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## Effectiveness of using multimodal approaches in teaching and learning listening and speaking skills

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#### Abstract

This study examined effectiveness of using multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills to Grade I learners in primary schools in Western Kenya. The study was based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence and Michael Halliday's Social Semiotic Theory. This study was carried out in the Western region where four counties namely Kakamega, Bungoma, Busia and Vihiga were sampled for investigation. 75 schools were used to elicit primary data for analysis. Further, the 75 schools were stratified into public rural (30), public urban (15), private rural (15) and private urban (15). Questionnaires, interviews and observation were the main instruments of data collection. The study adopted descriptive research with quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Stratified sampling was utilized in sourcing for appropriate sample of respondents who included teachers of English and their pupils in Grade 1 as well as 7 Curriculum Support Officers (CSO'S). The Spearman's rank-order correlation was administered to determine the correlation amongst the variables. To determine the performance analysis which compared the two tests that had been administered to the learners on different occasions, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was administered to compute the difference between each test of the matched pairs. Validity of research instruments was determined through two expert judgments whereas their reliability was determined through Cronbach's alpha formula. The findings revealed that the learners' scores improved with constant application of multimodal approaches effectively catered for learners with different learning styles.

Keywords: *approaches, competence, listening, literacy, multimodal and speaking*

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## 1.0 Introduction

English Second Language Teaching (L2) has been marked by expanded knowledge and advancement in invention that is meant to enable learners to speak fluently in the said language (Jewitt, 2014; Lim et al., 2017). Due to the aforementioned, the rise in the need to acquire literacy skills that leads to competency in human communication in the contemporary world has led to profound interest in the creation of multiple modes and approaches of communication other than speech and sound. Thus, it is through competency in listening and speaking skills (literacy skills) that a learner is purported to start getting familiarized with learning the English language. In the contemporary world, the literacy ability of a learner is deemed to be skewed without comprehending the use of the visual, aural and kinaesthetic in tandem with the verbal and print text approach (Jewitt, 2014; Lim, 2021).

In this regard, researchers and educators doubt themselves when thinking about the best approach to use in the teaching/learning (T/L) of listening and speaking skills so that all learners can engage and comprehend what they are being taught because different learners have diverse learning styles (Laadem & Mallahi, 2019). Thus, there is little possibility that you can find a scholarly plan that works entirely for learners with different learning styles without involvement of multimodality. It is against this premise that the current study has been undertaken to find out effectiveness of applying multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills.

A plethora of literature that focuses on multimodal approaches have defined multimodality as usage of semiotic signs and utilization of diverse modes. This is achieved through the use of different multimodal tools to ascertain representation of comprehension and production of meaning via discourse accomplished through modes like; images, layout, letters, colours and gestures during instruction, visual, audio and audio-visual technology in order to create order out of their use in the classrooms (Zafiri & Kourdis, 2016; Ryu & Bogg, 2016; Firmansyah, 2021; Jiang et al., 2020). Thus, in the current times, a written chapter in a text can be expressed, developed and presented in different versions – ranging from verbal to visual, aural and to kinaesthetic (Bezemer, 2016; Jacobsen, 2015; Laadema & Mallahi, 2019; Firmansyah, 2020).

Quintessentially in multimodality, a teacher of English applies different approaches to undertake various tasks during classroom interaction to communicate ideas. Typically, a teacher who applies multimodal approaches in a classroom setting would vary his/her teaching by using: imitating real life (simulation); using diagrams to illustrate; photographs consisting of one, two and three dimensions; moving and stationary pictures, including cloze tests, crosswords; power point, internet and diverse social media alternatively or concurrently to make a point during instruction. In essence, multimodality is meant to provoke every sense of a learner who is interacting with English as a Second Language (ESL) for the first time to have an environment that is richly endowed with different communicative illustrations and in several modes for easier comprehension of the listening and speaking skills. Based on this realisation, Stein (2008) argues that;

“Some worlds may be realised mainly through language. Others may be realised in complex multimodal ensembles which move beyond language, for example, into gestures, action, images or sound. Some may be represented in the absence of language and the presence of silence. The riches in children’s texts lie undetected because most teachers need the tools to unearth them. (Stein, 2008, p. 147)

The relevance of Stein’s argument to the present study is that it points out the multiple dimensions that teachers of English’ can realize competency in the learners learning of listening and speaking skills in primary schools. Through multimodality, they unearth the ‘undetected riches’ in the learner’s texts. However, the study does not comprehensively point out, the necessary modes required for teachers to equip themselves with semiotic materials (language and code) and sensory materials (smell and taste)

to appeal rightly to the learners' senses and achieve communication competence which forms a major concern of the present study. Multimodal approaches in teaching were engaged with an aim of establishing their effect in T/L of the English listening and speaking skills among Grade 1 learners in selected primary schools in Western Kenya. According to Firmansyah (2021), the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills are important stages of learning and comprehending a particular language. Firmansyah opines that early exposure of multimodal approaches in the lives of a learner may be linked to their success in the acquisition of a language later in their lives.

## 2.0 Literature Review

In spite of the existence of many studies on the effectiveness of the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills, this study acknowledges (Zafiri & Kourdis, 2016), who argues that "...the present learner's needs are diverse and complex, ...the influx of new technologies, new information and rapid advances made by Science have made it mandatory to approach the teaching of ESL in a different angle, and in this case use of icons and symbols are very key...", (p. x). Although research has shown that teachers of English in primary schools to some extent apply multimodal approaches in their day-to-day teaching of listening and speaking skills, they do not pay attention to these aspects of teaching modes leading to failure in achieving their goals (Zamani, 2016).

