

Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Language Learning Activities on Oral Skill Development: A Study of In-Class Oral Speech, PowerPoint Presentations, Video, and Blog Projects in an International Context

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Abstract: In recent years, the digitalization of society has sparked growing interest in multimodality, particularly within applied linguistics and second language acquisition (SLA). Research in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has examined how both teachers and students perceive and implement multimodal activities in second language classrooms, exploring their effects on L2 comprehension, writing, and vocabulary development. However, the impact of multimodal activities on L2 oral skill development, specifically oral presentation skills, remains underexplored. This study investigates the influence of four different modes of oral presentations (oral speech, PowerPoint presentations, video projects, and blog projects) as multimodal activities on the L2 oral skills development of first-year ELT students in an international context in Northern Cyprus. Employing a mixed-method approach, including surveys and interviews, the study reveals that multimodal activities significantly enhanced integrated skills, particularly vocabulary, grammar, writing, presentation, and speaking abilities. These activities also enabled students to identify and correct linguistic errors while improving their presentation skills through the consistent use of language across various modes (e.g., classroom presentations and blog reflections). Additionally, multimodality fostered social skills by facilitating group participation, peer collaboration, feedback exchange, and the negotiation of linguistic, content, and technical knowledge. On a psychological level, the multimodal approach helped students overcome their fear of oral presentations, reduce anxiety, boost self-confidence, and increase motivation. The use of visuals, such as PowerPoint slides, videos, and blogs, presented both challenges and opportunities, underscoring the importance of training students to effectively utilize multimodal activities to enhance their speaking skills and highlighting the need to integrate such technologies into L2 education.

Keywords: *Multimodality, oral speech, PowerPoint presentation, video project, blog, perceptions*

INTRODUCTION

The recent surge in technological advancements has created numerous opportunities for language learning to transition from traditional, routine classrooms to technology-driven activities. Studies like Hubbard (2009) have confirmed the effectiveness of technologies such as computers in L2 education, enhancing both language skill development and retention. This shift in technology has also sparked a significant transformation in language studies, often referred to as the 'trans-turn.' This transformation underscores the negotiability, permeability, and fluidity of boundaries between languages and other modalities in meaning-making (Sun, Yang, & Silva, 2021).

Moreover, the 'trans-turn' emphasizes a multimodal approach, defined as “an interdisciplinary, social semiotic approach that understands communication and representation as the integration of modes for meaning-making” (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016, p. 990). This approach recognizes the

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legitimacy of all semiotic resources in meaning-making, positing that language is just one among many resources for communication (Sun et al., 2021).

Studies have demonstrated that multimodality can enhance communicative competence, cultural understanding, and attitudes towards language (Coccetta, 2018; Freyn, 2017; Kennedy, 2014). Mayer (2001) explains that combining words and pictures leads to deeper learning compared to using words alone, a phenomenon known as the multimedia effect. Thus, presenting materials through various modes can make learning seem easier and increase student attention, potentially improving outcomes, particularly for lower-achieving L2 learners (Chen & Fu, 2003; Moreno & Mayer, 2007). Multimodality has also been found to facilitate second language listening comprehension. (Guichon & McLornan, 2008) and writing skills by providing a diverse range of semiotic resources (Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2017).

Oral presentations are considered highly effective for enhancing L2 learning and communication skills in both academic and professional contexts. They build confidence in public speaking and provide a competitive edge for future careers (Kim, 2020). Extant research on multimodality and oral language skills shows that incorporating multimodal texts makes students more proactive and autonomous (Kummin et al., 2020) and helps them achieve specific learning objectives during their presentations (Soliman, 2023). However, despite CALL's opportunities, research on multimodality's impact on L2 speaking remains limited, likely due to difficulties in collecting and interpreting speaking data. This study explores the use of four different presentation modalities —oral speech, PowerPoint Presentation, video projects, and blog project— and its impact on L2 presentation skills as well as other language-related skills of a group of 90 undergraduate students in an international setting in Northern Cyprus.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Multimodality and Multidimensionality

The foundation of multimodality lies in Halliday's (1978) social semiotic theory of communication which relates mainly to the study of language use in its social and cultural contexts. However, the concept of multimodality has been expanded to encompass the co-constructive features of language and other modes in constructing meaning (Kress, 2003; Jewitt, 2006). To be able to understand the concept of modality, we need to understand two related concepts: mode and modality. Mode is defined as “socially shaped and culturally given resource for meaning-making” such as “image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, and soundtrack” (Kress, 2017, p. 60); while modality is referred to “the integrations of two or more semiotic resources (including language) in the communication of meaning” (O'Halloran & Smith, 2012) or “linked clusters of semiotic resources used to make meaning in communication that are culturally embedded and recognizable” (Hawkins, 2018, p. 60). Thus, multimodality is a position that views “communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend[s] to the full range of communicational forms people use—image, gesture, gaze, posture, and so on” (Jewitt, 2017, p.15). Thus, it offers individuals “not only accessing information in different formats but also establishing interactivity between these representations” (Guichon & McLornan, 2008, p. 86).

Multimodality and L2 Language Education

Modern digital technologies, such as computers, the Internet, and online tools, offer a range of representational and communicative resources—including images, color, audio, and video—in addition to linguistic elements. These technologies provide multiple modes of representation through which meaning can be negotiated, mediated, and constructed, especially for second language learners. A number of studies have highlighted the importance and affordances of multimodalities and other semiotic resources beyond language for meaning negotiation and construction in second language writing. These have been explored under various frameworks, such as multimodal approaches or



composing, digital or multimodal design, and transmodality (Belcher, 2017; Casanave, 2017; Horner et al., 2015; Shin & Cimasko, 2008; Shipka, 2016).

