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THE EFFECT OF USING VIUSAL AIDS ON SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKING

By

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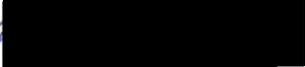Department: Education

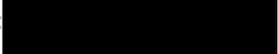School: School of Arts and Sciences

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DEDICATION

To my loving parents, colleagues, instructors and every educator...

THE EFFECT OF USING VIUSAL AIDS ON SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKING

Maya Marwan Ezzedine

Abstract

This study aims at examining the effect of incorporating visual literacy in terms of enhancing the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners. In addition, it attempts to identify teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding the integration and effect of visual aids in their speaking classrooms. The participants were grade six students who learn English as a second language in addition to teachers who teach English as a second language for elementary and intermediate levels. A questionnaire was distributed to be filled by all sixth graders in four sections of grade six at the school investigated. In addition, six students from one class were observed over a period of two months using an oral fluency rubric. Finally, a semi-structured interview including six questions was conducted with five teachers. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained. The findings in the three instruments used reveal that the integration of visual aids enhances second language communication skills and oral fluency. In addition, students hold positive attitudes regarding the implementation of visual literacy. We can deduce from the results of the three instruments that the use of visual materials has an obvious and inarguable positive effect on some areas of influence rather than others, particularly organization of sentences and voice and clarity. This study confirms that educators have to reconsider the teaching strategies which rely mainly on words and print material to teach speaking. Instead, visual literacy should be incorporated in order to evoke better responses from English-as-a-second language students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1- Overview

       Oral fluency in a second language constitutes one of the major challenges that are facing educational programs and teachers nowadays. Thus, many educators complain that students tend to code-switch or shift to their mother tongue when they want to express themselves even in a second language setting. This leads to the conclusion that speaking and oral comprehension are not given the importance that educators give to other skills as writing, or that the teaching strategies employed to teach this skill suffer a major lack. In this sense, oral comprehension and speaking are taught based mainly on texts or dialogue analysis and drill. Nevertheless, the real and rich input has been disregarded when teaching oral communication skills and the "authentic exposure to oral interaction has very often been missing" (Jaen & Basanta, 2009, p. 284).

       Students need to have rich input and motivating material that encourage them to express their inner selves and that provoke suitable authentic contexts for speaking a second language. Thus, visual literacy is necessary in terms of providing learners with visual aids which trigger them to speak about what they see and what they think. Visual literacy is defined by Aanstoos (2003) as "the ability to recognize and understand ideas conveyed through visible actions or images, as well as to be able to convey ideas or messages through imagery" (p.1).

       The implementation of visual literacy through using visual aids is the means to offer learners concrete objects and particular situations for speaking rather than being demanded all the time to exhibit an effort in abstract thinking. Learners are

1

not always ready to visualize the situations in order to find the suitable words and expressions, and that is why they need to rely on external factors that encourage them to express themselves in a second language.

In addition, visual aids are crucial for reducing the stress and anxiety that learners might experience when they have to speak a second language (Ayres, 1991). This is because the presence of visual aids helps them to shift their attention from the audience and to recapture their thoughts and expressions after any disturbance in speaking.

1.2- Problem statement

Based on my experience in teaching, I have recognized that there is an increasing interest among educators in empowering oral fluency, but the ways being implemented for this purpose disregard many important factors. In some cases there is time dedication for speaking skills, but this is accompanied with a shortage in the teaching approaches applied. Although visual literacy is considered by many educators (Hodapp, 1978; Seferoglu, 2008) an important factor in creating authentic situations for communication, still this area is highly disregarded in the educational programs.

Teachers tend to think of the different types of visual aids as an optional addition in their classrooms, and they often do not exhibit sufficient effort to implement them for language teaching. However, the modern teaching approaches stress the importance of incorporating visual literacy to enhance the oral competency of students and to increase their ability to transfer their linguistic knowledge to their real life situations (Rao & Thilakha, 2010).

For the above stated reasons, there is a need to examine the role of using visual aids in terms of enhancing oral fluency. Thus, it is expected in this study that using visual aids would improve second language speaking, particularly in relation to oral fluency and communicative skills.

1.3- Research context

The research is conducted at Al Nour School, a private school in the suburbs. It is a mixed school where males and females are taught in the same classroom and have a shared playground. In this school, English is taught as a second language while the native or the mother tongue is Arabic. The English language at the elementary level is given 11 hours a week of the curriculum.

The teachers are not native speakers of English; thus, it is their second language. The majority of language teachers are females (there are only three male teachers for the elementary and intermediate levels and the others are females). The language teachers in this school are hired based on their education and most of them have studied English Language or Literature at university. The interviewed teachers are of a BA level; none of them is pursuing higher education.

The students at this school are of different religious backgrounds. While they originate from different regions, it is important to note that most of them live in the suburbs. The socio-economic status of the majority of students ranges within the middle social class. The subjects of the current study are elementary students of grade 6 whose ages range between eleven and thirteen. The sample of the survey is divided between males and females.

1.4- Research questions

The following research questions are used to guide the research process:

1-   Does the implementation of visual literacy enhance the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners?

2-   To what extent do students think that the integration of visual aids helps them develop their communicative skills and oral fluency?

3-   To what extent do second language teachers believe that visual aids are beneficial in teaching second language communicative skills and oral fluency?

1.5- Definition of terms

The terms that are recurrent in this study are the following:

Second language:

Second language is defined by Lightbown and Spada (1999) as "any language other than the first language learned. The abbreviation L2 is often used" (p. 178).

Singhal (2011) writes that "second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning other languages in addition to the native language" (p. 1). In this paper the definition provided by Lightbown and Spada (1999) would be adopted to refer to a second language.

Visual literacy:

Bamford (2003) states that "visual literacy is about interpreting images of the present and the past and producing images that effectively communicate the message to an audience"(p. 3). Aanstoos (2003) points out that "visual literacy may be defined as the ability to recognize and understand ideas conveyed through visible actions or images, as well as to be able to convey ideas or messages through imagery" (p. 1).

Burmark (2002) claims that "when we speak of visual literacy, we are addressing the basic 'reading' (interpreting) and 'writing' (producing/using) of visually imbued communications" (p. 9). Being focused on speaking and the ability to communicate ideas, this study would use Aanstoos' definition to refer to visual literacy.

Oral fluency:

Oral fluency has been largely connected to reading fluency. Thus, it was hard to find definitions for clarifying oral speaking fluency. For instance, Schwanenflugel and Ruston (2008) claim that "fluent readers can read quickly and accurately, with a basic comprehension and expression that reflects the grammar of the sentence" (p. 3). Nevertheless, speaking fluency would normally entail the same immediacy, accuracy, and comprehension but in speaking. Xiao-liang (2008) states that "oral English fluency is the ability to speak English with smooth continuity and coherence that can be felt by a listener" (p. 1). Jong and Hulstijn (2009) define speaking fluency as "automaticity of psycholinguistic processes" (p. 3). In the current study the first definition given by Xiao-liang would be used to refer to oral speaking fluency.

Communication skills:

Yoder, Hugenberg, and Wallace (1996) point out that communication skill is "the ability to perform certain communication behaviors" (p. 27). Particularly, communication skills "include speaking, using and interpreting nonverbal behaviors, listening, organizing ideas, and adapting to the communication context" (p. 27). According to the Encyclopedia of Children's Heath (2010) "communication is the process by which information is exchanged between individuals. It requires a shared understanding of symbol systems, such as language and mathematics" (p. 1). Furthermore, communication skills are defined in the Info Science Dictionary (2010) as

"the ability to give information clearly and appropriately to other people" (p. 1). In the current study communication skills is referred to as the ability to communicate information in both verbal and nonverbal methods.

Visual aids:

The terms visuals and graphics are used interchangeably by Clark and Lyons (2011) who refer to graphics as "any non-textual element added to training materials. [These include] a wide range of iconic displays…including photographs, line drawings, animations, graphs such as pie charts, and video" (p. 4). The term visual aids is defined in Webster's New World College Dictionary (2010) as "films, slides, charts, and other devices involving the sense of sight (other than books), used in teaching, illustrating lectures, etc." (p. 1). The educational definition provided by Webster's New World College Dictionary is used to refer to visual aids in the current study.

1.6- Division of thesis

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter in the above section includes the introduction. It incorporates an overview, the problem statement, and the research context. In addition, the questions that the researcher investigates in this study and the definitions of operational terms are included in chapter I.

The following section of the thesis includes chapter II which presents a review of what modern research states about the effects of using visual literacy on second language speaking. Chapter II is divided into two main sections. The

first section discusses the importance of visual literacy and five subheadings which are culture, vocabulary learning, social interaction and awareness, self expression, and motivation. The second section discusses in details the important effects visual literacy has on oral fluency.

Chapter III contains the methodology applied in this study and an explanation of the research design and the three data collection instruments. Chapter III also discusses ethical considerations in this research, and it explains the triangulation method and its characteristics. Following is chapter IV which presents the results obtained from the study with figures and graphs. This chapter is divided into three sections, each including the results of one instrument. The first section includes the results obtained from the data analysis of the questionnaire. Each question is presented with the related results. The second section presents the results of the observations with detailed tables including the criteria and participants observed. The last section includes the interviews answers with interpretations.

Chapter V includes the discussion in which the results are interpreted in addition to the implications of this study. Finally, chapter VI contains the conclusions, recommendations, and the limitations in this study.

1.7- Conclusion

In the above section an argument was raised regarding the capability of visual literacy of enhancing oral fluency and improving second language

speaking. The questions that are raised aim to investigate whether the implementation of visual literacy enhances the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners and whether the students believe that the integration of visual aids helps them develop their communicative skills and oral fluency. It is also the research concern to investigate the teacher's beliefs and attitudes regarding the implementation of visual literacy and its effects on students. These questions are answered at the end of the study based on the obtained results. Nevertheless, in an attempt to support the results obtained from this study with current research that has been conducted in this domain, the following chapter presents a review of what researchers agree upon and state regarding the effects of using visual aids on second language speaking.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1- Introduction

Visual literacy has occupied an important place in modern research especially after the occurrence of student-centered approach which calls for responding to students' needs. Thus, the implementation of visual literacy, as per many researchers (Eken, 2003; Berho & Defferding, 2005; Ortuno, 1994), has become essential in education since it meets the needs of learners to comprehend ideas and acquire linguistic entities with the help of visual material. Moreover, it responds to recent changes in the world where students are exposed to huge visual material that is present everywhere, particularly in media.

It is apparent from the research that has been conducted in this area that visual literacy has positive effects basically in terms of exposing students to cultural background, increasing their social awareness and degree of interaction and motivation, enhancing their ability to express themselves, and improving their vocabulary retention and oral fluency. These aspects and the way researchers tackle them are discussed in details in the following section.

2.2- The Importance of Visual Literacy

Many researchers (see for instance, Rose, 2001; Seglem & Witte, 2009; Seven & Engin, 2007) agree that visual literacy is vital to be integrated in any educational curriculum especially that people are more and more exposed to images and signs in the

current century. Thus, as opposed to traditional teaching methods where visual appeals are not involved in teaching, modern education should incorporate visual material that would meet students' expectations of finding in their classrooms what appeals to their senses in a real world context. It has been recognized that the conventional teaching strategies that depend largely on books and print material as the dominant source of information are no longer sufficient in terms of providing the essential input needed to learn a language. For instance, Seglem and Witte (2009) point out that the conventional teaching methods do not incorporate the visual symbols that are necessary to increase students' abilities of interpretation and communication.

Semali (2003) states that the traditional print pedagogy is outpaced by media literacies which incorporate interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and constructing messages and concepts based on multi-mode texts in radio, television, magazines, newspapers, billboards, etc. The writer points out that in our age there is a strong competition going on in the classroom between the print literacy of textbooks and national curricula from one side, and the invading world of images and media languages from another side. As Burmark (2002) believes, there is a huge power for the images in our modern world in terms of offering great knowledge that is needed by learners.

Hence, it has become crucial to amend the curriculum in order to integrate media literacy as a way of promoting active learning and critical thinking. He states that critical pedagogy is missing in schools, and this is responsible for creating passive citizens. "The time has arrived to broaden the canons of traditional education and the curriculum to include the expanding technologies of television, film, video, and computers" (Semali, 2003, p. 275). These constitute rich sources of data, amusement,

10

and immediate communication that are not provided by studying a single medium or literacy.

By applying media literacy, students would have the chance to interpret, evaluate, and take decisions regarding meanings and concepts in the texts under examination. It is a successful way to encourage critical thinking and high cognitive levels which are needed to learn a second language.

Moreover, the integration of visual literacy helps in creating real life contexts in which students would have the chance to explore notions and premises they are likely to encounter later in their social and professional life. Burmark (2002) stresses the importance of visual literacy which is required in any profession. Thus, students should have the ability to shift gracefully between words and pictures.

The writer speaks about the power of images in the modern age which brought with it a great knowledge of "the language of visuals, a form of speech that goes beyond the nuances of words to the insinuations of images" (Burmark, 2002, p. 2). Hence, it is clear that the writer denies the capability of learning by mere exposure to linguistic structures without the involvement of the sense of vision that students highly rely on in order to understand and learn a language. The same idea is stressed by Smilanich and Lafreniere (2010) who suggest that learning strategies which depend solely on books are not successful and that the integration of films in language classroom is necessary to provide better understanding.

Burmark (2002) proposes that a classroom should look highly appealing in order to convey a positive mood for learning and to play a role in motivating students. That is why teachers should take advantage of every place in their classrooms as the door and the walls to hang flash cards and other kinds of visual materials. Also the

teacher has to give her/his students the opportunity to celebrate learning by implementing learning activities that use quilts, informational posters, web sites, murals, charts, graphs, diagrams, and self-portraits. Thus, these visual aids are necessary to create a rich atmosphere for learning instead of having the pencil and paper as the sole source of information.