These observations resonate with those of (Spireti & Chang 2020; Freyin, 2017) which opines that teachers display ignorance to some extent when it comes to the use of multimodal approaches in the classrooms leading low competence in acquisition of the language skills. He argues that learners who are not competent in the English language and without the ability to understand certain actions, impact poorly in the performance of simple tasks and grasping of simple instructions. While commending on the learners' and teachers' use of the aural modes and pedagogy, Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) argue that learners are supposed to be provided with practical experience during teaching and learning processes. Such experiences are likely to help them gain competency in the English language communicative skills. Often times, the nexus between the use of multimodal approaches and comprehension of English listening and speaking skills entwine to form a base upon which acquisition of listening and speaking skills is hinged. Thus, Barasa (2016) brings in the other perspective of reinforcement of T/L English listening and speaking skills using multimodal approaches that emanate from the need to master the English language for future use. He introduces another concept which reasons that English is only used as a third language (after the first language and Kiswahili) in the rural setups in Kenya, while the urban setups use it as a second language so it is difficult for the learners to master it effortlessly. Both Barasa (2016) and Firmansyah (2021) bring out knowledge that is very helpful to this study which entail finding approaches that can enhance acquisition of listening and speaking skills. However, they fail to point out important factors to consider in order to select suitable approaches to ameliorate the challenge. Therefore, this is a major concern in the present study.

Listening and speaking skills according to (Hashim, 2018) is a basis upon which a learner's communication competence in every subject is inclined. To achieve this task, teachers of English in Grade 1 in Kenya need to skilfully equip themselves with the knowledge that can harness a learner's learning styles efficiently. This is because there is no mode used in isolation that can sufficiently yield to comprehension of the English listening and speaking skills competence in English language (Wang, 2018). Similar sentiments are voiced by (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Suwalska, 2021; Wang, 2020) who argue that no learning style in isolation can assume total responsibility for the skills that are required for a learner to gain competency in listening and speaking skills. On the contrast, learners have to grapple with the acquisition of English language listening and speaking skills - yet for most learners it is the first time to encounter such a language (Borg 2014; Barasa, 2016). Likewise, Zandieh and Jafarigohav (2012) resonate that learners experience difficulties in the language due to limited opportunities of interacting with the target language outside class and as a result retention cannot be well facilitated.

This brings about conclusion that is twofold; Firstly, the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills is imperative. Secondly, the use of multimodal approaches caters for the learners with multiple or different learning styles.

In this regard, extant research has suggested various approaches to ameliorate this draw back (Wang, 2018; Yi et al., 2020). According to Eskoz and Elola (2019) other approaches had been tried in isolation without success. Print-centric approach- which entails teaching using only printed texts- was a good approach nevertheless, it was not balanced enough to fulfil each and every learner's learning styles. Based on this realisation, Ryu & Bogg (2016) pointed out that a print text approach applied in isolation without applying multimodal approach undervalues the gains that would have been made if multimodal approaches would have been applied. Similar sentiments are voiced by Coccetta (2018); Jewitt (2014); Firmansyah (2018); Freyn, (2017) who argue that as opposed to print- centric texts, multimodal learning approach provides analytical, critical thinking and reflective context that normally propels the learner to develop multimodal competencies.

According to Thembi and Hugo (2022), Walsh & Simpson (2015), there exists disparity between what teachers think they may have taught and what learners comprehend as proved when tests in form of examinations or other assessment indicators are administered to them to measure their achievement. Teacher educators sometimes feel nearly impossible to design a curriculum that can work comfortably for each and every individual learner (Kaur & Ganapathy, 2014). The questions that teachers of English are faced with are: How effective is the teaching and learning of listening skills in primary schools? Can they amalgamate the learning and teaching constructs to result in impactful comprehension of listening and speaking skills and improved academic achievement? What learning styles and multimodal approaches can be identified and adapted in lower grades to ameliorate the learners' conception and comprehension of the English listening and speaking skills? Many studies have been carried out in the area of competence in English language, but there is continued proof that the learners have not been able to address concerns. Reports from 'uwezo' confirm that primary school learners from the lower grades in the Kenyan primary schools cannot comprehend English language (Uwezo, 2012; 2013; 2016; 2017). Based on this scenario, Kenyan teachers of English have a heavy task of ensuring that the learners become competent in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Based on this literature and the researcher's collection in the field, the literature provided hypes a combined use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills. This information widens the understanding that icons and images in the life of a learner in the preliminary classes helps to reduce the abstractness of the subject matter thereby helping learners to understand. Therefore the above studies form a significant base in the present study. While Zamani (2016) reinforce the use of icons and symbols, Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) reinforce practical teaching. The present study bears proof that none of the above approaches can be utilized in isolation. The study shows how the above approaches are combined to bring about achievement in the classroom during interaction.

Further, while commenting on the effectiveness of using multi-modal approaches many scholars acknowledge that educationalists have been slow to embrace multimodality. They argue that instructors have not exposed the learners to sufficient multimodal resources to enable them to become competent exhibitors in their performance, thus creating a negative influence on the performance of ESL, (Bezemer, 2016; Wells, 2009). Wells (2009) further argues that the use of multimodal resources as taught to the learners of all ages in a new language enables them to construct knowledge together and thereby enhancing their individual understanding of the environment and provoke their potential of competency in the acquisition of ESL.

