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Aurelija Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė

1Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5710-6629>

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Aurelija Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė.

Email: aurelija.dauksaite-kolpakoviene@vdu.lt



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Multimodal Resources for Learning English as a Foreign Language Outside the Classroom: Insights from Lithuanian University Students

Aurelija Daukšaitė-Kolpakovienė

Abstract

This study aimed to reveal Lithuanian university students' views on the use of multimodal resources for learning English as a foreign language. An anonymous online questionnaire, including open-ended and closed-ended questions, was administered to upper-intermediate and advanced-level students to collect data. The data were analysed using quantitative and qualitative methods and, at times, compared across the two student groups when views differed greatly. The findings suggest that the use of multimodal resources significantly helps English skill improvement, as close to half of all the participants emphasised that they improve vocabulary and reading skills, and moderately enhance grammar and writing skills this way. They see multimodal resources as motivating, engaging, and effective. In fact, videos are seen as effective by half of the study participants, but moderately effective are these: music, podcasts, interactive games, online platforms with interactive tasks, social media, and online dictionaries. It is also important to note that students' experience of using such resources has individual differences, and upper-intermediate students find the use of multimodal resources challenging and have accessibility-related issues. Although the findings should be viewed in light of some limitations, they can help EFL teachers to gain insight, improve their multimodal pedagogies and make students' learning more effective by using the multimodal resources they identify as the most useful.

Keywords: EFL, language skills and competences, multimodality, student preferences, university students

Introduction

Nowadays, foreign language learning is easier than ever before. This is a rather bold statement to make, but we have to agree that the development of technologies and the Internet connection in numerous devices that people own has made everything easier and more accessible. Language learning is not an exception. It is possible to study a language in a formal institution classroom or outside of a classroom (non-formally) using a variety of resources, most of which are available in digital formats. Even though “multimodality” involves the study of fonts, colours, pictures, and other features of texts, it also encompasses a variety of modes or resources, which is the focus of this paper. In particular, it dedicates attention to and aims to learn about university students’ views on multimodal resources for learning English as a foreign language in the Lithuanian context. These include music, podcasts, social media, interactive games, online platforms of all sorts, online dictionaries, and other possible resources. Thus, the study of this paper is driven by the following research question: What are Lithuanian university students’ views on the use of multimodal resources for learning English as a foreign language? However, first of all, the next two sections will discuss the concept of multimodality in more detail and prior studies on multimodality in the EFL context.

Concept of Multimodality

Multimodality, as a term, meaning five communicative modes, covering “linguistic, visual, spatial, aural, and gestural” to make and convey meaning, was introduced by the New London Group in the 1990s (Brossek & Downes, 2024, p. 318). At that time, printed paper formats (e.g. books) were the primary focus of descriptions of multimodality, but later, all sorts of digital formats came into play, since their popularity in various spheres of life started growing steadily. As a result, contemporary definitions of multimodality have been influenced by this transition from traditional to electronic formats and now often involve information and communication technologies as one of the main modes. Heberle (2010, p. 102) suggests the following definition of multimodality: “the knowledge and use of language concerning the visual, gestural, audio and spatial dimensions of communication, including computer-mediated communication.” Lim et al. (2023) state that technologies have provided more ways of meaning-making, in addition to language, which has led to the so-called multimodal turn in multiple areas, including education in general and language teaching and learning in particular. At present, the

literature focusing on multimodal approaches in teaching emphasises that multimodality is the use of diverse modes and even semiotic signs (Masinde et al., 2023), which means that multimodality is not only about modes anymore, and teachers, as well as other specialists, “may resort to a variety of resources” (Denizci, 2022, p. 417) to reach particular aims. Jakobsen and Tønnessen (2018) explain that classroom practices are related to the world outside the classroom, which is indeed very multimodal. Since our world is surrounded by multimodality, our classrooms could and should reflect it, too, by making it an integral part. Thus, the use of multimodality can be seen as “an alternative to the traditional methods” (Masinde et al., 2023, p. 95) and a holistic approach to teaching a variety of skills and competences (D’Andrea, 2010). Educators can manipulate multiple modes for numerous pedagogical reasons (Denizci, 2022), for instance, to scaffold or in other ways support learning (Jakobsen & Tønnessen, 2018). In such a case, multimodality is also about communication, digital literacy and the development of necessary skills and competences by including authentic content related to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Lim et al., 2022).