Several studies have explored L2 teachers' perceptions and practices regarding multimodality in language pedagogy. Hampel and Stickler (2005) examined the use of multimodal activities in online language learning environments. The study found that multimodal platforms (such as those incorporating text, audio, and video) encourage learners to collaborate more effectively, exchange feedback, and engage in meaningful communication. In another study, Yi and Choi (2015) investigated the views of 25 teachers on their use of multimodal practices, finding that the teachers were highly supportive of these methods. They considered multimodal practices to be effective tools for engaging and motivating students, offering diverse means for student expression, and providing teachers with deeper insights into their students' learning. However, the teachers also noted several challenges associated with implementing multimodal practices, including time constraints, the pressures of standardized testing, and a decreased emphasis on academic language and literacy. Further, Choi and Yi (2016) conducted a qualitative study to examine how two teachers with limited experience in teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) employed multimodal approaches. The findings showed that incorporating multimodal activities offered the teachers multiple opportunities to help the learners better understand discipline-specific content, communicate their knowledge more effectively, and experience psychological comfort. The study also reported that these practices enhanced students' sense of accomplishment and self-esteem. However, it also highlighted significant constraints on the use of technology in the classroom, primarily due to a lack of administrative support.

In addition to teaching, multimodal practices have also been demonstrated to facilitate learning of diverse L2 skills. Tardy (2005) investigated how four multilingual graduate students expressed their identities in writing. The study found that the use of multimodality in their writing significantly aided the students in both understanding and conveying their disciplinary and personal identities. Further, drawing on the concept of synaesthetic semiosis (Kress, 1999), Shin and Cimasko (2008) explored how ESL writers in a first-year writing class utilized various modes in multimodal argumentative essays posted on the World Wide Web. Their study revealed that word-dominated discourse played a central role in the selection of these modes, with non-linguistic modes primarily used to illustrate the written essays. The findings also indicated that students employed non-linguistic modes to express their cultural and national identities, as well as their emotional connections to the topics. Additionally, the study showed that students used multiple modes to construct meaning, reflecting the social practices involved in learning multimodal genres in which they were engaged. Moreover, Castañeda and Cho (2013) investigated the impact of collaborative multimodal writing activities, such as wikis, on learning Spanish grammar. Their study revealed that writing on wikis improved students' understanding of grammar and was seen as beneficial for developing writing skills and overall L2 learning. However, students expressed discomfort with editing their peers' work and had reservations about the accuracy of others' edits. Further, adopting a translingual and multimodal approach, Pacheco and Smith (2015) analyzed the digital creations of four eighth-grade ELLs. The findings indicated that the students used multiple languages and modes to convey meanings, engage their audience, and reflect on their writing experiences. The study argued that a multimodal approach can enhance teaching and learning practices by providing students with a diverse range of semiotic resources in their writing. Additionally, Smith et al. (2017) analyzed the digital products of three eighth-grade English language learners and found that their writing processes involved using various writing tools, collaborating with peers, visualizing ideas, and interacting across different times and spaces. The study concluded that technology provided students with valuable opportunities to integrate their linguistic, cultural, and other semiotic resources into their writing practices. Furthermore, a study by Guichon and McLornan (2008) on the effects of multimodality on L2 learners' comprehension found that comprehension improved when students were exposed to a text through different modalities. Additionally, L2 subtitling proved to be more effective than L1 subtitling, as it presented less lexical interference.



L2 Speaking and Multimodality

L2 speaking is a fundamental mode of communication and is central to communicative competence, especially from the Communicative Language Teaching perspective (see Savignon, 1983). Research highlights the vital role of oral communication skills in academic settings for both knowledge building and sharing (Duff, 2010), as well as for assessment purposes. Oral presentations, also known as public speaking, oratory, or oration, are integral to English as a second language classrooms and have garnered significant attention from researchers (Mak, 2019). In this regard, Kim (2020) found that oral presentations are a highly effective method for enhancing L2 learning and communication skills. The study revealed that such presentations not only improve L2 proficiency but also build confidence in public speaking and provide a competitive edge for future careers. Additionally, oral presentations were recognized as crucial for developing effective communication skills in both academic and professional contexts.

It is worth noting that oral presentations in language classrooms can take various forms, such as monologues, videotaped presentations, PowerPoint-assisted deliveries, TED Talks, Toastmasters, blended learning sessions, and Pecha Kucha. Studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of oral presentations, specifically Pecha Kucha presentations (de Armijos, 2019; Zharkynbekova et al., 2017), in EFL classrooms.

Despite the inherently multimodal nature of oral presentations, particularly PowerPoint presentations, research on the intersection of multimodality and oral presentations remains limited. Soliman (2023) conducted a study on the multimodal design of PowerPoint presentations and found that the verbal component was the most effective for teaching literature in a second language. The study also emphasized that the strategic use of verbal elements can help students achieve specific learning objectives during their oral presentations. In a mixed-method study, Lee (2019) explored the integration of multimodal technologies for teaching EFL presentations to Taiwanese university students. The findings showed that participants generally viewed technology-supported multimodal activities in their oral training course positively, even though they faced psychological and technological challenges while creating multimodal assignments. Additionally, a study by Kummin and colleagues (2020) on the use of multimodal texts in teaching English oral skills -the ability to effectively communicate using spoken language- revealed that incorporating multimodal texts encouraged students to be more proactive and autonomous. The results also indicated that the multimodality of texts provided students with opportunities to engage with the language more critically and creatively, enhancing both individual and group language learning development.

Research has also highlighted the connections between oral discourse and other modalities, such as writing, emphasizing the intermodal and intertextual links between them (Duff & Anderson, 2015). These connections are particularly significant in the context of multimodal literacy practices for L2 learners, such as digital storytelling (Kang, 2020). Payne and Whitney (2002) note that online chatting can enhance L2 learners' oral proficiency. Additionally, oral presentations can be managed more effectively when integrated with writing. Rubin and Kang (2008) recommend poster presentations as an effective way to use writing to support oral presentations and interactions. Moreover, video technology is considered a powerful multimodal tool that significantly enhances language teaching and learning (Chuang & Rosenbusch, 2005; Godwin-Jones, 2003), particularly in presentation training (Powell, 2011). Lonnecker, Brady, McPherson, and Hawkins (1994) demonstrated that video modeling, a form of video technology, effectively identifies weaknesses in presentation abilities and helps reduce undesirable student behaviors. Additionally, Levis and Pickering (2004) found that speech visualization technology is beneficial for teaching intonation.

