

Multimodal Literacy in Higher Education: University Students' Perspective on Digital Resources in English Language Learning

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

The thesis titled “Multimodal Literacy in Higher Education: University Students’ Perspective on Digital Resources in English Language Learning.” submitted by Mahbuba Hoque 20103056 of Summer, 2024 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English and Humanities on March 3, 2025.

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Ethics Statement

The work in this paper is original, with all sources properly cited. Additionally, ethical guidelines were followed strictly to gather information from the participants. Informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality was maintained. More details are provided in the methodology chapter.

Abstract

In the digital age, English language learning has evolved with multimodal literacy, integrating text, images, audio, music, animated images or videos and other interactive elements. The increasing significance of multimodal literacy for communication is leading to a growing body of research to address the differing potential of modes and their intramodality of making meaning. This study attempts to examine role of multimedia resources in student engagement, active learning, skill development, accessibility challenges and cognitive overload. Employing a qualitative, phenomenological research approach, the study explores university students' experiences with videos, podcasts, online platforms, AI driven language tools, and other interactive digital content. Findings reveal that these resources greatly enhance student motivation, comprehension, and practical language skills by offering interactive and contextualized learning experiences. Digital tools such as videos and podcasts improve listening skills, while AI based conversation tools like ChatGPT boost speaking fluency. Furthermore, visual learning aid in retention and conceptual understanding, makes complex ideas more accessible. However, despite these benefits, challenges such as connectivity issues, digital literacy gaps, cognitive overload and distractions from nonacademic digital content were identified. The study highlights the need for structured and balanced integration of multimedia-based learning to maximize their educational benefits while minimizing potential drawbacks. It concludes that multimodal literacy can revolutionize language learning, but requires curated materials, improved and student support. Future research should explore long term impacts of multimedia learning on academic performance and develop strategies to mitigate cognitive overload in digital learning environments.

Keywords: Multimodal literacy, English language learning, Student engagement, active learning, Digital accessibility, AI in education, Cognitive overload.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved cat, Angur, whose companionship kept me motivated through this journey.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I am profoundly grateful to God for granting me the strength, patience, and wisdom to complete this research. Without His guidance, this journey would not have been possible. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my thesis supervisor Md Al Amin for his continuous guidance and valuable feedback throughout this research. A special thanks to the participants of the study for their time and willingness to share their experiences, making this research possible. Thank you all for being a part of this journey.

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List of Acronyms

CBL Case based learning

ICT Information Commutation Technology

Glossary

Thesis:	An extended research paper that is part of the final exam process for a graduate degree. The document may also be classified as a project or collection of extended essays.
Glossary:	An alphabetical list of key terms
Multimodal Literacy:	The ability to understand and communicate using multiple modes, such as text, images, audio, and video.
Active Learning:	A student-centered approach that involves engagement through discussions, problem-solving, and interactive tasks
Cognitive Overload:	When too much information is presented at once, making it difficult for learners to process effectively.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Literacy in the 21st century is no longer limited to reading and writing traditional alphabetic texts. The rise of digital technologies, including social media, online platforms, and mobile devices has transformed communication into a multifaceted phenomenon. This contemporary communication landscape is characterized by the seamless integration of various media. Multimedia, a product of advancements in digital technology, offers users a rich learning experience by displaying messages and knowledge through a combination of text, audio, video, graphics, animations and other interactive elements (Gani, Ibrahim, Khaerudin, Jandra, Huda, & Maseleno, 2019). Today, individuals can effortlessly communicate through a blend of text, photographs, and videos via mobile phone technology, as well through different types of computers and multimedia devices (Walsh, 2010). The increased accessibility and mobility of digital technology have significantly reshaped how individuals engage with information, intensifying the need to clarify the relationship between literacy and technology. (Walsh, 2010). The world of education is constantly evolving, just as the rapidly changing world of information. Today, education goes beyond mere knowledge acquisition; rather, it demands the development of soft skills, communication, creative thinking and adaptability. As a result, we have to rethink our approach to learning because success is no longer just related to academic qualification anymore but by one's ability to analyze and apply knowledge (Dewi et al., 2021, as cited in Khan, Sarwar, Chen, & Khan, 2022). It is important to recognize that language and literacy practices have always been inherently multimodal, involving not just spoken or written words but also visual images, gestures, posture, movement, sound and even silence (Mills & Unsworth, 2017). Consequently, there is a need to redefine what it means to

be a literate person today and how to prepare individuals for successful communication in this evolving context. This transformative shift has profound implications for education, particularly in the field of language learning. Multimodal literacy – defined as the ability to create and interpret content utilizing multiple modes of communication- has emerged as a key competency in the digital age. It refers to meaning making through the reading, viewing, understanding, responding to, producing, and interacting with multimedia and digital texts. The simultaneous processing of multiple modes, including oral or gestural communication (such as speaking, listening, and dramatizing), as well as writing, designing and producing multimedia content, creates a cohesive and synchronous experience (Walsh, 2010). Integrating multimodal resources into language learning broadens the traditional concept of literacy, encompassing the diverse communicative practices common in today's classrooms and digital spaces. Incorporating these tools into language instruction can make lessons more engaging, interactive, and reflective of real-world communication practices. In Bangladesh, the integration of digital tools in higher education is becoming increasingly prevalent. Higher education institutions are incorporating online resources, mobile applications, and digital platform into learning practices. However, challenges persist, including disparities in digital literacy, uneven access to technology and inconsistent institutional support for digital learning. While some students have adapted seamlessly to digital learning environment, others struggle with issues such as limited technological infrastructure, insufficient training, and cognitive overload when operating multiple modes of communication. As multimodal literacy continues to shape language learning environments, understanding how university students perceive and engage with these tools is essential for designing more inclusive and effective language learning strategies that cater to diverse learning needs.

1.2 Research Problem

Despite the growing recognition of multimodal literacy in 21st century, its impact on language acquisition and learners' reception remains underexplored. While multimodal approaches hold significant promise for enhancing student engagement, motivation and overall learning outcomes, questions remain regarding their effectiveness compared to traditional text-based instruction. Without a clear understanding of learners' experiences, challenges and preferences, it becomes difficult to accurately assess the true potential of multimodal approaches in language instruction. Furthermore, best practices for integrating multimodal resources into the classroom must be identified to ensure their full potential. This research seeks to address these gaps by examining the role of multimodal literacy in enhancing English language learning, with a specific focus on learners' perceptions. Specifically, it investigates how university students perceive multimodal literacy and its impact on their English language learning experience.

1.3 Rationale

In the era of digital technologies, multimodal literacy has emerged as a cornerstone of effective language learning. With the increasing integration of digital tools in education, understanding how university students perceive and engage with these tools in language instruction remains a crucial yet underexplored area of research. However, limited research exists on students' experiences, challenges, and preferences regarding multimodal literacy. The overarching aim of this thesis is to contribute to an empirically grounded understanding of how multimodal literacy influences English language learning in Bangladeshi higher education. By gaining valuable insights into students' perspectives, this research aims to enhance the effectiveness of multimodal resources in language education, ensuring they are tailored to meet the diverse needs and preferences of learners.

1.4 Research Questions

In pursuing the aim, the following research questions are examined:

1. How do university students perceive the integration of multimedia resources in language learning, particularly in terms of perceived benefits and preferred approaches?
2. What challenges do they encounter when integrating multimodal literacy into their language learning experiences?

1.5 Research Significance

This study will make significant contribution to several key areas. Firstly, it will offer valuable insights into educational practices by demonstrating how multimodal tools influence student engagement and the development of crucial skill such as critical thinking, creativity, and communication in language learning. Secondly, the findings will be instrumental in assisting educators in designing more engaging lesson plans that effectively integrate multimodal resources. By leveraging the potential of these tools, educators can enhance the learning experience for all students. Furthermore, this research will play a crucial role in informing policy-making decisions regarding the integration of technology and multimodal learning in higher education. By identifying potential barriers- such as accessibility issues, digital literacy gaps, and cognitive overload- this study can contribute to the development of more inclusive and equitable educational policies. Finally, this study will encourage further exploration of multimodal literacy in diverse educational contexts, providing valuable insights into how Bangladeshi university students interact with multimodal resources in language classrooms.

1.6 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into six chapters. The first chapter, Introduction, presents the background, rationale, and purpose and of the study. It introduces the concept of multimodal literacy and outlines the research questions, aims, and significance of the study. Chapter two,

Literature review, explores existing research on multimodal literacy and its role in language learning. The third chapter, Methodology, describes the research design, data collection, and analysis methods used in the study, outlining the procedures followed to ensure reliability and validity. The fourth chapter, Results, presents the findings of the study, providing an overview of the data collected. The fifth chapter, Discussion, interprets the data in relation to the research questions and analyses the data collected discussing their implications for English language learning. It also discusses how the results align with or challenge existing research. The sixth chapter, Conclusion and Recommendations, summarizes the key findings and suggests practical implications for language teaching. It highlights the significance of the findings and provides recommendations for future practice and research.