As far as the teaching of foreign languages is concerned, the use of multiple modes may be more or less common depending on the context and the language in question. For instance, English classrooms may use multimodal resources all the time to teach and engage students (Putri et al., 2024), while German classrooms may not see multimodality as an integral part of the courses taught (Ugagu-Dominic, 2021). In general, in contemporary classrooms, it is natural for teachers to use technologies just as they use PowerPoint presentations or audio recordings, but what is important is that “learning is more effective when information is presented in more than one mode” (Rodgers, 2019, p. 6).

Multimodality descriptions frequently mention technologies, which can rightly be seen as an important part of multimodal teaching practices in contemporary classrooms, no matter whether these are foreign language or other study subject classes. Just like in real life, students need to be able to “view, share, design, and produce multimodal texts” (Brosseuk & Downes 2024, p. 317) or other forms (e.g. videos), manipulate the forms, adjust them to make them more understandable, etc. (Guichon & McLornan, 2008). These online communication-related skills have become common in people’s personal and professional lives (Rodgers, 2019; Ugagu-Dominic, 2021) and classrooms with students being taught face-to-face or online, especially during and after the pandemic.

Similarly, Jakobsen and Tønnessen (2018) suggest that students should not limit themselves to using multimodal resources provided by the teacher in the classroom but also create them (e.g. multimodal texts) or find and use them outside the classroom to continue improving or practising their skills and competences. Nevertheless, as Cárdenas-Claros et al. (2023) point out, current literature on multimodality in language teaching and learning has hardly investigated how teachers choose multimodal resources to integrate in their language classrooms and the factors that influence the use and combination of multiple modes. It does not focus on student preferences for and experiences related to the choice and use of multimodal resources in the EFL context either. This paper will focus on the latter gap in research, but will discuss some prior studies and their findings first.

Findings of Prior Studies

Multimodality has been found to have a positive effect on students' grades, since students have varied learning styles, and the utilisation of the same materials in different modes helps to choose the one that is the most effective and serves their needs (Masinde et al., 2023). Masinde et al. (2023) have also shown that, in primary education, multimodal approaches help with EFL students' listening and speaking skills and their active participation when compared to the use of only one mode, such as a textbook, for all students and classroom activities.

Similar conclusions were reached by Putri et al. (2024), who found that students benefit from the utilisation of more than one mode (e.g. films, pictures, interactive tasks, etc.) for meaning-making when they have differing learning styles, which, at the same time, makes their educational experience better. However, it may be difficult for teachers to find suitable materials in particular languages (e.g. French; Cousinard, 2022), and the materials the teachers can find may not be inclusive or appropriate in terms of culture, or financial aid may be necessary to obtain the necessary materials (Cárdenas-Claros et al., 2023). Masinde et al. (2023) discovered that even though EFL teachers see numerous advantages of multimodal approaches, they are not motivated to use them in their teaching due to the mentioned and other difficulties, such as technological ones, and time constraints that cause challenges in the implementation of multimodal teaching and learning (Putri et al., 2024).

Multimodality in vocabulary teaching has become very popular in recent years (Cárdenas-Claros et al., 2023). Some interesting results in this area can be found in Yu and Liu's (2022) study, which has revealed that multimodal input motivates and interests students in language learning contexts, but in terms of effectiveness in vocabulary learning, not all modes seem to work in the same way. For instance, when a picture is provided first rather than a translation while learning new vocabulary, it helps with vocabulary retention better (but not all words can be presented with pictures). This means that even the order in which different modes are introduced in a language classroom could be significant, although both of the mentioned modes have a positive effect on their own, too. In addition, Yu and Liu (2022) noted that the text-first approach was better for vocabulary review. Thus, it is a good idea for teachers (and students outside the classroom) to choose varying modes not only because of varying student learning styles but also because of the aims of particular activities that they do. A different study that interviewed second language teachers in a global context (half of the participants were teachers of English to whom English was a native language) noticed that the teachers chose particular modes in their teaching based on their students' needs and aims and their own experience while teaching and/ or learning (Cárdenas-Claros et al., 2023).