On the other hand, blogging is a crucial multimodal practice that can enhance both writing and speaking skills for L2 learners (Bloch, 2008). It serves as a gateway to multimodal literacy, allowing learners to express their own voice and identity (Bloch, 2008). Hsu, Wang, and Comac (2008) found that audioblogs effectively enhance the learning experience of oral presentations, while Hung and Huang (2015) demonstrated that video blogs can improve EFL students' oral presentation skills.



Oral presentations in L2 classes are also often linked with stress, anxiety, and tension, as research has shown a correlation between L2 speaking and anxiety (Amirian & Tavakoli, 2016; Arifin et al., 2023; Barber, 2023). Additionally, academic oral presentations require extensive preparation and practice, which can be challenging for students from diverse sociocultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds who may be less familiar with such activities (Duff, 2009). Effective oral presentations also necessitate thorough training in listening, reading, writing, and nonverbal communication, in addition to speaking.

This study adopts the multimodality approach as its theoretical framework. Multimodality is defined as an interdisciplinary, social semiotic approach that views communication and representation as the integration of various modes for meaning-making (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016). The adoption of this approach is driven by recent technological advancements that enable the combination of multiple modalities in constructing meaning. These advancements facilitate hybrid forms of communication involving diverse semiotic modes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative inquiries (Patton, 2015) to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions. The decision to adopt this approach was influenced by the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation—oral skills—which are challenging to explore and often require a multi-faceted analysis. Specifically, an explanatory sequential design was employed, in which quantitative data from surveys were collected first, followed by qualitative data from the open-ended sections of the surveys and supplemented by interviews. This design enabled a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions, experiences, and practices related to the integration of four multimodal language learning activities into their oral presentations.

The mixed-methods approach was chosen because it offers the strength of combining the numerical breadth of surveys with the in-depth insights provided by reflections and interviews, making it particularly suitable for exploring the nuances of language learning experiences. By integrating both data types, the study provides a fuller understanding of how multimodal activities impact students' oral skills development.

The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How do students perceive the impact of oral speeches on their presentation skills?
2. How do students perceive the impact of PowerPoint presentations on their presentation skills?
3. How do students perceive the impact of video projects on their presentation skills?
4. How do students perceive the impact of blogs on their presentation skills?
5. How do these multimodal activities affect students' perceived speaking development and their perceptions of language learning?

Study Context

The study was conducted in an international setting with a student population of approximately 20,000, focusing on the English Language Teaching (ELT) Department, which included around 250 undergraduate and graduate students. Ethics approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional review board (EKK23-24/009/10). Students were informed about the research, and all participants consented to take part in the study. The sample consisted of first-year ELT students in their second semester at the time of the research. Out of 89 students enrolled in the Oral Communication Skills course, 43 completed the survey, with each survey number corresponding to an individual respondent (e.g., Survey 11 refers to Student 11). Seven students also voluntarily participated in follow-up interviews. The course, offered in two groups, met for two hours each week.

The participants represented 10 different nationalities, including Iran, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Russia, Korea, Türkiye, and Cyprus, with the majority being from



Türkiye. The course was offered over two academic semesters during the 2023-2024 academic year. In the first semester, students were introduced to the course requirements, presentation delivery, slide design, and the use of various multimodal technologies to enhance their presentations in English. During the fall semester of 2023-24, students were required to deliver different PowerPoint presentations. In the second semester, they engaged in four distinct multimodal assignments.

Table 1 Distribution of participants by nationality and percentage

Nationality	percentage
Turkish	70
Kazakh	2.5
Korean	7.5
Kyrgyz	2.5
Persian	7.5
Russian	7.5
Turkmen	2.5

The course under study is offered to first-year ELT students to further develop their speaking skills and introduce them to the various skills needed to deliver oral presentations in English as a second language. Most of the activities in the class revolve around listening and speaking and as part of the course grade students are required to deliver multiple presentations in the class. All the students enrolled in the course had passed a proficiency exam administered by the School of Foreign Languages to the English-medium programs before enrolling in their respective departments. Most students were at the B1 or B2 English proficiency levels at the time of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study took place in the spring of 2024, spanning a duration of 15 instructional weeks. At the end of the semester, students were invited to complete a survey via a link shared in the course WhatsApp group and on the Moodle page. Participation was voluntary, and 43 students completed the survey, with seven students also consenting to participate in end-of-semester interviews.

Throughout the semester, as part of the course, students completed four different oral presentation modalities. For the first presentation, they delivered an individual persuasive speech on a topic provided by the course instructor, without using slides or other visual aids. For the second presentation, students selected a topic from a list prepared by the instructor and delivered an approximately six-minute presentation using no more than seven slides. In the third presentation, students worked in groups of two to four to create a video project, which they then presented to the class along with accompanying PowerPoint presentations. Finally, for the fourth assignment, students had the option to work individually or in groups to prepare a reflective blog. This blog was to include their reflective presentations, supplemented by pictures and videos.

The study utilized a survey, prepared by the researcher, comprising approximately 30 questions divided into three sections. The first section gathered students' biographical information. The second section consisted of multiple-choice questions using a Likert scale (15 items), alongside an open-ended section (8 items). The Likert-scale questions assessed students' perceptions and practices regarding the integration of four different modalities in their presentations. In this section, students were asked about the perceived impact of the four modalities on their language learning skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, speaking, and self-confidence. Students were asked whether these modalities had improved their language skills and, if so, to what extent. Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale: "Significantly improved," "Somewhat improved," "No significant improvement," and "Declined." Data for this section were reported using percentages.

The open-ended section encouraged students to reflect on their experiences with the four modalities and their impact on language learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted at the end of the semester, one week before the final exams in the spring semester of 2024, at times convenient for the students. These interviews were conducted in English, Turkish, and Persian, based on the



participants' preferred language, and each lasted approximately nine to fourteen minutes. The interviewees (see Table 2) were asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the semester, focusing on the four modalities they had engaged with. After recording the interviews, the researcher transcribed them into a Microsoft Word document. For both data sets, a theme-based analysis was employed, following Patton's (2015) qualitative data analysis technique.