In addition to the positive learning atmosphere, visual literacy seems to have effects in terms of refining the quality of learning a new language to become long lasting and motivating. Seven and Engin (2007) suggest that using visual and audio materials provide long term learning. Since all of their senses are involved, students concentrate more on the lesson and they get more interested and motivated. Moreover, visual materials help students to be active learners since they take part in the learning process and they "participate in the lesson vividly and voluntarily" (Seven & Engin, 2007, p. 11).

Instead of being rote learners who are merely receiving what is being said by the teachers, students would have the chance to explore by themselves what is being presented to them in the rich input of the visual material. This would constitute the means to achieve one of the primary aims of educators, and that is creating self-dependent learners. Kang (2004) discusses the importance of visual enhancement in terms of involving students in the learning process and helping them in reclassifying ideas and practicing linguistic entities. The writer recommends using visual organizers which comprise figures, charts, and other types of visual aids which improve understanding and learning since they present information in a spatially structured manner.

These organizers are used by learners to create in their minds structured notions of information in order to "develop a holistic understanding of the content to be learned" (Kang, 2004, p. 58). The writer identifies various types of graphic techniques that can be used before, during, and after instruction to improve second language teaching. Before instruction, visual frameworks are used when planning lessons and preparing curricula as a way of organizing content and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies that are used. During instruction, these frameworks are helpful to develop a graphical presentation of the information so that students can recognize the link between ideas. In the after instruction stage, visual organizers can be used by students to construct their own activities or products. As a result, these visual organizers would serve as guide for learners to develop their own learning strategies and to construct schemas which are necessary to ensure long term learning.

One of the major aspects that are emphasized by researchers (Rose, 200; Seglem & Witte, 2009) when studying visual literacy is culture. In modern education, culture is perceived as an essential entity in a language classroom since it highly interferes in learning contexts. Thus, it is important to integrate cultural illustration in a language classroom if our aim is to create an authentic atmosphere and a real life learning setting. Visual literacy is able to fulfill this function because of the rich cultural manifestation present in it.

2.2.1- Culture

Although many texts and print materials are formulated in a way to offer cultural information and symbols, they are not enough to give a clear representation of the culture that is involved. Written texts alone do not create natural contexts where

students may explore spontaneously cultural notions. Nevertheless, visual literacy plays an important role in exposing students to various cultures in a familiar and clear way since it involves displaying images, paintings, posters, and different materials that present different cultural backgrounds. Rose (2001) states that the term culture is hard to define by a single meaning since it carries various connotations, and it calls for controversial issues. Thus, visual images and their effects are involved in the process of interpreting the term culture. Rose (2001) writes the following

If culture cannot be thought of as a singular whole, nor as constituted simply by objects, then, it is more helpful to think of it as the range of meaningful social practices in which visual images' effects are embedded, just as many social scientists are now doing (p. 14).

The cultural context is vital in learning a second language, and this context is highly expressed by visual symbols and images that surround learners everywhere. That is why many researchers agree that incorporating visual literacy is necessary for students to understand many ideas and notions which are determined by culture. Seglem and Witte (2009) state that traditional literacy is not sufficient anymore since successful communication depends on the ability to use high thinking skills in order to interpret the world that is formed of visual symbols.

Thus, teachers and educators should incorporate visual literacy if they want students to develop critical understanding of print and nonprint materials encountered in different cultural and social contexts. In order to do so, teachers can use tattoos and paintings which are culturally rich sources to do activities such as interpretations, discussions, and predictions. In this way, students would have the chance to explore cultural notions in a natural way and involving tasks.

Seglem and Witte (2009) also recommend incorporating visual materials into the research process by building connections between images found in magazines and information students need to convey. This way breaks the linear traditional method of simply rephrasing what was found in the sources. "By taking the time to work with the information in a visual format, students were able to separate themselves from the language of the source, which resulted in language of their own" (Seglem & Witte, 2009, p. 220).

Incorporating visual literacy to create cultural settings has positive effects on learning all language skills. According to Ortuno (1994), visual authentic materials should be used in order to improve the four linguistic skills (writing, comprehension, speaking, and reading) and in order to develop cultural awareness. Thus, using Spanish paintings is a good method to develop the linguistic and cultural literacy of students since it has many instructional benefits as lowering classroom anxiety, developing cognitive abilities based on cultural scenes, and motivating students for further study that is promoted by a sense of accomplishment. Ortuno (1994) writes the following

> Using paintings as an instructional aid can help bridge the gap between language and culture to make learning both enjoyable and intellectually profitable. Because each picture serves as a window opening onto an authentic view of human experience, paintings lend themselves well to the teaching of language and culture... (p. 502).

Thus, human experience, which is the core of a cultural background, is typically represented by visual materials. This instant and natural exposure to different cultures may not be offered successfully by textbooks and printed texts. In this sense, Berho and Defferding (2005) criticize traditional second language instruction for

involving limited cultural information. Thus, the use of artistic work in the second language classroom exposes students to the target culture and appeals to students of various proficiency levels who might not be engaged in traditional grammar tasks.

For this purpose, the writers suggest the usage of both target-culture and student-generated art to be the base for different kinds of activities in a second language classroom. In terms of speaking, students can describe their work or create an exhibit or a gallery in class where they circulate in groups and discuss the artistic techniques such as the usage of color and the creator's message. Berho and Defferding (2005) write the following

> The creation of original art, as well as the considered analysis of artwork representative of target cultures, provides multiple opportunities for communicative activities in the four skill areas. L2 students are exposed to important cultural and historical information in a much richer way than merely reading or listening to lecture (p. 276).

This view challenges the teaching methods which lack the necessary means to expose students to necessary cultural knowledge and contexts. Learning a second language cannot be isolated from culture and adopting visual literacy is a suitable and efficient way to achieve this purpose. For instance, Seferoglu (2008) stresses the fact that the activities generated by using films provide students the opportunity to learn in authentic way and to be exposed to native speakers of English and colloquial language.

2.2.2- Vocabulary learning

Many researchers (Bush, 2007; Sydorenko, 2010; Webber, 2001) stress the important effects visual aids have on vocabulary learning. They argue that print

materials do not possess the same ability as visual aids in terms of clarifying ambiguous notions and providing long term learning of vocabulary words that are presented in authentic contexts. For instance, Bush (2007) points out that culture and vocabulary are both important elements in learning a second language and pictures constitute preferable tools to integrate these two aspects; however, in most cases the applied classroom procedures do not present an agreement as to the best method of involving these two central elements in the process of learning.

Bush (2007) criticizes the fact that many students keep on inefficiently memorizing vocabulary lists. In addition, many educational strategies are unable to involve effective methods for providing students the cultural awareness they need. The solution to this problem is achieved by integrating culture and vocabulary in a way that does not dissect language to separate elements or components. This can be achieved by developing an "extensive inventory of terms related to both culture and vocabulary, as well as extensive procedures for images collection and cataloging" (Bush, 2007, p. 742). It would be impractical if there is not a feasible mechanism that teachers can use to integrate pictures in their language classroom.

Visual literacy is an invaluable replacement for traditional vocabulary teaching strategies that rely on rote learning of a high number of words which are treated as separate linguistic features and isolated from their contextual usage. Sydorenko (2010) emphasizes the role that images play in terms of enhancing the acquisition of vocabulary words. She stresses the fact that learners tend to learn the greater number of words by connecting them to visual images. The writer's aim was to examine vocabulary learning based on different kinds of video input including video with audio only, video with captions only, and video with both audio and captions.

17

The findings showed that more meanings of words are acquired when videos with both audio and captions are used since they expose students to great visual input. The writer states that "the meanings of some new words can be learned from very difficult authentic videos when the language is well-supported by visual images" (Sydorenko, 2010, p. 61). This can be explained by the fact that students can better understand and remember the meanings when they have established the relations between the meaning and both of the word's forms (the written and the aural forms). As a result, the writer recommends using videos with audio and captions since they involve students in a three-task performance which requires high cognitive level needed for language learning.

The capacity of learners to associate words with visual representation constitutes a successful strategy to learn new words in a long-lasting way. Webber (2001) discusses the fact that paired associate learning in which pictures are paired with linguistic items enhances language learning and the recall of vocabulary words. The study shows that a higher number of correct responses were recorded when pairing words with pictures than when pairing words with words. Hence, picture stimuli are superior to word stimuli in enhancing foreign language learning. As a result, visual literacy has a crucial role in enhancing vocabulary learning in terms of both, the number of words retained and the words' meanings which are grasped by learners.

2.2.3- Social awareness and interaction

It has been agreed among educators (Rose, 2001; Jaen & Basanta, 2009) that the integration of visual literacy increases social awareness among students. The activities involved when using visual aids need cooperation, interaction, and

18

communication. Thus, students would be encouraged to build ties among themselves and to learn how to accept each other's opinions by performing tasks that involve the usage of visual aids.

Rose (2001) states that the visual is crucial in terms of understanding and interpreting the modern social life since a lot of meaning is conveyed through different kinds of images shown by modern technologies such as TV, digital graphics, and others. Nevertheless, these images are not innocent since they reveal particular views of the world around us. "These images are never transparent windows on the world. They interpret the world; they display it in very particular ways" (Rose, 2001, p. 6). Hence, it is the responsibility of teachers to develop students' social awareness by offering them the chance to explore the variant connotations and views conveyed by visual materials around them.

Jaen and Basanta (2009) discuss the importance of teaching oral communication skills using multimodal texts from DVDs since they provide learners with live data. The use of multimodal texts exposes "learners to authentic learning environments, so that they can interpret the pragmatic and semiotic variables of the social context" (Jaen & Basanta, 2009, p. 284). Since social contexts play a major role in the process of understanding and interpreting linguistic elements, it is necessary to create concrete natural situations that represent the target sociocultural community. Thus, using digital films is a way to offer students the chance to picture, analyze, and discuss the sociolinguistic features of the target language such as register, colloquial speech, and metaphor (Jaen & Basanta, 2009).

2.2.4- Self expression

The implementation of visual literacy allows learners to express their inner selves overtly and fluently, particularly when the situation calls for different interpretations and points of view. Their use activates the cognitive schemes that are dormant in students' minds and they provide the suitable atmosphere to create new ones. Thus, students would have the material needed to express what exists in their inner being.

Rose (2001) states that there is a critical approach for interpreting visual images which involves taking images seriously, considering the social conditions and effects of visual objects, and finally reflecting on one's own way of looking at images. Hence, each individual would find in the interpretation of a certain visual material a means to express his/her own way of thinking and opinion.

Burmark (2002) suggests that it is important to display portraits for students to discuss what they reveal of different cultures, times, socio-economic statues, and styles. Later, the students are asked to create their own portraits about people they like or themselves, and then talk about the emotions and features that these portraits reveal. "Self-portraits clearly chart emotional growth, as well as increased artistic skills" (Burmark, 2002, p. 58).

2.2.5- Motivation

One essential positive effect of adopting visual literacy is increased motivation. Visual aids motivate students to participate more in the learning process since they become eager to discuss what they can see and visualize. The rich input that is presented to them through visual aids gives them the basis to construct ideas and express them.

Smilanich and Lafreniere (2010) emphasize the capacity of films to bring back reluctant students to an enthusiastic and active learning atmosphere. The writers argue that print texts lack the aspects needed to engage students and motivate them. On the other hand, films provide more opportunities for students to discuss their thoughts and ask as well as respond to questions. "Film offers an immediacy and accessibility that the printed text frequently does not. Students who are intimidated by, or impeded from, accessing print text are able to discuss film with acuity and insight" (Smilanich & Lafreniere, 2010, p. 604).

The motivating role played by visual aids is also discussed by Seven and Engin (2007) who agree that visual and audio materials attract the students and involve them in the learning process. Students find in visual aids the guide they need in order to overcome their sense of fear and reluctance.

Smilanich and Lafreniere (2010) call attention to the fact that it is difficult for some students to confront the great demands of text, particularly comprehending and discussing abstract concepts. However, they are more likely to offer their opinions on movie scenes and techniques since they feel that they have greater knowledge and familiarity in this area. The writers go further in their discussion to suggest that film plays the role of bridge that helps students get to a stage where print material can be accessible.

By discussing critically how meanings are revealed through images, they would be able to grasp important features in literature such as metaphor and symbolism. This sense of achievement that students gain from the feeling that they know would motivate them to be active participants in the learning process.

2.3- Visual literacy and oral fluency

Some researchers claim that incorporating visual aids in the curriculum may function as a barrier for the development of oral fluency among students. Their claim is based mainly on the assumption that too much input, particularly visual input, may hinder the learning process and constitute an attention distracter.

For instance, the assumption of Dikilitas and Duvenci (2009) that integrating visual materials would contribute to students' oral performance more than auditory materials was refuted in their study. The results showed that the test group which used visual materials as stimuli performed worse than the control group which used auditory/textual materials in terms of number of words per second and length of speech. However, the test group spoke faster than the control group. Dikilitas and Duvenci (2009) clarify that these results may be due to the additional burden on the receptive channels that is caused by visual materials, which might lead to a failure in interpreting the message. Nevertheless, there is high agreement among researchers (Hollich, 2006; Eken, 2003; Seferoglu, 2008; Elwin & Sheats, 1950; Webber, 2001) that different types of visual aids have positive effects in terms of teaching second language communication and oral fluency.

In early stages, visual aids help learners to understand speech segments which are needed to move to further stages in language leaning. Hollich (2006) claims that language acquisition is a multifaceted procedure in which learners dissect the words in the speech patterns, annotate meanings to these words, and determine the rules for joining words to express and form meanings. The writer examined the effect of visual and audio familiarization on learning segmentation, vocabulary, and grammar. The results showed that audio-visual information aids segmentation and "can mean the

22

difference between successful segmentation and an inability to pull out the units of speech in a distracting environment" (Hollich, 2006, p. 16).