In the context of Ukrainian higher education (Fedorenko & Kravchenko, 2023), which would probably be geographically the closest to that of Lithuania, which the study to be reported later dealt with, it was revealed that the use of such multimodal resources as videos, websites and others to learn English for specific purposes (ESP) was mostly seen as entertaining (52%). Fewer students believed it was enlightening and thought-provoking, but the results were not much lower (42% and 49%, respectively). In general, multimodality in ESP courses was perceived as motivating and attracting student attention, but more as entertainment rather than serious learning. Thus, it is important to choose multimodal resources very carefully so that they are used strategically for learning purposes rather than for entertainment in the classroom.

Aryana et al. (2022) found that some multimodal resources are more favourable to EFL students (in Indonesia) than others. For instance, the EFL students were not in favour of music as a resource in higher education, while videos, texts and images were seen as preferable ones. In addition, a combination of different modes was seen as having a positive effect on active student participation (Aryana et al., 2022) and communication of knowledge of a second or foreign language (Morell & Pastor Cesteros, 2018). Moreover, Elmiana (2019) noted that the use of images engages

and motivates students while at the same time reducing their mental load, which makes learning easier. The upcoming parts of the paper will focus on Lithuanian students' preferences and experiences using multimodal resources for learning English.

Methodology

The study used an anonymous questionnaire as a *research tool* that was administered to EFL students at Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) in Lithuania. Based on the literature review, the questionnaire was created online on *Google Forms* and divided into two parts: the first one was on demographic information of the participants (3 closed-ended questions), and the second one involved eight closed-ended (multiple-choice and multiple-choice grid) and three open-ended questions on multimodality in the EFL context. The data were analysed using MS Excel, thematic analysis and at times a comparative approach (*methods*) to discuss very different findings among two groups of participants.

The *participants* were selected randomly through classes of English as a foreign language. Two EFL classes were approached: one of upper-intermediate level general English (B2) and one advanced level (C1/C2, EAP course) class. The former one had 24 students, while the second one was not full and had only 13 students at the time of the study (37 students in total). Both of these classes were taught by the same teacher. However, the students were asked to reflect on their overall experience, rather than the one related to these classes. The students participated voluntarily.

The following *procedure* was adopted: the students were introduced to the topic of the study and the questionnaire and invited to participate during one of their classes (with the permission of their teacher). They filled out the questionnaire using their mobile phones or laptop computers through a link posted on Moodle. It took them ten to fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaire. The analysed data were presented to the students during the last week of classes of that semester.

One of the main *limitations* of this small-scale study is the rather limited number of students and the unequal number of students in the two classes. As a result, the paper does not always employ the comparative approach with respect to the findings (only when the results differ between the two groups). It usually treats the participants as one group of students studying English as a foreign language, despite their differing levels of proficiency.

Results and Discussion

As indicated above, the first part of the questionnaire included three questions on the participants' demographic information, such as age, gender, and year of study, to learn about the context in which the study should be placed. An average study participant was 19 years old (60%). Others were slightly younger (11%) or older: 20 – 19%, 21 – 5% and 22 or older – 5%. The majority of study participants were female students of English as a foreign language (almost 76%). The proportions of genders differed in the classes of the two levels of English, but this was accidental, as VMU students register for their classes themselves by choosing a teacher, class time and location where the class takes place. The classes that were involved in the study were taught by the same teacher, at the same location, in the mornings, four times a week. The students could have studied (most probably did, although this information was not collected) lower levels of English with other EFL teachers. However, the study did not specifically focus on their experience studying English as a foreign language at the university level but rather on their overall general views, preferences and experiences related to learning English as a foreign language and the use of multimodal tools for this purpose.

