่ ยใหค้ ุณเรยี นรูค้ าศพั ทภ์ าษาองั กฤษไดง้ า่ ยขนึ้ หรอื ไม่?)	3	7
4.	Do you like learning English vocabulary using pictures on your laptop (power point)? (คุณชอบเรยนรูค าศพั ทภ์ าษาองั กฤษโดยใชร้ ูปภาพบนแล็ปท็อปของคุณ (พาวเวอรพ์ อยต)์ หรอื ไม่?)	10	0
5.	Do you like learning English vocabulary through bingo games? คุณชอบทจี่ ะเรยี นรูค้ าศพั ทภ์ าษาองั กฤษผ่านเกมบงิ โกหรอื ไม่?	10	0
6.	Does learning using bingo games make it easier for you to learn English vocabulary? การเรยี นรูโ้ ดยใชเ้ กมบงิ โกชว่ ยใหค้ ุณเรยี นรูค้ าศพั ทภ์ าษาองั กฤษไดง้ า่ ยขนึ้ หรอื ไม่?	9	1
7.	Does learning using maching games make it easier for you to learn English vocabulary? การเรยี นรูโ้ ดยใชเ้ กมเครอื่ งจกั รชว่ ยใหค้ ุณเรยี นรูค้ าศพั ทภ์ าษาองั กฤษไดง้ า่ ยขนึ้ หรอื ไม่?	8	2

8.	do you remember every what was taught in class by me? คุณจ ำทุ สิ่ ทฉี่ ฉันสอนในชนี้ เรยี นได้ไ ้ หม	6	4
9.	Do you understand learning with me by using English, not Thai? คุณเขาใจการเรยนกบั ฉันโดยใชภาษาองั กฤษไม่ใชภาษาไทยหรอื ไม?	6	4
10.	Do you enjoy studying with teachers from Indonesia (me and my friends) คุณชอบเรยนกบั ครูจากประเทศอนิ โดนีเซยี ไหม (ฉนั และเพอื่ นๆ)	10	0

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings suggest that the implementation of multimodal approaches in language learning can be considered effective, with notable improvements observed in various aspects. The study focused on four specific standards that needed to be fulfilled for a successful language learning experience, namely the students' understanding of the meaning of new words (70%), their ability to memorize the new words better (70%), their capability to pronounce the new words correctly (70%), and their proficiency in using the words in real-life contexts (50%).

The results of the research demonstrate that the use of multimodal techniques, such as PowerPoint presentations, mix-and-match games, bingo games, Google Translate, and visual aids, has positively impacted the students' language learning journey. The 70% achievement in understanding the meaning of new words and memorization indicates that the incorporation of multimodal methods aids in reinforcing vocabulary retention and comprehension.

Moreover, the 70% achievement in pronunciation suggests that the implementation of interactive and engaging activities contributes to the student's ability to articulate words accurately. The use of visual aids, along with interactive games, helps to enhance the students' pronunciation skills, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

However, the study has also revealed an area that requires improvement. The 50% proficiency in using the words in real-life contexts indicates that there is room for enhancement in applying learned vocabulary to practical situations. This particular aspect may be influenced by various factors, such as the frequency of practice, opportunities for real-life language usage, and teacher guidance.

To address this limitation, the implementation of additional practical exercises, role-plays, and communicative activities could be incorporated into

the language learning curriculum. Creating opportunities for students to utilize newly acquired vocabulary in real-life scenarios can significantly boost their language proficiency and confidence.

The results of interviews with 10 students consisting of 5 students from the upper ranks and 5 from the lower ranks also support the findings from the observations. Nine out of ten students stated that they liked learning English with a multimodal approach. It shows that learning methods involving media such as PowerPoint, mix and match games, bingo games, images, and Google Translate provide a pleasant learning experience for students.

However, the results of the interviews also showed that only 7 out of 10 students stated that they felt it was easier to memorize and remember English vocabulary using multimodal. Meanwhile, as many as 6 out of 10 students said that they understood the teaching using English, not Thai. This suggests that although a multimodal approach can help facilitate understanding, there are still some students who face difficulties in mastering English vocabulary.

Besides, there were also some students who stated that teaching in English made it difficult for them, and there were some who did not feel able to use vocabulary in real contexts.

Overall, the findings from observations and interviews show that the application of a multimodal approach to learning English can improve learning efficiency by about 80 percent. However, there are still some challenges to overcome, in ensuring that students can use English vocabulary in contextual situations. Thus, further adaptation and development of this multimodal learning method are needed to more optimal results in learning English Thai students.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings from observations and interviews indicate that using a multimodal approach to learning English can increase learning effectiveness by approximately 80%. However, there are several obstacles to overcome in ensuring that pupils can use the English language in context. Furthermore, some students indicated that learning English is tough for them, and others are hesitant to use vocabulary in real-life situations. As a result, additional adaptation and enhancement of this multimodal learning strategy is required to achieve better outcomes in English learning for Thai students.

REFERENCES

Ajisoko, P. (2022). The Use of Duolingo Apps to Improve English. *Journal of English Teaching*, 149.

Brown, H. D. (2006). *PRINCIPLES of language learning and teaching.* drown: Pearson Education.

Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary. -*: Oxfordshire: Pearson.