

Multimodal Analysis of Songs and Images in An Elementary English Classroom

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Abstract

The potential effects the use of multimodal in the classroom have been widely recognized by many researchers. However, the descriptive account regarding how the teachers operate the variety of modes and how they treat the modes alongside their main materials is still limited. This study aims to analyze the functions of multimodal: song and image as modes used in an English classroom at one of Elementary schools in Garut. Qualitative design was chosen to attain the objective. The study which followed a case study procedure observed and interviewed an English teacher who has been chosen purposively by using certain criteria. The data was analyzed with qualitatively analysis. The findings indicated that these two modes in this case: song and image serve a complementary role to the main materials in the teaching and learning. The song helps the teacher make student interest in learning, and create a good atmosphere. Meanwhile the image helps the students brainstorm the ideas of the material taught by the teacher. Image was also used to visualize the object of material to lead the student into same idea. In line with the findings, the study confirms the positive role of different modes in the elementary classroom.

Keywords: *Elementary school, Image, Multimodal, Song.*

INTRODUCTION

English at the elementary school level is one of the lessons that are needed in the era of globalization. Teaching English in elementary schools should involve multimodal (Kamelia, Sukyadi, & Kurniawan). According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), multimodal is defined as an approach that uses semiotic modes such as audio, visual, and kinesthetic. Thus, English teachers in elementary schools are looking for various modes to support effective English learning, which can creatively generate meaning and encourage classroom interaction.

Multimodal has an important role in the learning environment, especially at the elementary school level. Students are presented with knowledge content with verbal representations and one or more appropriate visual representations (Moreno & Mayer, 2007), because elementary school students have not been able to think abstractly. So specifically, teachers in elementary schools use modes to visualize them into a more real/concrete form. The modes that are often used at the elementary school level include images and songs. These images and songs are able to turn abstract concepts into concrete ones, are able to present large amounts of information in a limited time with little effort, and are able to stimulate student interest in learning (Abdulrahman, 2020).

Images and songs also make students able to obtain information in learning well and this will affect learning outcomes.

Many studies on multimodal have been carried out. For example, Gilakjani, Ismail, and Ahmadi (2011), discuss multimodality learning, multimodality and second language mastery, and the implications of multimodality in language learning and teaching. Gilakjani, et al. agree that utilizing multimodality can engage students in meaningful cognitive critical understanding, and can help language learners to cope more efficiently when they encounter new modes of presenting information. Also Littleton, Twiner, and Gillen (2010), found the fact that the use of multimodal sources – the use of interactive whiteboards (IWB) was effective in teaching. Bonsignori (2018) found that a multimodal approach to language teaching can help students learn to recognize and understand modes outside of verbal language (for example, visual, gestural, and spatial) to better understand and produce texts in the target language effectively.

However, most of these studies focus on the analysis of multimodal components in helping teaching and learning processes, not on the investigation that describes the function of images and songs as multimodal components and refers to the relationship of meaning with verbal modes. Similar to the research conducted by Kamelia, Sukyadi, and Kurniawan which explored the teaching of EFL through multimodal by investigating the types of multimodal often used by teachers (gestures, proxemic spaces, and images), their functions, and their semiotic relationship with verbal modes. The difference between this study and previous study is the mode used.

Therefore, current researchers feel the need to explore images and songs as modes that play an important role in the learning environment by describing their function and referring to the relationship between their meaning and verbal as outlined by Royce (2002) in their discussion in order to be able to play an optimal role in their application to learning in elementary school.

METHOD

The specific purpose of this study is to explore and describe the function of images and songs in learning English in elementary schools. This qualitative research was conducted in a village elementary school in North Garut. This school was chosen because the teachers are multimodal with expertise in images and songs, and this school is the only school where English lessons are still available.

The data presented in this paper are derived from classroom-based in-depth observations and interviews with one teacher who teaches English using images and songs at a village elementary school in North Garut. The class is third grade students, i.e., ages 8-10. One teaching session was recorded and thoroughly analyzed to find several incidents that demonstrated the modes used by teachers, and how they functioned in teaching activities. Observation and video recording of this research was conducted once (June 14, 2022) and observation lasted 9 minutes. Furthermore, interviews were conducted at the analysis stage because certain data needed to be confirmed and enriched, and teacher was also interviewed to investigate his knowledge of images and songs in teaching and learning practices in the classroom. Then, the video recording is played over and over again to get the expected data. Specifically, pictures and songs were analyzed through Royce's (2002) theory.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussions that resulted from the interview and observation data will be covered in this part. This part will be organized in accordance with the research question: 1. what are the roles of song and image in elementary-level English classrooms?

Findings

Based on data has been obtained from observations and interviews. The study found that the multimodal which is often used at the elementary level has several modes; song and image, as stated by the informant that:

Respondent: Multimodal that I know is a song, gesture, photo, writing or reading. Because I teach English in elementary school so mostly I use these media (songs and images) to make them easy to learn the material.