1.7 Scope and Limitations

This research focuses on university students who have prior experience using multimodal resources for language learning. Specifically, the study examines the use of multimedia tools such as videos, images, podcasts, movies, audio clips, interactive quizzes, and other digital learning materials. Given the qualitative nature of the research, the findings are limited to the perspective of a specific group of participants and may not be generalizable to all educational context. Additionally, the study primarily explores participants' perceptions and experiences rather than directly measuring their performance outcomes or language proficiency improvements.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of literature exploring the diverse role of multimodal literacy in English language learning. In today's increasingly digital and interconnected world, communication goes beyond traditional text-based formats, requiring a broader conception of literacy that incorporates visual, auditory and interactive elements. This review outlines the theoretical foundations of multimodal literacy and its implications for language education. Specifically, it explores the impact of multimodal literacy on learner engagement and motivation, its application in active learning strategies, its role in developing key language skills, and the accessibility challenges and cognitive demand associated with its effective implementation.

2.2 Thematic Review

To understand the role of multimodal literacy in language learning, it is important to define the concept of multimodality.

Defining Multimodality

Multimodality, a concept introduced in the late 1990s (Jewitt et al., 2016), is the study of how we make meaning by combining multiple signifying means or modes such as images, writing, music, gestures, and speech, into a cohesive whole. Unlike traditional disciplines like linguistics, semiotics, or musicology, which focus on specific semiotic resources, multimodality examines how these different modes interact and enhance meaning when used together (Pérez-González, 2020).

Multiple Intelligence and Learning Preferences

Gardner and Hatch (1989) proposed the Theory of multiple intelligence suggesting that individuals possess seven distinct types of intelligence, each functioning independently. People differ in their unique combinations of these intelligences, which influence their learning preferences and engagement with educational content.

This theory supports the integration of multimodal resources, as different forms of media cater to various intelligences, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning styles.

Enhancing Student Engagement and Motivation Through Technology- driven learning

Student engagement results from both motivation and active participation in learning. It is a product, not a sum because it will not occur if either component is missing (Sawang, O'Connor, & Ali, 2017). Various types of technology can be utilized to enhance student engagement and encourage students to actively participate in the classroom learning process (Sawang et al., 2017).

Technology is being increasingly integrated into classroom through student- led actions, for example, using smartphones (Woodcock, Middleton & Nortcliffe, 2012, as cited in Brown, Thomas, & Thomas, 2014). Additionally, Web 2.0 tools have been shown to enhance learning depth by increasing interaction, critical thinking and collaboration (Liburd & Cristen, 2013, as cited in Brown et al., 2014).

When used appropriately, technology has been found to enhance student learning (Kuh & Vesper, 2001, as cited in Morris & Parker, 2014). Moreover, it promotes platforms for student engagement, active learning, and collaboration (Thomas & Kuh, 2005, as cited in Morris & Parker, 2014). Existing definitions of student engagement shows the importance of active participation in lessons which include discussion between students and instructors and as well

as among student themselves (Moris& Parker,2014). Although technology can significantly enhance the students' learning experiences, its pedagogical approach, whether technology-based or not, must be done thoughtfully and carefully (Moris & Parker,2014).

In the 21st century, students must develop a diverse set of skills, including technological literacy, media literacy and information literacy, life skills along with general learning abilities (Inderwati, Sofendi, Purnomo, Vanty, & Suhendi,2019). Information and communication technology (ICT) have a lot of potential roles in improving the English language proficiency, as evidenced in studies of Indonesian learners. Ciptaningrum (2017, as cited in the Inderawati et al., 2019). Research suggests that, using technology, particularly through social media, has become a creative approach to improve students English writing skills Inderawati (2017, as cited in the Inderawati et al., 2019).

Students today no longer need to rely solely on their instructors for technological integration for supporting their learning. Instead, technology has become an essential part of their daily lives, extending into their learning experiences. Thus, examining students' perceptions of technology in both teaching and learning process is crucial to gain a better picture of their views on how they engage with multimodal resources. Additionally, it is equally valuable to explore how students are practically utilizing the technology in their learning provides further insights into its effectiveness (Inderawati et al., 2019).

Integrating technology in the educational institutions makes student learn faster and easily (Sarica & Cavus, 2019 as cited in the Inderawati et al., 2019). However, before including technology into the teaching and learning process, well – structured and carefully planned activities are crucial to ensure that if the digital tools align with students' skill levels and learning needs (inderawati et al., 2019).

Motivation plays a significant role in influencing learning and achievement (Ames, 1990 as cited in Liu, Olmanson, Horton & Toprac, 2011), and instructional context has a strong influence on student' motivation. Educational resources that are appropriately challenging, offer students choices and promote a sense of autonomy and self-determination can positively affect motivation (Hidi & Harackiewicz,2000 as cited in the Liu et al., 2011).

Studies suggests that there are two complementary strategies to motivate students: enhancing self-efficacy and increasing intrinsic value or interest in the task. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1986, as cited in the Liu, et al., 2011), refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to succeed. Intrinsic value or interest on the other hand refers to the enjoyment of performing a task. When students find personal relevance and interest in a task, they are considered intrinsically motivated. Motivated students are more likely to stay engaged in difficult situations and open to challenging tasks more eagerly compared to their less motivated peers (Stipek,1993 as cited in the, Liu et al.,2011).

Motivation plays a significant role in encouraging behavior and inspiring individual to adopt intrinsic driving force of action (Mook, 1995, as cited in the lee, Hsiao, & Ho,2014). It drives people to take initiatives, continue working on tasks, and enhance their willingness to study, thereby driving them to complete activity (Slavin 2001, as cited in the Lee et al.,2014).

According to Miller and Miller (2000), in the context of e -learning, motivation is considered a fundamental element of success. Students with higher motivation achieve better learning outcomes, whereas poor academic performance is often not solely result from lack of ability but could rather a lack of motivation to learn. Similarly, Forest (2000) highlights that motivation plays a crucial role in academic success, influencing student's willingness to engage in learning and persist through challenges (as cited in the Lee et al., 2014).

Active Learning Strategies: The Role of Multimedia and Collaborative techniques

Active learning transforms the learning process by encouraging students to engage with content based on their own interest and abilities. In another word, it enhances the learning process more effectively and help gain positive learning outcomes (Gani et al., 2019).

Multimedia, as a learning tool, can be adjusted according to the needs and abilities of the individual learner (Gani, et., al,2019). Integrating multimedia presentations into materials with active learning techniques leads to better educational outcomes (Sawyer, Obeid, Bublitz, Schwartz, & Brooks,2017).

Active learning is based on the idea that simply listening passively is not sufficient for authentic and lasting learning. Therefore, this approach emphasizes more on the activities like problem solving, collaborative discussions of ideas, critical thinking, reading, writing and forming meaningful cultural experiences beyond the classroom (Bon-well & Eison,1991 as cited in the (Sawyer et al., 2017).

Collaborative learning provides students with opportunities to exchange ideas, engage in discussion and build logical arguments while supporting their viewpoints. This process of cognitive engagement provides deeper and more meaningful reasoning. Vygotsky's social development Theory argues that development and learning are formed through social interactions before being internalized on a personal level. In cooperative learning, student interaction often involves joint dialogue that builds on each other's input and provoke thoughtful responses to challenging questions (Chi, 2019, as cited in Sawyer et al., 2017).

When integrating active learning into classroom, teaching can be influenced by how lesson content is presented, which may facilitate or hinder active learning strategies. The use of multimedia- driven instruction such as videos, podcasts, images and computer-based lessons is

increasingly being adopted in college courses. Additionally, it is becoming a continually growing practice to improve the learning experience by complimenting traditional text-based materials (Bartlett & Strough, 2003; Gotsick & Gotsick, 1996; Seaman,1998, as cited in Sawyer et al.,2017).

A lot of students learn best when they are engaged in collaborative, small group activities. Therefore, the learning environment needs to be appropriate to address these needs (Byerley, 2001). One widely used active learning strategy is Think -Pair- Share, a structured collaborative strategy that involves three distinct steps. First in the “think” phase, the instructor presents a question or a short problem based on the lecture or reading materials. Each student then independently reflects upon the question and writes down their thoughts. In the “pair” phase, learners pair up with a peer. They engage in discussion, compare and contrast their individual answers, then work together to develop an improved joint response. Finally, in the “share” phase, the instructor selects a few pairs, either randomly or through volunteers to present their collaborative responses to the class (Byerly, 2001).

