EFL Learners' Perceptions of Incorporating Multimodal Composing into Writing Instruction

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Abstract

The pedagogical importance of multimodal composing in second language (L2) writing has received significant attention from researchers in the field of English language teaching. Recently, in the L2 writing class, research on the potential of this approach to teaching writing has been the focus of many researchers. The aim of the present study is to explore EFL learners' perceptions of incorporating Multimodal Composing (MC) into EFL writing instruction. 33 EFL learners from the English department at the University of Halabja participated in this study. A mixed methods research design was used to conduct the study. The data were collected using a reflection survey and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 27). Non-parametric statistical measures were used for the purpose of presenting and comparing learners' perceptions across three multimodal tasks. The qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed thematically using NVivo 15 to discover main patterns and themes. The results of the study revealed that EFL learners had positive perceptions of incorporating multimodal composing activities into writing instruction. Learners' perceptions changed over time; they became more comfortable with the multimodal tasks, and their perceptions of the pedagogical importance of the tasks became increasingly positive. The majority of participants perceived the multimodal tasks

as more motivating and engaging than traditional writing activities. Learners also reported that the tasks were beneficial in terms of increasing task engagement, audience awareness and improving writing skills through reviewing and revising.

Keywords: Multimodal Composing, Traditional Writing, Multiliteracies, Writing Instruction, EFL Learners' Perceptions

تێڕوانینی فێرخوازانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وەک زمانێکی بیانی لەسەر بەکارهێنانی نوسینی فرە مەودی (فرە شێوازی) لە وتنەوەی بابەتی نوسین

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پوختە

گرنگی پەروەردەی بابەتی فرە مەودی/فرە شێوازی نوسین لە وتنەوەی بابەتی نوسین لە بواری فێرکردنی زمانی ئینگلیزی بۆتە جێی سەرنجی زۆرێک لە توێژەران. لە ماوەی چەند ساڵی ڕابردودا، لە بواری نوسینی زمانی دوەمدا، توێژینەوە لەسەر توانای ئەم ڕێگایە بۆ فێرکردنی نوسین، جێگەی گرنگ و سەرنجی زۆر توێژەر بوە. ئامانجی ئەم توێژینەوەیە بریتییە لە لێکۆڵینەوە کردن لە تێڕوانینی فێرخوازانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وەک زمانێکی بیانی لەبەکارهێنانی ڕێبازی فرە مەودی لە فێرکردنی نوسینی زمانی ئینگلیزیدا. ٣٣ خوێندکاری قۆناغی سێیەم لە بەشی ئینگلیزی لە زانکۆی هەڵەبجە بەشداریان لەم توێژینەوەیەدا کردوە. دیزاینی توێژینەوەی تێکەڵ بەکارهێنراوە بۆ ئەنجامدانی لێکۆڵینەوەکە. داتاکانی توێژینەوەکە بە بەکارهێنانی ڕاپرسی و چاوپێکەوتنی نیمچە کراوە کۆکراونەتەوە. داتا چەندایەتیەکان بە بەکارهێنانی ڕێگەی ئاماری ناپارامێتری شیکاریان بۆ کراوە بەمەبەستی زانین و بەراوردکردنی تێڕوانینی فێرخوازان لە سێ ئەرکی جیاوازدا. داتا چۆنایەتیەکان کە لە ڕێگەی چاوپێکەوتنی نیمچە کراوەکانەوە کۆکرانەوە، بە شێوەی شیکاری بابەتی شیکارو لێکدانەوەیان بۆکراوە.بەگوێرەی ئەنجامەکانی توێژینەوەکە، فێرخوازانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وەک زمانێکی بیانی تێڕوانینی ئەرێنیان هەبوە لەسەر بەکارهێنانی ڕێبازی فرە مەودی لە فێرکردنی بابەتی نوسیندا. سەبارەت بە گۆڕانکاری لە تێڕوانینی فێرخوازان لەسەر ڕێبازی ئاماژەپێدراو بە تێپەڕبوونی کات دوای ئەنجامدانی چەند ئەرکێکی یەک لە دوای یەک، تێڕوانینی فێرخوازان بە تێپەڕبوونی کات گۆڕانکاریان بەساردا هات؛ فێرخوازان زیاتر هەستیان بە ئاسودەیی ئەکرد، وە تێڕوانینییان لەسەر گرنگی پەروەردەیی ئەرکەکان بەردەوام ئەرێنی بون. زۆرینەی بەشداریوان پێیانوابو ئەرکە فرە مەودیەکانیان زیاترهاندەر و سەرنجڕاکێشن وەک لە چالاکییە تەقلیدییەکانی نوسین. هەروەها بەگوێرەی تێڕوانینی فێرخوازان، ئەرکەکان سودبەخش بون لە ڕوی قوڵبونەوەو کاتی زیاتر تەرخانکردن بۆ ئەرکەکان، وە بەرزکردنەوەی ئاستی هۆشیاری بەرامبەر بە خوێنەران/ یاخود بینەران. هەروەها فێرخوازان پێیانوابو ڕێبازی فرەمەودی لە ڕوی کارامەی نوسینەوە، لە کاتی پیاچونەوەو گۆڕانکاریدا، بۆتە هۆی باشتربونی ئاستی کارامەیی نوسینیان .