Similarly, audio-visual input helps students in learning words and grammatical structures as well if there's no distraction and the situation is simple. The writer stresses the fact that the cognitive systems involved in acquiring a language are interdependent and interact with each other, and visual perception cooperates with other types of perception in the process of language learning. As a result, visual literacy constitutes a system that is involved to a great extent in the process of learning different linguistic skills.

For instance, the adoption of feature films in language classrooms is praised by Eken (2003) who shows through the description of a film workshop, which was conducted by second language students, that the analysis of feature films promotes higher level of critical thinking skills, and it enhances students' linguistic skills in speaking, listening writing, and reading. In addition, it is technique for bringing diversity into a language classroom.

Similarly, Seferoglu (2008) departs in his paper from the suggestion that films are rich with authentic material which is necessary in English as a foreign language classroom. The study shows that feature films provide learners the opportunities to start and sustain conversations, negotiate meanings, and be exposed to native speakers and real-life Colloquial English. Thus, using films in an oral communication classroom constitutes a positive learning experience that enhances language skills and competences.

Moreover, Lin (2000) demonstrates how the implementation of films and cinematic materials has a motivational value in terms of empowering listening and

speaking skills. Thus, film related activities aim at increasing the proficiency of low to intermediate level students in speaking and listening. As a result, educators have shown that using films in an oral communication classroom constitutes a positive learning experience that enhances language skills and competences. This is particularly helpful and important for low achievers and reluctant students who certainly are not able to improve in a classroom where conventional techniques are used.

Other types of visual aids such as pictures, audio-visuals, and records are discussed by researchers who urge the usage of such materials in a language classroom. For example, Elwin and Sheats (1950) present the successful use of audio-visual aids by the armed forces who are all adult learners. The aids included films, flash cards, graphic portfolios, and comic strips which were implemented in a training period of eight weeks aiming at facilitating English learning. The writers suggest that films and other types of visual aids are recommended since they promote discussions and other learning opportunities. These opportunities may not be provided by printed texts alone and that is why visual literacy should constitute an essential part of the learning strategies.

Johnson (1946) proposes that the integration of visual aids should not be considered a desired option in teaching a language. It's necessary in the process of learning a second language. For instance, the usage of records serves many linguistic purposes in terms of providing opportunities to practice pronunciation and conduct conversations. Another useful teaching device that the writer discusses is the film which serves to develop vocabulary, oral comprehension, and facility in expression. Thus, Johnson (1946) suggests that the utilization of film and other illustrative materials such as paintings is necessary and cannot be disregarded.

Other researchers (Rao & Thilakha, 2010; Walsh, 2003) criticize the conventional text-based and drill teaching approaches and they offer alternative strategies based on incorporating visual aids. In order to cope with the requirements of the new technological age, educators should no longer rely solely on words and print material which provide less sophisticated contexts than the ones students encounter outside their classrooms.

For instance, Rao and Thilakha (2010) criticize the conventional teaching methods, as the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method, since they fall short to meet the communicative competence needed today and since they teach English as a subject and not as a language. The writers offer alternative methods to improve spoken skills such as Group Discussions, Debates, Computer Assisted Language Learning, and Teaching Language through Visual Aids. The adoption of these methods would develop fluency, body language, the analyzing capacity of students and their ability to talk freely. The improvement at these levels which constitute an essential part of learning to speak a second language stresses the idea that visual literacy is no longer an option that we may add to our language classrooms. In fact, they are as necessary as books, stories, and other print material.

Walsh (2003) challenges the teaching methods in which print material is the dominant source of learning. He stresses the idea that in the age of technology, reading images in picture books is required as means of implementing visual literacy. This would help creating different meanings and discourses that students can explore.

Walsh's study investigates both L1 and L2 young learners' responses to two books which are rich in pictures and words that are interdependent to create various levels of meaning. Children seemed to rely on the pictures in these two books in order

to comprehend and recount the story events. Their responses varied between labeling, observing, and commenting on aspects reflected in the pictures at meta-textual and intertextual levels. In addition, the children used these pictures to express emotions and even to create stories which indicate a high evaluative and cognitive level.

Walsh (2003) says that "the pictures evoked a variety of responses that were not merely 'literal' as they incorporated different levels of cognitive, affective and cultural understandings" (p. 129). As a result, these observations suggest that the interpretation of pictures is a different experience from interpreting words and children need to explore this world of pictures.

In the same sense, Pino (1988) proposes adapted listening and speaking approaches in order to improve language learning. For instance, the introduction of new vocabulary words is done through using pictures; this is followed by listening phases which are based on questions and activities related to pictures and charts. The speaking formats that follow are interactive and they include tasks as interviews, situation role-plays, problem-solving and solo speaking activities. The predicted outcomes cover better understanding and use of the target language in addition to developed communicative skills.

2.4- Conclusion

As it is clear in the above review, visual literacy cannot be ignored in modern language curricula and teaching methods. Visual literacy fulfills important functions that can be hardly reached in traditional teaching methods that rely solely on books and on what the teachers say. If we want our students to express themselves in a better way and to be more fluent and motivated while learning a language, we have to apply visual

literacy. Otherwise, we would be depriving students of their right to explore their inner

awareness by themselves and to be active participants in the learning process.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 - Introduction

This chapter includes two sections. The first section describes the participants involved and the research design employed in this study. The second section includes the instruments used for data collection.

3.2- Participants

The researcher has chosen the participants from Al Nour School, a private school in the suburbs. The sample consists of five English teachers for elementary and intermediate levels and 119 sixth graders who learn English as a second language. The participant teachers have taught English for more than three years and they have degrees in English language and/or literature. On the other hand, the students are from all four sections of grade six and are of different proficiency levels and gender. They speak Arabic as their native language and they study English as a second one.

The sample studied in the observation is considered to be purposive since it includes six students divided evenly between males and females and selected to be incorporating three different proficiency levels in order to detect the effect of the new variable and to examine any variance based on proficiency level and gender (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Cohen et al. (2011) explain that in purposive sampling, a researcher selects the participants who possess the sought qualities. The sample then would be built in a way that suits the researcher's requirements. The sampling under examination in the interview is considered purposive as well since it consists of teachers who were selected based on the subject and level taught (English for elementary levels).

The sample incorporated in the survey is convenience and purposive (Cohen et al., 2011). It is purposive based on a previously decided and selected sample comprising sixth graders who study English as a second language. It is convenience as well since the questionnaire was distributed to all sixth graders in all sections "who happen to be available and accessible at the time" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 155- 156).

The researcher has used fake names for the teachers, students and school participating in the study in order not to reveal personal data that should remain anonymous. Wisker (2001) points out that one main ethical consideration is preserving the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

3.3 - Research Design

The type of research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. It involves verbal interpretation and explanation of observed behaviors and includes quotations of interviews that are conducted with teachers, hence qualitative (Bailey, Bemrose, Goddard, Impey, Joseyn, &Mackness, 1996). It is quantitative as well since a questionnaire is used, resulting in data that are presented using percentages, figures, and charts (Bailey et al, 1996).

This study falls under experimental research category, particularly a quasi-experimental design (pre-experimental design, one group pre-test-post-test) (Cohen et al., 2011). It involves studying communication skills and oral fluency of a second language elementary classroom (Grade 6) over a period of time, which is one month, before the introduction of an experimental manipulation (visual literacy). This is followed by a study of the same group over the same period of time after the integration of the manipulative variable.

It is worth noting that the criterion of control and variable groups is difficult to implement or even not applicable since there would be discrimination between the teaching strategies being adopted with both groups and that might lead to a conflict with the teachers or among them.

3.4- Triangulation

Triangulation is applied in this study since the researcher uses three modes of data collection including observation, interview, and questionnaire. Triangulation has been associated with many advantages according to many researchers (Cohen et al., 2011; Bailey et al., 1996; Fielding, 2008). Cohen et al. (2011) define triangulation as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior" (p. 195). The first main advantage of using triangulation is including multifaceted perspectives which provide the results obtained more confidence and neutrality and make them less biased. Bailey et al. (1996) say that each research method serves a specific purpose; for instance, observation is better than a questionnaire to collect data about people's behavior while the opposite is true to know about their opinions and ways of reasoning. Thus, one can be more confident about a final outcome or a conclusion that has been obtained after combining different methods, a process refereed to as triangulation.

The second advantage is that triangulation is a successful way to familiarize researchers with different methods that might have become of limited use because others are overused or considered superior to them (Cohen et al., 2011). Another advantage for triangulation is presented by Fielding (2008) who states that the use of different methods in research is challenging and has the potential to add sophistication

to the interpretation and evaluation of social phenomena. This is because multiple methods constitute an incentive to researchers to be more critical regarding the data demonstrated. "Multiple method research puts findings from different methods in dialogue and this stimulates more fine-grained and sophisticated knowledge" (Fielding, 2008, p. 40).

3.4.1- Interview

The first instrument used in this study is semi-structured interviews with Grades 4, 5, and 6 second language teachers. The methodology involves audio-visual recording of the interview using video-camera and analysis, hence qualitative. The interview includes questions about the teachers' attitudes regarding the use of visual aids and the degree of their implementation. Also the interview incorporates questions about the role of visual literacy in terms of enhancing oral fluency and communication skills.

Wisker (2001) stresses that interviews are particularly beneficial to provide detailed data the researcher aims to collect in addition to some unexpected fascinating information. Thus, the questions were chosen to leave for the interviewed teachers space to share ideas based on their experiences. Cohen et al. (2011) state that open-ended questions are flexible and they allow the interviewer to attain deep levels of exploration. The six open-ended questions were prepared to reveal responses that would serve the purpose of the research and they target the variables of concern for this study. They are focused on the types, role, degree of use, and students' reactions to visual aids.

A distinctive feature of semi-structured interview is that it establishes some type of balance between the need for certain responses to be compared later, and the

need for a rich and fruitful conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee (Wisker, 2001). Hence, the interviews were designed in a way to obtain comparable but at the same time rewarding responses.

Taking into account ethical considerations, the teachers interviewed were informed in details about the purpose of the interviews. In addition, the names of the participants remained anonymous for the sake of confidentiality (Wisker, 2001).

3.4.2- Observation

Another method of data collection used in this study is classroom observations. The researcher observed six students of grade six during a period of two months. The sample comprised 3 female students and 3 male students chosen randomly from three different proficiency levels. The observation was conducted based on a rubric that was formulated by the researcher and that includes six criteria related to oral fluency and communicative skills. The rubric was composed to include four levels of proficiency including exemplary, proficient, partially proficient, and incomplete (see Appendix II). The rubric is analyzed and then resulted in figures measuring the effects of integrating visual literacy on oral fluency individually.

The observation took place during six sessions, the first three were done without the integration of visual aids and the following three were conducted after the integration of the new variable. According to Cohen et al. (2011), the special characteristic of observation is that it gives the researcher "the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations" (p. 456). Instead of asking the people about what they do, observation allows the researcher to detect what they really do (Wisker, 2001).

According to Bailey et al. (1996), observations may range from fully non-participant to fully participant in which the observer is one member of the sample observed. In this study, the researcher adopted the participant observation since she played an active role in providing visual aids and sometimes interfering in the classroom course. Cohen et al. (2011) point out that participant observation constitutes a useful method for investigating small groups and for detecting activities and incidents occurring over a short period of time. This is the typical case in this research study where a specific number of students are observed while performing speaking activities.

Observation methods may be categorized as structured, semi-structured and unstructured observation (Cohen et al., 2011). In this study, the researcher followed a structured observation in which data were gathered to detect the performance of participants in particular skills. Observations were recorded in the previously mentioned rubric by the researcher herself. They were then analyzed and interpreted using verbal methods in addition to tables (Cohen et al., 2011).

According to Bailey et al. (1996), observations involve complex ethical dilemma and they require the researcher to take difficult decisions whether to inform the participants about being observed or not. In this research, the research tried to reach a certain balance by informing participants that they are observed but not revealing the particular criteria being observed in order not to affect their behavior.

3.4.3- Questionnaire

In order to identify students' attitudes and thoughts regarding the usage of visual aids, a questionnaire was designed by the researcher and self-administered by the participating students, each grade six section at a time. Wisker (2001) maintains that

questionnaires are used to "gather information directly by asking people questions and using them as data for analysis" (p. 147). According to Cohen et al. (2011), the questionnaire is a very common and broadly used tool for gathering survey information with an output that is usually structured data, often numerical, and relatively straightforward to analyze. It usually provides the ability to be administered without being accompanied by a researcher. "Questionnaires often seem a logical and easy option as a way of collecting information from people" (Wisker, 2001, p. 142-143).

Questionnaires are frequently used in the modern world, so the response rate is very low in most of the cases, unless certain ways are used to make people complete the questionnaires and submit them directly. This would normally affect the size of the sample, length of the questionnaire, and the types of questions asked. In order to ensure that the sample size is appropriate, the researcher distributed and received the questionnaires by herself, and she made sure the questionnaire has a reasonable length so that it can be filled entirely in the time allotted.

The questionnaire used in this study consists of ten main closed-ended questions in addition to sub questions and socio-demographic questions. Close-ended questions are practical since they can elicit frequent responses and allow comparisons to be conducted between groups in the sample. However, they do not give the participants the opportunity to express additional thoughts and interpretations which are not restricted and predefined by the structure of the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2011). For this reason, the questionnaire includes a question that uses both open and close-ended formats to obtain further details about students' attitudes. Burns (2000) clarifies that open ended questions permit the participants to rationalize and explain their choices and responses and they decrease the restrictions of predetermined choices of reply.