Developing Language Skills Through Multimedia

Multimedia based resources play a crucial role in enhancing listening skills by providing learners with authentic language exposure in a controlled environment (Breet, 1995). Instead of making the language itself easier, the focus can be on additional tools or media such as subtitles, visuals or interactive features that assist learners in understanding the content better. These supporting tools can make the language more comprehensible without altering its authenticity (Breet, 1995).

(Vanderplank, 1998, as cited in the Breet, 1995) says that subtitled videos can support in information retention and contribute to the development of listening skills, making them valuable tools for language learners. Subtitles can make spoken language more accessible by

clarifying the speech learners hear, making it easier to follow along. It lowers emotional barriers such as anxiety or frustration, increasing learner engagement with the material. Additionally, they expose learners to different accents and dialects which broadens their listening comprehension. They allow for adjustable comprehension levels, meaning learners can control the level of understanding by adjusting the content to match their abilities which can improve comprehension and language intake. When paired with task feedback, subtitles allow learners to review explanations and reasons behind answers, encouraging active and deeper learning

Combining multiple forms of media, such as audio, text, video, and subtitles within a single learning platform offers a flexible and adaptable learning experience. This multimodal approach allows learners to choose and adjust materials based on their performance and learning styles. For example, a combination of both written and spoken media may provide input that is more comprehensible and easier to retain. This set up enables self-directed learning, giving learners control over their experience (Breet, 1995). Traditional language learning tools, such as textbooks or audio recordings accompanied by text, do not contain the same level of interactivity and adaptability. In contrast, digital resources offer a greater volume of content, accommodating various learning needs, preferences and learning styles (Breet, 1995). Offering a variety of language content and activities allows learners to have greater autonomy in their learning. They can make choices about how to engage with materials and select strategies that best suit their needs. This process of selecting learning strategies not only personalizes the experience but also guides the learner to think about what ways of learning benefit them the most (Breet, 1995).

Challenges: Accessibility Issue and Cognitive Overload

Multimedia resources, such as videos, audio recordings and photographs, can be used either from archival sources or the past or real time to capture and share real world experiences and events. Additionally, interactive animated diagrams can be used to illustrate concepts across various disciplines, allowing students to observe the change over time (Sloan, Startford, &Gregor, 2016).

However, several challenges hinder the successful incorporation of multimedia tools in education. These challenges include resource limitations, gaps in digital literacy, connectivity issue, lack of motivation, insufficient digital tools, unfamiliarity with technology among educators, high subscription cost, quality concerns and risk of distractions (waang,2023).

As post-pandemic educational reforms emphasize multimedia integration, institutions worldwide have redefined pedagogical approaches and incorporated multimedia to enhance engagement, accessibility, and learning outcomes (Waang, 2023).

The integration of digital tools is no longer a matter of personal preference but a necessity, particularly in the wake of extensive educational development initiatives that prioritize information technology as a key component for both teaching and learning (Aladwan, 2020, as cited in the Waang, 2023). It is very crucial to ensure equitable access to technology and resources to bridge the digital divide, so that all students and educators can get the benefit from multimedia tools. Additionally, multimedia tools offer students a broad spectrum of digital materials. For example, open educational resources, videos, simulations, websites, which broaden their knowledge and support their learning efforts (Waang,2023). Despite the potential benefits of multimedia learning, many students, especially from remote area or underprivileged backgrounds, face common challenges like digital literacy gap, which limits their ability to effectively utilize these resources (Warschauer, 2003, as cited in the Waang,2023).

Educational institutions in Bangladesh face both internal and external challenges when attempting to implement multimedia-based classes (Azad, 2024). This shift towards multimedia - based classes, the teacher and students must have the skills of multimedia instrument, as multimedia-based classes enhance the standard of teaching -learning in classroom (Sanchez- Garcia, 2013, as cited in the Azad ,2024). However, the use of multimedia in Bangladeshi educational setting has not been largely explored, with limited research on the challenges and gaps associated with its implementation (Azad, 2024).Some of the major obstacles to multimedia integration in Bangladeshi classrooms include Lack of effective training, overcrowded classrooms, difficulties for backbenchers who struggle to see and hear multimedia content clearly and unsuitable classroom settings are the primary obstacle for multimedia classes (Azad,2024).

Meaningful learning involves developing a deep understanding of the material, which involves focusing on the important elements of the content, mentally organizing the information in a logical way and connecting it with relevant existing knowledge (Mayor, 2003). However, Students need to actively process information for effective learning. Since the human brain has a limited capacity for handling information at once, presenting excessive information may overwhelm learners, making it harder to retain content. This challenge is called cognitive overload. Therefore, multimedia learning materials should be designed in a way that facilitate meaningful learning without overloading the learners cognitive processing abilities (Mayor, 2003).

It is difficult to present information in a perfectly organized manner. When synchronization of different types of information is not possible, one strategy to reduce cognitive overload is ensuring that students have the cognitive skills necessary to retain and process information mentally. For example, individuals with strong spatial skills can hold and manipulate mental

image more easily, this allows them understand complex ideas without feeling cognitively overwhelmed (Mayor, 2003).

The amount of time students spend on a task also reflects how mentally demanding it is. If students take significantly longer to process a particular format, it may indicate that the presentation style is increasing cognitive demand on them. A more complex format may require extra time to process and understand which can lead to cognitive fatigue and hinder learning (Brunken, Plass, & Leutner, 2003). Cognitive load refers to the mental effort required to complete a task. On the other hand, mental workload is describing the interaction between task requirements and human capabilities or resources (Maraza- Quispe, Alejandro – Oviedo, Fernandez- Gambarini, Cuadros- Paz, Choquenhuanca- Quispq, & Rodriguez- Zayra, 2022). To optimize learning in multimedia-based environments, instructional designers must consider task complexity, information organization, and learners' cognitive processing abilities.

One effective way to optimize learning with multimedia is to pre- select videos in order to identify the best situations where to apply subtitles in general and what type of subtitles. When presenting videos in a foreign language, it is crucial to use subtitles that translate the language so that it can help viewers to understand the information in the video. However, same-language subtitles can have varied effects- they may be both helpful and distracting, depending on the complexity of the material and learners' proficiency level. Therefore, the usage of these subtitles should be evaluated by the educator and the nature of the multimedia (Maraza- Quispe et al., 2022).

2.3 Conclusion

In summary, this literature review has examined the key themes and debates surrounding multimodal literacy in English language learning, emphasizing its significance in the digital age. The reviewed studies offer valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of integrating multimodal resources into language instruction. While existing studies highlight the potential of multimodal literacy, there remains a gap in understanding how university students perceive and interact with this tool, particularly within the Bangladeshi educational context. This study aims to address these gaps by investigating students' perception on multimodal literacy and its effectiveness in English language learning. The findings will contribute to broader discussions on digital literacy, inclusive education and evolving landscape of language learning in technology- driven environment. Additionally, this research offers practical insights for more effective integration of multimodal approaches in higher education.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in this study to explore the role of multimodal literacy in enhancing English language learning among university students. It provides a comprehensive overview of research design, including the rationale for selecting a qualitative approach, participant selection, data collection methods and data analysis techniques. This methodological framework aims to ensure the rigor and validity of the research findings while offering a clear roadmap for study's implementation. The following sections, elaborate on these aspects, detailing the specific methods used for data collection and analysis, including the sampling strategy, data collection instruments and procedures for ensuring the reliability and validity. Additionally, this chapter addresses ethical considerations and potential limitations, providing a transparent and comprehensive account of the research process.

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research method, to delve into the university students' experiences regarding multimodal literacy in language learning. Qualitative research focuses on understanding the meanings individuals or groups assign to social or human problems, guided by specific assumptions and interpretive framework. To study this problem, qualitative researchers collect data in natural settings, remaining sensitive to the people and place being studied. The final report or presentation typically incorporates the voice of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex interpretation of the research problem, often contributing to literature or calling for a change. (Creswell, 2013).

Building on this qualitative framework, this study adopts a phenomenological approach to explore the subjective experience and personal insights of learners. Rooted in the philosophical traditions established by Edmund Husserl (1927), Phenomenology seeks to explore the structures of consciousness and the essence of experiences. Central to this approach are the concepts of phenomenological-psychological and eidetic reductions, which involve examining the self- experience and its derivative experience of other selves and society (Hussel,1927). By prioritizing individuals' lived experiences and their unique interpretations of phenomena, this approach is particularly well suited for collecting rich, descriptive data that captures the depth and complexity of Students' learning journeys.