Table 2. Interview participant demographics

Name	gender	age	nationality	duration of interview (MM:SS)
Interviewee 1	Female	20	Turkish	10:05
Interviewee 2	Male	20	Iranian	12:41
Interviewee 3	Female	20	Turkish	13:35
Interviewee 4	Male	20	Turkish	10:48
Interviewee 5	Male	20	Turkish	13:47
Interviewee 6	Female	19	Turkish	9:00
Interviewee 7	Female	22	Turkish	13:09

FINDINGS

The findings of this study revolved around three main themes: students' perceptions of oral speech and PowerPoint presentations, video projects, and blog projects.

Students' Perceptions of Oral Speech and PowerPoint Presentations

The first section examines the study participants' perceptions of in-class presentations (both oral speeches and PowerPoint presentations), with a focus on how these activities impact their overall presentation skills and, more specifically, their speaking abilities and other language competencies. The first item was the extent to which oral presentations in class is perceived to affect the participants' speaking. Around 67 percent of the students believed that oral presentations significantly affected their speaking skill development while 31 percent stated that they somewhat influenced their speaking skill.

Table 3. Impact of in-Class presentations on students' speaking skill development

	significantly improved	somewhat improved	affected/ no significant improvement
Speaking	66.7	31	2.3

The next set of questions asked students whether oral presentations had an impact on their learning of various linguistic elements, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and confidence. A total of 92.9 percent of participants believed that oral presentations enhanced their vocabulary learning. Furthermore, over 85 percent of participants agreed that oral presentations positively influenced their grammar, pronunciation, and confidence in English as a second language.

Table 4. Impact of oral presentations on students' linguistic features and confidence

	yes	no	not so sure
Vocabulary	92.9	2.4	4.8
Grammar	85.7	9.5	4.8
Boosting confidence	88.1	4.8	7.1
Pronunciation	85.7	4.8	9.5

The reflection data from the survey (referred to here as "reflection") and insights from the interviews corroborated the survey results regarding the impact of oral presentations on participants' presentation skills and, consequently, their speaking abilities. Participants highlighted several positive outcomes from engaging in oral presentations. They reported that these activities helped boost their confidence and reduce anxiety about speaking in front of others. This reduction in anxiety and fear of making mistakes led to a greater sense of accomplishment and increased motivation for some.



Additionally, students indicated improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation as a result of preparing and delivering their presentations. The presentation process allowed them to learn and practice both formal and informal speech patterns, as well as to develop an increased awareness of non-verbal communication skills, such as making eye contact, which further contributed to their overall speaking development. Some representative excerpts from the data are provided below:

I think oral presentations improved my speaking a lot. I not only learned new words while preparing the presentation, but also learned to reduce my anxiety and stress while presenting in class, and felt more confident as I accomplished something. At the same time, I learned the correct pronunciation of the words that I had pronounced incorrectly, Survey 22

I learned some vocabulary while preparing and working on slides for my presentations! I learned vocabulary such as divine, and the difference between anxious and anxiety, we used AI to prepare some slides on heritage and history, it was good for some stuff such as history but not so effective, Interview 2

Oral speeches and presentations also played a crucial role in promoting students' noticing of their own mistakes and language weaknesses. As students engaged in more classroom presentations and interacted with and watched and observed their lecturer and peers, they became more aware of specific areas that needed improvement. This increased awareness helped them identify challenges in pronunciation and gaps in vocabulary, prompting a focused effort to refine their language skills.

Engaging in oral presentations highlighted several aspects of my language skills that needed improvement. As I practiced delivering my presentation, I noticed certain words and sounds that I struggled to pronounce correctly, which prompted me to focus more on these areas. Additionally, presenting to an audience revealed gaps in my vocabulary. When I stumbled over words or found myself unable to express certain ideas clearly, it became evident that my word choice was limited in certain contexts. This realization pushed me to expand my vocabulary and practice using new terms. Survey 11

Participation in oral presentations encouraged students to improvise when speaking in front of an audience, which not only helped reduce their anxiety but also facilitated their language development. This spontaneous use of language allowed them to think quickly and creatively, enhancing their ability to communicate effectively in real-time, as described below:

I used to get stressed during presentations, which caused me to forget what I had planned to say. However, improvising and creating new sentences on the spot ended up improving my English. Survey 11

Oral presentations without slides they helped improve my vocabulary because when I forget something, I have to create new sentences on the spot. Survey 11

The feedback provided by both peers and the instructor after each presentation was highly valued by students. It allowed students to focus on key areas such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation. Students appreciated the immediate corrections and guidance, which facilitated their ongoing improvement and contributed to increased confidence and reduced anxiety.

It reduced my shyness because it enabled me to speak in front of people, and my language improved because my mistakes were corrected. Survey 40

Because when you gave feedback on a specific point and I corrected those areas I could see the development and I took you seriously, and at the same time watching those people who show great enthusiasm and work in their presentation contributed to my learning especially X's presentations and in terms of pronunciation was very helpful; before a presentation I



went and asked her how to pronounce a certain word and immediately she showed me how to pronounce before the presentation and it was quite helpful. Interview 5

Moreover, the students' reflections on multimodal activities reveal challenges and benefits. Working in groups, facilitated by multimodal activities, provided opportunities for enhanced socialization, language development, and awareness of linguistic differences. However, some students encountered difficulties when working in non-compatible groups at the beginning of the semester, which were later resolved.

I also liked the group presentations very much, but they were a little challenging for me because I am a person who likes to be a leader in everything. I want everything to be the way I want and I do it that way. These group presentations taught us the power of working together and solidarity, and that our work can be easier with this cooperation. Of course, if you are giving a group presentation with your best friend, this is always a good option. Survey 22

... while I was working in a group, I saw how they were acting and performing or doing and they also saw how I was doing, we saw how presentations were prepared, from this angle, we contributed to each other's learning through new ways! as I shared with you earlier, when we did not know how to pronounce a certain word, we listened to the pronunciation of the word several times together and that helped a lot. Interview 3

Finally, the data illustrate the mixed experiences students had when conducting oral presentations without visual aids, such as slides, videos, or blogs. Many students found that presenting without visuals was challenging because it required them to rely solely on their memory and engage in spontaneous speaking. For others, the absence of visual aids created anxiety and discomfort, as they felt less prepared without the structured framework that slides provide. Some students also found that visuals could be distracting, causing them to feel less comfortable during presentations. Some representative extracts are provided below:

