# The effects of multimodality through storytelling using various movie clips

SoHee Kim[1]

**Abstract**. This study examines the salient multimodal approaches for communicative competence and learners' reactions through storytelling tasks with three different modes: a silent movie clip, a movie clip with only sound effects, and a movie clip with sound effects and dialogue. In order to measure different multimodal effects and to define better delivery modes, three one-shot commuter-based tests for each mode and one survey were conducted. Three tasks were administered on the websites specially designed for the study using Flying Popcorn 7.0, a web authoring programme. After viewing each movie clip, participants were asked to immediately record a one-minute story. There were 90 Korean English learners who attended academic English classes at a university located in South Korea. The results showed that there was a significant difference in their speaking performance when using the movie clip with sound effects and dialogue. In the survey, participants responded that the movie clip with sound effects and dialogue provided a good way to assess speaking and listening within a given time frame.

**Keywords**: storytelling, multimodal learning, media effects, speaking assessment.

## 1.    Introduction

Multimodality can refer to a new form of communication that provides learning experiences for language learners. It is composed of more than one medium and is defined as the learner's use of more than one sense (Mayer & Sims, 1994). Multimodal modes include more than language, enabling language learners to perceive and understand differently, based on their language proficiency and their cognitive processes used to interpret media. Moreover, using a variety of modes can also lead to the development of integration skills, allowing language learners to interpret multiple modes simultaneously. In order to investigate multimodal

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effects, this study used different movie clips for a storytelling task on computer-based tests to find salient media effects. Since using a movie clip draws attention for active viewing, encourages discussion among language learners, and develops opinions and literature skills (Kim, 2014; Scheibe & Rogow, 2008), a storytelling task with a movie clip can be an effective medium to assess language learners' media effects. This study explores how English learners interact differently with media, a movie clip, and attitudes towards different modes.

## 2.    Method

### 2.1.    Participants

The participants in the present study were 90 university students (53.3% male, $n=48$; 46.7% female, $n=42$) who attended academic English classes to fulfill their graduation requirements in South Korea. There were 59 freshmen, 25 sophomores, four juniors, and two seniors. The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) scores ranged from 325 to 940. Overall, they had studied English in Korea between two and 16 years and had studied in English-speaking countries between zero and five years.

### 2.2.    Research questions

This research explores the impact of effective media learning environments on the development of oral proficiency, as well as exploring guidelines for language teachers for effective learning through media teaching. To address this, the study had the following two research questions: (1) How does the participants' speaking performance differ relative to the three various modes through storytelling? (2) What specific interactions are related to the three different modes for oral performance?

### 2.3.    Materials and methods

This study investigates the language learners' attitudes towards different modes and speaking performances through storytelling on three online computer-based tests. After viewing each movie clip, participants were asked to record a one-minute story based on what they had seen. Three tests were developed using the Flying Popcorn 7.0 web software programme that allows test-takers to record oral performance for the movie clip task and saves their recorded files on the computer.

All participants were required to write their names on the first screen and then they were able to watch each movie clip in order to record their stories.

The first task used the movie clip with sound effects: Charlie Chaplin's 'The Coffee'. The second task featured the silent movie clip: Charlie Chaplin's 'Hotel Evergreen'. The last task used the movie clip with sound effects and dialogue, 'Turbo Diner' from the Wallace and Gromit movie. All the movie clips were under two minutes long.

The participants' oral proficiency was assessed holistically and analytically with four criteria: discourse, vocabulary, grammar, and sentence complexity. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scores from one to six were used as the holistic rubric. The analytical rubric was based on the Communicative Language Ability (CLA) model and was adapted into four categories in order to measure discourse, vocabulary, grammar, and sentence complexity (Kim, 2014). Each category is scored from one to five. T-tests, ANOVA and Chi-Square tests were used to examine recording and questionnaire data. Participants' TOEIC listening comprehension scores were compared with speaking performance in order to determine if there were any differences for the three modes.

## 3.    Results and discussion

Three native speakers – two British and one American – assessed participants' oral performance, and the inter-rater reliability of Cohen's Kappa coefficient was .885. The results revealed that Task 3, Task 2, and Task 1 had higher scores respectively on both the holistic and discourse scores. In line with this, there were significant differences for holistic scores between Task 1 and Task 3 ($p<0.05$) and discourse scores between Task 1 and Task 2 ($p<0.05$), as well as between Task 1 and Task 3 ($p<0.05$).

Moreover, there was no significant difference between participants' preferences or level of difficulty in their speaking performance relative to the three movie clips when creating a story. There was, however, significant difference between how easy participants founded the tasks and their speaking performance ($p<0.05$) as well as grammar scores ($p<0.05$) for Task 3.

In the survey, participants answered that Task 3 was a good test to assess their listening and speaking skills over a short time period. They also felt that a movie clip without dialogue can offer freedom to make a story.

## 4.      Conclusions

This study concluded that the participants' oral performance was substantially different for holistic and discourse scores for the three tests. Moreover, they had different interpretations towards different modes.

This study investigated multimodal effects through storytelling with various media modes for oral proficiency, but a longevity study with different types of movie clips and an investigation of learners' preference for various movie clips for storytelling still need to be conducted for media literacy.

## 5.      Acknowledgements

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