Rationale for choosing phenomenological approach:

A phenomenological approach was chosen for this study because it allows for a comprehensive exploration of student's lived experiences and personal interpretations of multimodal literacy in language learning. This approach focuses on how individuals make sense of their experiences, making it particularly effective for understanding the influence of multimedia resources in language learning outcomes. By focusing on students' thoughts, feelings and reflections, this approach enables the collection of rich and descriptive data which help uncover the nuances of learner's engagement with multimedia tools as well as the complexity of using multimodal resources, such as personal preference, encountered barriers and varying levels of engagement. Since, multimodal literacy involves personal interaction with various media forms, the phenomenological approach allows for a contextualized understanding of how students perceive and interpret these resources within their learning environment. By using this approach, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the students' experience, providing insights that can inform more effective strategies for integrating multimodal literacy into language education.

3.3 Research Questions

My study has been guided by the following research questions:

1. How do university students perceive the integration of multimedia resources in language learning, particularly in terms of perceived benefits and preferred approaches?
2. What challenges do they encounter when integrating multimodal literacy into their language learning experiences?

3.4 Research Procedures

A systematic process was followed to ensure effective and ethical data collection. The research procedure includes participant selection, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques.

3.4.1 Participants Selection

Participants for this study were university students who have experience using multimodal resources for language learning. Purposive sampling was used to select approximately 10 participants who can provide in-depth insights into their experiences. This sample size was considered appropriate for achieving data saturation while maintaining the study's manageability.

To ensure diverse perspectives, efforts were made to include students from various academic years, disciplines and cultural backgrounds to ensure comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study.

Recruitment involved personal invitations and direct outreach. Some participants were interviewed in person, while others attended via Zoom meetings due to availability constraints. Interviews were scheduled according to participants' preferred times. Informed consent was

obtained before each session. The inclusion criteria required either who have current enrolment in undergraduate language courses or who have prior experience with the use of multimodal resources in their language learning.

Participant overview:

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Role	Educational Background
Akash	Male	23	Student	Under gradate
Anusha	female	24	Student	Undergraduate
Monica	Female	23	Student	Undergraduate
Zahir	Male	22	Student	Undergraduate
Samanta	Female	24	Student	Undergraduate
Sara	Female	23	Student	Undergraduate
Maya	Female	23	Student	Undergraduate
Rana	Male	24	Student	Undergraduate
Tahera	Female	22	Student	Undergraduate
Rakib	Male	24	Student	Undergraduate
Nova	Female	24	Student	Undergraduate

3.4.1 Ethical Consideration

To ensure ethical research practices, informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participants were informed about the study’s purpose, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were used instead of real name. Additionally, all data was securely stored, and participants’ responses were anonymized to protect their privacy.

3.4.2 Data Collection

Data was collected through semi- structured interviews, conducted either in person or via video conferencing, depending on participants’ availability. This approach allowed for flexibility in exploring participants’ thoughts, experiences, and emotions while ensuring key

topics were thoroughly covered. The interview guide was developed based on the research questions and included open-ended questions, enabling participants to express their perspective freely. The questions focused on

- how multimodal resources influence their learning experiences.
- the challenges they encounter while using multimedia tools.

Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. Prior to each session, informed consent was obtained, and participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.4.3 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze and interpret the collected interview data. This method involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data, making it well-suited for organizing and interpreting rich qualitative data.

According to Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (or ‘themes’) within qualitative data. Unlike other qualitative analytic approaches, TA is considered a tool or technique rather than a rigid methodology, as it is not bound by theoretical commitments.

In this study, thematic analysis allowed for a comprehensive analysis of both the positive and negative aspects of students’ experiences with multimodal literacy in language learning, leading to a nuanced understanding of their perspectives.

Steps of Data Analysis:

The following steps, adapted from Clarke and Brauns’s (2017) framework, were used for thematic analysis:

Familiarization: Reviewing the interview transcript thoroughly to understand the overall content.

Coding: Identifying key phrases and ideas related to the study's central themes.

Categorization: Grouping codes into broader themes based on the research focus.

Reviewing and defining themes: Refining and naming the themes to ensure clarity and relevance.

Interpretation: Drawing conclusions by comparing findings across interviews to identify patterns and insights.

The systematic analysis provided an in-depth understanding of how learner perceive and engage with multimodal literacy in English language learning, ensuring that the analysis remained rigorous and transparent.

3.5 Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of my study, I have applied several strategies that are commonly used in qualitative research. These strategies enhance the credibility, transformability, dependability and confirmability of the findings.

Credibility: credibility was established through member checking. Participates were given the opportunity to review and verify the accuracy of the data and interpretations derived from their interviews.

Transferability: Transferability was enhanced by providing detailed description of the research context, including participants demographics, institutional setting data collection procedures.

Dependability: Dependability was ensured by meticulously documenting the entire research process.

Confirmability: confirmability was maintained through researcher reflexivity which involved consistently reflecting on potential biases and assumptions and how they might have influenced the research process.

3.6 Conclusion

In summary, the methodological choices in this study were carefully aligned with the research objectives, making sure a rigorous and ethical approach to data collection and data analysis. By employing a qualitative research approach, with a phenomenological approach, the study was designed to ensure a comprehensive exploration of university students' experiments with multimodal literacy in language learning. This methodological framework provided a solid foundation for the study enhancing the credibility and reliability of the findings.

Chapter 4

Results

4.1 Introduction

In the 21st century, education is no longer confined to a particular place or time; rather, learning is an ongoing process that extends beyond traditional classroom settings. Multimodal literacy enables continuous learning inside and outside the classroom, offering opportunities beyond the walls of formal education. From movies and podcasts to platforms like YouTube and ChatGPT, cater to a variety of learning preferences and styles, enabling students to engage with language in diverse and meaningful ways. While these resources provide opportunities for skill development and enriched learning experiences, their effective utilization is often hindered by challenges such as accessibility issues, cognitive overload and digital literacy gap. This section explores dual aspect of multimedia resources; their contribution to enhancing language skills and the challenges learner encounter in integrating them into their educational practices.

RQ 1: How do students perceive the integration of multimedia resources in language learning specially focusing on their perceived benefits and preferred approaches?

Enhancing Student Engagement and Motivation through Technology- Driven Learning

The first theme identified in this study was student engagement and motivation in the context of multimodal learning. All participants agreed that multimodal resources enhance engagement by creating a student- centered learning environment both within and beyond the classroom. Participants shared various examples of how they have utilized multimedia tools to increase engagement and motivation. While some provided specific examples of the types of resources they used, others simply agreed that, multimedia resources increase students' engagement with materials and motivate them to stay more focused. One effective strategy was shared by

Akash, who described the inclusion of online discussion board facilitated by the instructor. He explained that, this online platform was accessible to all learners, allowing them to engage with course materials, post their thoughts, ask questions, and respond to peers outside of formal class hour. He stated: *“We could engage with materials at our own pace and revisit concepts as needed.”*

Interactive elements like quizzes -whether it is graded and non-graded significantly enhance engagement with educational material. Anusha highlighted, *“Quizzes effectively make us recall and apply knowledge, which reinforce learning and maintaining attention.”* A few participants mentioned that online quizzes significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. They revealed why they prefer online quizzes. One of the reasons is that, these quizzes provide immediate feedback after each attempt. Sometimes it offers explanations or hints about the area they need to improve and the feedback loop is very crucial for students to address their knowledge gaps. Monica said, *“This immediate feedback loop allows me to actively test my understanding and see where I need improvement.”* participants revealed the other reasons is flexible timing. This flexibility accommodates different learning styles and allows learners to decide when to start or finish the quizzes. As Zahir said, *“I do not have to start quiz with half the syllabus because it fits in to my study sessions in flexible schedule.”* While few students prefer online quizzes for their flexible timing, others value them for having multiple attempts for trying. Participants mentioned that, online quizzes which often have options for additional attempts are highly beneficial for personalized and effective learning. It increases self-paced study and allows learners to revisit concepts as needed. As Samanta stated, *“I prefer quizzes which has options for additional attempts because it allows self-paced study.”* Participants also emphasized the importance of videos as a multimedia resource, stating that videos capture students’ attention and encourage discussions among students by explaining abstract or difficult ideas easier to grasp. Many revealed that, in their university courses, they

regularly watch relevant videos while learning any new topic. Sometimes, they get to discuss it with the classmates and respond to open-ended questions, which deepens their understanding of materials. Sara stated, *“These videos are always helpful as they introduce us to new topic or scenarios.”*

Almost all of the participants in this study agreed on the strong correlation between enjoyment and student engagement. They reported that when students enjoy learning, they are more likely to stay motivated, invest time, and engage more deeply with the materials. As Samanta said, *“when students find learning enjoyable, they are more motivated to continue engaging with the material.”*

