

The Impact of Visual AIDS on English Language Learning Among Secondary School Students

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Abstract. *This study explores the impact of visual aids on students' learning outcomes in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Drawing on classroom-based experiments with secondary school students, it compares traditional methods with those enhanced by visual materials. Results show that visual aids significantly boost motivation, participation, and comprehension, particularly in grammar and vocabulary acquisition.*

Key words: *EFL instruction, visual learning tools, vocabulary acquisition, grammar comprehension, learner engagement, multimodal resources, secondary education.*

Introduction

The integration of visual aids into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has long been a subject of interest among educators and researchers. In today's digitally driven world, where learners are constantly exposed to visual stimuli through various media platforms, the role of visual input in the learning process has become more crucial than ever. Effective language teaching must therefore go beyond traditional methods and respond to the cognitive preferences of modern learners. Visual aids serve this purpose by bridging the gap between abstract language forms and real-world communication, making learning more authentic, meaningful, and engaging.

As scholars have emphasized, bringing elements of the real world into the classroom not only enhances the learning environment but also reinforces the communicative purpose of language. Visual materials enable learners to grasp cultural context, body language, and social cues that are often embedded in communication but may be overlooked in text-based instruction. In this way, visual aids do not merely supplement verbal instruction—they act as powerful tools that deepen learners' understanding of the target language and the cultural realities it represents.

The use of visual aids in education is by no means a new concept. According to Weaver and Bollinger (1949), visual aids encompass “any specifically prepared drawing, illustration, model, motion picture, film strip, or other device that will expedite learning through the sense of vision” [6]. M. Jesa further classifies these tools into four distinct categories, each serving different instructional purposes [3]:

- Non-Projected 2D: wall boards, roll-up boards, pictures, posters, charts, cartoons, cue sheets, flannel boards, flashcards;
- Non-Projected 3D: cut-outs, models, mock-ups, puppets, marionettes, dioramas, vocabulary wheels, keyboards, teaching machines;
- Projected 3D: slides, transparency sheets, film strips, microfilms, videocassettes, CDs;

- Verbal Visuals: textbooks, supplementary readers, workbooks, magazines, reference materials, newspapers, and clippings.

The significance of visual literacy—the ability to interpret and create meaning from visual information—has grown in tandem with the proliferation of images in contemporary society. Bamford (2003) highlights that visual literacy is fundamental to information processing, knowledge construction, and academic achievement [1]. Supporting this view, Mannan argues that visual aids not only clarify and reinforce concepts but also enhance the overall quality of learning by making it more vivid, motivating, and learner-centered [5].

In light of these perspectives, it becomes evident that the thoughtful use of visual aids in EFL classrooms contributes significantly to improving language acquisition. When strategically implemented, visuals can transform the classroom into an interactive, inclusive, and cognitively stimulating space—particularly beneficial for learners who may struggle with traditional, text-heavy instruction. [5].

This study sought to find out the following questions:

- Do visuals take a role to facilitate foreign language learning?
- Do visual aids augment students' motivation and performance in class activities?

Methods

Participants

Preliminarily, in this study the participants were 13 pupils of the 7th “A” and 13 pupils of 7th “B” class, 2 EFL teachers: D. A. Abdurazzakova, N. D. Alimova, in total, the research encompasses 28 participants.

Design of the study

As the comparison is an essential point in experimental research two groups were taken in order to observe. There have been experimental lessons for 2 weeks and the same unit was taught to both groups. The classes 7th “A” and 7th “B” have been observed in order to analyze the efficiency of using visuals. In the class 7th “A”, the teacher was Naima Alimova and for the 7th “B” class Dilnoza Abdurazzakova. The 7th “A” class was selected as the “control group” and the 7th “B” as the “experimental group”. Classroom observation was carried out by using criteria and field notes regarding pupils' behavior and attitude towards the activities. After the observation period, tests and grammar exercises were given to both groups in order to compare their outcome of knowledge.

Data collection

The observation lasted two weeks. During this period, the Unit 2 “Your health” was taught with 7 lessons in which mainly parts of body and illnesses were given. For grammar The Present Perfect Tense was given. In the control group, the teacher used pupils' textbooks to explain the themes. Teacher did not use other visual teaching aids. During the lessons the teacher taught new words orally, she said the words and pupils repeated them in chorus. In all lessons that were observed in this class, the activities were given for either individual or pair work. Pupils rarely worked as a group. In these lessons, overall, pupils learned 60 words in this unit. Besides, the teacher taught grammar with the structures given in the book. Pupils had difficulties to understand The Present Perfect Tense, as this tense does not exist in the grammar of the Uzbek language. The teacher tried to explain this tense by writing some sentences on the blackboard. However, it was difficult for most pupils to write sentences while doing activities.