The absolute majority of the students (94.6%) in both English classes were first-year students. As the study took place in spring, it means both groups of students were studying at the university for the second semester. Only 5.4% were second-year students. These must have started their English studies at university at either pre-intermediate (A2) or intermediate (B1) level, as VMU students study levels of English (as defined by the CEFR) based on their high school grades, the score of the state school-leaving examination and the placement test result received upon enrolment at university. As emphasised by the university study regulations, the students need to achieve an advanced level (C1 or C1/C2) proficiency within the first two years of their bachelor studies.

Table 1 presents the most frequently used multimodal tools to learn English as indicated by the study participants. The numbers show how many students chose the provided answers, but the percentage is not counted, since the numbers are rather small, and no clear standing-out tendencies can be revealed. On the other hand, some of the highest numbers have been highlighted for clarity.

Table 1

The most frequently used multimodal tools for learning English

	Slides	Videos	Music	Podcasts	Interactive games	Online platforms with interactive exercises	Social media	Online dictionaries with audio/visual features
Never	3	5	9	10	10	13	8	8
Rarely	8	4	5	8	14	8	4	12
Sometimes	16	9	4	10	7	8	3	6
Often	6	11	4	5	5	5	6	6
Very often	4	8	15	1	1	1	16	5

Note. The table was created by the author of this article

The students sometimes learn English from PowerPoint or other slides, probably provided and demonstrated in class by the teacher of English. These may include grammar rules, exercises and other materials gathered in one place. However, if the numbers of the two groups of participants are considered separately, which is not reflected in the table, there are quite a few differences in the frequency of use of certain multimodal resources. For instance, advanced students mostly learn through videos, while upper-intermediate ones learn through social media. In addition, advanced students rarely learn through music, which is not the case for upper-intermediate students, whose answers are well reflected in Table 1 (they learn through music very often). In general, both participant groups rarely or never learn English through interactive games, online platforms and online dictionaries. Moreover, podcasts are moderately frequently used. Some of these findings are in line with the study by Aryana et al. (2022) that revealed that EFL students in higher education are not in favour of using music as a multimodal resource, while videos are among the most preferred resources.

In terms of the effectiveness of multimodal resources for learning English, the responses are widely distributed as well (Table 2). Since the numbers are quite low in every category, the percentages are not counted, but the highest numbers are highlighted in bold for discussion purposes.

Table 2*The most effective multimodal resources for learning English*

	Videos	Music	Podcasts	Interactive games	Online platforms with interactive exercises	Social media	Online dictionaries with audio/visual features
Not effective	1	4	6	6	1	3	1
Slightly effective	1	6	3	5	2	5	7
Moderately effective	9	10	11	11	11	14	13
Quite effective	9	8	7	10	12	6	6
Very effective	17	9	10	5	11	9	11

Note. The table was created by the author of this article

Videos seem to be very effective for close to half of all study participants. This is probably the reason why they are often chosen, as discussed above. However, all the other types of multimodal resources that were listed in the questionnaire, namely music, podcasts, interactive games, online platforms with interactive tasks, social media, and online dictionaries, are moderately effective. Table 1 earlier demonstrated that quite some students use music and social media very often to learn English, but as Table 2 shows, these multimodal resources are only moderately effective. Thus, it may be that these multimodal resources are used for other primary reasons, such as enjoyment, engaging content and others, rather than learning English, but some linguistic skills and competences may be acquired at the same time, too.

When the learners of English were specifically asked about their skill improvement with multimodal resources outside the classroom, the responses varied greatly, but some numbers that stand out in Table 3 are highlighted (the percentages were not counted).