Active Learning Strategies: The Role of Multimedia and Collaborative Techniques

The second theme emerged from the study is active learning, which participants described as an approach that enhances and deepens understanding. Bon-well and Eison (1991, as cited in the Sawyer, Obeid, Bublitz, Schwartz, & Brooks, 2017) argue that, active learning goes beyond passive listening and emphasizes more on the activities like problem solving, collaborative discussions of ideas, critical thinking, reading, writing and forming meaningful cultural experiences beyond the classroom. Participants widely discussed their involvement in various active learning activities throughout their courses including case-based learning, think-pair-share activities, peer teaching, concept mapping, and fieldwork projects. These strategies encouraged deeper engagement with course content and application of knowledge. Maya has shared her experience with case-based learning, an effective active learning strategy where students are presented real life cases or scenarios to analyses, discuss and solve. Maya said, *“one of the activities I enjoyed most was case based learning. We worked in a group to discuss a real-life situation about a customer service issue at a hotel. Each of us was given a role - such as a customer, hotel manager, or receptionist.”* Before starting the activity, learners got

to watch short video clips of real customer complaints and responses in English. This multimedia supported case analysis helped them develop higher level thinking, promote active engagement through discussion and role play, and encourage practical application of knowledge. As she added, *“before starting the activity, these short videos helped us observe natural conversations, understand different speaking styles and learn how to express opinions politely and professionally.”*

Rana shared an effective learning strategy: the think -pair and share method. In this activity, students first think about a topic or problem individually, then pair up with peer to discuss it, and finally share their insight with the class. Rana explained how this activity worked in her poetry class: *“one of the tasks in my poetry class called think -pair -share, we analyzed a poem individually, compared interpretations in pairs, and then presented our finding using a PowerPoint slide show to the next class”*. This method allows students to engage with material through structured discussion, enhancing critical thinking and peer collaboration. Byerly (2001), describes the think pair and share as a three-step process. This activity consists of three steps. In the think part, the instructor first asks a question or poses a short problem based on the lecture or reading materials. Each student then reflects individually and writes a belief note about their understanding. In the pair part, learners pair up with a nearby peer to compare and discuss their answers so that they can develop an improved joint response. Finally, in the share part, the instructor selects few pairs either randomly or through volunteers to present their collaborative answer.

Participants reported that using digital collaboration tools such as short video clips, slideshows, podcast while doing these activities to introduce the topic allow learners to engage with the material in different ways, supporting different learning preferences visual, auditory or kinesthetic .Tahera described her experience with online journal entries, which she found particularly useful for analyzing literary themes and how it can be an effective multimedia

resource for active learning. As mentioned, in a group activity, students wrote weekly journal entries on George Orwell's animal farm, which helped learners to analyze the text, interpret its theme and form thoughtful opinions to deepen their understanding of the story and its messages. It also helped them keep a track record over time to identify growth areas and gaps. She stated, *"we had a journal entry in every week based on specific themes from animal farm."*

Anusha shared her experience with peer teaching exercise in a course. Peer teaching can be a great example of active learning with the integration of multimedia resources. In this approach, she noted that they can simply teach the topic or they can incorporate some multimedia tools like video lessons, podcasts or interactive slideshows to teach their peers. Peer teaching can provide both peer "teacher" and "learner" a clear and in depth understanding of the materials. As both of them actively engage in the process, it enhances participation and retention of knowledge. She explained *"we have used engaging video, image or audio clip to introduce topics, or explained concepts using PowerPoint slides. Including these resources encourages collaborative and active learning along with enhancing engagement and motivation."* Peer teaching promotes deeper comprehension. It requires learners to articulate their understanding and answer questions, reinforcing knowledge retention.

Nova discussed concept mapping as one of the most effective strategies for applying active engagement. In this task, students created visual diagrams connecting ideas and concepts to demonstrate understanding. As mentioned in the study, students made concept maps then shared the main ideas and understanding with the class with the help of the instructors. The whole activities were video recorded in detail so that it can be shared with the university they were collaborating with. The idea of sharing concept maps with peers allows students to get fresh ideas and approaches. Showing the video record to the university will have cross-cultural exchange. Collaborating with another university let them have border learning experiences.

Nova stated, *“I participated in a group concept mapping project. The activities were video recorded so we could share them with the university we collaborated with, allowing for cross cultural change.”*

Rakib shared his experience with field trip and collaborative course project which he described as effective example of active learning. This project exposed them to extended learning beyond the classroom and bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge with real world application. Also, it was a great source of cross institutional exchange as it was shared with the university they are collaborating with. Rafiq stated *“We filmed a video of our field trip, combining visual, auditory, and experiential learning to connect academic knowledge with real world process.”*

Developing Language Skills Through Multimedia

Another emerging theme is skill development through multimedia resources. Almost all participants mentioned that, multimedia resources contribute more or less to the all the four English language skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing- to varying degrees. In day-to-day life, students are now exposed to various multimedia resources for both academic and non-academic purposes. As a result, it is common for learners to try various language methods and tools to improve their listening abilities. They watch YouTube videos, movies series, attend online lecture, listen to podcasts, use different online apps, and read online articles or PDFs. The Integration of these tools into daily learning routines helps learners achieve a holistic improvement in their English language proficiency. As Akash stated, *“I think multimedia resources have helped me improve my English skills across all areas. For both academic and non-academic purposes, I am exposed to wide range of multimedia resources daily.”* Participants described improvements across all four language skills. Akash further added, *“if I specify, my listening skills have significantly improved through consistent exposure to*

multimedia resources. I regularly watch YouTube videos, sometimes movies and Tv series and listen music. Also, academically I frequently use multimedia resources for my courses. such as making presentation slides, attending online class, exam or online consultation. Additionally, I regularly read online articles and engage with various online resources for my studies.”

As we learn from the participants’ experiences, multimodal literacy in daily life plays a crucial role in improving all four language skills. However, its impact varies among learners. For some, it strengthens their listening skill, while for others, it enhances their speaking skills. Sometimes, it depends on individual preferences and the type of multimodal exposure they encounter in their daily lives. A lot of participants find movies as a great medium for language learning. One key reason is that movies provide contextual understanding, that means learners can observe authentic language usage, natural pronunciation, intonation, rhythm as well as cultural representation. This contextual exposure makes it easier to comprehend spoken language, even if the words are unfamiliar. Monica said in the interview, *“Movies are my favorite pastime and I think they are an excellent way to improve my listening skills. Every time I watch a movie; I am exposed to real- life conversation which help me listen to conversation in context.”* She further explained: *“one reason I watch movies for learning English is having contextual understanding and the other reason is they never get boring. Because of the entertaining content, I stay focused and listen to a longer content.”* Many participants stated that watching movies with subtitles can be a very effective way for language learning as it allows learners to see the written form of words while hearing them spoken. This simultaneous exposure to spoken and written language can develop both listening and speaking proficiency. It can provide better retention of new vocabulary and Grammar. While talking about subtitles, Samanta shared how she utilizes the subtitles to take notes of vocabulary while watching a movie. She said, *“I write down new words or phrases along with their meanings and try using*

them in daily conversations or writing because I think cultural media is great for learning niche or colloquial words I would not have otherwise.”

Sara shared a practical method of how she uses movie as a medium for improving listening skills. She stated, *“I watch movies with subtitles first and then I remove the subtitle. For this, I select movies or genres I enjoy, preferably choosing films that match my proficiency level.”*

Rakib suggested another practical method of speaking practice and that is, focusing on specific parts of a movie and mimicking the dialogue to develop pronunciation and intonation. Pausing the movie to repeat lines further reinforces speaking skill. While practicing speaking they can jot down new vocabularies or interesting phrases to review later. As he said, *“I follow shadowing technique that means I repeat dialogues along with movie which helps me with pronunciation and fluency.”*

Maya shared another fun technique that she practices with her friends, which they call the speed-reading game. She said, *“we challenge ourselves to read the subtitles as quickly as possible before they disappear.”* A lot of participants showed interests in listening to podcasts as a way to improve their listening skills. They revealed that listening to podcasts allows them to develop abilities in a convenient and entertaining manner because of its distinctive feature and capabilities. While listening to podcasts, they can choose their favorite channel, host, topic, duration as well as difficulty level. Regular listening introduces learners to various accents and dialects challenging their ability to understand spoken language. Zara showed her interests in listening to podcasts as it often features diverse topics with natural speech patterns, providing a realistic context for language learning. She thinks integrating this as a daily habit means incorporating regular listening practice session every day, even with a busy schedule. She stated, *“The accessibility of podcasts is a major advantage. I can listen to them while commuting, doing daily chores or simply walking in the park.”*

Similarly, Rakib also believes that podcasts are a convenient and time -efficient medium for improving listening skills. He stated, *“I always prefer podcasts. First, they have a vast array of topics and genres with the availability on various platform and devices. Second, I can choose podcasts that match my proficiency level. Third, following podcasts discussion improve my focus and listening endurance over time.”*

Based on Anusha’s experience, she thinks podcasts have been most effective for her vocabulary acquisition. She stated, *“When I listen to podcasts, I encounter a wide range of vocabulary even when I listen to unfamiliar words, I often can grasp the meaning within the contextual learning.”* A few participants said that watching YouTube content significantly enhanced English language skills particularly the listening comprehension. Zahir talked about several YouTube channels which share content only focusing on learning English. He says, *“I follow BBC News; it shares updated news along with featuring clear and professional British English pronunciation. Other one is named BBC learning English which offers a series called 6-minute English .it shares very short and focused format each only six minutes long- that are very easy to incorporate into daily routines”*. Participants acknowledged that YouTube can be used as one of the leading platforms for language learning only if the learner use it mindfully. Like any other online tool, YouTube also may have a reputation for distraction. However, the true value of it how learners choose to use it. Rana stated, *“YouTube application can be found easily in smartphones. The users only have to write the name of the topic they want to watch and it will run on directly”*.