Sometimes when I prepared the slides, I prepared an outline from the vocabulary of the main points; which helped me to remember what I wanted to say better or sometimes I wrote some of the letters bolder to remember that it was to do with something or the main point was this! Interview 2

... visuals, images, photos, slides, emoji can help with recollection! Actually while giving presentations with slides, I experienced some difficulties as shifting to different slides or seeing the slides and thinking at the same time while speaking created some sort of distractions for me. That is why I felt a bit more comfortable while giving presentations without slides! I felt more like a teacher! That is why I prefer presentations without slides. Interview 3

The one without slides makes me nervous but confident at the same time, because I am not relying on slides not reading, giving a speech actually, the second one is most easier than the others because it is like a support standing by my back. Survey 40

Students' Perceptions of Video Projects on Speaking and Language Development

In evaluating the impact of video projects on their speaking skills, participants expressed a clear preference for oral presentations. Only 63 percent of them viewed video projects as beneficial for their speaking development (see Table 5 below).

Table 5. The perceived impact of video projects on speaking skill development

	significantly improved	somewhat affected/ improved	not so sure (no significant improvement or not agreed)
Speaking	63.2	31.6	5.2



However, participants believed that video projects were beneficial for learning vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and boosting self-confidence. The highest score in this section was related to video projects helping students become more self-confident (76.9%), followed by improvements in grammar (71.8%), and then vocabulary and pronunciation (both at 69.2%).

Table 6. The perceived impact of video projects on linguistic features and confidence

	yes	no	not so sure
Vocabulary	69.2	15.4	15.4
Grammar	71.8	12.8	15.4
Boosting confidence	76.9	10.3	12.8
Pronunciation	69.2	12.8	17.9

The students' insights into their video projects provide a variety of reflections on how engaging in multimodal activities like video production influences their language learning, emotional regulation, self-confidence, and social interactions. While a few participants viewed video projects as routine activities ("Can't say anything... Just like a regular presentation" — Survey), the majority felt these projects significantly enhanced their language learning skills. The video projects acted as a mirror, enabling students to notice and correct their grammar and pronunciation mistakes. This process often required multiple recordings, which repeatedly exposed students to the same language, thereby reducing anxiety and stress when presenting in class. The repetitive nature of recording allowed students to identify and correct their errors, and the ability to stop, review, and redo segments provided valuable practice, leading to improvements in pronunciation and fluency. Additionally, the project offered students the opportunity to gain technical knowledge.

The video project was a very fun and informative project for me. I was able to notice the pronunciation and grammatical mistakes I made while shooting the video and corrected them. Additionally, the video presentation was a useful project as I learned new words. Survey 40

I tried shooting the video, if I want to tell you the truth, just my section of the video. I tried maybe 30 times, vocabulary wise, I could not memorize certain phrases or sentences while shooting, but I remember the pronunciation of the word appreciate. ... while shooting the videos, it somehow presented some difficulties for me. I edited them myself, while I was editing the video ...technically I learned a lot of things. The video project provided me with good vocabulary and confidence. Interview 4

The video projects were also considered beneficial for building self-confidence and reinforcing knowledge. Several students mentioned that creating a video contributed to their self-confidence and helped improve their pronunciation.

I looked at my videos several times, looking at the errors I made. One specific example was not to be excited or anxious when preparing our videos, because when we get anxious a lot, we start mixing up things in our mind and as a result forgot what we wanted to say. Interview 1

It increased my confidence in English because I had never prepared a video in English before, and preparing this video taught me both how to prepare a video and that I can prepare a video in another language. Survey 7

Additionally, the projects provided not only linguistic practice but also opportunities for experiential learning. Some students highlighted the educational value of the video project, noting that it facilitated learning beyond language skills, including the acquisition of new content.

We made our video project with four people and talked about eight historical places within the walled city. This is the first time we have done such an assignment. We shot a video and



uploaded it to YouTube. Everyone would see the video, so we worked very carefully. We prepared our speech in advance and repeated it many times. Since our topic is historical places, we learned many words about history. We listened to the pronunciations from the translation and discussed the pronunciations we did not know. It was like a vlog video and I felt like a confident YouTuber. It was a very fun, instructive and at the same time tiring assignment. Survey 22

Some students also felt more comfortable speaking in front of a camera than delivering a live presentation, as the video format provided a safe space to experiment and improvise without fear of immediate judgment. The process of making videos, thus, served as an exercise in emotional regulation, helping them maintain composure and focus more effectively on their speech.

While we were shooting the videos, there were instances of improvisations and I liked it because I sometimes did not feel self-confident while speaking, but when we were shooting the videos, because I knew there was a camera in front of me, I felt a bit more comfortable! I also tried to improvise while shooting the video; I became a bit too anxious. While I was shooting the video, because I was interviewing another person I felt that I made some grammar mistakes but when I realized that the interviewee understood me I became more confident. I did not fully understand the person who I was interviewing because he was a native speaker but I pretended that I understood but generally I got the gist. However, after watching the video, when I watched myself I realized that I could have pronounced some of the words better, and I tried to correct them! Interview 3

Collaboration also emerged as a significant factor in the learning experience. Working together on video projects not only helped improve language skills but also fostered social connections and teamwork.

..... in the video we had to work with other people, foreigners, we went to a historical place, shooting video was a fun activity, when we were shooting the video on that day, we made friends with some people from Italy and some other foreigners. Definitely working with helped me a lot with my English as his English, especially in terms of speaking, his proficiency is a bit better than mine and he could be quite helpful actually and could transfer the knowledge. He corrected my mistakes and was helpful in terms of vocabulary because the transcript we were going to use in the video was prepared by both of us but it was mainly his work. Interview 5

Overall, the students' reflections on their video projects reveal that engaging in multimodal activities significantly impacted their language learning, emotional regulation, and self-confidence. Additionally, the video projects fostered collaboration and experiential learning, further enhancing the students' educational experience.

Students' Perceptions of Blogging Projects and their Impact on Language Learning

In evaluating blogging projects, participants rated them the lowest among all activities for improving speaking skills, with only 47.4 percent believing that blogging significantly enhanced their speaking abilities. However, these projects were seen as having a substantial impact on grammar (81.6%) and vocabulary (71.1%) learning and improvement.