These sentiments are reiterated by Bezemer (2016) who argues that the absence of well-structured application of creativity by teachers in the classroom discourse may have negative influence on the learner's engagement and interest in the target language. In comparison between the use of multimodal approaches and the traditional verbal method, Wells (2009), argues that teachers who apply multimodal



approaches influence the teaching of listening and speaking skills better than those teachers who apply the traditional verbal approach towards their teaching, which is based on the teacher merely providing instruction and subsequently developing the lesson. This way he argues that students do not learn anything substantial because learning is a process that is heavily influenced by practical reality within the context of the learners. This means that learners need to be exposed to what is happening around them in the most simplified way- thus the use of multimodal approaches

Research findings have indicated that the teaching of listening and speaking skills in many corners of the world encounter diverse barriers most common among them being the structural differences between the learners L1 and the structure of the English language (Bezemer, 2016; Boggs & Ryu, 2016). They believe that these differences block the process of message transfer from the teacher's explanation to the learners' mind, however, they found out that relying on multimodal approaches, eliminates complications that arise as a result of not understanding the subject matter and lead to comprehension of the subject matter (positive impact) (Zamani, 2016). Likewise, Moreno and Mayer (2007) believe that multimodal learning environments use different modes to represent content knowledge, for instance, verbal and non-verbal, where the non-verbal mode is depicted in picture-mode including both still life and mobile pictures. These different presentation modes (verbal and non-verbal) are used to appeal to the learners' diverse sensory organs thus the (visual and auditory). From the analysis of the above scholars, the authors examine structural diversity in the learners L1 and lack of how to present the content knowledge as the factors that slows comprehension of listening and speaking skills during interaction. These two points of reference are comparable to the present study. Secondly, the above documentation have guided the present study on the important aspects of teaching the learners from known (concrete) to unknown (abstract). However the present study permeates into the usage of images, signs, aural, visual and kinaesthetic thereby providing a detailed description and analysis of the multimodal approaches.

Further, Multimodal courses allow teachers to present the subject matter in more than one sensory mode (multiple representations), thus have been used to further facilitate student's learning (Shah & Freedman, 2003). Additionally, Tonnessen (2010) asserts that omission of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills deprives learners of better understanding of language, gaining acceleration of the language and most of all, introduces cross-cultural failure in the classroom. Similarly, while giving a report on the research he carried out on the learner's awareness of the structure and tense of the target language, Jacobson (2015) as quoted in Erton (2006) concluded that, just as languages had their own structures and tenses, the same applies to English language, therefore, to eliminate the above barrier, relying on multimodal features to compensate the shortages or assimilate the structures can prove to be very helpful.

Ryu and Bogg (2016) carried out a study, the main aim of the study was to determine how writing lecture activity based on multimodal approaches affected the Korean students' writing skills- cartoon caricatures were selected as visual texts for analysis. The findings of this study revealed that textual analysis based on the multimodal approaches was more influential in the writing skills of the learners than the traditional writing methods with respect to their areas of evaluation. The study recommended that more multimodal discourse in respect of the above subject be utilised as an alternative to the traditional methods that were currently being used in schools. Likewise, Kiran and Kiran (2011) asserted that out of the different theories and methods applied in analysing different types of texts, multimodal approaches offered the best tool for analysis in the dimension of narrative discourse. In the light of this, the present study identifies with the above studies because they offer a base for the present study. This is because the above works provided gaps (in the area of multimodal tools to be utilized) that justified the present study to be carried out. For instance, Ryu & Borg (2016) reinforces texts based on multimodal approaches, but this study focused on multimodal texts as well as multimodal teaching and learning approaches which are not necessarily texts.

It is important to note that learners are a key variable amongst many variables elicited in the teaching of a second language (Borg 2014; Griffith, 2006). In addition to that, the success of every step-in teaching is basically determined by how the learners are able to exhibit their competency in the target language. Therefore, the dream of every teacher of ESL should be to think of ways of transferring and exchanging of the perceived information to their audience who in this case is the learner, (Hargie, 2011). According to Hargie (2011), learners comprehend multimodal language better than the traditional verbal language. However, he laments that teachers do not recognize multimodal approaches because unlike the verbal language, which is directed by rules of grammar that structure its communication, the multimodal aspect of communication is neither structured nor rule governed. Likewise, there are no dictionaries and thesaurus that define or expound on the use of multimodality therefore the teachers tend to brush it aside while teaching due to lack of guidance on how to execute it, (ibid). In this regard, they teach using the lecture method which is systematic and rule governed. However, the learners do not benefit much in this case

In addition to that, Hargie (2011) asserts that human beings are unique in grasping and using abstract ideas. According to Hargie (2011), this scenario causes the teachers of ESL not to recognize and perceive the existence of non-verbal communication despite using them in their day today activities and communication during instruction. The present study operationalizes multimodality in the teaching of ESL firstly as an authentic language that needs to be taught in day to day use in a class setting or contextual setting that may be executed through watching, participation and speaking rather than reading (Kubanyiova, 2007)- which is one of the goals of the CBC curriculum. Secondly, as an example of visible characters that are much easier to understand because they can be seen and touched. The whole of this idea is best understood by Amutabi(2019) who asserts that it is much easier to understand a language in which one has limited proficiency if there is adequate context that is talking about what is present and observable helps the learner to understand and is crucial to acquiring language. In this context, Amutabi (2019) talks about ‘adequate context’ and says that it helps to elaborate unfamiliar language. Amutabi (2019) fails to indicate that adequate context in isolation cannot help to understand unfamiliar language without blending appropriately with the multimodal modes of the cultural context (Suwalska, 2021).