A few Participants also mentioned using ChatGPT as a language learning tool. They claimed it can be very convenient for learners to practice English with. It is accessible anytime and anywhere. It offers immediate feedback and allows learners to practice speaking without fear of judgement. Jamil thinks proficiency needs practice. Therefore, to speak a language fully,

learners need to practice speaking a lot. He stated, “*I prefer using ChatGPT as speaking partner because it provides a safe learning environment and immediate feedback*”.

RQ 2 What challenges do students encounter when integrating multimodal literacy into their language learning experience?

Accessibility Barriers and Cognitive Overload in Multimedia-Based Learning

As participants continue to share their positive experience with multimodal literacy, several accessibility challenges hinder the effective implementation of these technologies. The study reveals that accessibility issues and cognitive overload are two major challenges students face when using multimedia-based learning resources. While these tools enhance engagement and learning outcomes, they also present barriers such as internet connectivity issues, digital literacy gaps, information overload, lack of proper instruction and platform restrictions. Internet access is a fundamental requirement for multimedia-based learning, yet connectivity issues remain a significant challenge. Participants reported that slow or unreliable internet connections disrupt accessibility to multimedia resources they use to attend class, exam or other academic purposes. Zara described her experience: “*Slow or unreliable internet connections sometimes disrupts my class lecture, online exam or other assignments.*” This finding aligns with Azad (2024), who states that educational institutions in Bangladesh face internal and external challenges while attempting to implement multimedia-based classes. Similarly, Waang (2023) observes that as the impact of pandemic begins to fade, institutions redefine their pedagogical approaches and start including multimedia more in education to enhance the engagement, accessibility, and learning outcomes. However, Waang (2023) also identifies several challenges in successfully incorporating multimedia tools in education. These includes resource limitations, gaps in digital literacy, connectivity issue, lack of motivation, insufficient digital tools, unfamiliarity with technology among lecturers, high subscription cost, quality

concerns and risk of distractions. Moreover, digital literacy gaps among students especially who are in their first year of university students creates additional obstacles as they have to adjust to a new academic environment which leave them to figure things out independently. for instance, As Samanta stated, *“I often get confused as I do not have any prior knowledge using multimedia for the study purpose.*

The design and selection of multimedia resources play a crucial role in determining their effectiveness. Amaya thinks that multimedia content specially those chosen for class room or take-home assignment, should be selected carefully. Poorly chosen material with low audio or video contrast may lead to incomplete understanding of the lesson because student might miss key information. This will lead to difficulty following along and disrupt the flow of learning for instance She noted, *“I have difficulty understanding certain accents, especially the British ones.”* Similarly, a lot of participants during their coursework, have faced issues with multimedia content they have used for classwork or take-home assessment. Text or visual with poor contrast can be very difficult to access the resources. It can significantly hamper lessons for students. When text lacks sufficient contrast with the background, they struggle to read on screen. Fast paced content such as rapidly changing visuals make the material inaccessible for some learners to process the information. Using overly busy or complicated multimedia can give student hard time finishing the task. If the tasks are graded assignments, it becomes difficult to finish and have a good grade. This type of content can be very overly time consuming and lead to frustration. Tahera stated, *“the videos had very low contrast making it difficult for me to identify content and complete my assignment.”*

Study participants revealed that, lack of clear guidance impacts overall wellbeing of students. Sometimes dealing unfamiliar platform without clear instruction can result in submitting incorrect file format with broken links, spending excessive amount of time troubleshooting or experiencing with platform rather than focusing on the actual content of assignment. These

issues can lower confidence in students and reduce their willingness to engage with similar task in the future. As Monica said, *“I was really unfamiliar with this step-by-step process and the instruction was not very clear to me which created frustration.”* Participants also highlighted unexpected technical glitches during the online exam which can cause stress and lower performance such as losing the work because of not having the autosave or back up feature, breaking the concentration because of interruption, having insufficient time to complete the answers or redoing the lost work. Rakib revealed in the interview, *“if the platform had autosaved my answers or allowed me to pick up where I left off after the refresh, I would not have lost all my work.”*

Participants have found out, even if multimedia resources play as a supporting role for learners but sometimes, it may overwhelm students with excessive information which led to reduced learning efficiently and cognitive overload. Roza stated, *“Sometimes multimedia resources overwhelm students with excessive information.”*

Participants revealed how the increasing dependence on multimedia resources for academic purposes coupled with the frequent interruptions posed by social media apps and entertainment platforms has a profound impact on the efficiency of study sessions. Monica stated, sometimes *“I get distracted by non-educational content available online”*

Additionally, participants expressed concerns over subscription-based learning models, which limit access to essential resources. *Sometimes* multimedia resources do not give full access. this limited accessibility happens due to language barriers, regional restrictions or lack of accessibility. Rana stated, *“sometimes multimedia resources require subscriptions or paid access, which can be a barrier and it causes reduced resource variety”*. Participants says, while multimedia resources have revolutionized education, they have also introduced the risk of exploitation. The increasing reliance on multimedia resources in education is leading to the

commercialization of learning. *“Most of the resources these days prioritizes revenue over educational quality by shifting to subscription-based models, making it harder to access high quality materials.”*

4.2 Conclusion

The finding reveals that multimedia resources hold significant potential in revolutionizing English language learning. By providing engaging and interactive learning experiences, these resources can effectively enhance various language skills from listening comprehension through movies and podcasts to improved speaking fluency through AI powered conversational tools like ChatGPT. However, successful integration of multimedia resources requires careful consideration of potential challenges such as internet accessibility, cognitive overload and unfamiliarity with digital tools. By addressing these challenges, educators and institutions can create a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of multimedia tools while minimizing their limitations.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to find out the role of multimodal literacy in English language learning, focusing on its impact on student engagement and motivation, active learning, skill development and accessibility issues, including the potential for cognitive overload and digital literacy. While delving into the narratives of the participants experiences during the use of multimedia resources, several noteworthy insights were found how these resources influence the learning experience of students acknowledging both benefits and challenges associated with their integration.

Student Engagement and Motivation

One of the key findings of the study is that multimodal resources significantly enhance learner engagement and motivation by making learning more dynamic, interactive and student - centered. Compared to traditional text-based approaches, multimedia tools like videos, interactive quizzes and activities provide learners with a more diverse and enriching ways, encouraging their willingness to participate in learning tasks. Notably, students expressed a profound appreciation for the online discussion board where they could post about any confusion or point of view regarding the topic they learn after the formal class hour. This platform not only increases student engagement, but also motivates them to revisit the topic they have learned, read other students' idea, concepts and explore their questions further. Student engagement and motivation are increased when learning taps into learners' curiosity, making them want to study more. This study is relevant to the Sawang, O'Connor, and Ali (2017), who argue student engagement is the product of motivation and active learning. They emphasize that engagement will not occur if either component is missing. Elements like

quizzes whether graded or ungraded, help students find out the area where they lack understanding. Quizzes with multiple attempt options provide immediate feedback by revealing not only the correct answer but also showing the areas for improvement. However, traditional textbook typically lacks such options. It typically offers limited opportunities for multiple attempts and lack immediate feedback. Moreover, Online quizzes have very flexible timing. It allows learners to decide when they are ready to sit for the quizzes and learn at their own pace. This is also very beneficial for their upcoming exams to prepare.