Regarding the function of multimodal; song and image at elementary school based on the data at the interview is as a complementary role to the main materials in the teaching and learning.

Respondent: The function of these modes is generally as a complementary and helps the teachers deliver the learning materials to student.

The song helps the teacher make student interest in learning, and create a good atmosphere. The effectiveness of using music and songs in teach English, particularly to young learners, has been supported by numerous foreign researches. It has been suggested that using music and songs in language classes is an effective teaching strategy, particularly for young students. Songs were incorporated into the Audio-lingual Method from the 1950s through the 1970s in order to combat potential boredom brought on by endless drills (Kanel, 2000). Songs make the classroom fun and entertaining, reducing the amount of time that students are bored in class (Ulate, 2008). This research is inline with the interview data that mentioned by the informant that said:

Respondent: the use of songs in learning makes students more interested and enthusiastic in learning. Because with the songs, it is easier for students to remember the material, than teaching materials that are explained without the songs.

The use of images is one of the focuses of this research. The teacher explains the picture to the students in the form of a print out. These images print out serves as the main visual aid for delivering teaching materials.

Based on the observation data, the teacher only prints the pictures. Based on these findings, the images only act as illustrative visuals. This kind of function has been described by Moghtadi (2012). He found that one of the functions of image in L2 teaching is as an illustration which has a passive function in a text. The images serve to provide context, aid understanding, and increase motivation (Moghtadi, 2012) cited in (Kamelia, Sukyadi, & Kurniawan, 2017). Furthermore, the data shows that the printed image involves two types of intersemiotic relationships, namely intersemiotic synonyms and intersemiotic hyponyms. This synonymous relationship stipulates that the image and the verbal in the composition are co-ordinated in the same sense and context. Furthermore, the rest experienced a hyponym relationship. This type of relationship defines an image showing the relationship between a more general term and a more specific example.

The images build students' imaginations and may be stimulated in the classroom, leading them to write down their thoughts. Wahyuningsih (2011) tries to measure the efficiency of using pictures, the results indicated that using pictures can enhance students' motivation, and improve their writing performance. Wright (1989) also reinforced a solid case that pictures can help both teachers and students since they provide inspiration and motivate them when speaking and writing. Based on the informant opinion she said that:

Respondent: the image helps the students brainstorm the ideas of the material taught by the teacher. Image was also used to visualize the object of material to lead the student into same idea.

As a result based on observation activities and interview that have been carried out learning English in elementary school is very likely to use multimodal. Children at the age of elementary school need interesting material learning. With multimodal learning, every student is guaranteed to have at least one of his or her learning preferences met at some point during the lesson. They really enjoy learning and they also become more responsive. The function of the two modes is generally to help teachers to more easily convey learning materials to students, while for students they become more interested and enthusiastic in learning. For example, the use of songs makes it easier for students to remember songs than teaching materials that are explained without songs. While the image is help visualize the material to students.

The use of the song is usually in preteaching, in the beginning to warm up. But sometimes there is also something in the main material to assess the accuracy of the pronunciation of the song and the students' self-confidence. The image is rarely use in the main material. If at the beginning, for brainstorming, students are fishing to focus on the material, then the main material is usually as an explanation of the material, clues to questions and clarifies the point.

Discussion

This study aims to deeper knowledge into the function of multimodal learning in elementary school. This study shows that the songs makes the student interest and enjoy the learning process. It is very inline with Yusuf Yuliyanto (2017) who said that the use of songs in listening class can be implemented for increase student interest during the learning process. They can enjoy activities, and make them not feel bored also easier to understand the material. The song can make the class fun and make a good atmosphere. The results study by Dzanic and Pejic (2021) said that teachers can use songs to help create an enjoyable environment where children are learning more effectively, and also as Etty Pratiwi (2018) said that song will make the atmosphere in the classroom more comfortable to learn English and easily understandable. Students can understand a short and simple sentences by using song.

In addition the image can visualize the student about the material. It is relevant to the finding of Aschawir (2014); there are many benefits to using images when teaching, including increasing the input's realistic and liveliness. Image also can stimulate the student to make idea. It same with Izza Maulana Rohman (2016) in his finding that said an image is visual, it works incredibly well to increase students' enthusiasm for language acquisition. Students will learn to focus on details they haven't seen that are related to their subject if images are used in teaching and learning.

The limitations in this study are; only researching two modes, the number of the participant and the level of the school.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study aims to get deeper knowledge about the use of multimodal; song and image in the English elementary classroom. We found that song and image at elementary school is a complementary role to the main materials in the teaching and learning. The song usually used for pre-teaching, for making student interest and make a good atmosphere in the class. The image used to visualize the material to students and also for brainstorming; students are fishing to focus on the material.

Finally, hopefully the results of this study can be useful for English teachers and broaden their perspectives on how English can be actualized in the classroom through several modes. For the future researcher it will be better to investigate many different modes, and found in the other level; junior high school, and senior high school.

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