In regard to the issue of emotional impact of doing a task, scholars argue that emotions produce impact to everyone’s work and they should not be ignored (Holloway, 2012). Following the above argument, the researcher claims that the issue of multimodal approaches and how they emotively appeal to the learner is of great importance. Learners who are greatly informed, liberated and motivated enjoy their lessons and are able to get a clear and accurate comprehension in listening and speaking skills, (Kubanyiova, 2007). This being the case it is important to note that the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills in our primary schools, especially Grade 1 is of great importance because it motivates the learners. By carrying out this study, the researcher hopes to contribute towards a well oriented program by holistically identifying all the interrelated multimodal approaches and consolidate all the multimodal constructs in a unified mode as stated in the problem under the study. This well elaborated in chapter four.

### 3.0 Results

A total of 75 questionnaires were administered to 75 teachers before they were observed in class to establish the effectiveness of the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of English in primary schools in Western Kenya. The rationale for this was to ensure that there was less manipulation of the lessons later on by the respondents and safeguard the reliability of the data.

Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ) test was applied to determine the reliability that was applied in sourcing the data collection instruments. According to Shemwel et al. (2015), Cronbach alpha is the most common measure of internal consistency (reliability) in terms of how closely related those items are. It is expressed

as the function of the number of the test items and the mean of every item as shown in Table 1 below. Table 1 explains the criteria for judging Cronbach’s alpha (Cohen, 1988).

**Table 1: Criteria for Judging Cronbach Alpha (Cohen, 1988)**

Cronbach’s Alpha	Internal Consistency
0.9	Excellency
0.8 less a less than 0.9	Good
0.7 less a less than 0.8	Acceptable
0.6 less a less than 0.7	Fairly acceptable
0.5 less a less than 0.6	Poor
A less than 0.5	Unacceptable

Orodho (2016) cautions usage of a great number of items because they inflate alpha’s value while a narrow range value deflates it. The value of the alpha indicates the % of the reliable variance. In this case for example, if the computation of the alpha is 0.90, it implies that 90% of the variance is reliable. This means that 10% is error variance. This study utilized the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient whereby the level reliability of the data instruments was determined using the SPSS package. Table 2 provides a summary of Cronbach’s alpha coefficients that was obtained by the researcher.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis of the Instruments**

Instrument	Item Tested	Cronbach’s Alpha	Verdict
Questionnaire	31	0.75	Acceptable
Observation Schedule	10	0.85	Good
Interview Schedule	4	0.9	Excellent

Table 2 above shows that data which was collected and the data instruments applied were above the minimum threshold for the internal consistency based on the judgment criterion advanced by (Orodho, et al., 2016; Kothari, 2004).

The study adopted a stratified sampling technique. Stratified sampling was applied to select the 75 primary schools in the four counties. This was done to ensure that all the schools in the area had an equal chance of being selected (Orodho, et al., 2016). Similarly, categories of various primary schools were stratified into public rural, public urban, private rural and private urban. The schools were stratified as follows: public rural (30) schools; public urban (15) schools private rural (15) schools and private urban (15) schools. Further, 7 Curriculum Support Officers (CSO’s) who geographically hailed from the areas where those schools were located. This was to ensure uniformity in the data collection was being carried out. The sampling was carried out in line with Saunders et al. (2018) concept of saturation and value information who argue that once enough data has been hitherto collected any more data collected is not necessary. The learners in Grade 1 who were being taught by the teachers under investigation were subjected to a simple assessment with and without multimodal modes to ascertain the efficacy of the application of the multimodal approaches in teaching listening and speaking skills. The quantitative aspect of the data involved calculation of the mode of the items that were involved in the study. Since before carrying out any study an assessment of the normality of the data is required, this study carried out a normalcy assessment to ascertain that its normalcy (Orodho, 2016). In this study, normality tests were conducted to test whether the data was consistent with a normal distribution. In this regard, the

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Shapiro-Wilk test were used to test for normality. The Shapiro-Wilk test was deemed appropriate. This is because for small sample size (less than 50 samples) while Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used for sample size greater than 50. In the case of this study the sample was 75.

For both tests the hypothesis:

$H_0$ : Data is Normally Distributed

$H_1$ : Data is not Normally Distributed

**Decision Rule:**

When the p-value is less than the level significance, say 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

To determine the effectiveness of using the multimodal approaches. After that a hypothesis was tested. This was followed by the qualitative account of the results obtained from the key informant interviews and the observation schedules followed by the result interpretation.

In the assessment of the effects of using multimodal approaches in the acquisition of English language, was established from the teachers’ responses to 31 questions in a Likert scale of 1 – 4 (1 – strongly agree, 2 - agree, 3 - disagree, 4 - strongly disagree) were established. Further, the learners were subjected to assessment of the use of multimodal approaches during learning to ascertain how the learners scored before and after the introduction of the multimodal approaches. Table 3.0 below illustrates the teachers’ the effectiveness of the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills.