Table 7. The perceived impact of blog projects on speaking skill development

	significantly improved	somewhat improved	affected/ not so sure (no significant improvement or not agreed)
Speaking	47.4	10.5	42.1



Table 8. The perceived impact of blog projects on linguistic features and confidence

	yes	no	not so sure
Vocabulary	71.1	10.5	18.4
Grammar	81.6	7.9	10.5
Boosting confidence	62.2	10.8	27
Pronunciation	63.2	10.5	26.3

Despite the lower perceived impact on speaking skills, the reflective nature of blogging provided students with opportunities to review and reinforce their learning throughout the semester. This iterative process, involving writing and revising blog posts, was particularly beneficial for vocabulary acquisition. Students reported feeling motivated to use varied vocabulary and explore new expressions, which helped in retaining new language forms. Blogging also allowed students to track their progress, enhancing their understanding and recall of the language. Additionally, it helped students develop technical skills, becoming more digitally literate, through collaboration with their peers.

Because I saw my own reflection, I improved by working to complete my shortcomings. Survey 39

Because we used a lot of vocabularies; these modalities helped me in improving vocabulary to some extent, since as we constantly had to use the same language over and over again, it led to new discoveries, especially in writing the blog; while I was writing I wanted to use different vocabularies which made me discover new things. Interview 1

The blog assignment helped me a lot in increasing my vocabulary, and I also learned new information about blogging by exchanging ideas with my friends. Survey 43

Moreover, blogging significantly impacted students' writing skills by providing a platform for practicing different ways of expressing their thoughts. The collaborative nature of the blog projects also played a crucial role, as students learned from peers and resources like AI tools, which helped them correct mistakes and improve their writing.

Blog did not influence my speaking a lot honestly, but it impacted vocabulary and grammar; first I tried to write what I was going to say in Turkish and then tried to translate it into English but there were some words I did not know and I also wanted to use some academic vocabulary and used AI. In the beginning, AI used difficult words and then I used a dictionary to understand those vocabulary, so I used words with simple pronunciations. These helped me a lot while writing the blog. ... blog made me fix my grammar mistakes and grammar. Interview 4

...blog project I can say, we did a lot of collaboration with friends while preparing the blog and I learned how we can write informally while talking about ourselves. Interview 7

The blogging activity allowed students to incorporate personal experiences, which helped them learn vocabulary that was personally and emotionally relevant, thereby enhancing their language learning. Additionally, blogging prompted emotional engagement by allowing students to reflect on their language development over time, which fostered a sense of achievement and intrinsic motivation.

Working on a blog project has significantly enhanced my vocabulary, grammar. The need to express ideas clearly and engagingly motivated me to expand my lexicon and use synonyms and context-specific terms more effectively. I became more conscious of common grammatical errors and learned to avoid them. Survey 11



Blog also made me quite emotional as we had to write about experiences of learning from the start of the year as I could see my development and improvement over the year while writing our reflection. Interview 1

Despite the perceived advantages by most respondents, a few expressed their dislike of the activity, finding it time-consuming and not significantly beneficial for their speaking skills.

The blog just revealed a new skill in me, making websites, but in the future I would not want to do it, as it takes up a lot of my time. Survey 11

Overall, blogging emerged as a valuable multimodal activity that facilitated language learning in a meaningful, engaging, and emotionally supportive way. Further, the students' insights into their blog projects highlighted the multifaceted impact of blogging on their language learning and emotional well-being. Many students found that blogging provided emotional support and a sense of achievement, as it allowed them to reflect on their progress over time. Writing about their experiences from the start of the year helped them see their development, which was both motivating and encouraging.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study suggest that multimodality has a significant impact on the development of L2 presentation skills, as well as other language-related abilities. This section outlines the four key findings: (1) the enhancement of linguistic and digital literacy skills through multimodality, (2) the psychological effects of multimodality on students, (3) the influence of multimodality on social dynamics in language learning, and (4) the benefits and challenges of using visuals as a multimodal tool in L2 presentations. Each of these findings will be discussed in detail below.

The Enhancement of Linguistic and Digital Literacy Skills through Multimodality

The multimodal activities in this study were instrumental in developing integrated language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, writing, presentation skills, and, crucially, speaking. These activities not only enhanced various language skills but also facilitated students' ability to notice gaps in their language knowledge. By engaging in diverse multimodal tasks, students were able to identify and reflect on their linguistic shortcomings, practice and refine their language use, and ultimately promote their language development. This process of noticing (Schmidt, 1990)—where learners become conscious of their language errors and areas needing improvement—was key to their progress and deeper understanding of the language.

Students reported improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation as they prepared and delivered their oral presentations. This process enabled them to practice both formal and informal speech styles, use new vocabulary, and speak spontaneously in front of an audience. Engaging in impromptu language use fostered quick thinking and effective real-time communication. Oral presentations were also crucial in helping students notice and recognize their mistakes and language gaps. Through repeated practice and by observing their lecturers and peers, students became more aware of specific areas needing improvement. This increased awareness helped them identify pronunciation difficulties and vocabulary gaps, motivating them to refine their language skills. These findings are in line with previous studies reporting the significant impact of multimodality on English language learners' acquisition of vocabulary (Galimberti, Mora, & Gilabert, 2023; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015), mastery of writing (Jiang, Yu, & Lee, 2022), and oral comprehension (Beltrán-Palanques & Querol-Julián, 2018). Additionally, in line with the study by Morell, Beltrán-Palanques, and Norte (2022), students in this study became more conscious of non-verbal communication skills, such as maintaining eye contact, which further enhanced their speaking abilities. This aligns with the output hypothesis (Swain, 1985), as speaking through different modes provided the participants with



opportunities to notice their errors, gain multimodal awareness (Alalem, 2023), and facilitate their language development.