Wisker (2001) points out that questionnaires are typical to gather data about participants' behaviors, attitudes, and reactions to events. Thus, the questionnaire consists of questions about students' attitudes regarding the implementation of visual literacy in their English Language class, in addition to questions that aim to measure the students' interaction with visual aids. Moreover, there are socio-demographic questions that cover gender, region, socio-economic status, and parent's profession. These provide supportive material for the data analysis, and ensure a proper execution of the research in the analysis phase. The data are entered later on to the PC to undergo data processing and production of figures.

In order to make sure that the last version includes sufficient and efficient responses, a closed and well thought-out questionnaire needs to be piloted and refined (Cohen et al., 2011). For this reason the researcher piloted the items included in the questionnaire upon constructing them on students of grade six from another school. Then, she added clarification for ambiguous and recurrent terms and added scales for more clarity and frequency of response.

3.4.4- Data analysis

The data collected from surveys are subjected to data processing using SPSS software. The resulting graphs and figures are presented with interpretation and analysis of the results. The analysis is based on several variables including students' attitudes and reaction regarding the use of visual aids. The questions also investigate students' opinions regarding the effect of visual aids on their own performance in terms of fluency and communication.

3.5- Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are supposed to be respected by every researcher when attempting to conduct a study. This issue is stressed by many researchers (Cohen et al., 2011;

Bailey et al., 1996; Wisker, 2001) who identify certain conditions that should be present in research to be considered ethical. Bailey et al. (1996) point out that the aim of ethics is to help people to make decisions when confronted by moral issues and they have to choose between the right and the wrong. There are different views regarding what to be considered moral or immoral, but the researcher should always aim at creating a balance between preserving the participants' welfare and offering knowledge by research (Bailey et al., 1996).

In this study, the researcher secured the verbal consent of the Al Nour's Principal who gave his approval on conducting the research on the effect of using visual aids. The director, supervisor, and the teachers were also informed about the nature and purpose of the study. The participating students were also informed about the purpose of their filling the questionnaire. Thus, the researcher secured all participants' verbal consent without offering incentives in order not to violate ethical considerations (Cohen et al., 2011).

In addition, the researcher used fake names to address the school, teachers, and participants involved in order not to reveal personal information that should remain anonymous. Wisker (2001) considers preserving the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants as one main ethical consideration. Moreover, using fake names is a means of protecting the participants from any harmful consequences that may occur. Bailey et al. (1996) explain that it is unethical to "cause harm or distress to the

participants…One of the main purposes of ethics is to urge everyone to do good and right by others" (p. 4). Privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, and consent are necessary to be present in order to protect the participants (Bailey et al., 1996). The right of any participant to refuse to participate in the study or to withdraw was preserved in this study. Cohen et al. (2011) explain that participants may be encouraged to be involved but the decision to take part in the research and to withdraw from it is completely theirs.

3.6- Validity and reliability

Cohen et al. (2011) point out that validity and reliability should be respected in effective research. There are main principles and steps to be followed to guarantee that the research is valid and reliable. In this study, the triangulation method was used since it combines three methods of data collection to detect different perspectives regarding the researched topic (Cohen et al., 2011). In addition, the researcher included a definition for the term that is recurrent in the questionnaire (visual aids) and additional explanations at the time of administration. While conducting the rubric observations and the interviews, the researcher tried to avoid biases and to interpret the obtained results objectively and by relating them to literature in the field. Moreover, the sample was selected to be representative in terms of size, and this is in order to avoid obtaining generalized results. Finally, the research was conducted in an authentic and natural context in grade six classrooms to guarantee it's trustworthy and reliable (Cohen et al., 2011).

3.7- Conclusion

This chapter explained in details the methodology adopted in this study. The three methods of data collection in addition to ethical considerations are illustrated. The next chapter presents the results obtained from data analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1 - Introduction

The data collection methods have revealed satisfactory data and findings to answer the research questions of the study:

1.   Does the implementation of visual literacy enhance the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners?

2.   To what extent do students think that the integration of visual aids helps them develop their communicative skills and oral fluency?

3.   To what extent do second language teachers believe that visual aids are beneficial in teaching second language communicative skills and oral fluency?

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis is used to interpret the obtained data which are presented in the chapter.

4.2- Questionnaire Results

A survey was conducted with all sections of Grade 6 students (4 sections, 119 students) who learn English as a second language. The survey was based on a questionnaire including 4 demographic variables and 10 questions (Appendix III) that were filled by students. The results were calculated using SPSS.

The first question attempted to measure whether students take speaking lessons in their language classroom. Figure 1 shows that 97% of students say that they do learn speaking in their English language class. The majority of students do take and they are aware of speaking lessons, which provides necessary basis for the survey. This result ensures that the study is based on a valid and representative sample. Yet, 3% of the

students say that they do not learn speaking in their English classroom. Probably this is due to the fact that speaking lessons are labeled as Enumeration, which is a more familiar term to them than the word speaking.

Figure 1: Learning Speaking Lessons

Q1. Do you learn speaking in your English language class?

No, 3%

Yes, 97%
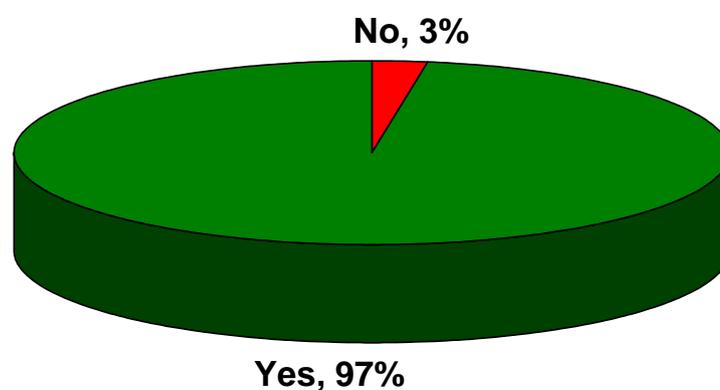
The second question was meant to measure students' degree of awareness of visual aids. Apparently, the vast majority is aware of visual aids with 91% saying that they do know what visual materials are (Figure 2). 8% of students do not know what visual materials are and 2% did not provide an applicable answer. These may have not been familiar with the term itself rather than visual aids.

Figure 2: Awareness of Visual Materials

Q2. Do you know what visual materials are?

NA, 2%   No, 8%

Yes, 91%
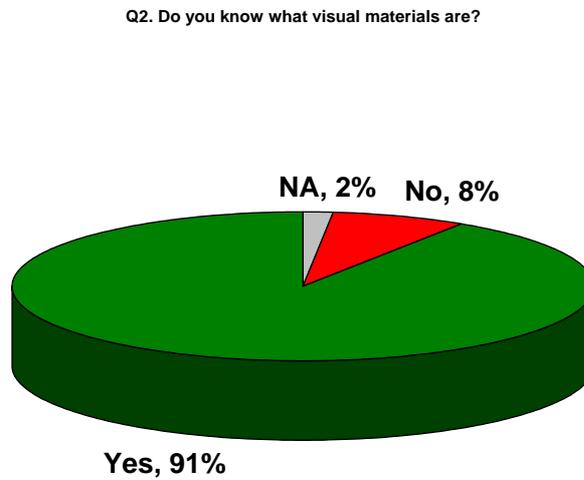
The third question was meant to measure the degree of visual aids usage by the teachers. As Figure 3 shows, 83% of students say that their teacher does use visual aids in speaking classes. This shows that the teachers use visual aids to a great extent in their speaking lessons. Yet, still 15% of students say that their teachers do not use visual aids and this is relatively a significant number and it explains the fact that visual aids are not being used regularly.

Figure 3: Degree of Visual Aids Usage

Q3. During your speaking classes, does the teacher use visual materials?

NA, 2%   No, 15%

Yes, 83%

41
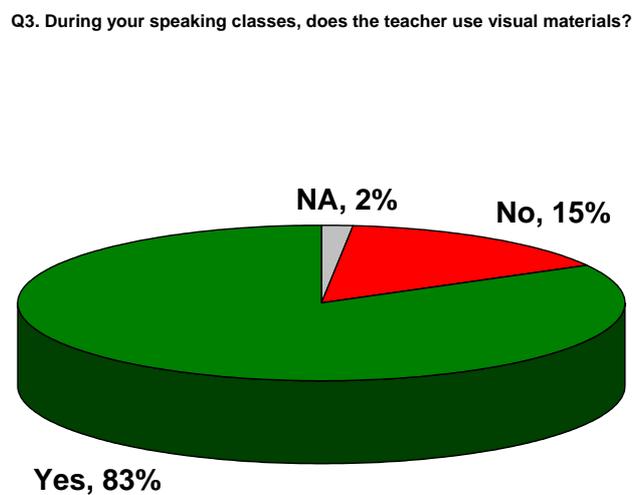
Question 4 attempted to measure the extent to which each type of visual aids was used in speaking classrooms. It is apparent that charts and pictures are the mostly used types as 84% of the students chose charts and 80% of them chose pictures among other types. There is a large difference between theses two types of visual aids and the other ones where the third position is occupied by slides with 23% followed by maps with 18%. This result shows that there is a focus on specific types of visual aids and that not all types are being used at the same frequency level.

Films and paintings came in the last two places with 12% and 9% consecutively (Figure 4). Though films are the richest in linguistic input and paintings help provide real life situations and cultural awareness, these two types are not frequently used in speaking lessons.

Figure 4: Mostly Used Visual Aids

Q4. What are the visual materials that your teacher uses most?
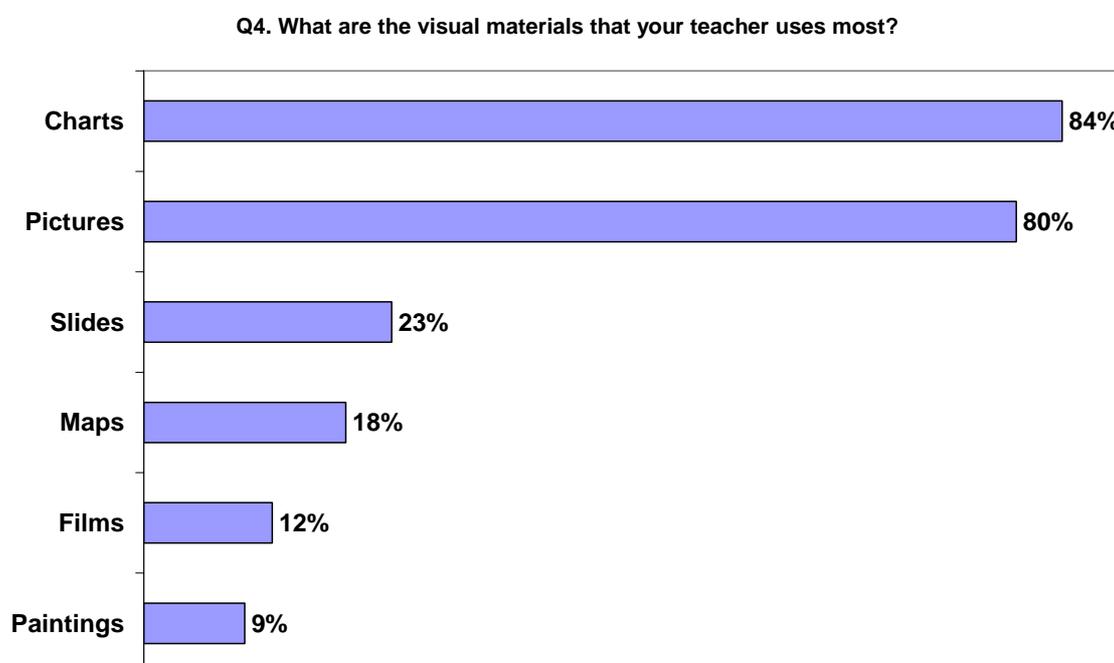
Question 5 was meant to determine students' attitude to classes with and without visual aids. The results of this question are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Attitudes to Classes With and Without Visual Materials

Q5. a. Do you like your speaking classes with visual materials?

No, 5%

Yes, 95%

Q5. b. Do you like your speaking classes without visual materials?

Yes, 13%   NA, 2%

No, 86%
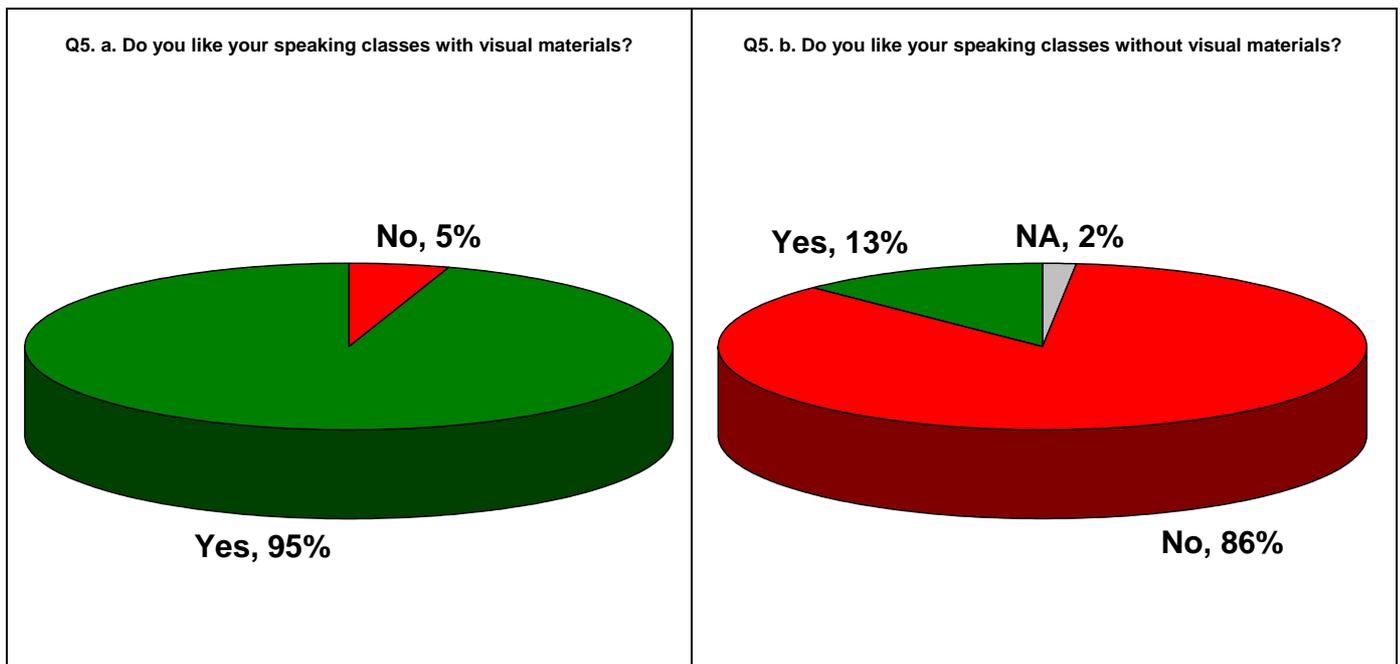
Apparently, the vast majority of students (95%) do prefer learning speaking with visual aids. Only 5% mention that they do not like classes when visual aids are used. On the other hand, a very significant majority of students (86%) say that they do not like their speaking classes without visual aids. This result leads to the outcome that students hold a highly positive attitude regarding visual aids and probably promising performance would be expected from students in speaking classes. Having only 13% of students who say they like speaking classes without visual aids indicates that traditional teaching methods are no longer preferred by most of the students.