کلیلە وشەکان:

نوسینی فرەمەودی/فرە شێوازی، نوسینی تەقلیدی/ یەک مەودی، فرە خوێندەواری،وتنەوەی بابەتی نوسین، فێرخوازانی زمانی ئینگلزی وەک زمانێکی بیانی

1. Introduction

Writing is essential in achieving academic success. However, it has been widely recognized as a challenging skill for L2 learners to master (Hyland 2010). In order to provide more effective and motivating learning experiences, it is important to understand how EFL learners reflect on their experiences with new approaches of writing instruction. Traditionally, writing instruction has only involved linguistic mode (text). Literacy pedagogy has often referred to the instruction and learning of reading and writing in printed, formal, and standardized versions of the national language. In other words, literacy teaching has been narrowly defined and "restricted to formalized, monolingual, monocultural, and rule-governed forms of language" (The New London Group, 1996, P. 60). However, considering demographic, social and cultural changes, and advancements in technology, it is no longer sufficient to rely only on linguistic mode for teaching and learning literacy (Ajayi, 2009).

Three decades ago, the authors of the New London Group (1996) advocated for a different understanding of literacy. They argued that due to the wide variety of communication channels and growing linguistic and cultural diversity in the modern world, a more comprehensive understanding of literacy is required than the one provided by traditional approaches which are solely language-based. According to Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn, and Tsatsarelis (2001), communication is traditionally described as monomodal (text mode only); however, this understanding is misleading because communication has always been multimodal (linguistic and non-linguistic modes), and various modes of communication (semiotic resources) such as linguistic (text) and non-linguistic (e.g. visual, audio, gestural, spatial) are orchestrated and used in contemporary communication (Kress, 2010). Traditional literacy - which is often understood only in terms of language - no longer represents contemporary communication because contemporary communication does not depend on the linguistic mode only, but it also depends on integrated use of multiple modes of communication (Kress, 2010).

In multimodal composing research, there are two main frameworks: Multilitracies (New London Group, 1996) and multimodality (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Kress, 2003, 2010). These two frameworks are grounded in New Literacy Studies (Smith, 2014). Multimodality and multiliteracies are sometimes used interchangeably; however, the two terms come from two different but overlapping theoretical frameworks. According to Rowsell and Walsh (2011), multimodality is a field that studies how people use various