**Table 3.0: Effectiveness in the Application of Multimodal Approaches in the Teaching of Listening and Speaking Skills**

Statement	SA	A	D
Leads to meaningful English learning experiences	54(72.0%)	18(24.0%)	3 (4.0%)
Improves learners’ attitude towards teaching and learning of English	55(73.3%)	18(24.0%)	2 (2.7%)
Provide a reach and conducive environment for the learners	66 (88.0%)	9 (12.0%)	-
Enable learners to develop personal enrichment of the language both in speech and in writing	42 (56.0%)	33(44.0%)	-
Acts as a motivator for the learners to acquire the English language	67(89.3%)	7 (9.3%)	1 (1.3%)
It enables students’ active participation in the lesson	45(60.0%)	30 (40.0%)	-
These approaches quicken the learner’s comprehension of the English language	70(93.3%)	5 (6.7%)	-
They cater for the learners with different learning styles	52(69.3%)	23(30.7%)	-
Encourages creativity due to the learner’s ability to make sentences from the multimodal tools	55(73.3%)	20(26.7%)	-
Encourages autonomy amongst learners	30(40.0%)	45(60.0%)	-
Learners are able to develop creative and critical thinking skills	70(93.3%)	5 (6.7%)	-
Helps learners to gain self-confidence hence lifting up their self esteem	54(72.0%)	21(28.0%)	-
Has created a paradigm shift from the usual monotony of print-based text approaches	47(62.7%)	28(37.3%)	-
Promotes positive learning outcomes during placement	55(73.3%)	19(25.3%)	1(1.3%)
Facilitates various learning styles	56(74.7%)	18(24.0%)	1 (1.3%)



Evoke the learners' interest with continuous use	56(74.7%)	18(24.0%)	1 (1.3%)
Improves both spoken and written language	69(92.0%)	6 (8.0%)	-
Leads to accumulation of the English language vocabulary	56(74.7%)	19 (25.3%)	-
Trains the learner in to achieving skills that will direct them to their future careers	40(53.3%)	35(46.7%)	-
Easy comprehension because of the presence of multimodal tools	38(50.7%)	36(48.0%)	1 (1.3%)
Learners acquire extensive knowledge in all fields	44(58.7%)	31(41.3%)	-
Involvement of learners in various learning styles	34(45.3%)	40(53.3%)	1 (1.3%)
Expose the learners into dealing with different learning gadgets	50(66.7%)	25(33.3%)	-
Easy English language comprehension	37(49.3%)	38(50.7%)	-
The learners find the lesson interesting	45(60.0%)	30(40.0%)	-
Increases the learner's autonomy	33(44.0%)	40(53.3%)	2 (2.7%)
It is learner centred	42(56.0%)	33(44.0%)	-
Requires very minimal guidance from the teacher	31(41.3%)	42(56.0%)	2 (2.6%)
Leads to acquisition of values such as coordination	58(77.3%)	17(22.7%)	-
Learners are motivated	25(33.3%)	49(65.3%)	1 (1.3%)
Lead to increased scores	52(69.3%)	22(29.3%)	1(1.3%)

Based on the above results, there is overwhelming evidence showing that the use of multimodal approaches is important if achievement of the teaching and learning of listening and speaking skills. Contrastingly, teachers of English do not seem to be motivated by the multimodal approaches. They minimally use them even though they acknowledge the advantages of this approaches in the achievement of listening and speaking skills. This scenario evidently manifested during the class observation.

#### 4.0 Performance of learners

To further find out effectiveness of using multimodal approaches in listening and speaking skills in the classrooms, oral assessment test in listening and speaking was administered to the learners to determine how they performed with the use of texts alone without inclusion of multimodal approaches. Three weeks later after some multimodal approaches had been administered, the learners were assessed in listening and speaking skills. Oral assessment in listening and speaking skills was therefore administered to the learners to gauge their achievement. The scores were subjected to the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. This test which is a non-parametric test (equivalent to the dependent t-test) is used to compare two sets of scores that emanate from same participants. The Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed rank test computes the difference between each set of matched pairs, then compares the sample against the median. Therefore the results that were found were computed using Wilcoxon signed-rank to compare the scores. The results are tabulated in the subsequent tables.

The hypothesis that was tested:

H<sub>0</sub>: The median difference of before and after multimodal approaches is equal

H<sub>1</sub>: the median difference of before and after Multimodal Approaches is not equal

5.0 Performance of Public Rural Schools Before and After Use of Multimodal Approach in Teaching Listening and Speaking Skills

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

In the public rural schools, when multimodal approaches had not been applied, a total of 213 of the learners scored below expectation and 170 exceeded expectation. The scores changed when multimodal approaches were consciously introduced where 88 of the learners scored below expectation and a larger number, 275 exceeded expectation. As illustrated in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.0 : Scores Obtained During Assessment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentiles		
						25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup> (Median)	75 <sup>th</sup>
Below Expectation	30	7.10	3.387	2	16	5.00	6.50	9.25
Approaching Expectation	30	14.40	4.658	7	25	11.00	13.00	17.25
Meeting Expectation	30	14.03	5.881	2	29	11.00	13.00	18.25
Exceeding Expectation	30	5.67	3.089	1	14	3.00	5.00	8.00
Below Expectation	30	2.93	1.818	0	7	2.00	3.00	4.00
Approaching Expectation	30	10.13	4.200	0	20	8.00	9.50	11.25
Meeting Expectation	30	18.77	5.606	9	29	13.00	20.00	23.00
Exceeding Expectation	30	9.17	3.957	2	17	6.75	9.00	11.00

6.0 Wilcoxon Singed Ranks Test

The p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance hence we rejected null hypothesis. A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that use of multimodal approaches elicited significant change in the scores of the learners in public rural schools. A scrutiny of the results reveal substantial favour of the use of multimodal approaches.

Table 5.0 Test Statistics

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>				
	Below Expectation(After) - Below Expectation(Before)	Approaching Expectation(After) - Approaching Expectation(Before)	Meeting Expectation(After) - Meeting Expectation(Before)	Exceeding Expectation(After) - Exceeding Expectation(Before)
Z	-4.725 <sup>b</sup>	-4.306 <sup>b</sup>	-4.380 <sup>c</sup>	-3.896 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000

- a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test
- b. Based on positive ranks.
- c. Based on negative ranks.