The use of video as a multimodal activity in oral presentations also proved effective in enhancing language learning skills, particularly L2 presentation skills. The video projects served as a reflective tool, enabling students to identify and correct their grammar and pronunciation mistakes. The process often required multiple attempts, allowing students to notice and rectify their errors. The ability to pause, review, and redo parts provided valuable practice, which enhanced pronunciation and fluency. These findings align with previous studies highlighting the significant impact of video as a multimodal tool in language learning and teaching (Chuang & Rosenbusch, 2005; Godwin-Jones, 2003), especially for presentation training (Powell, 2011). Similarly, this study, like the research by Lonnecker et al. (1994), found that video projects enable students to identify and correct their mistakes due to the flexibility provided by editing features.

Although students did not perceive the usefulness of blogs on their speaking development very favorably, they reported a notable effect on their grammar and vocabulary improvement and learning. Furthermore, the reflective aspect of blogging offered students a valuable chance to review and reinforce their learning throughout the semester. The repeated exposure to language through writing and revising blog entries was especially helpful for vocabulary development. Students were encouraged to use diverse vocabulary and experiment with new words, leading to the discovery and retention of new expressions. The blog project also enabled some students to reflect on their progress, which enhanced their comprehension and recall of the language. The blog projects also served as a reflective exercise, allowing students to think about their experiences while repeatedly using certain vocabulary and grammar, which helped them acquire specific phrases and linguistic features. This finding somewhat confirms the finding of (Alalem, 2023) that multimodality enhanced students' multimodal awareness. Additionally, students gained technical skills, and improved their digital literacy with their classmates. Furthermore, blogging had a significant impact on students' writing skills (Bloch, 2008) by offering a platform to practice various ways of articulating their ideas. The process of translating their thoughts from their native language into English, refining these translations, and utilizing AI encouraged the use of more precise language and fostered a deeper understanding of grammar.

Overall, students encounter the same text in different modes, allowing them to experience multimodality both in creating and interpreting multimodal meanings. This engagement in multimodal practices appears to heighten students' awareness of both linguistic and nonlinguistic features of language and demonstrates how meaning can be negotiated through various modes.

The Psychological Effects of Multimodality on Students

The multimodal approach also influenced students on a psychological level. Multimodality provided the students a psychological refuge through which they reduced their anxiety and boosted their self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment. The results on oral presentations (both oral speech and PowerPoint presentations) indicated that participating in such activities helped boost students' self-confidence and reduce their anxiety about speaking in front of others. As they delivered more presentations, especially the group presentations, some students experienced a significant decrease in anxiety, which for some eventually led to a stronger sense of accomplishment and increased motivation. This finding aligns with previous studies reporting that multimodal activities enhance students' sense of accomplishment and self-esteem (Choi & Yi, 2016), motivation to participate in EMI classes (Sabaté-Dalmau & Moncada-Comas, 2023) and willingness to communicate (Peng, 2019).

The video projects on the other hand served as a reflective tool exposing students to the same language repeatedly, thereby lowering their anxiety or stress when speaking in class. The video projects were also seen as beneficial for enhancing self-confidence and reinforcing language knowledge. This finding confirms Hung and Huang (2015) that found video blogs can enhance EFL students' oral presentation skills.



Engagement in video projects also not only impacted language learning, but also students' emotional regulation, and self-confidence. Many students highlighted that the process of creating videos allowed them to control their emotions better, as they could practice and refine their speaking without the pressure of immediate audience feedback. They felt more comfortable speaking in front of a camera than a live audience, which reduced anxiety and encouraged more confident self-expression. This iterative process not only helped them become more aware of their language use but also provided opportunities to practice new vocabulary and pronunciation in a low-pressure environment.

The blogging activity on the other hand provided students with opportunities to revisit and expand their vocabulary in a personal and iterative manner, thereby strengthening their language skills and boosting their confidence. These projects served as reflective exercises, allowing students to integrate their personal experiences and learn vocabulary that was both meaningful and emotionally significant. This approach somewhat aligns with Tardy's (2005) findings, which highlight the effectiveness of multimodality in helping students express their disciplinary and personal identities.

Additionally, the informal nature of blogging created a relaxed environment that reduced anxiety and increased motivation for language use, particularly in speaking. Many students appreciated that blogging offered a unique and enjoyable way to practice English by incorporating everyday experiences and a conversational tone. Furthermore, blogging fostered emotional engagement by providing students with opportunities to reflect on their language development over time, which contributed to a sense of accomplishment and intrinsic motivation. These findings support Bloch's (2008) research, which identifies blogging as a valuable multimodal practice that enhances both writing and speaking skills for L2 learners while providing a platform for students to express their unique voices and identities.

The Influence of Multimodality on Social Dynamics in Language Learning

Additionally, multimodal activities enhanced students' social skills by providing a platform for active participation in group activities. In these settings, students collaborated with peers and instructors, exchanged feedback, and negotiated their linguistic, content, and technical knowledge. This collaborative environment was instrumental in advancing language learning, as it allowed students to engage in meaningful social interactions that fostered both linguistic development and social competence. This finding aligns with Li's (2020) study, which reported that multimodality enhances students' content and collaborative learning. It also supports Lantolf and Thorne's (2009) sociocultural theory of second language development, which suggests that social activities such as group projects and presentations offer authentic contexts for interaction, thereby promoting both linguistic growth and social skills.

Feedback from instructors and peers, provided before, during, and after presentations, as well as throughout video and blog projects, was perceived by students as highly influential. This feedback played a crucial role in helping them identify and correct language errors, refine their presentation techniques, and grasp the key elements of effective communication. It guided students to focus on critical aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation. Moreover, the feedback was reported to significantly enhance language development, boost confidence, and reduce anxiety. These findings align with Hampel and Stickler (2005), who noted that multimodal platforms encourage learners to collaborate more effectively, exchange feedback, and engage in meaningful communication.

Working in groups provided valuable opportunities for social interaction, language development, and a deeper understanding of linguistic diversity. Through group work, students were able to exchange ideas, offer and receive feedback on grammar and pronunciation, and observe various presentation styles. Many students found that collaborating with peers allowed them to receive immediate, constructive feedback, which was essential for their development. This feedback exchange was reciprocal; students not only benefited from corrections but also offered valuable suggestions to



their peers, such as recommending that a friend internalize the text before speaking for more effective delivery. This is consistent with Kress's (2003) idea that multimodal activities can support L2 learners by offering diverse ways to express and negotiate language, thereby fostering social skills through collaboration.