modes to make meaning. Multiliteracies was introduced by the New London Group (1996) as a new pedagogy of literacy. Multimodality comes first because it explains how meaning is made, while multiliteracies, as a pedagogical approach, provide us with tools to implement it. Multiliteracies, as a pedagogy, encompass linguistic diversity and the use of multiple modes of communication. Furthermore, multiliteracies has also worked as a theoretical framework for understanding multimodal composing (Zhang et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the concept of multimodality is typically seen to have originated from Halliday's (1978) work in social semiotics which emphasizes the importance of understanding various modes of communication people use when they communicate. Halliday made the case in his work that educators and academics should not focus on grammatical and sentence-level construction. In other words, they should not only investigate, instruct, and/or evaluate language resources; however, they need to concentrate on how individuals employ a variety of modes for various purposes in various situations (Kessler, 2022). Multimodality refers to the use and integration of multiple modes or channels of communication; these modes include linguistic (speech and writing) and non-linguistic modes such as visual (e.g. images, color) audio (e.g. music), spatial (e.g. layout, organization), and gestural (Kress, 2010).It is claimed that these multimodal resources are socially developed over time. They argue that individuals purposefully select and combine these modes to construct meaning (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016). From this perspective, language is no longer considered as the primary or most dominant mode of meaning-making, nor is it the sole starting point for analysis (Jewitt, 2009 as cited in Smith, 2014).

These potentials and limitations of modes are called "affordances" by Gibson (1979 as cited in Forceville, 2011). According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001), the design of a semiotic product (a multimodal text) involves the use of multiple semiotic modes. Each mode is contributing in its own unique way; they can work together by supporting one another and serve complementary functions. Kress (2010) states that each mode has its own strengths and limitations. One mode can be effective in certain functions while being less effective or entirely useless in others.

Since communication and representation are usually multimodal, incorporating a multimodal pedagogy into language teaching is worthwhile. Researchers argue for incorporating multimodal pedagogy into L2 teaching curriculum (e.g., Belcher, 2017;

Hafner & Ho, 2020; Grapin &Llosa, 2020; Jiang, 2017; Lim & Kessler, 2021; Lim & Polio, 2020). These researchers emphasize that contemporary communication and new literacy practices require language teachers and educators to adopt multimodal approaches and incorporate them into their language pedagogy. Liang (2023) states that multiliteracies pedagogy can meet the needs of modern literacy education, and adopting multimodal composing is one approach to support it.

2. Literature Review

Multimodal composing as a notion was first presented by scholars in New Literacy Studies as a means to implement a pedagogy of multiliteracies in educational settings (Jiang & Luk, 2016). The term "multimodal composing", also known as multimodal composition or multimodal writing, refers to the use of various semiotic resources (modes) such as audio, visual, gestural, and spatial alongside linguistic mode (text) to create meaning (Lim & Kessler, 2024).

Research on multimodal composing in writing instruction is growing gradually. Students engaged with multimodal composing tasks reported many benefits of multimodal composing. Research has found that teachers observed higher levels of student engagement and motivation when using multimodal tasks (e.g. Kang & Kim, 2023; Miller, 2010, Ryan et al., 2010). Additionally, in a study conducted by Miller (2007), struggling students who engaged in multimodal activities were often re-defined as knowledgeable and confident students. Research also reveals that incorporating MC tasks can promote learner autonomy and boost creative thinking (Yang et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies indicate that MC helps learners develop authorial agency and build identity among L2 writers (Cimasko & Shin, 2017).

Multimodal composing helps learners improve various aspects of their writing skills. For example, a study was conducted by Yeh (2018), which investigated the perceived benefits of digital video-making projects in enhancing multiliteracies among advanced EFL learners in Taiwan. EFL learners reported that they expanded their vocabulary, and improved their writing and speaking fluency, specifically through script writing and narration. In Kim and Belcher's (2020) study, learners viewed multimodal composing as more engaging, interesting and effective for meaning making, especially when visual spoken elements are involved. They believed that multimodal writing increased their creativity and raised their