7.0 Performance of Public Urban Schools after Use of Multimodal Approaches in Listening and Speaking Skills

7.1 Descriptive Statistics

In the public urban schools, when multimodal tools were not applied, a total of 65 of the learners scored below expectation and 149 exceeded expectations. The scores changed when multimodal approach was used where 48 of the learners scored below expectation and a larger number, 171 exceeded expectations as illustrated in Table 4.14 below.

Table 6.0 : Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentiles		
						25th	50th (Median)	75th
Below Expectation (Before)	15	4.33	.976	3	6	4.00	4.00	5.00
Approaching Expectation (Before)	15	10.13	2.997	6	16	8.00	10.00	12.00
Meeting Expectation (Before)	15	14.67	4.082	9	22	11.00	14.00	18.00
Exceeding Expectation (Before)	15	9.93	5.189	6	26	7.00	9.00	10.00
Below Expectation (After)	15	.40	.910	0	3	.00	.00	.00
Approaching Expectation (After)	15	3.93	1.387	2	6	3.00	4.00	5.00
Meeting Expectation (After)	15	14.47	5.069	9	26	11.00	12.00	18.00
Exceeding Expectation (After)	15	19.33	5.900	10	28	14.00	20.00	23.00

### 8.0 Wilcoxon Singed Ranks Test

The p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance hence we rejected null hypothesis.

A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that use of multimodal approaches showed elicit a significant change in the scores of the learners in Public Urban Schools.

Table 7.0: Test Statistics

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>				
	Below Expectation(After) - Below Expectation(Before)	Approaching Expectation(After) - Approaching Expectation(Before)	Meeting Expectation(After) - Meeting Expectation(Before)	Exceeding Expectation(After) - Exceeding Expectation(Before)
Z	-3.316 <sup>b</sup>	-3.417 <sup>b</sup>	-.379 <sup>b</sup>	-3.191 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.005	.001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test  
 b. Based on positive ranks.  
 c. Based on negative ranks.

### 9.0 Performance of Private Urban schools after use of multimodal.

#### 9.1 Descriptive Statistics

Urban private schools, had a total of 131 learners scoring below expectation when multimodal was not used and 251 learners exceeding expectation. The scores changed when multimodal approach was used, where 48 scored below expectation and 461 exceeded expectation when multimodal approach was used.

Table 8: Descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentiles		
						25th	50th (Median)	75th
Below Expectation(Before)	15	4.40	2.694	0	9	3.00	5.00	6.00
Approaching Expectation(Before)	15	18.40	4.517	13	26	14.00	17.00	23.00
Meeting Expectation(Before)	15	18.93	5.311	10	29	15.00	18.00	23.00
Exceeding Expectation(Before)	15	6.80	3.144	3	15	4.00	6.00	9.00
Below Expectation(After)	15	2.80	2.042	0	6	1.00	3.00	5.00
Approaching Expectation(After)	15	13.73	3.432	8	20	11.00	13.00	16.00
Meeting Expectation(After)	15	19.60	4.085	13	25	16.00	20.00	23.00
Exceeding Expectation(After)	15	11.40	5.275	6	25	7.00	10.00	15.00

10.0 Wilcoxon Singed Ranks Test

The p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance hence we rejected null hypothesis.

A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that use of multimodal approaches elicit a significant change in the scores of the learners in Private Urban Schools

Table 9.0 Test Statistics

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>				
	Below Expectation(After) - Below Expectation(Before)	Approaching Expectation(After) - Approaching Expectation(Before)	Meeting Expectation(After) - Meeting Expectation(Before)	Exceeding Expectation(After) - Exceeding Expectation(Before)
Z	-2.684 <sup>b</sup>	-3.428 <sup>b</sup>	-.597 <sup>c</sup>	-2.960 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.001	.041	.003

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test  
 b. Based on positive ranks.  
 c. Based on negative ranks.

11.0 Performance of Private Rural schools after use of multimodal

11.1 Descriptive Statistics

Private schools had 84 learners scoring below expectation when this approach was not used and when multimodal was used, a total of 24 learners scored below expectation when multimodal approach was used.

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Descriptive Statistics						
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Percentiles		
						25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup> (Median)	75 <sup>th</sup>
Below Expectation(Before)	15	5.60	1.844	3	9	4.00	6.00	7.00
Approaching Expectation(Before)	15	9.93	3.369	5	16	7.00	10.00	12.00
Meeting Expectation(Before)	15	12.93	5.189	7	25	9.00	12.00	16.00
Exceeding Expectation(Before)	15	5.40	2.530	1	11	4.00	5.00	6.00
Below Expectation(After)	15	1.60	1.595	0	5	.00	1.00	3.00
Approaching Expectation(After)	15	7.13	2.800	3	12	5.00	7.00	9.00
Meeting Expectation(After)	15	12.27	3.453	6	18	10.00	12.00	15.00
Exceeding Expectation(After)	15	12.80	4.945	5	24	9.00	11.00	16.00



### 12.0 Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

The p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance hence we rejected null hypothesis.

A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that use of multimodal approaches showed elicit a significant change in the scores of the learners in private rural schools.

Table 11 Test statistics

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>				
	Below Expectation(After) - Below Expectation(Before)	Approaching Expectation(After) - Approaching Expectation(Before)	Meeting Expectation(After) - Meeting Expectation(Before)	Exceeding Expectation(After) - Exceeding Expectation(Before)
Z	3.311 <sup>b</sup>	-3.195 <sup>b</sup>	-.599 <sup>b</sup>	-3.415 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.549	.001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

c. Based on negative ranks.