Question 6 asks students whether they think that visual materials helps them more in learning to speak English. 93% of students regard visual aids as helpful. Half of

them strongly agree that visual materials are helpful and 43% of them agree on the same issue (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Helpfulness of Visual Materials in Learning English

Q6. Do you think that using visual materials helps you more in learning to speak English?
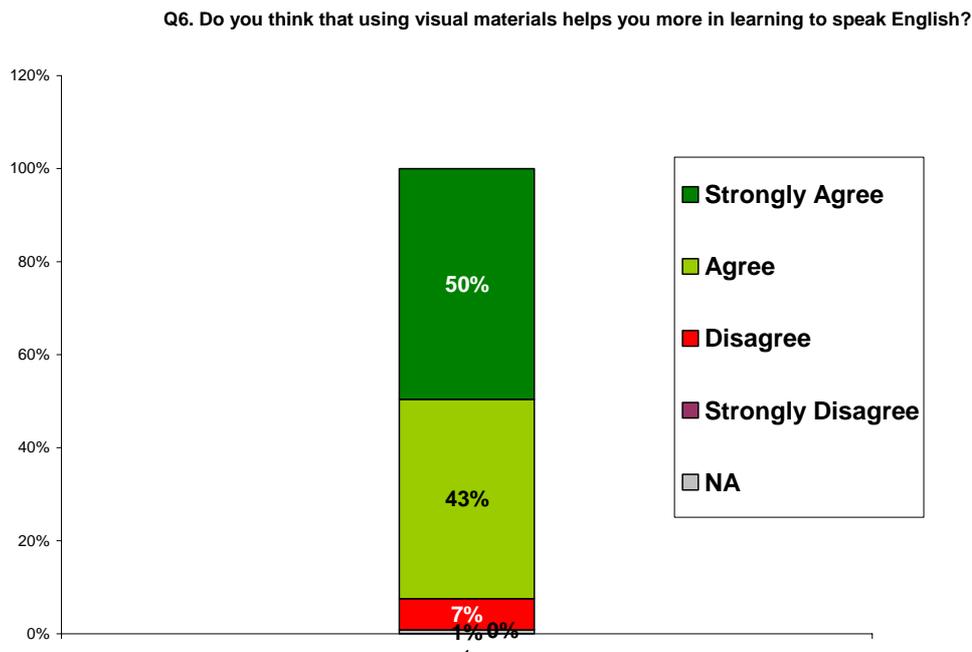
Only 7% of students say that they do not agree and none of them strongly disagrees that visual materials help learning to speak English. This result largely supports that the majority hold a positive attitude and they consider visual aids beneficial in terms of increasing their fluency in English.

Question 7 discussed the effect of the use of visual materials on learning English. Every student was asked about six attributes in the aim of measuring the effect of the use of visual aids on each of them.

Figure 7: Effect of Visual Materials on Learning English
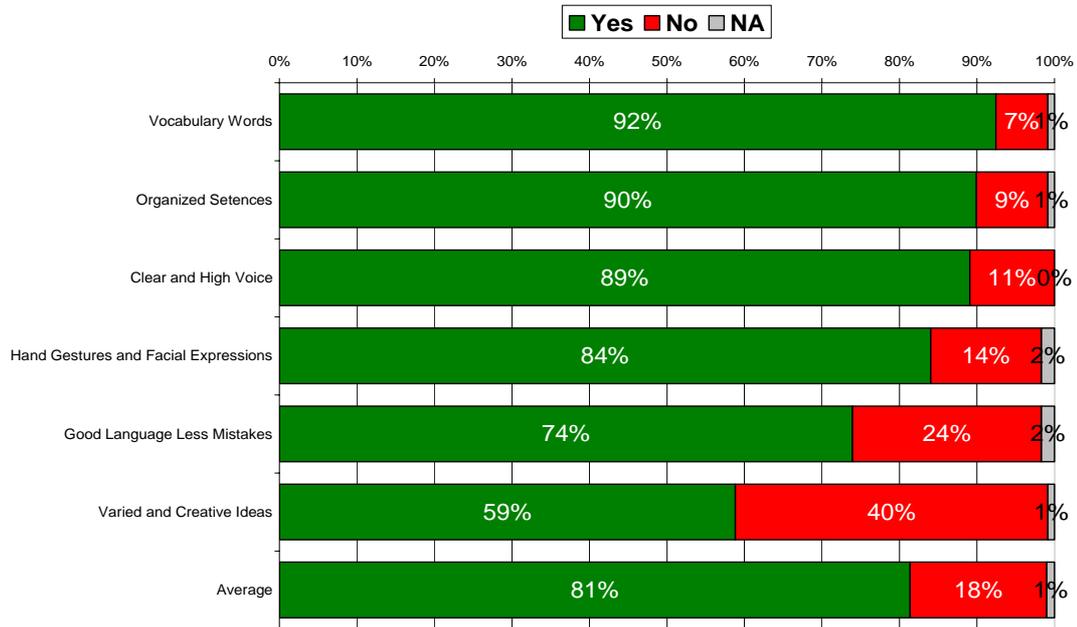
Apparently, the majority of the students admit that visual aids have a positive effect on all of the measured attributes. The average score of positive answers showed 81% where the scores ranged from 92% to 59%. The highest was recorded on the use of Vocabulary Words where 92% of the students say that visual aids have a positive effect on their usage of vocabulary words. In the second place came Organized Sentences since 90% of students agree that this skill is positively affected by visual aids; this was followed directly by Clear and High Voice (89%).

The fourth place was occupied with Hand Gestures and Facial Expressions where 84% of the students say that using visual aids helps students to use hand gestures and facial expressions. In the fifth position come Good Language and Less Mistakes (74%) which is below the positive average of all attributes in Question 7 (81%), and lastly comes Varied and Creative Ideas with 59% (Figure 7).

Figure 8: Increased Ability of Speaking English with Visual Aids

Q8. Do you think that students are able to speak more in English when visual materials are used?

No, 13%

Yes, 87%
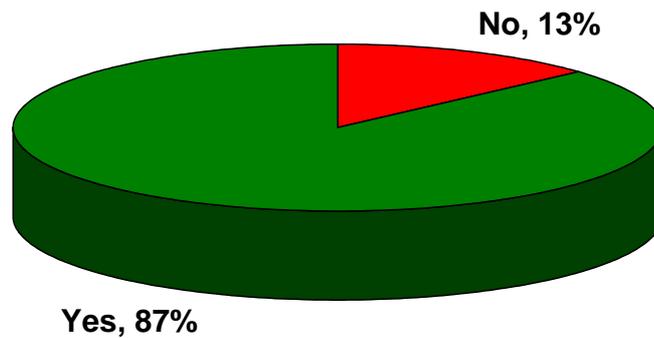
In question 8, students are asked whether they are able to speak more in English when visual aids are used. As it is apparent in Figure 8, 87% of students respond by yes and 13% say no. Again this result stresses that students consider visual aids encouraging and useful. The majority of students believe that they increase their ability to speak more in English.

Question 9 attempts to measure students' degree of motivation and participation when visual aids are used. 83% of students say that they do share more in speaking activities when visual materials are used and only 13% say that they don't (Figure 9). This result shows that most students think that their motivation to take part in the communicative tasks is increased by employing visual literacy.

Figure 9: Degree of Motivation with the Use of Visual Aids

Q9. Do you feel that you share more in speaking activities when visual materials are used?

No, 13%

Yes, 87%
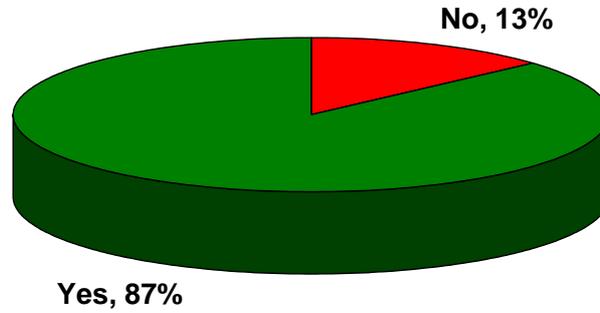
Question 10 measures students' attitudes regarding the frequency of using visual aids. This question is based on a three-point scale as shown below:

- I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are always used

- I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are sometimes used

- I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are never used

Figure 10: Preference of Frequency of Using Visual Aids
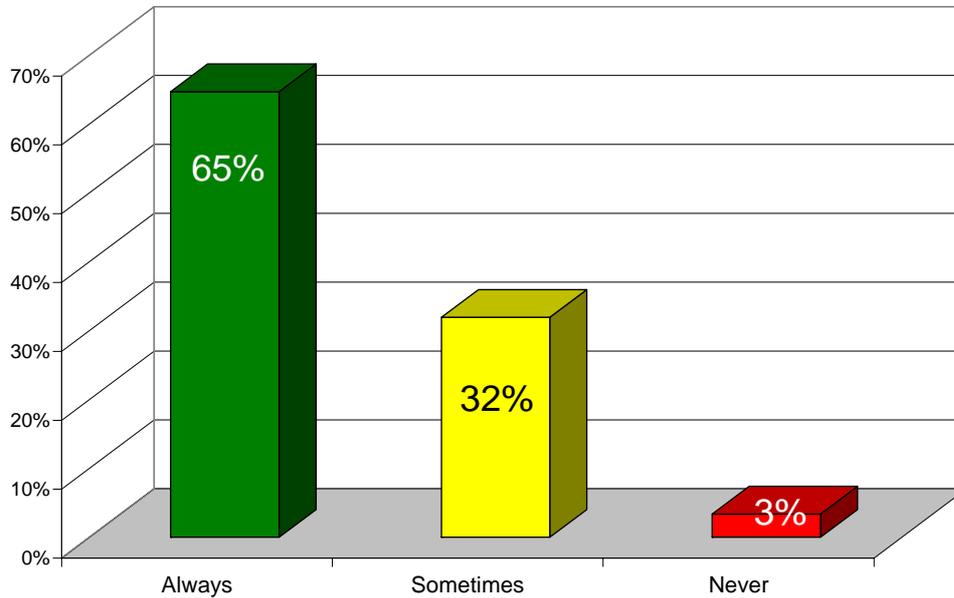
65% of the students say that they prefer that visual aids are always used in speaking classes. Only 3% declare that they prefer if visual aids are never used, similar to question 5A where only 5% say that they do not like classes with visual aids. Having the dominant majority of 97% who would like to have visual aids in their speaking classes, whether always or sometimes, is a further indication to the importance of using them based on the willingness and readiness of the students to interact and cooperate.

The above stated results apply to the whole sample regardless of gender and other clusters (Appendix IV). Even the differences that can appear in some clusters, such as 'NA' and 'Other' in origin, have no significance due to the small number of respondents.

4.3- Observation Results

The observations took place over a period of two months during which six observations were conducted. The first three observations were conducted in classes where there was no use of visual aids and the remaining observations were done after the introduction of visual aids. Three males and three females of different proficiency levels constituted the group observed.

The observation was based on a rubric that included six criteria and four proficiency levels ranging between exemplary and incomplete. (Appendix II).

Table 1: Changes in Rubric Scores by Criterion – Rolling Average

Criterion Observed	Before			After		
	Obv 1	Obv 2	Obv 3	Obv 4	Obv 5	Obv 6
Vocabulary Usage	1.83	1.58	1.55	1.67	1.92	1.89
Organization and Structure	1.83	1.67	1.55	1.50	1.75	2.06
Style and Voice	1.67	1.34	1.45	1.17	1.67	1.95
Nonverbal Communication	0.67	1.00	1.11	1.33	1.67	2.00
Linguistic Complexity	2.00	1.67	1.67	1.33	1.58	1.66
Conetnt	1.67	1.84	1.78	1.83	2.08	2.34
AVG	1.61	1.52	1.52	1.47	1.78	1.98

Table 1 shows the progress of the averages over three observations before the introduction of visual aids compared to the averages over the three observations after the introduction of visual aids, using three observations rolling average (before and after). The first column shows the averages of each criterion in the first observation Obv 1. The second and the third columns have the rolling averages of Obv 1, 2, and 3. The fourth column Obv 4 shows the averages of each criterion in the first observation after the introduction of visual aids. The last two columns have the rolling averages of Obv 4, 5, and 6. The last row shows the averages of the averages in each column.