audience awareness. Participants also stated that they spent almost twice as much time on the multimodal tasks which indicates more engagement when designing the multimodal tasks. Dzekoe (2017) also investigated the effectiveness of computer-based multimodal activities in English learning through writing. Participants' interviews and reflections revealed positive perspectives on the integration of multimodal activities into their academic writing classes. Most students reported that using visuals, such as posters and images along with their texts helped them revise their content and organization more effectively. Some students noted that the effort and work required for some tasks such as designing posters was more demanding but eventually beneficial for their learning process. Similarly, Castaneda (2013) specifically examined learners' experiences concerning incorporating digital stories as a DMC task into their classes. The findings of the study revealed that even though students expressed their concerns regarding the use of the editing software, they appreciated the opportunity to review and revise their language in the process of creating their digital stories and consequently they became more aware of their linguistic choices. Moreover, Kohnke et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative case study to investigate learners' perceptions of a Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) task. Students reported that the task was useful and relevant to real-life situations. Another finding of the study was that students felt that completing the task helped them increase their self-confidence in using English in professional settings.

Furthermore, Chen (2018) conducted a qualitative study to explore whether digital video production as a pedagogical tool can help EFL leaners develop their digital empathy. The study revealed six key themes in student reflections: development of video production skills, active listening, teamwork, perspective-taking, emotional engagement, and appreciation of peer feedback. Chen's research emphasizes the importance of preparing EFL students not only to use language effectively but also to engage ethically in digital environments. Jiang (2017) investigated the benefits of MC in EFL learning. The data were collected using interviews and reflections. The results showed that, in terms of educational benefits, MC provided learning opportunities such as increased student participation and opportunities to use English for communicative purposes in authentic contexts. Jiang and Luk (2016) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate EFL learners' perceptions of integrating MC into Chinese EFL curriculum at university level. Because of the challenging and engaging nature of MC, learners reported several benefits such as enhanced

motivation, engagement, responsibility, and learners' feeling of achievement and self-esteem. Another study was conducted by Hafner (2014) to investigate students' perceptions of incorporating digital video projects into English language teaching. The data of the study were collected though learner interviews, learners' comments on a course blog, and documentaries produced by participants. Students perceived digital video projects as authentic and motivating. Video projects provided them with opportunities to use English in meaningful and creative contexts. Learners also believed that creating the multimodal tasks was a chance to experiment with various modes, develop their language and digital literacy skills.

Language learners also reported some challenges and difficulties they faced during the process of creating their multimodal texts. For example, in Hafner's (2014) study, most adolescent learners had a positive view on the multimodal tasks; however, some expressed concerns after performing their collaborative DMC tasks. They had concerns about limited opportunities to write in English, and they were struggling with integrating multiple modes and addressing audience needs. However, they actively tackled these challenges by reflecting on the purpose of their texts and multimodal projects. In another study by Oskoz and Elola (2014), learners explained that they used to write traditional writing styles such as argumentative and expository essays which emphasize presenting the facts objectively; however, adapting to the more personal and expressive nature of digital stories is somehow challenging and demanding.

Recently, multimodal composing as a relatively new approach to L2 writing instruction has been the focus of many researchers (e.g., Hafner, 2014; Jiang, 2017; Kim & Belcher, 2020, 2022; Yi & Choi, 2015). However, research specifically on EFL learners' perceptions of incorporating multimodal composing into writing instruction is still scarce (e.g., Jiang, 2017; Lim & Kessler, 2021; Kessler, 2022; Kim & Belcher, 2020), and the majority of the studies on multimodal composing are qualitative and small scale case studies (focusing on two or three participants) (Ferdig & Pytash, 2013; Lim & Kessler, 2021; Kessler, 2022). Furthermore, there are very few studies, particularly longitudinal ones that examine changes in learners' perceptions of multimodal composing over time (Kang & Kim, 2023).