The study revealed a slight improvement in the scores when multimodal approaches were administered unlike when they were not utilized.

### 13.0 Correlation between Multimodal Approaches and Acquisition of English Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1 Learners in Primary Schools in Western Kenya

To determine the relationship between multimodal approaches and acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners in primary schools in Western Kenya, Pearson correlation was employed. Since the variables were measured on the ordinal Likert for individual items, there was need for conversion to continuous data for the analysis. The resulting scores formed paired data points and the analysis results were as shown in Table 12

Table 12 Correlation Analysis between Multimodal Approaches and Acquisition of English Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1 Learners in Primary Schools in Western Kenya

Variables	Multimodal Approaches	Acquisition of Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1
Multimodal Approaches	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.614**
	N	0.000
Acquisition of Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1	Pearson Correlation	0.614**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1
	N	0.000

\*\* . The value is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 12 depicts a strong positive relationship (R = .614) being statistically significant (p ≤ 0.05). The implication being that, statistically as the use of multimodal approaches increases, acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners in primary schools in Western Kenya also

increases significantly. With the strong positive correlation, use of multimodal approaches have a greater boosting effect on acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners. This is because with multimodal approaches, teachers can move beyond just using texts. Instead, they can utilize multimodal tools that include images, audio and video to grants learners opportunity to explore variety of learning experiences.

Höllerer et al, (2018) established that teachers use various photos in their presentations to get their point across. They display videos with substrands, speech, music, and gestures that deepen comprehension of a topic. The more senses a learner uses while during interaction, the better they will remember what they have been taught and how to apply it in real life (Cocchetta, 2018). Using multiple approaches can help learners to comprehend complex strands and concepts and provide differentiated instructions.

**14.0 Regression Analysis for Multimodal Approaches and Acquisition of English Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1 Learners in Primary Schools in Western Kenya**

To determine how multimodal approaches were used to determine achievement of listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners in primary schools in Western Kenya, the two variables were modelled through regression. Sum of scores for items in each scale for individual participants was determined to obtain a continuous range of scores. Thus, the paired data points that resulted were analyzed and presented in Table 13

**Table 13 Regression Analysis for Multimodal Approaches and Acquisition of English Listening and Speaking Skills by Grade 1 Learners in Primary Schools in Western Kenya**

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.741 <sup>a</sup>	0.549	0.543	0.226		
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.71	1	9.71	12.93	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	56.22	74	0.757		
	Total	65.93	75			
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.523		.461	27.16	0.000
	Multimodal Approaches	0.469		0.189	0.412	2.48

a. Dependent Variable: acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners

b. Predictors: (Constant), application of multimodal approaches

It was found that application of multimodal approaches accounts for 54.9% (R square = .549) acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners. Analysis model showed statistical significance as F (1, 74) = 12.93 [p ≤ .05]. Hence from regression, application of multimodal approaches significantly contribute to 54.9% of resulting acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners. Analysis of the regression model coefficients as shown in table 4.21 shows that there is a positive beta

co-efficient of 0.469 as shown by the co-efficient matrix with a P-value =  $0.000 < 0.05$  and a constant of 12.523 with a p-value =  $0.000 < 0.05$ . Therefore, both the constant and, application of multimodal approaches contribute significantly to the model. Therefore, the model can provide the information needed to predict acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners from application of multimodal approaches. The regression equation is presented as follows:  $Y = 12.523 + 0.469X_2$ ; Where Y = acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners,  $X_2$  is the application of multimodal approaches. The equation shows that a unit change in teachers' teaching experience would cause a 0.469 change in application of multimodal approaches in the teaching of English. Thus, application of multimodal approaches covered in this study had a significant and positive effect on acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners.

Likewise, Moreno and Mayer (2007) argues that multimodal learning contexts use different modes to represent content knowledge, for instance, verbal and non-verbal, where the non-verbal mode is depicted in picture-mode including both still life and mobile pictures. These different presentation modes (verbal and non-verbal) are used to appeal to the learners' diverse sensory organs thus the (visual and auditory). Additionally, the application of multimodal approaches allow teachers to present the subject matter in more than one sensory mode (multiple representations), thus have been used to further facilitate student's learning (Shah & Freedman, 2003). Additionally, Hollerer, et al., (2018) asserts that omission of multimode in the teaching of listening and speaking skills deprives learners of better understanding of language, gaining acceleration of the language and most of all, introduces cross-cultural failure in the classroom. Consistent with these sentiments are the findings by Anil (2015 and Thaseem and Kareema (2017) who noted the learners' increase in scores upon usage of multimodal approaches.

### 15.0 Testing of Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one was designed to test if there was significant relationship between application of multimodal approaches and acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners. Thus, the null hypothesis was stated as:

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant influence of application of multimodal approaches on acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners.

The Pearson correlation analysis depicts a strong positive relationship ( $R = .614$ ) being statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). While the regression analysis shows that there is a positive beta co-efficient of 0.469 as indicated by the co-efficient matrix with a P-value =  $0.000 < 0.05$  and a constant of 12.523 with a p-value =  $0.000 < 0.05$ . The implication being that, statistically as there is more application of multimodal approaches increases, acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners also increases significantly. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that *there is no significant influence of application of multimodal approaches on acquisition of English listening and speaking skills by Grade 1 learners*, and accept the alternative hypothesis.