Table 3

The use of multimodal resources and language skill improvement

	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Not at all	1	3	1	2	1	2	3
Slightly	3	6	7	3	8	5	8
Moderately	11	16	7	9	11	6	18
Significantly	16	12	9	11	11	17	6
Greatly	6	0	13	12	6	7	2

Note. The table was created by the author of this article

Close to half of the respondents significantly improve their vocabulary and reading, while they moderately enhance their grammar and writing skills through multimodal resources. Fewer students significantly or greatly improve their grammar, listening and speaking skills. On the other hand, if the categories of “significantly” and “greatly” are put into one to narrow down the number of categories, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, and reading skills would be those that are mostly improved with the use of multimodal resources. These are in line with the findings about videos being very effective for learning English. Videos often involve all of these linguistic skills and competences (reading can be practised if transcriptions are used). Prior studies revealed that listening, vocabulary and other skills and competences can successfully be improved (in- and out-of-class) with multimodal resources (Cárdenas-Claros et al., 2023; Masinde et al., 2023). Using videos is one way of doing that, but at the same time, learners can develop a great number of other skills (e.g., critical thinking) and 21st-century competences (Rodgers, 2019).

Similarly to the study by Fedorenko & Kravchenko (2023), Lithuanian university students agree or strongly agree that multimodal resources are more motivating for learning English compared to traditional methods. However, if the responses of the two participant groups are contrasted (not reflected in Figure 4), the proportions differ greatly: 53.8% of advanced students and 37.5% of upper intermediate agree with this idea, while 15.4% and 29.2% respectively strongly agree. Yu and Liu (2022) have revealed that multimodal input not only motivates but also interests students. In the present study, it is interesting to note that among upper-intermediate students, there was none who would disagree or strongly disagree, whereas

7.7% of advanced students disagreed that multimodal tools motivate more than traditional teaching and learning methods.

Interestingly, 46% see the learning of English with multimodal tools as quite engaging and 21% as very engaging. However, 3% noted that such tools and resources are not engaging at all, and 30% marked moderate engagement. If the findings in the two participant groups are compared, some differences can be observed. 41.7% of upper-intermediate students see such multimodal resources as quite engaging, compared to 53.8% among advanced students. This means that, in general, a higher number of advanced students identify multimodal resources as more engaging. On the other hand, 29.2% of upper-intermediate students believe such resources are very engaging, as compared to only 7.7% of advanced students. Thus, it appears that the students of lower proficiency (upper-intermediate level) are more engaged when multimodal resources are used (70.9%) than those of higher proficiency (61.5%). What is also important to emphasise is that some respondents in the latter group (advanced proficiency) noted that multimodality does not engage them at all, which was not observed in the data on lower proficiency students in the study.

Accessibility of multimodal resources is an important issue, as some students may not find them useful if they are difficult to work with. For 43%, such resources are very accessible, suggesting they have no access issues, while for 32%, they are quite accessible. Only 3% indicated they are slightly accessible, which may point to many problems, most probably related to the necessity of an Internet connection, which is often a must for such resources. If the data from the two participant groups are compared, it seems that lower proficiency students have more issues in relation to accessibility. 33.3% of them see such resources as very accessible, compared to 61.5% of advanced students. They are moderately accessible to 29.2% of upper-intermediate students, in contrast to only 7.7% of advanced students who think the same way. The only similarity in the data is related to the option of 'moderately accessible' (29.2% and 30.8% respectively). In general, 66.66% of upper-intermediate level students identified multimodal resources as (quite or very) accessible, as opposed to 92.3% of advanced students who marked the same options in the questionnaire. Yet, both groups agree (100%) that when their learning combines text, images, audio, and other modes, it is more effective than when only one mode, for instance, a textbook (although they can also be seen as multimodal), is used. This is in line with some previously discussed results with respect to the use of videos, music, podcasts, interactive games, online platforms with interactive exercises, social media, and online dictionaries with audio/visual features.