As we may see in Table 1, three of the measured criteria suffered a drop in average score directly after the introduction of visual aids in Obv 4, probably due to certain confusion that might have occurred on the occasion of the introduction of visual aids. This drop was present in Organization and Structure, Style and Voice, and Linguistic Complexity.

When we look at the average of the averages of all the criteria (last row in Table 1), we can see that the average of the criteria in Obv 4 shows a drop compared to the previous observation (Obv 3). However, ascendant averages in the following two observations (Obv 5 and 6) are recorded. In fact, gradual improvement of averages appears to be present in almost all of the criteria after the introduction of visual aids except for Vocabulary Usage where we obtain a fluctuation in scores.

Table 2: Changes in Rubric Scores by Criterion - Ratios

Criterion Observed	Before			After			After/Before
	Obv 1	Obv 2	Obv 3	Obv 4	Obv 5	Obv 6	
Vocabulary Usage	1.00	0.86	0.98	1.08	1.15	0.98	1.22
Organization and Structure	1.00	0.91	0.93	0.97	1.17	1.18	1.32
Style and Voice	1.00	0.80	1.08	0.81	1.43	1.17	1.35
Nonverbal Communication	1.00	1.49	1.11	1.20	1.25	1.20	1.80
Linguistic Complexity	1.00	0.83	1.00	0.80	1.19	1.05	1.00
Conetnt	1.00	1.10	0.97	1.03	1.14	1.13	1.32
AVG	1.00	0.94	1.00	0.97	1.21	1.12	1.30

Table 2 shows the ratios of consecutive rolling averages that are in table 1. The ratios that are less than 1.00 represent a drop while the ratios that higher than 1.00 represent an increase in average.

The last column presents the ratio of average scores after the introduction of the new variable to the ratio before. Apparently, the results show that there is an increase in the average after the introduction of visual aids to speaking sessions in most

of the measured attributes where five out of six criteria have ratios that are greater than 1.00. Only Linguistic Complexity showed no difference in average score before and after the introduction of visual aids as the general ratio records 1.00.

Nevertheless, none of the measured criteria showed a ratio lower than 1.00.

Among the criteria observed, Nonverbal Communication showed to be the most criterion affected by the new variable, having the greatest ratio (1.80). It is followed by Style and Voice with 1.35. Then come Organization and Structure and Content, both equally scored a ratio of 1.32. Vocabulary Usage scored a ratio of 1.22 while Linguistic Complexity showed no sensitivity to the introduction of the new variable.

It seems that visual aids encourage students to participate and interact with the subject of discussion as well as peers and teachers in a better way, perhaps feeling more at ease to use their body language to express themselves. This can be deduced from the fact that Nonverbal Communication leads the ratios compared to the other criteria. Moreover, having Style and Voice occupying the second position supports the previously mentioned idea that visual aids motivate and encourage students to speak with more confidence and increased interactivity.

Having Linguistic Complexity not affected by the introduction of visual aids possibly originates from the absence of sophisticated linguistic input in the visual aids used. The types of visual aids used were limited to images, pictures, signs, and word cards and which do not include rich linguistic input. For instance, video tapes might be of greater help in terms of increasing the positive effect on the criterion of Linguistic Complexity since they provide students with sophisticated linguistic structures. However, when we compare the ratios (after to before) in the last column to the average

in the last row, we can see that Vocabulary Usage, with ratio 1.22, is below the ratio of the average (1.30). This leads to a conclusion that there is no solid evidence that the use of visual aids has affected positively Vocabulary Usage, and that this positive ratio corresponds to the normal improvement through the course of time rather than the effect of visual aids specifically. In other words, this improvement would have taken place regardless of the introduction of the variable.

Table 3: Changes in Total Scores by Student – Rolling Average

	Student Observed	Before			After		
		Obv 1	Obv 2	Obv 3	Obv 4	Obv 5	Obv 6
Male	Ali	8.00	9.50	9.67	7.00	10.50	12.00
Male	Mohammad	9.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	11.00	12.33
Male	Abbas	9.00	6.00	8.00	10.00	12.00	12.67
Female	Gretta	9.00	9.50	9.00	14.00	15.00	15.33
Female	Maysoun	12.00	13.00	11.00	10.00	12.00	13.00
Female	Marwa	11.00	9.50	9.00	3.00	3.50	5.67

Table 3 shows the changes in total scores of each student using rolling averages. In the first column, the total score of the first observations for each student are shown. The average of the first two observations is shown in the second column, while the average of the first three observations for each student before the introduction of visual aids is shown in the third column (obv 3). The same applies to the following three columns that represent the scores for each student after the introduction of the variable. The students are categorized by gender and sorted by level of academic achievement from the highest achiever to the lowest. Three of the six students observed, Ali, Maysoun, and Marwa, suffered a drop directly after the introduction of visual aids. While Maysoun, who is the average achiever among females, had a slight drop in score after the introduction of the variable, surprisingly, Ali who is the highest achiever

among males, showed a significant drop in Obv 4. On the other hand, Marwa, who is

the lowest achiever among females, suffered a severe drop in Obv 4 that continued to

Obv 5 with a slight increase (From 3 to 4). Yet, it is important to note that even after the

drops in scores that some students faced after the introduction of visual aids, the scores

gradually ascended in Obv 5 and Obv 6, hence meaning a positive slope on the

students' general performance.

Table 4: Ratio of Students' Total Scores before and after the Introduction of Visual

Aids

	Student Observed	Averages	
		AVG Before	AVG After
Male	Ali	1.00	1.24
	Mohammad	1.00	1.54
	Abbas	1.00	1.58
Female	Gretta	1.00	1.70
	Maysoun	1.00	1.18
	Marwa	1.00	0.63

All students, except Marwa (Table 4), show increased average ratios after the

introduction of the variable, which confirms that the use of visual materials helped them

speak English in a better way. This shows that the introduction of visual aids had a

positive effect on students regardless of their gender or proficiency level. Even Marwa,

who suffered a drop directly after the introduction of visual aids, probably due to

confusion that might have taken place, she then shows high improvement in the last

observation after the use of visual aids (see table 3). This fact can be regarded as

promising for further improvement should further observations be conducted.

Among males, the low achiever who is Abbas shows the most significant improvement. This comes in opposition to the case with females where Marwa (low achiever) shows a drop in score. The high achiever among females, Gretta, shows the most significant improvement in scores, while the high achiever among males, Ali, shows the least improvement. These results suggest that there is a variance in the reaction to the use of visual aids in terms of gender and proficiency level. Nevertheless, the significance of this finding needs to be supported by quantitative research to prove its validity.

4.4- Interview Results

All interviewees state that they use visual aids in their English speaking classrooms. However, there is a variation in the extent or frequency of usage; while four of them say that they use them in most of the lessons (about 70% of the time), there is one participant who says that she uses them in every speaking session. This result reveals that teachers consider the necessity of including visual literacy, but still there are instances where visual aids are not employed.

Regarding the types of visual aids that are used most in class, the results show that these include images, pictures, signs, real objects like clothes, slides, charts, murals, and flash cards. These constitute the basic constituents of visual aids. However, there are some types that are used by some teachers and ignored by others. For example, interviewee 1 says, "Mostly images and pictures. Sometimes I use real materials and sometimes signs for certain products or restaurants." On the other hand, the type of visual aids used most by interviewee 2 is real objects. It can be concluded from this contradiction in answers to question two that not all types of visual aids are used by all

teachers. In fact, the visual aids that require technological devices are the least used among teachers such as video tapes and CDs.

In answer to question three, all teachers agree that visual aids are beneficial in terms of enhancing communicative skills and oral fluency of students. The major benefits as teachers agree constitute increasing participation and clarity, exploring thoughts and ideas, enhancing vocabulary usage, improving self expression and creativity, and providing real bases for current situations.

For example, Interviewees 1 and 4 agree that the usage of visual aids makes students more enthusiastic and active. They play a role in terms of encouraging and motivating students to participate in the activities running in class.

On the other hand, interviewees 4 and 5 state that visual aids help in providing a situation that is close to reality and tangible. Interviewee 4 says, "Yes, they help students visualize the situation and deal with it on real bases." Similarly, Interviewee 5 states that "they are beneficial since they play a role in making the situation more tangible and clearer so students can express themselves in a better way." Thus, visual aids help clarify abstract ideas and create a real life natural context where language can be used in a close-to-reality way.

Nevertheless, interview 1 mentions an additional advantage related to the kinesthetic learning style. She says, "Yes they are largely beneficial since students would have the chance to explore visual literacy. Thus, it meets kinesthetic learning." Thus, the adoption of visual literacy is essential to meet the needs of students who are able to learn more while carrying out activities by themselves. It is one of the learning styles that should be taken into consideration in the teaching methodology.

The answers also show that students are able to express themselves in an easier manner with the use of visual aids since they help them retrieve ideas that are already present in their minds. In addition, visual aids enhance grasping new vocabulary words which are essential for students to express themselves in a better way. Interviewee 1 says that "visual aids trigger thoughts and ideas that are present in students' minds."

Increased creativity was also mentioned as an advantage for using visual aids. Students can create and come up with new words with the help of visual literacy. Interviewee 3 states that visual materials clarify the concept and provide "the students with various functional words and through them you can come up with sensory and expressional words which all enhance the communicative skills." Students can also use visual aids to create dramatic sketches and new situations where they can explore their ideas. "They usually describe or ask questions about the pictures used, and even they create dramatic scenes." (Interviewee 1)

Similarly, results of question five about students' reaction show that there is an agreement among teachers that students react in a positive way when visual aids are used. For instance, interviewee 1 says, "They become enthusiastic to speak about what they see in these visual materials. They usually describe or ask questions about the pictures used, and even they create dramatic scenes." Thus, most teachers agree that students are willing to share more and their anticipation is more effective when visual aids are used. In fact, they become active learners. Hence, teachers consider visual aids an essential part of their English classroom since their use has positive influence on students' fluency, communication skills and motivation.

Regarding difficulties faced by teachers in terms of using visual aids, the answers of participants differ to a great extent. Interviewee 4 says that no difficulties are

faced specially that some students bring some objects with them. However, space constitutes a difficulty as interviewee 3 mentions.

The major difficulties mentioned by the other participants are related to a lack in the availability of visual aids. This might be caused by financial reasons since teachers need a certain budget for this purpose, which is not always feasible. This issue is referred to by interviewees 1 and 5. Another reason is the need for special material or equipment which might not be present such as the projector. Thus, two interviewees mention that the classrooms are not fully equipped or prepared to use all types of visual aids. In fact, the answers of participants show that there is a shortage in technology devices that are necessary to use in their speaking lessons. For instance, Interviewee 2 states that she basically "has limited access to technological visual aids." Interviewees 1 and 4 agree that video tapes are important to use but they have limited access to them since their classrooms are not prepared with the needed devices.

The last difficulty is related to the time needed in order to prepare visual materials. Interviewee 5 states that it is time consuming. It can be concluded then that some difficulties are encountered by teachers when they attempt to use visual aids.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented the results that were obtained from analyzing each response in the questionnaire. In addition, the findings of the observation were presented separately and collectively. Finally, the interviewee's answers were presented based on similar findings. The following chapter includes the discussion and interpretation of results and the implications of the study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1- Introduction

In this chapter, the findings obtained in chapter four are discussed in details and interpreted in relation to the research questions and the purpose of the study. The concurrence of the findings with the literature on the topic under study is presented in this chapter as well.

5.2- Interpretation of results

The present study aims at investigating whether the implementation of visual literacy enhances the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners. In addition, it attempts to identify teachers' attitudes regarding the integration of visual aids in their speaking classrooms.

The three instruments that are used in this study led to common general findings which confirm that the integration of visual aids in English language classrooms enhances the oral speaking skills of students. It is clear from the results that visual aids improve students' oral fluency and enhance their motivation. These results concur with the findings of Smilanich and Lafreniere (2010) who emphasize the motivating role played by films and argue that print texts lack the aspects needed to engage students.

Teachers agree that visual aids are necessary to use in speaking classrooms for they have numerous positive effects on students' performance. Similarly, the survey results show that most of the students have positive attitude regarding visual aids. They think that their usage is an encouraging element that would help them express

58

themselves in English. Similarly, Rose (2011) points out that each individual would find in the interpretation of visual aids a means to express his/her inner self.

The same finding is true in the observation results which show that students' communicative skills improved after the integration of the manipulative variable. The results show progress in the students' averages over three observations before the introduction of visual aids compared to the averages after it. These findings concur with those of Seferoglu (2008) who shows that visual aids provide learners the opportunities to start and sustain conversations, negotiate meanings, and be exposed to native speakers and real-life Colloquial English. Thus, using visual aids in an oral communication classroom constitutes a positive learning experience that enhances language skills and competences. Likewise, Pino (1988) declares that the predicted outcomes after integrating visual aids include better understanding and use of the target language in addition to developed communicative skills.

In the interview conducted with the teachers, they all claimed that they often use visual aids in their speaking classes although there is a variation in the extent or frequency of usage. The survey that was conducted with students confirmed this finding as 83% of students say that their teacher uses visual aids in speaking classes. Due to complications that might be caused by using a scale that defines the frequency of using visual aids, having 6 grade students filling the survey, the question used instead a binary scale defining whether they are used or not. Thus, the results did not provide a solid reflection of the extent to which visual aids are used in speaking classes.