Visual Learning and its Impact

Another important element is visual learning which can be defined as the assimilation of information from visual formats. Visual information can be presented in different formats, such as images, flowchart, diagrams, video, graphs, cartoons, slide shows/ PowerPoint, posters, movie, games and flash cards. Participants strongly favored the use of videos in classroom as it helps them better manage learning objectives and achieve academic success. It also captures students' attention by explaining abstract or difficult ideas easier to grasp. In contrast, they noted that relying solely on text-based learning can make classes monotonous. From the study, it is noted that visual learning significantly improves memory retention and comprehension. Students are more likely to remember information better when it is presented both visually and verbally, in ways that are easy to understand and help reveal relationships and patterns. Therefore, including visual learning in the classroom increase student engagement with the material. Furthermore, it was also noted how visual representation can provides much needed clarity while struggling to understand concepts through texts or verbal explanations alone. Importantly, Visual learning is not just a learning style, it can be an effective approach for all students. By associating ideas, words, and concepts with images, learners can better understand and retain information. It benefits both students who naturally prefer visual learning and those

who do not. Therefore, we can come to the conclusion that visual learning offers better results than traditional learning system for both visual and non-visual learners.

Active Learning Strategies and Multimodal Integration

Active learning is a teaching approach that encourages students' engagement through critical thinking, discussion, investigation, creation rather than passively receiving information. The study findings highlight several active learning strategies that benefit students in higher education. One such strategy is case-based learning, (CBL) where students are presented real life cases or scenarios to analyze, discuss and solve. This approach fosters higher- order thinking skills by making learners apply their knowledge to real world scenarios, In CBL classrooms, students typically work in groups on case studies, stories involving one or more characters and/or scenarios. The cases present a disciplinary problem or conflicts that students must devise solutions for under the guidance of the instructor. Most case studies are based on real events, or are a construction of events that could happen. They typically involve a narrative describing problems or conflicts that need to be solved. The study findings suggested that Incorporating multimedia tools while doing case-based study make the process more interactive, collaborative and reflective. Integration of multimedia tools significantly enhances the CBL process. Example include, showing videos or podcasts for the initial case presentation then doing digital research using interacting tools, creating digital concept maps, and then engaging in online discussion with peers. The think pair and share method described in the study a can be considered as another concise activity while retaining all key points. First analyzing a topic individually, then discussing interpretation with a peer and finally sharing insights with the class using PowerPoint presentation. It combines both digital tools with traditional learning methods provides a clearer connection to academic research. The whole method shows learner how the integration of digital tools can deepen comprehension, collaboration and engagement while keeping it easy to follow.

The finding also indicates peer teaching as another effective active learning strategy. In this student-centered approach, students take turns teaching and learning from each other. This is a very fun experience for the students where it benefits the one who is being taught and also the one who is teaching. The act of presenting ideas to others helps develop critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration skills. Again, it showed how the integration of multimedia resources elevates the whole process. For instance, incorporating tools like PowerPoint slides, YouTube videos, audio recording transforms learning from passive reading to active participation. However, it is important to find the right balance of multimedia elements so that they support and enhance the educational content without overwhelming learners.

As the study finding indicates about keeping a weekly journal entry enables students to record their experiences, develops critical thinking, inquiry skills and increase active involvement. It also let them have reflective learning which plays a crucial role in developing critical thinking and self-awareness. However, using online platform like google docs to keep these weekly entries significantly enhanced the experience and made room for more active engagement in their learning. For example, while studying a novel, participants were tasked with creating an animal book based on the characters and themes they found out while doing the online journal entry with group members. These collaborative activities require active participation from all members making them think outside of the box. These activities not only make the lesson less boring but also enhances reflective practice.

Concept mapping is another effective active learning strategy that encourages students to visually organize and connect ideas. The study finding indicate, when integrated with multimedia tools for instance in a shared doc, it became more effective. this collaborative activity where students construct concept maps is an exercise in knowledge elicitation and has a positive impact on learning. Concept maps can be used in various ways such as pre- class assignment, small group activities, or to summarize information at the end of a class or project.

In this particular instance, the students created concept map as a group project and then shared their individual maps with the university they were collaborating. Documenting film with peers can be a very enjoyable experience while doing it for a class assignment. As noted from the study, a collaborative fieldtrip was designed to gather real -world data for a research paper where students were tasked with documenting the entire fieldtrip by filming the events as they unfolded. This collaborative effort required them to share five minutes film with the students from partnering university and then uploading the video to YouTube. This interculturally interactive approach adds variety to students' assessment by exposing them to new ideas and creative freedom, allowing them to experiment with storytelling techniques, visual styles and ideas without constraints of a longer format. Therefore, the finding indicates that, video-based assessment develops not only students' digital literacies and confidence in using multimedia technologies, but also encourage deeper learning through more active engagement with the subject matter.

In conclusion, multimedia resources can actively engage students and encourage critical thinking. Active learning classrooms are learner-centered and collaborative, with flexible furniture arrangements and technology that allows students and instructors to share and present information. From the study we have seen that how active learning involves students to engage in their learning by thinking, discussing, investigating, and creating, linking the activities to language skill development. In class, they practice hands on activities like solving problems, struggling with complex questions, making decisions, proposing solutions, and explaining ideas in their own words through writing and discussion. Timely feedback, from both instructor or fellow students, is crucial for this learning process.

The general problem in learning English in academic scenarios are related to learning content, resources and learning time. In a formal education setting, the content is often restricted to the structural aspects rather than functional aspects of language itself. Students only learned how

language is structurally based on grammar rules and word orders. Nevertheless, it could not meet and fulfil the demands of English proficiency and limited students' ability to develop practical communication skills. This might be caused by the limitation of classrooms and text books to bring a real-life situation into a learning process in classes. As technology continues to permeate our lives, our reliance on it has grown significantly. It has seamlessly integrated into our daily habits and education is no exception. Consequently, multimodal resources have emerged as powerful tools for enhancing language skills. Now learners can look at all four fundamental skills of English listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, they are getting better at understanding how language functions or in what situation and context the English words and sentences are appropriately used.

Combining Multimedia Resource for Holistic Learning

Findings indicate that, students engage extensively with multimedia content both academically and personally. These days, they have a wide range of sources available such as podcasts, songs, documentaries, interviews, or movies and TV shows. One can improve one's language skills through multimedia resources by utilizing resources that match with their level, topic, and purpose. In this way, learners can be exposed to different accents, dialects, and registers of the target language. For instance, Learners expressed that inclusion of videos not only make lessons more relatable but also encourages active participation. These resources often provide real life examples, helping learners contextualize abstract concepts and boosting their intrinsic motivation. However, some students highlighted the need for a balance approach, as excessive reliance on multimedia could lead to destruction or a superficial understanding of the material.

Movies are shown as a quite interesting and valuable resource for learning a language because hearing and seeing vocabulary and grammar in action is a great help for learner. In the study, they shared some effective tips and tricks for achieving their learning goals by watching movies

and TV shows. The findings indicate that, leaning from movies and TV shows is all about audio and subtitle settings. For instance, initially watching movies with subtitle, then eventually watching without subtitles because, subtitles provide immediate clarification for unfamiliar words or phrases and it is a great way to associate spoken word with written form. Moreover, seeing and hearing words simultaneously reinforces auditory memory. Once learners remove subtitles, they rely solely on their listening skills. It forces them to focus more intently on pronunciation, tone and context to understand the dialogue which includes, expression, slang as well as idiom which are necessary for everyday communication. Furthermore, the whole process helps them go through gradual learning progress because, over time, it helps learners understand spoken English naturally, even in fast paced or complex conversation. Then again, repetition must be there when it comes to learning with movies. Watching it once may not enough to bring the optimal results.

Movies are great resources not only for listening but also for practicing speaking skills. Several participants reported significant improvements in their speaking skills after incorporating movie watching into their language learning routine. One of the effective strategies they follow to improve speaking is mimicking dialogue. This involves, listening to a line from a movie, pausing it and then repeating the dialogue aloud. This technique helps learners to follow native speakers' speech patterns. They can use subtitles initially for accuracy while gradually practicing without them encourages more natural flow. Another strategy they mentioned is shadowing without pausing. This technique involves listening to characters dialogue and speaking along with them simultaneously, with matching the exact pace and intonation. This practice helps both in listening comprehension and speaking fluency in real time. Another fun activity was mentioned which is speed reading game where they challenge themselves to read subtitles as quickly as possible before they disappear. This strategy can improve reading speed and word recognition. However, it is better to start with slower paces movies or scenes. As

mentioned, watching movies and TV shows also can be a valuable tool for keeping track of new vocabularies too.

Besides all of these while choosing movies, it should be chosen carefully because, when it comes to language learning, not all movies are created equal. Therefore, learner should choose a movie they know they will enjoy for the exercise and they should choose movies made in target language and not in the first language dubbed into the target language because the translation might be good but it might not provide them the real-world context. They can also rewatch something familiar because in this case, they already know the storyline. So, they do not have to spend that much mental energy figuring out the and they can focus the whole attention to the language.