In the next group the lessons were held as experimental lessons and the teacher used different types of visuals while teaching. In the experimental group, during the lessons students were sat forming a semi – circle and the teacher stood in the middle of it, walking through the classroom in order to write on the blackboard and check students' performance of the activities. For teaching new vocabulary, on the first day, the teacher showed a short video on the projector in which the parts of body were described. The environment of the classroom changed when the video was introduced. There was a

significant increase in the number of pupils participating in the discussion of the video. During viewing and post – viewing activities pupils showed to be more interested and participative. On the other days, the teacher distributed printed pictures to pupils. When it was time to consolidate, the teacher showed pictures on the projector and asked pupils what they were. These tools helped pupils to learn and memorize the words. While teaching grammar, the teacher used slides on which some situations for explaining Present Perfect Tense were given with pictures. It was easy for learners to understand that theme with the help of those slides.

In summary, it can be said that pupils’ level of attention and their participation increased gradually when these methods were used. Most of them became active participants while doing oral and written activities. The most important improvement that can be noticed was that shy and less – participative pupils felt really supported by the visuals.

Results And Discussion

The exam results for each group are demonstrated in the tables below. As it is mentioned above, the test was given to pupils in order to check their comprehension of the theme. The results of both groups were given in the following table:

Table 1. Comparison of the results of the test.

№	Experimental group		Control group	
	Words (overall 60)	Percentage	Words (overall 60)	Percentage
1	55	91%	54	90%
2	45	75%	41	68%
3	50	83%	31	51%
4	58	96%	48	80%
5	48	80%	50	83%
6	54	90%	45	75%
7	57	95%	41	68%
8	50	83%	43	71%
9	49	81%	38	63%
10	40	66%	36	60%
11	52	86%	40	66%
12	37	61%	47	78%
13	49	81%	45	75%
Average:	49	81%	43	71%

It is evident from the tables that in terms of vocabulary, the results of the “experimental group” is higher (with 81% on average) than the results of the “control group” (with 71% on average). In the experimental group the lowest result was 61% with 37 words, while in the control group this was 51% with 31 words.

When it comes to the analysis of grammatical task, while completing the sentences, most of the learners of the experimental group did not have any difficulties, but in the control group difficulties were observed. The results are given in the following table:

Table 2. Results of testing grammar of both groups.

Sentences	Completed by: (number of pupils)	
	Experimental group	Control group
1	8	8
2	9	8
3	7	5
4	8	6
5	9	7
6	5	5
7	7	6

8	9	8
9	7	6
10	6	5
Average	8	6

It is obviously figured out from the tables that the experimental group showed better results in grammar task, too. The average number of sentences completed was 8 in experimental and 6 in the control group.

All the given data proved that when visual aids are used in teaching English as a foreign language, the lessons will be more efficient compared with the lessons in which visuals are not used. In addition to this, it was easier for teachers to teach pupils if they use more visuals, rather than explain with words or simple structures.

Conclusion

In this globalization era, traditional teaching aids such as course books, dictionaries have no longer great effect on learners. They cannot satisfy the students' needs and excite them because of lacking variety of teaching. As the day goes on, educators attempt to discover various teaching approaches so as to find out the ways to engage the students to their courses. In consequence of these endeavors, some of them came to a mutual agreement that utilizing more visual teaching aids facilitate the acquisition of a foreign language and give the learners opportunity to experience real life situations in classroom atmosphere.

The results of the experiment carried out with the pupils of 7th "A" and 7th "B" clearly show the positive effects of including different visuals in the language classroom. With the change of the classroom dynamics, the students' behavior was changed as well. The data collected through observation during the lessons shows a clear increase of students' participation. Less participative students seemed to be more engaged and relax and it was reflected in their attitude, as they seemed more confident when speaking and interacting. The comparison of the results of the "experimental group" and the "control group" clearly showed that while teaching grammar or giving new vocabulary, utilizing visual teaching aids leads to better results. Visuals helped learners to memorize the words quickly and to remember when they are asked. Besides, there was a great role of visual aids when explaining grammar, they made easy to understand the theme.

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