Based on the results obtained from the observation and on the fact that the teacher was not informed about the observation objective and there was no use of visual aids in the class observed, we can deduce that teachers are not using visual aids

regularly. In fact, there was significant change in the students' oral performance during the observations conducted after the introduction of the manipulative variable. The improvement in the students' oral performance with the integration of visual aids is stressed by Lin (2000) who demonstrates how the implementation of films and cinematic materials has a motivational value in terms of empowering listening and speaking skills.

Regarding the types of visual aids that are mostly used in speaking classes, there is agreement between what was mentioned by the students and that by the teachers. The top three types of visual materials mentioned by students were charts, pictures, and slides. 84% of the students mentioned charts and 80% of them mentioned pictures whereas slides came in the third place with 23%. These three types were mentioned as well by the teachers. Nevertheless, both teachers and students disregard films and paintings. In the survey conducted with students, films and paintings occupied the last two places among other types. Similarly, teachers did not mention paintings and films among the types of visual aids that they use most in class. It is worth noting that though films are the richest in linguistic input and paintings help in providing real life situations and cultural awareness, these two types are not frequently used in speaking lessons.

The vast majority of students (95%) do prefer speaking with visual aids. And the dominant majority (97%) would like to have visual aids in their speaking classes whether always or sometimes. This can be sensed as well from the teachers' talk of the enthusiasm shown by the students when visual aids are used. Thus, they consider that visual aids are an essential part of their English classroom. Students' increased enthusiasm and preference for visual aids are tackled by Berho and Defferding (2005)

who point out that the use of art work in the second language classroom exposes students to the target culture and appeals to students of various proficiency levels who might not be engaged in traditional grammar tasks.

All teachers agree that visual aids are beneficial in terms of enhancing communicative skills and oral fluency of students. Similarly, 93% of students regard visual aids as helpful. Half of them strongly agree that it helps them more in learning to speak English. These matching findings can be considered solid evidence on the great positive influence visual aids have in terms of improving communicative skills of students. Similar findings are obtained by Hollich (2006) who points out that visual literacy is involved to a great extent in the process of learning different linguistic skills since visual perception interferes with other types of perception. Elwin and Sheats (1950) also assert that films and other types of visual aids are recommended since they promote discussions and other learning opportunities.

An additional common finding is the increased degree of participation fostered by the use of visual aids. 83% of students say that they do share more in speaking activities when visual materials are used; most students think that their motivation to take part in the communicative tasks is increased by employing visual literacy. Likewise, all teachers said that the usage of visual aids makes students more enthusiastic and active and that they play a role in terms of encouraging and motivating students to participate in the activities running in class. These findings are harmonious with those of Seven and Engin (2007) who suggest that using visual and audio materials provide long term learning. Since all of their senses are involved, students concentrate more on the lesson and they get more interested and motivated. Moreover, visual materials help students to be active learners since they take part in the learning process

and they "participate in the lesson vividly and voluntarily" (Seven & Engin, 2007, p. 11).

When we go more deeply into the areas of influence, we can notice that there is a common solid ground that confirms a concurrence among the findings obtained from the three instruments. The fact that there is an average of 81% of positive answers confirming the positive effect of visual aids matches what the teachers say about the influence of using visual materials. This concurs as well with the findings of the observations where the average of ratios shows 1.30 positive ratio after the introduction of visual aids. This reveals that the use of visual aids was optimistically anticipated by both teachers and students and the same finding was obtained by observations over a period of six weeks. These results match Ortuno's (1994) recommendation that visual authentic materials should be used in order to improve the four linguistic skills of writing, comprehension, speaking, and reading and in order to increase cultural awareness.

Nevertheless, when we analyze the findings of each method separately, we notice that there are some contradictions that can be observed between some of findings in the different methodologies used. The positive effect of using visual aids on vocabulary learning was highly agreed upon by students with a great majority of 92%, and that was obtained as well from the interviews with teachers where most of them mentioned vocabulary usage as subject to enhancement with the use of visual materials.

On the other hand, this was not clear in the findings of the observations. In fact, it was not clear if the improvement in scores after the introduction of the variable was due to the variable itself, or to the natural improvement along the course of time during an academic year. Nevertheless, previous research demonstrates that vocabulary

learning is enhanced by visual literacy. For instance, Bush (2007) points out that pictures constitute preferable tools to integrate vocabulary and culture and that teachers should have access to a collection of images and related vocabulary and cultural terms. Moreover, Sydorenko (2010) emphasizes the role that images play in terms of enhancing the acquisition of vocabulary words. She stresses the fact that learners tend to learn the greater number of words by connecting them to visual images.

Due to several limitations in conducting this study, particularly regarding the types of visual aids, the validity of this finding could not be established, thus further research using other methodologies over a longer period of time would be able to validate this issue.

While Organized Sentences came in the second place on the ladder of positive answers where 90% of the students mentioned that using visual aids in speaking classes enhances the organization of sentences, all teachers agree that visual aids are beneficial in terms of enhancing communicative skills and oral fluency of students. The results of the observations confirmed this finding with a positive ratio of 1.32 after the introduction of the variable. Thus it is clear that there is a consensus obtained from the three methodologies over the positive influence of using visual materials on oral fluency and organization of sentences. The positive effect of visual literacy on oral fluency and sentence structure is also reinforced by Hollich (2006) who demonstrates that audio and visual aids help students in learning segmentation, vocabulary, and grammar.

Clear and High Voice came in the third position on the ladder of positive answers where 89% of the students say that using visual aids in speaking classes enhances clarity and voice level. Teachers as well confirmed that using visual materials increases clarity. Looking at the results obtained from the observations, it is apparent

63

that there is a clear positive effect of using visual aids with a positive ratio of 1.35 after the introduction of the variable. Thus, it is clear that the assenting effect of visual aids on voice clarity is inarguable.

While teachers did not mention the effect of the usage of visual materials on the usage of hand gestures and expressions, 84% of the students say that it is subject to enhancement with the use of visual materials. This result was also confirmed by the highest ratio in the results of the observations with 1.8 positive ratio after the introduction of the variable. This finding concurs with Burmark's (2002) observation regarding the influence of visual aids, particularly the portraits, in terms of enhancing self expression of students. By using portraits, the students would talk freely about the emotions and features and they would interpret artistic skills. Rao and Thilakha (2010) also stress that the adoption of alternative teaching methods that incorporate visual literacy would develop fluency, body language, the analyzing capacity of students and their ability to talk freely.

The three instruments used in this study did not stress the positive effect of using of visual aids on language in terms of improving language usage and committing less mistakes. While a majority of students regarded visual aids as having a role in enhancing language learning and decreasing mistakes, with 74% of participants choosing a positive answer, yet, this score lies 7 points below the average of positive answers with 81%. On the other hand, teachers did not mention the effect of using visual aids on linguistics, whereas there was no change in the linguistic complexity in the observations after the introduction of the variable, this having a stagnant ratio of 1.00. However, this result would possibly be altered if there was use of other types of visual aids such as videos. This conclusion would need further study and is again

subject to the presence of several limitations that accompanied the implementation of this study.

Finally, Variety of Ideas and Creativity was the least positively regarded attribute among students with 59% of positive answers recorded. Yet, teachers mentioned improving self expression and creativity as one of the areas of influence of the usage of visual materials. Likewise, a positive ratio of 1.32 was obtained from the findings of the observations. The same result in terms of enhancing creativity is presented by Walsh (2003) who found that students rely on pictures to provide responses which varied between labeling, observing, and commenting on aspects reflected in the pictures at meta-textual and intertextual levels. In addition, the children use these pictures to express emotions and even to create stories which indicate a high evaluative and cognitive level.

5.3- Implications

Since speaking a second language constitutes a major concern for schools and educators, this study is expected to provide solid outcome that serves as basis for reconsidering conventional methods in teaching oral skills.

The present study has important implications for the teaching of English as a second language learners. When teachers attempt to apply methodologies that respond to various students' needs, they should take into consideration the students' different learning styles and their requirements. A starting point would be to employ visual literacy which is necessary in terms of strengthening the communicative skills and motivating students.

The results of this study show that it has become crucial to challenge the pedagogies which rely solely on texts and print materials and replace them by more efficient and nonconventional methods. Visual literacy should no longer be considered a desirable option that can be added to the curriculum. It should be regarded as a major constituent of curricula that aim at teaching a second language.

5.4. Conclusion

From all of the above, we can deduce that the use of visual materials has a clear and inarguable positive effect on some areas of influence rather than others, namely organization of sentences, and voice and clarity. These two attributes are subject to agreement among results from the three instruments used in this study.

However, it is worth mentioning that using visual aids in speaking classes has no remarkable effect on the linguistic level where results from all of the three methodologies have a consensus on the limited positive influence of using visual materials on this area in particular. This conclusion can be somehow applied to the effect on vocabulary usage, where the teachers did not stress the positive influence of using visual aids on this area in particular, and the findings of the observations lacked critical evidence on the positive influence of using visual materials in speaking classes on vocabulary. The fact that 92% of students positively regarded the effect on vocabulary could be due to a possible overlap between speaking sessions and other language sessions dedicated for teaching vocabulary.

This chapter included interpretations of the findings in a comparative way. The following chapter includes the conclusions, recommendations, and limitations of the study.

CHAPPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

6.1- Introduction

This study aimed at examining the effect of incorporating visual literacy for the purpose of enhancing the oral fluency and communicative skills of second language learners. In addition, it attempted to identify teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding the integration and effect of visual aids in their speaking classrooms. The participants included grade six students who learn English as a second language in addition to teachers who teach English as a second language for elementary and intermediate levels. A questionnaire was distributed to be filled by all sixth graders in four sections of grade six at the school investigated. In addition, six students from one class were observed over a period of two months using an oral fluency rubric. Finally, a semi-structured interview including six questions was conducted with five teachers.

6.2- Conclusions

The findings from the three instruments reveal that the integration of visual aids enhances second language communication skills and oral fluency. Another common finding is that students hold positive attitudes regarding the implementation of visual literacy. The top three types of visual materials mentioned by both students and teachers were charts, pictures, and slides. Nevertheless, both teachers and students disregard films and paintings. Thus, since films and paintings are rich in cultural exemplification and oral input, it is highly recommended that they be used more frequently.

The findings do not reveal solid support for the assumption that visual aids have positive effect on vocabulary learning. It is clear that teachers assume that visual aids have great influence on certain areas like vocabulary learning and have minor influence on others like hand gestures and expressions. However, the findings of this study show the opposite. Thus, even if teachers are using visual aids, they are not testing their effect on various attributes in order to know what materials should be introduced to improve certain abilities.

A strong effect of visual aids on hand gestures and expressions was recorded by the analysis of both questionnaires and observation, which opposes the obtained results in the interviews. Teachers did not regard the usage of visual materials as effective in this area. Hence, the findings in this study may constitute the incentive for teachers to value the importance of visual literacy to improve body language and self expression.

Finally, we can deduce from the results of the three instruments that the use of visual materials has an obvious and inarguable positive effect on some areas of study rather than others, particularly Organization of Sentences and Voice and Clarity.

6.3- Recommendations

Gender does not constitute a basis for analyzing the obtained results in this study. Nonetheless, the gender issues may be considered in future studies in order to identify the differences between males' and females' responses and attitudes regarding the implementation of visual literacy.

The concern of this study is to examine the effect of visual aids on speaking a second language. Nevertheless, other linguistic skills such as reading, listening, and

writing are not examined in this study. Other research that studies the effect of visual

literacies on various language skills would contribute to the results obtained in this

study.

6.4- Limitations

The types of visual aids used were limited to images, pictures, word charts, and

signs. Using other types of visual aids was not applicable because of a shortage in

certain devices particularly DVDs and head projector. In addition, the teachers

participating in the study were not balanced in terms of gender. This issue could be a

base for further research attempting to study the effect of gender variation on the results

of the interviewee.

Regarding the survey, formulating the questionnaire was subject to restrictions

caused by students' age and level of understanding as grade 6 students. Thus, certain

scales on open-ended questions were not applicable at this level. Moreover, the study

did not take into consideration the effect of visual literacy on students' communicative

skills outside classroom. This needs a long-term study to see if students are able to

transfer their acquired skills to real life situations.

In terms of the participants in the study, the sample was taken from one school.

The results would have been more valid if another sample from another school took part

in the survey. Finally, the study was conducted at a private school where second

language is well-taught with a relatively advanced standard. Public schools, where

second language may be given less emphasis and priority in the curriculum, would have

shown different results from the ones obtained from this study.

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APPENDIX I

Interview for MA Research Proposal:

The Effect of Using Visual Aids on Second Language Speaking

Maya M. Ezzedine

LAU

<u>**Questions**</u>

1. Do you use visual aids in your speaking sessions? To what extent?

2. What types of visual aids do you use most in your classroom?

3. Do you think that visual aids are beneficial in terms of enhancing communicative skills and oral fluency of students? How?

4. How do students react when you implement visual literacy in your speaking class?

5. Do you face any difficulties while using visual aids in class? If yes, what are these difficulties?

6. What are the types of visual aids that you think are important to use and are not available or you have limited access to them?

<u>Answers</u>

<u>Interviewee 1</u>

Female

Age: 31

How many years of experience in teaching do you have? 6

What grades do you teach? 6- 7

What major have you studied at university? English Linguistics

1. Yes, I use them a lot. Nearly every speaking session includes a kind of visual aids. However, sometimes I am obliged to use the same ones more than once.

2. Mostly images and pictures. Sometimes I use real materials and sometimes signs for certain products or restaurants.

3. Yes they are largely beneficial since students would have the chance to explore visual literacy. Thus, it meets kinesthetic learning. Also visual aids trigger thoughts and ideas that are present in students' minds.

4. They become enthusiastic to speak about what they see in these visual materials. They usually describe or ask questions about the pictures used, and even they create dramatic scenes.

5. Visual aids need a certain budget to be prepared, which is not always available. Also there aren't prepared classrooms with LCD and television. Also the overhead projector is not always available.