The responses on whether the use of multimodal resources is challenging do not differ greatly, as 54% indicated a positive, while 46% a negative answer. However, if the data of the two groups of participants are considered separately, the students' views on challenges concerning the use of multimodal tools turn out to be the opposite. 62.5% of upper-intermediate students indicated their experience as challenging, while almost the same amount – 61.5% – in the advanced students' group indicated that it was not challenging. A possible reason may be that while moving from lower to more advanced-level studies, the students do not see multimodality as a challenge anymore, since it may have become an integral part of the learning process. Another way to explain this could be related to the proficiency the students gain: the higher the proficiency, the easier to learn English through different modes, which future studies could explore. Yet one more possible explanation may not be linked to their language proficiency but to their digital skills, since many multimodal resources are now created with the help of information and communication technologies. On the one hand, as Sanchez (2023) notes, "Technology is part of students' lives, they are involved one way or another with iPhones, iPads, MacBooks, and iBlogs on the internet. The YouTube channel has become the main source of knowledge for multiple disciplines" (p. 553). On the other hand, the use of various tools and technologies as educational rather than recreational resources may turn out to be more complicated than it might seem at first sight.

When asked to provide specific examples of situations in which the use of multimodal tools or resources in general had helped them improve their English, some students were very explicit and detailed, while some others only attempted to indicate specific skills or competences that they believed they had become better at when they used such resources inside or outside the classroom. Having read the responses and grouped them by focusing on key words related to linguistic skills and competences, it became evident that upper-intermediate students often improved their vocabulary (8) and speaking skills (5) (the number in brackets means the number of times it was mentioned by the students). Others were indicated less frequently: reading (2), grammar (2), listening (2), pronunciation (2), and writing (1). The rest of the students could not remember or chose not to indicate. Here are some examples (the language here and elsewhere is not corrected):

Student 1 (subsequently S1). *It improved my vocabulary.*

S11. *Watching YouTube videos helped me understand more words.*

S10. *It really helped me to build a confidence while talking in English, also it helped me expand my vocabulary.*

It is important to note that while some students did not indicate any, some other students pointed out two or three skills or competences that they improved while using multimodal resources.

However, when advanced students of English were given the same question, their provided answers differed. Speaking and pronunciation were mentioned four times each. Then, in the order of frequency of mention, were vocabulary (3), listening (2), and reading 1. Here are some examples:

S1. *I feel more free to speak with foreign people.*

S6. *It helped to improve my listening and talking abilities.*

S11. *Improved my speaking.*

Just like upper-intermediate students, advanced-level students sometimes indicated several skills or competences, while some others indicated none. There was one comment that could hardly be classified under some specific linguistic skill or competence but is important: “Listening to people have conversations gives you a good understanding of how English works when used in a realistic setting” (S10). This only proves that it is useful to ask students open-ended questions, as their answers can help to see a bigger picture. In this case, the student refers to the use of the English language in real-life contexts. This is why languages are studied – they should be used in the real world outside the classroom.

In addition, the study intended to find out if the students’ learning becomes more effective with regard to their preferred learning styles when multimodal resources are used. Only one upper-intermediate student did not know, and one student indicated that it is disturbing when various modes are used: “I really like the textbook, because other sources make me not to pay attention, so if not textbooks, then slides are okay” (S2). Other students agreed it is, in fact, useful to use such resources in the learning process. Thematic grouping of open-ended answers showed that only one student had the auditory learning style, while fourteen students preferred the visual learning style and highly approved of the use of videos for learning English. Here are some examples:

S4. *For someone it could be just boring, and much more interesting to watch videos [...], something that is happening in the world now.*

S7. I prefer visual learning style. I think it makes learning more appealing.

S9. I found textbook really boring and not that effective. I think that visual learning and some games, for example Kahoot, would be very beneficial for language learning.

Advanced students, on the other hand, rarely focused on their own learning styles, as they pointed out that theirs would be a mixture of different ones. This is the reason why they agreed (with one exception, as the student did not have an opinion) that learning with multimodal resources, not only with their EFL or ESP textbook, makes their learning more engaging, less repetitive, and less limited, and provides learning opportunities that textbooks cannot. The following are some examples:

S8. Using not only textbooks, gives variety of learning opportunities.