While some students initially felt uncomfortable in group settings—especially those who preferred to work independently or take on a leadership role—most gradually adapted by joining more compatible groups or forming smaller, supportive sub-groups. This adaptation resulted in increased confidence and reduced stress during presentations. Furthermore, collaboration enabled students to learn from each other's strengths, practice new skills together, and develop social networks that extended beyond the classroom, enhancing their overall language learning experience. Additionally, collaboration fostered a deeper understanding of content and language through shared practice and observation. Students noted that working in groups helped them observe different presentation styles and techniques, contributing to their learning of effective communication strategies. Peer collaboration also extended to technical aspects, such as correct pronunciation, where students would practice together and learn from one another's mistakes. Watching enthusiastic peers and engaging in collective learning activities, like practicing pronunciations or preparing group presentations, further reinforced their learning. These collaborative experiences were not limited to classroom interactions; some students even sought assistance from foreign friends online, which enriched their learning and broadened their social networks. Overall, collaboration emerged as a vital component of the learning process, enhancing both linguistic competence and social skills.

Additionally, the video projects fostered collaboration and experiential learning, further enriching the students' educational experience. Creating videos often required peer cooperation, which helped build social connections and improve language skills through mutual support and feedback. These projects also encouraged students to explore new content, such as visiting museums or researching historical sites, enriching their knowledge and providing authentic contexts for language use. This approach aligns with content-based language learning, where language is acquired in the context of engaging, meaningful content. These findings are consistent with those of Kummin et al. (2020), who found that incorporating multimodal texts enhances students' autonomy and provides opportunities for more critical and creative language engagement, thereby improving both individual and group language learning.

The collaborative aspect of the blog projects was also significant, as students learned from each other and used resources like AI tools to identify and correct errors, thereby enhancing their writing. Overall, the blog projects offered valuable experiences for language development, self-reflection, and collaboration, fostering both linguistic growth and personal insights. This finding aligns with Castañeda and Cho's (2013) research, which found that writing on wikis improves students' understanding of grammar and is beneficial for developing writing skills and overall L2 learning.

The Benefits and Challenges of Using Visuals as a Multimodal Tool in L2 Presentations

The data reveal that students had mixed experiences when delivering oral presentations without visual aids like slides, videos, or blogs. Many students found presenting without visuals particularly challenging, as it required them to rely entirely on memory and engage in spontaneous speaking. Despite these challenges, some students noted that this method enhanced their improvisation skills, encouraged the use of more natural language, and built self-confidence by pushing them to express their ideas independently.

Visual aids, on the other hand, were perceived as highly beneficial for helping students recall linguistic items. Many students found that associating visuals with language elements improved their memory, particularly when they were anxious about performing in front of peers and instructors. This aligns with findings from Shin and Cimasko (2008), who observed that students employed non-linguistic modes to express their identities and emotional connections to topics. In this study, the use of multimodal visuals facilitated most participants' presentations, echoing the findings of Guichon and



McLornan (2008) that multimodality aids in listening comprehension, and of other studies that show diverse semiotic resources enhance students' writing skills (Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2017).

Additionally, some students experienced increased anxiety and discomfort when presenting without visual aids, as they missed the structured support that slides typically provide. Visual aids were valued for their role in aiding speech planning, reinforcing grammar and writing skills, and supporting memory recall. This contrasts with Mayer's (2001) concept of the multimedia effect, which suggests that combining words and images leads to deeper learning than using words alone. However, it aligns with other studies suggesting that presenting material through various modes can make learning more accessible and increase student engagement, potentially improving outcomes, particularly for lower-achieving L2 learners (Chen & Fu, 2003; Moreno & Mayer, 2007). This finding also somewhat echoes Rubin and Kang's (2008) study, which suggested that oral performance can be more manageable with the aid of writing.

Conversely, some students felt that visuals could be distracting, making them less comfortable during presentations. The data suggest that while visual aids provide valuable linguistic and cognitive support, presenting without them can foster greater confidence and spontaneity in speaking, though it may also increase stress. The effectiveness of each approach often depended on individual student preferences, learning styles, and the specific topic being presented. Therefore, language teachers should consider these factors when assigning oral presentations to their L2 students. Overall, the findings indicate that visuals can both facilitate and hinder oral presentations, depending on various contextual and individual factors.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that multimodal activities provided a multifaceted learning experience, combining language practice with emotional regulation, confidence building, experiential learning, and collaboration. The insights underscore the value of multimodal activities in developing various competencies that are essential for language learners.

A key finding of this study is the significant improvement in self-confidence among students. The study reveals that multimodal activities greatly enhance self-confidence, which is linked to increased participation in meaning-making and negotiations through various modes. Although this research did not specifically investigate student motivation, the results suggest that the confidence gained from using diverse modes likely contributed to greater motivation and engagement in oral presentations.

The study has several implications for language learners and teachers. One significant implication is the scaffolding role of video projects in enhancing oral presentations. These projects provide learners with opportunities to view their performance independently and make repeated edits, which can improve their speaking skills. Another implication is the effectiveness of visuals in supporting language recall. Visual aids help students remember words and phrases more effectively, reducing the anxiety that often leads students to avoid oral presentations. Teachers should consider learners' individual learning styles when assigning multimodal activities, as this study found that students have varying preferences for different multimodal approaches. By incorporating multimodal methods, students can engage with learning materials that align with their preferred learning styles. Additionally, ESL teachers should integrate diverse digital literacy practices into their classes. School administrators should support ESL teachers by providing professional development and resources to effectively use these technologies.

This study has some limitations. Some students may have presented biased responses to please the researcher, who was also the course instructor. Additionally, students' international backgrounds might have influenced their perceptions of multimodality, though this variable was not examined in the study. The researcher's dual role could have affected students' perceptions and interpretations of



the data. Finally, while the study analyzed students' perceptions of each mode separately, it is important to recognize that modes are often interconnected, and language is inherently integrated with other modes to convey meaning (Hawkins, 2018).

Ethical Statement: This research has been conducted in compliance with the institutional regulations of Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee, as outlined in the ethical permission document dated 06/05/2024 (EKK23-24/009/10).

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