Sometimes, solely depending on one platform might limit progress. For instance, only watching movies may not lead to active language skills like speaking or writing because when we are watching movies, we are absorbing the information passively. Therefore, interaction is crucial for fluency. Another thing to keep I mind is that, movies are made with specific themes. So, learner might encounter a limited range of vocabulary and expression.

In additions to movies, podcasts, which are digital recordings, have also gained popularity as a useful technical tool for language learning, especially for English language learners. It consists of series of digital audio or video episodes, which can be downloaded or played on various devices (Abdulrahman, Badalama, & Widodo,2018). Listening to podcasts on a daily basis exposes learner to the natural flow of spoken language and enables learners to practice their listening and comprehension skills, as well as to acquire new words and expressions in a fun and engaging way. One of the key advantages of podcasts is their accessibility; they are available anytime and from any location. This flexibility allows learners to choose content that align with their interests and fits into their schedules. Consequently, podcasting improves

learning outcomes, motivation, engagement in higher education which can be a very innovative alternative media to learn language. However, it is good to keep in mind that, passively listening may not always be the best option. Learners can easily listen for a few hours without learning anything substantial. Therefore, to reinforce the existing language skills or using them to pick up new vocabulary, learners should focus on what they are listening to and listen to podcasts that focus on learning, speeding up and slowing down the audio according to their preferences. Similarly, YouTube has become as one of the most common yet effective multimedia tools for improving language skills. This versatile platform allows learners to search for any topic of interest, from understanding grammatical structures to seeking study tips to enhance their English proficiency. However, some people view these platforms as nothing more than entertainment, while others use it as powerful educational tools. Specific channels like BBC Learning English, 6 minutes English provide short, structured lessons that integrate authentic English usage with targeted learning objectives.

AI Tools and Language Practice

Recent advancements in AI-driven tools, such as ChatGPT can be an exceptional speaking partner. Interactive AI models provide a valuable opportunity to practice language in an interactive manner within a non-judgmental learning environment. Learners can receive immediate feedback as well as try different prompts to improve conversational skills.

While multimedia resources offer numerous benefits for English language learning, this study has presented certain challenges associated with its implementation in educational settings.

Cognitive Overload and Information Overload

In today's digital age, learners are constantly bombarded with an excessive amount of multimedia content. Educational institutions are also increasingly relying on multimedia resources for both teaching and assessment. Sometimes, the learning task both in classroom or

outside the classroom, exceed the learners cognitive processing capacity. Learners struggle to keep pace with rapid presentation of information in some classroom resources particularly videos that are excessively long or delivered at a pace that is too fast for comprehension. This rapid delivery can be specially challenging for first year students from Bangla background who may have the less proficiency in English. Similarly, elements those are chosen for take-home assessment should also be chosen carefully as some participants shared how a poorly chosen elements hamper their assignments and negatively impact grade. Therefore, when designing multimedia messages, the working structure of human cognition must be taken into consideration so that it allows the learning to progress according to each learners own cognitive process.

Lack of Guidance and Digital Literacy Gaps

Other significant issue identified through participant experiences was the lack of proper guidance. learner faced challenges while navigating unfamiliar platforms without clear instructions for submitting assignments online which negatively impacted their wellbeing. Students often face challenges when encountering new educational platforms, especially during their first year. Without clear instructions, they have to spend excessive amount of time experiencing platform rather than doing the actual content of the assignment. Therefore, It is better to have digital competence for both learner and instructor. Digital literacy refers to the ability to engage in critical and creative practices involving various technologies and media to understand, share, and construct meaning (Hague, 2010, as cited in Mokhtari, 2023).

Technical Glitches and Distractions

Another significant issue identified was the occurrence of unexpected technical glitches during online exams, which can severely disrupt the learning process. Platform crashes, slow loading times, and lack of autosave features were common concerns. Also, getting distracted even if

they are using multimodal resources for academic purposes, that means becoming overwhelmed by too many information available online. Sometimes the information might be misleading. This digital saturation, combined with misleading or unverified online information, complicates learners' ability to differentiate high quality educational material from distracting or irrelevant content. The fact that, in universities students have to rely on online communication for almost everything which is an uncontested reality. Therefore, it is very important to acknowledge students with digital literacy. That means, teaching students to use technology efficiently, focusing on quality rather than quantity. This way they will not get lost in misleading information and it will reduce screen time.

Commercialization and Accessibility Barriers

Furthermore, rising concerns about online sources prioritizing profit over the quality of education, emphasizing marketability and profitability. Sometimes, multimodal resources do not provide full access, requiring paid subscriptions, which can create a significant barrier for many students. Subscription based educational platforms limit access to high quality resources are creating a financial barrier for students.

Passive Learning and Lack of Interaction

Another thing to keep in mind is that, while students are using multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, movies, it has no real time interaction. They passively receive the information without the opportunity to directly engage with the sender. Also, these resources provide controlled message, that means having complete control over the content on how to present it. Sometimes, the content they are looking for might not be available online. Moreover, there is no option for feedback as well.

Whether it is podcasts, YouTube videos or movies, solely or over excessively depending on digital learning resources without a structured learning approach may lead to leaving out

important Grammar rules, and language fundamentals. It is safe to keep in mind that, these resources might not meet the safety standards. General trend among learners is that they tend to consume online contents passively. So, teacher may use this technology to develop students' reflective and critical thinking, helping students develop criteria for evaluating and selecting reliable information sources on the web (Bastos & Ramos, 2009).

Despite the benefits of multimedia in language learning, there are some limitations to its use. While multimedia can enhance language learning. One major drawback is that, it lacks the authenticity of real human communication as tasks are machine generated. Additionally, many multimedia learning programmes offer limited task types, primarily focusing on only right and wrong answer excluding open ended tasks. Other challenges include, screen size constraints which restricts the amount and organization of displayed text. Experiencing lower image quality in digital video format. Although digitalized video is expected to improve, it is not yet on par with television or live video standard. It gives learners overwhelming choices which may be counterproductive for learner especially if they are not fully prepared to navigate these options effectively. When faced with too many options, some learners may experience cognitive overload, leading to reduced efficiency in learning (Breet, 1995).

5.2 Conclusion

The findings of the study shows that multimedia resources have the potential to significantly enhance the English language learning experience. When effectively integrated, these resources can enhance overall learning outcome. However, it is crucial to address the challenges associated with their implementation. By carefully selecting and utilizing multimedia resources, a dynamic and engaging learning environment can be created that maximizes student success.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Higher education undoubtedly started integrating the use of technology as a primary mode for content delivery to undergrad students. This became especially salient throughout the shift to online education during the covid-19 pandemic. This situation has led to fundamental transformation and adjustments in students learning strategies in both formal and informal settings. Today learners have endless resources to learn language using digital tool of their choice. Therefore, using technology seems extremely logical to facilitate the student's learning language.

This study aimed to explore the role of multimodal literacy in enhancing English language learning through the perspective of student. It focused on the key themes- Engagement and motivation through technology driven learning, Active Learning strategies: the role of multimedia and collaborative techniques, Language Skill development, accessibility barrier and cognitive overload in multimedia-based learning. Study reveals that students tend to be engaged and motivated more when multiple elements such as videos, images, interactive elements incorporated into their lesson. Additionally, active learning was significantly facilitated through multimodal resources. It enables learners to participate more in their educational journey. In terms of skill development, participants shared how multimedia tools enhance specific language skill, particularly listening and speaking skill by giving them the opportunity to practice in real world context. Moreover, visual and auditory aids associated with multimodal literacy provides better retention of understanding Grammar structures and new vocabularies. However, the study also found some challenges while using these resources, particularly accessibility issues and cognitive overload. While most participants had access to

digital devices, some faces difficulties because of the slow internet or lack of technological literacy. Moreover, rapid use of multiple resources sometimes overwhelms learners. Therefore, there is a need for balanced and well-structured materials. Technology has become an essential part of all aspects of life since the demand and dependence of it is increasing rapidly. This trend extends to the educational context, where technology complements multimodal literacy. To access most multimedia resources, proper integration of technology is needed, particularly as a medium for enhancing both learning and teaching. If technology is well integrated into learning environment, then learning can take any place and at any time. Since the perception of literacy has expanded with the advancement of technology, digital literacy becomes another significant thing to consider to enhance both teaching learning process in higher education.

6.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, while multimodal literacy offers a lot of benefits in improving English language learning, it is essential to address accessibility and cognitive load issues to maximize its potential. While multimedia resources significantly enhance engagement, comprehension, and fluency, findings suggests that a balanced approach is essential. Excessive reliance on digital tools can lead to distraction from non-educational online content, superficial understanding when content is consumed passively, and reduced self-regulated learning skills, as students may depend too heavily on interactive media rather than developing independent study habits. Educators, institution and learners themselves should not use multimedia as a replacement for traditional classroom learning rather it can be a powerful tool for supplementing and enhancing learning.

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