6. Videos and CDs; also charts which need skills and time to prepare so they require an assistant to help.

<u>Interviewee 2</u>

Female

Age: 30

How many years of experience in teaching do you have? 10

What grades do you teach? 6- 7

What major have you studied at university? English Language and Literature

1. Of course, in every enumeration (speaking class) depending on the subject. About 70% or more of the time.

2. Clothes, medicine, real objects.

3. Of course. Students like to have things in their hands while speaking. They feel more into the situation.

4. They become more excited, willing to participate more.

5. Sometimes there aren't available materials or it's not applicable.

6. All visual aids should be real. Basically I have limited access to technological visual aids.

Interviewee 3

Female

Age: 34

How many years of experience in teaching do you have? 15

What grades do you teach? 5- 6

What major have you studied at university? English Literature and its Languages

1. Visual aids are a must to facilitate the objective, especially at the beginning so that the idea can be grasped. I use them in about 70% of the speaking classes.

2. Murals, realia (real objects). Not very often the projector, charts, images.

3. It clarifies the idea and provides the students with various functional words and through them you can come up with sensory and expressional words which all enhance the communicative skills.

4. They are completely concerned and interested. They share more and their anticipation is more effective.

5. We have difficulties in spaces sometimes.

6. We ask students to get items. Sometimes we can't ask students to get some tools for some reasons like safety. Also there are limited field trips.

Interviewee 4

Female

Age: 42

How many years of experience in teaching do you have? 11

What grades do you teach? 6

What major have you studied at university? English Literature

1. Of course I use them in every enumeration period.

2. Sometimes solids, posters, real materials, flash cards.

3. Yes, they help students visualize the situation and deal with it on real bases.

4. They would be active and enthusiastic. It provokes them to elicit more ideas. They participate more.

5. No difficulties are faced. Sometimes students are assigned to bring visual aids with them.

6. Video tapes. It's documentary and important.

Interviewee 5

Male

Age: 28

How many years of experience in teaching do you have? 4

What grades do you teach? 4

What major have you studied at university? English Literature

1. Yes, I use them but not all the time since there are no facilities and I have to prepare them by myself.

2. I use slides, pictures and word cards.

3. Yes they are beneficial since they play a role in making the situation more tangible and clearer so students can express themselves in a better way. Also they are useful in terms of vocabulary improvement so students can look, identify, and name the places or people presented in them.

4. Some students get distracted but these are the minority. The others love describing and using them while speaking. They participate more and feel free to talk.

5. There are some financial problems you know. Pictures and images are relatively expensive. Also they are time consuming. Also the classrooms don't include LCD so we have to preserve ahead of time.

6. Paintings are very helpful specially that they reflect cultures and social patterns. Also maps and charts are useful but they are difficult to prepare.

Oral Fluency Rubric for MA Research Proposal:
The Effect of Using Visual Aids on Second Language Speaking
LAU
STUDENT OBSERVED:
_____

CATEGORY	Exemplary	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Incomplete	Pts.
Vocabulary usage	**3 points**	**2 points**	**1 point**	**0 points**	
	☐ Words that the audience could understand are used. The vocabulary is strong and unambiguous.	☐ Appropriate word choice is used, but with less sophistication, expressiveness and/or originality.	☐ The speaker uses words that may be unsuited to the topic, audience or purpose of the message; word choice lacks originality.	☐ Inappropriate use of vocabulary; words are unsuited to the topic.	
Organization and structure	**3 points**	**2 points**	**1 point**	**0 points**	
	☐ The message is overtly organized. The speaker helps you understand the sequence and relationships of ideas by using organizational aids.	☐ The message is organized. You do not have difficulty understanding the sequence and relationships among the ideas in the message.	☐ The organization of the message is mixed up; it jumps back and forth.	☐ The message is so disorganized. You cannot understand most of the message.	

Style and voice	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points	
	☐ The volume varies to add emphasis and interest. Rate varies and pauses are used to add emphasis and interest.	☐ The volume is not too low or too loud. The rate is not too fast or too slow. Pauses are not too long or at inappropriate spots.	☐The volume is too low or too loud. The rate is too fast or too slow. Pauses are too long or at inappropriate spots.	☐ The volume is so low .The rate is so fast that you cannot understand most of the message	
Nonverbal communication	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points	
	☐ Eye contact is made regularly. Body posture is maintained all the time and gestures are used extensively and appropriately.	☐ Eye contact is made intermittently. Body posture is maintained most of the time and many gestures are used.	☐ Eye contact is rarely made. Body posture is rarely maintained and gestures are almost absent.	☐ Lack of eye contact. Body posture and gestures are inappropriate or absent.	

Linguistic complexity	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points	
	☐ Accurate language that suits to the topic and audience is used. Grammar is conventional.	☐ The language used is accurate most of the time. Grammar is usually correct.	☐ The language used is often inaccurate. Lapses in sentence structure and grammar .	☐ Inaccurate language is used. Incorrect sentence structure and grammar.	
Content	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points	
	☐Relevant information is present all the time.	☐Relevant information is present most of the time.	☐A lot of information is not relevant.	☐The information is irrelevant.	
TOTAL POINTS					/18

APPENDIX III

Questionnaire for MA Research Proposal:

The Effect of Using Visual Aids on Second Language Speaking

Maya M. Ezzedine

LAU

D1.   Age:_____
D2.   Male □   Female □
D3.   Origin: _____

D4.   Does your mother work? □ yes   □ no
If yes, what does she work? _____

D5.   Does your father work? □ yes   □ no
If yes, what does he work? _____

Q1.   Do you learn speaking in your English language class?
□ yes   □ no

Q2.   Do you know what visual materials are?
□ yes   □ no

Visual materials are things that you can look at, such as pictures, a film, model, map, or slide that the teacher uses to help you understand something or to remember information

Q3.   During your speaking classes, does the teacher use pictures, films, slides on projector, maps, charts, paintings, and other visual materials?
□ yes   □ no

Q4.   What are the visual materials that your teacher uses most? (You can choose more than one answer)
□ pictures
□ films

□ slides on projector
□ maps
□ paintings
□ charts

Q5.   Do you like your speaking classes

  With visual materials?   □ Yes   □ No

  Without visual materials?   □ Yes   □ No

Q5a.   If you like speaking classes more with visual materials, why do you say so?

_____

_____

_____

___

Q6.   Do you think that using visual materials helps you more in learning to speak English?
□ Strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ Strongly disagree

Q7.   With the use of visual materials

a.	You are able to use more vocabulary words	□ yes	□ no
b.	Your sentences become more organized	□ yes	□ no
c.	You speak with a clear and high voice	□ yes	□ no
d.	You use your hand gestures and face expressions more	□ yes	□ no
e.	You use good language and less mistakes	□ yes	□ no
f.	You have more varied and creative ideas	□ yes	□ no

Q8.   Do you think that students are able to speak more in English when visual materials are used?
□ yes   □ no

Q9.   Do you feel that you share more in speaking activities when visual materials are used?
□ yes   □ no

Q10.   **Choose** the statement that best suits your views
□ I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are always used.

□ I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are sometimes used.

□ I prefer my speaking classes when visual materials are never used.

		Total	Gender	
			Female	Male
Learn Speaking English	No	3%	0%	5%
	Yes	97%	100%	95%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Awareness of Visual Material	NA	2%	2%	2%
	No	8%	9%	6%
	Yes	91%	89%	92%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Teacher Uses Visual Aids	NA	2%	4%	0%
	No	15%	13%	17%
	Yes	83%	83%	83%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes With Visual Aids	No	5%	4%	6%
	Yes	95%	96%	94%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes Without Visual Aids	NA	2%	4%	0%
	No	86%	87%	85%
	Yes	13%	9%	15%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Visual Aids Help Learning to Speak English	NA	1%	0%	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%
	Disagree	7%	4%	9%
	Agree	43%	42%	44%
	Strongly Agree	50%	55%	45%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

		Origin					
		Beirut	Beqaa	Mount	NA	Other	South
Learn	No	0%	8%	0%	33%	0%	3%
Speaking	Yes	100%	92%	100%	67%	100%	97%
English	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Awareness of	NA	0%	8%	0%	33%	0%	0%
	No	11%	0%	8%	0%	20%	6%
	Yes	89%	92%	92%	67%	80%	94%
Visual Material	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Teacher Uses	NA	0%	8%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	No	19%	0%	17%	33%	0%	17%
	Yes	81%	92%	83%	67%	80%	83%
Visual Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes	No	7%	0%	3%	0%	20%	6%
With Visual	Yes	93%	100%	97%	100%	80%	94%
Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes	NA	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Without Visual	No	81%	85%	94%	67%	80%	83%
	Yes	19%	8%	6%	33%	20%	14%
Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Visual Aids	NA	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Help Learning	Disagree	7%	8%	3%	33%	40%	3%
to Speak	Agree	33%	62%	47%	33%	40%	40%
	Strongly Agree	59%	23%	50%	33%	20%	57%
English	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

		Mother Works		Father Works	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Learn	No	4%	0%	0%	3%
Speaking	Yes	96%	100%	100%	97%
English	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Awareness of	NA	3%	0%	0%	2%
	No	7%	9%	0%	8%
	Yes	90%	91%	100%	90%
Visual Material	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Teacher Uses	NA	3%	0%	0%	2%
	No	14%	17%	33%	14%
	Yes	84%	83%	67%	84%
Visual Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes	No	5%	4%	0%	5%
With Visual	Yes	95%	96%	100%	95%
Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Like Classes	NA	3%	0%	0%	2%
Without Visual	No	84%	89%	100%	85%
	Yes	14%	11%	0%	13%
Aids	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Visual Aids	NA	0%	2%	0%	1%
	Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%
Help Learning	Disagree	10%	2%	0%	7%
to Speak	Agree	41%	46%	67%	42%
	Strongly Agree	49%	50%	33%	50%
English	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

		Origin					
		Beirut	Beqaa	Mount	NA	Other	South
Students	No	15%	15%	8%	33%	40%	11%
	Yes	85%	85%	92%	67%	60%	89%
Speak More	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
You Share	No	4%	0%	19%	33%	60%	11%
	Yes	96%	100%	81%	67%	40%	89%
More	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Usage	Always Used	56%	69%	67%	33%	40%	74%
	Never Used	4%	15%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Frequency	Sometimes Used	41%	15%	31%	67%	60%	26%
Preference	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Vocabulary	NA	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	No	15%	0%	3%	0%	20%	6%
	Yes	85%	100%	97%	100%	60%	94%
Words	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Organized	No	19%	15%	6%	0%	40%	6%
	Yes	81%	85%	94%	100%	60%	94%
Setences	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Clear and High	NA	4%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	No	22%	31%	22%	0%	60%	23%
	Yes	74%	69%	78%	100%	20%	77%
Voice	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hand Gestures	NA	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	No	30%	46%	47%	100%	60%	31%
and Facial	Yes	70%	54%	53%	0%	20%	69%
Expressions	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Good	NA	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	No	15%	8%	6%	33%	40%	3%
Language Less	Yes	85%	92%	94%	67%	40%	97%
Mistakes	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Varied and	NA	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	3%
	No	19%	0%	11%	0%	40%	17%
	Yes	81%	100%	89%	100%	40%	80%
Creative Ideas	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

88

		Mother Works		Father Works	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Students	No	15%	11%	17%	13%
	Yes	85%	89%	83%	87%
Speak More	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
You Share	No	14%	13%	33%	12%
	Yes	86%	87%	67%	88%
More	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Usage	Always Used	62%	70%	50%	65%
Frequency	Never Used	4%	2%	17%	3%
	Sometimes Used	34%	28%	33%	32%
Preference	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Vocabulary	NA	1%	0%	0%	1%
	No	5%	9%	17%	6%
	Yes	93%	91%	83%	93%
Words	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Organized	No	14%	7%	17%	11%
	Yes	86%	93%	83%	89%
Setences	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Clear and High	NA	3%	0%	0%	2%
	No	27%	20%	50%	23%
	Yes	70%	80%	50%	75%
Voice	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hand Gestures	NA	1%	0%	0%	1%
and Facial	No	40%	41%	17%	42%
	Yes	59%	59%	83%	58%
Expressions	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Good	NA	1%	0%	0%	1%
Language Less	No	14%	2%	33%	8%
	Yes	85%	98%	67%	91%
Mistakes	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Varied and	NA	3%	0%	0%	2%
	No	14%	15%	0%	15%
	Yes	84%	85%	100%	83%
Creative Ideas	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

			Gender	
		Total	Female	Male
Students	No	13%	11%	15%
	Yes	87%	89%	85%
Speak More	Total	100%	100%	100%
You Share	No	13%	11%	15%
	Yes	87%	89%	85%
More	Total	100%	100%	100%
Usage	Always Used	65%	77%	55%
	Never Used	3%	0%	6%
Frequency	Sometimes Used	32%	23%	39%
Preference	Total	100%	100%	100%
Vocabulary	NA	1%	0%	2%
	No	7%	6%	8%
	Yes	92%	94%	91%
Words	Total	100%	100%	100%
Organized	No	11%	6%	15%
	Yes	89%	94%	85%
Setences	Total	100%	100%	100%
Clear and High	NA	2%	0%	3%
	No	24%	21%	27%
	Yes	74%	79%	70%
Voice	Total	100%	100%	100%
Hand Gestures	NA	1%	0%	2%
and Facial	No	40%	40%	41%
	Yes	59%	60%	58%
Expressions	Total	100%	100%	100%
Good	NA	1%	0%	2%
Language Less	No	9%	4%	14%
	Yes	90%	96%	85%
Mistakes	Total	100%	100%	100%
Varied and	NA	2%	0%	3%
	No	14%	15%	14%
	Yes	84%	85%	83%
Creative Ideas	Total	100%	100%	100%