S9. I learn better when I listen to other people talk, so listening to podcasts and YouTube videos helps me learn the pronunciation l, which can't be done reading a textbook.

Thus, in general, it is possible to claim that the research participants see multimodal resources as helpful and effective because of or in line with their learning styles.

At the end of the questionnaire, the students were asked to provide suggestions on how teachers could improve the use of multimodal resources for English language learning in the classroom. Only 11 (out of 24) upper-intermediate students provided suggestions, five of which were related to video watching (e.g. S4. Teachers need to pick videos that are engaging and interesting and also interactive; S5. In my opinion, it will be interesting to watch some videos/read articles about what is happening in the world now, and in the news). Others suggested the use of memes (S3), short movies (S14), free and accessible resources (S9), etc. The same question was posed to advanced students. Six (out of 13) students provided suggestions, two of which were also related to video watching (S2. Watch more videos, which cover topics. Videos shouldn't be long and have a lot of visual info which is actually related to the topic not only for aesthetic; S6. For me, it really helps learning by watching videos, so I can imagine more clearly what the teacher is talking about). Videos may be very much preferred because "they engage students effectively," as claimed by Elmiana (2019). In various questionnaire questions, the study participants referred to the use of videos, which only proves that they are an important part of contemporary foreign language learning. Other student suggestions on multimodality included gamification (S4), the use of various resources on a regular basis (S7), and movies (S9).

Conclusions

This small-scale case study included mostly 19-20-year-old first-year Lithuanian female university students studying English at either upper-intermediate or advanced level. As the findings indicate, these students most frequently choose either videos (advanced students) or social media (upper-intermediate students) while studying English outside the classroom with multimodal resources. However, they rarely or never choose interactive games, online platforms, online dictionaries, or podcasts for this purpose. Both student groups agree that the use of multimodal resources makes their learning more effective. In fact, videos are seen as effective by half of the study participants, but moderately effective are these: music, podcasts, interactive games, online platforms with interactive tasks, social media, and online dictionaries. This may suggest that even if the students use some of them and learn English through them, the learning itself is not their primary aim of use. On the other hand, multimodal resources do significantly help in terms of English skill improvement, as close to half of the participants emphasised that they improve vocabulary and reading skills, and moderately enhance grammar and writing skills this way. Fewer students significantly or greatly improve their grammar, listening, and speaking skills, but they agree or strongly agree that multimodal resources are more motivating for English learning compared to traditional methods. Both upper-intermediate and advanced students agree that when their learning combines text, images, audio, and other modes, it is more effective than when only one mode is used.

Multimodal resources are engaging, but more lower proficiency students (upper-intermediate) are strongly engaged by them. Nevertheless, it appears that these students have more accessibility issues with such resources, even though, in general, they are very or quite accessible. At the same time, it is interesting that two-thirds of upper-intermediate students see the use of multimodality as challenging, while almost two-thirds of advanced students do not hold this view. In general, it is possible to state that despite the possible challenges or accessibility problems, Lithuanian university students of English are not discouraged from using multimodal resources, but learning English may not always be the primary goal. Yet, when they do learn with multimodal resources, upper-intermediate students indicate their improvement mainly in vocabulary and speaking skills. Advanced students mention the same and add pronunciation, but their answers are more divided and less conclusive.

Although the findings should be viewed in light of some limitations in terms of sample sizes indicated in the paper, they lead to possible recommendations on how to improve EFL teachers' multimodal pedagogies and make students' learning more effective. Firstly, the use of a variety of resources helps students with mixed learning styles, which can result in more efficient and beneficial learning in terms of different linguistic skills and competences (vocabulary and speaking in particular). Secondly, videos are seen as the most favourable multimodal resource for English students, so their teachers could make use of them more often when teaching a great variety of topics (although Masinde et al. (2023) have noted that teachers are reluctant to use multimodal resources). Whether, to what extent and how successfully this could be applied in different contexts to teach students of various proficiency levels is an area for future investigation.

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