### 16.0 Qualitative Findings during Classroom Observation on the Effects of Using Multimodal Approaches When Teaching Listening and Speaking Skills

Observation results revealed that the learners were more active in the classroom when the teacher used multimodal modal approaches than if the teachers applied a mono approach or a course book alone. These observations resonate with those of Wang (2018) and Gardner (2020) who argue that mono-modal form of teaching emasculates the learners, thereby depriving them of important skills that they would have acquired had they utilised multimodal modes. The observation results presented in the foregoing subsection are in line with the ones obtained through the teachers' questionnaire and the interviews from the CSO's plus those obtained from the rubrics analysis. In this regard, information generated by the observation results showed that more learners effortlessly acquired the listening and speaking skills when the teacher applied different multimodal approaches in one lesson. On the other

hand, the absence of the multimodal modes delayed the learners' response to most of the questions that were asked by the teacher.

Studies conducted by scholars in various countries identified multimodal approaches such as the visual, audio, audio-visual, kinaesthetic which should be applied in tandem to contribute towards activating the skills of listening and speaking skills to learners with various learning styles ( Mudin et al. 2018; Hashim, 2018; DzaNic and Pejic 2016). On one same note, Joseph (2015) agrees that mono-mode type of learning cannot be relied upon to execute sound learning.

Similarly Lim, (2017); Kuzu et al., (2014)) assert that in order for the teachers to optimise their teaching and learning, they need to have skills and knowledge to wittily select correct multimodal approaches to implement the teaching with fidelity. They reiterate that the former must be practised consistently, effectively and with efficacy so that the support, progress and growth of learners can be enhanced.

In this regard learners exposed to multimodal approaches are more likely to interact autonomously in listening and speaking skills lessons more than those learners who are not exposed because they lack fundamental skills that activate listening and speaking skills (ibid). Analysis further revealed that lack of inclusion of enough paralinguistic features such as eye contact; semiotic signs such as the use of winks, facial expressions, use of portraits and kinaesthetic such as pointing towards items, dancing (where necessary) and practice hampered the learners' concentration in class. According to Shatri, (2017), proper application of semiotic signs that portrays the learners' context familiarises the learner with their context thereby accelerating their level of comprehension in listening and speaking. Similarly, Zamani (2016) agrees that the use of gestures, body language and rhythms in tandem with listening and speaking skills enable novice learners to grasp abstract ideas. Tonnessen (2010) indicated that the use of semiotic signs and kinaesthetic is often ignored by teachers of English in the lower grades yet they play a fundamental role in acquisition of listening and speaking skills. This is more so because teachers assume that the learners would understand the lesson without much probing. Consequently, failure to apply semiotics and kinaesthetic equally deny the learners the autonomy to explore their learning environment (Belcher, 2017).

In some lessons, the teachers explored the multimodal approach of engaging their learners in picture drawing after observation of the photographs that she had pinned on the chalkboard. The researcher believed that this was in a bid to activate the learners' skill of listening and speaking. Similarly, during the interview session with the CSO it was established that teachers applied multimodal approach in teaching to enable learners activate their creativity, mastery of the concept and also enhances learner's autonomy and motivates self-directed and independent learning. Here is an excerpt of one of the CSOs:

Multimodal approach show how almost all communicative events have multimodal aspects in that spoken or written modes, as examples, are almost invariably linked with other modes, such as the gestures that accompany speech or the visual dimensions of page design or font that accompany print-writing. With the rapid growth of screen based digital media resources these multimodal dimensions have become more viable. Therefore, some learners who may not understand language can express themselves through writing. Since the CBC curriculum is supposed to cater for the learners from all learning styles, these teachers are right in allowing the learners to draw what they are instructed to (Ananda, 18 August, 2022).

Form the above statement, it can be deduced that in listening and speaking, learners can be exposed to exercising their creativity and autonomy by viewing the pictures and drawing, thereby producing their own multimodal modes through their own creativity. These findings concur with that of Hargie, (2011) who also found that learners comprehend multimode language better than the traditional verbal

language. Likewise, Kiran and Kiran (2011) asserted that out of the different theories and methods applied in analysing different types of texts, multimodal approaches offered the best tool for analysis in the dimension of narrative discourse. Contrastingly, Ritonga (2022) laments that anecdotal evidence shows that teachers in schools are reluctant to incorporate multimodal approaches in the classrooms. He argues that teachers have an assumption that they lack the skills to make them practical in the classrooms. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every teacher to ensure that he/she challenges this assumption.

The findings above are consistent with both observation and Key Informant Interviews which concurs that teachers' perceptions in the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills speaks to the results obtained from the very teachers either negatively or positively. For instance, Gardner (2020) posits that to avoid raising of learners who are disillusioned in their studies because they feel that their academic need are not put into consideration, the teachers must embrace the use of multimodal approaches. Sentiments that are also shared with (Halliday, 1994).

### **17.0 Conclusion**

This study explored effectiveness in the use of multimodal approaches in teaching of listening and speaking skills in primary schools in Western Kenya. The data from questionnaire, observation and interview indicated that application of multimodal approaches were very effective in the learners because they cater for the learners with different learning styles. The Curriculum Support Officers further acknowledge that the use of multimodal approaches in the teaching of listening and speaking skills yielded effective competence amongst the learners. This means that the learners are more likely to grasp the content as already they are positive in their attitudes towards the strands that are being discussed in the classrooms. Overall, these findings provoke extant researchers with an urge to find out the best approaches to blend in the teaching of listening and speaking skills. This is in a bid to bring out achievement and competence in the aforementioned area.



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