To address this gap in the literature, the current study adopts mixed methods research design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to explore EFL learners' perceptions

of incorporating MC into their writing classes. Another aim of the study is to explore whether EFL learners' perceptions will change over time after completing three multimodal tasks during one semester multimodal composing intervention.

Based on the research aims, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do EFL learners reflect on their experiences with one semester-long incorporating multimodal composing into writing classes?
2. Do learners' perceptions change over time when engaging in different multimodal tasks?
3. What benefits do EFL learners perceive from engaging in multimodal composing?
4. What are the challenges experienced by EFL learners' when engaging with different multimodal tasks?

3. Methodology

3.1 Context and Participants

The participants of the current study consisted of 33 EFL learners from the English Department at the University of Halabja. These participants belonged to an experimental group from a larger quasi-experimental study; however, in the current study, only the data will be included which are related to this group (the experimental group). The participants were third-year students who were enrolled in the second semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. They met once a week for two hours over the period of 12 weeks. These students had studied reading and writing skills during the first four semesters of their undergraduate program at university; however, as they reported, they had never experienced multimodal composing in their writing classes before.

3.2 Research design

This study uses a mixed methods research design to investigate Kurdish EFL learners' perceptions of multimodal composing in writing instruction at the university level. Both types of quantitative and qualitative data were collected using a reflection survey and semi-structured interviews. During the course of one semester, students received instruction in creating multimodal texts using linguistic mode (writing) and non-linguistic modes (e.g., image, audio, and video). During a 12-week intervention, participants in the experimental group created three different genres of multimodal texts, namely, narrative,

argumentative and process. In creating their multimodal essays, students used storyboards to plan their multimodal texts. They changed their traditional essays into multimodal ones using some video editing applications (e.g., CapCut, InShot, VN video editor). Furthermore, learners' perceptions were investigated through a task reflection survey which was used after completing each multimodal task, and semi-structured interviews to explore their perceptions and experiences with MC tasks. This reflection survey was used for two main purposes. First, it was used to investigate learners' perceptions immediately after completing each multimodal task to understand how they reflect on that particular task. Second, it was used for three consecutive multimodal tasks they completed to examine whether their perceptions will change over time when engaging in different multimodal tasks.

3.3 Instruments

In the current study, two data collection tools were used: A task reflection survey and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Reflection survey

In order to examine learners' reflection of every single multimodal task they completed during the semester, a task reflection survey was used (adapted from Kang & Kim, 2023). The reflection survey consisted of only six items because it was primarily designed to measure learners' affective responses towards a specific task, not to measure their general perceptions. The survey items measure six aspects of the task such as task difficulty, feelings of frustration, performance, interest, motivation, and learning opportunities. The survey used a nine-point semantic differential scale. Since this kind of scale measures perceptions along a continuum, responses are often gradual rather than negative or positive, agree or disagree; having a rating scale with more than 7 points, allows respondents to express their feelings more adequately (Preston & Colman, 2000). Below is an example of the scale:

This task was not interesting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	This task was interesting.

Content validity of the survey was established through expert review and piolet testing. A copy of the survey was sent two experts to examine the clarity and relevance of the items.

Based on their suggestions, some changes were made. The revised survey was then piloted with five students at the same level of the study participants. Since the items and the instructions were clear and did not present any problems for the respondents, no further changes were needed.

The internal consistency of the reflection survey was examined using Cronbach's Alpha. The survey was administered three times after each multimodal task. The reliability values for the three datasets were different across the three administrations: Task 1 (α = .64), Task 2 (α = .85), and Task 3 (α = .74). The reliability coefficient in the first administration is below Cronbach's Alpha threshold (.70) for acceptable reliability; however, this may be attributed to learners' unfamiliarity with the multimodal task at the early stages of the experiment. The higher and acceptable reliability coefficients in the second and the third task suggest that learners' perceptions became more consistent as they gained experience.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

At the end of the semester, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' perceptions of and experiences with the multimodal composing. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. This method of sampling is widely used in qualitative research to select individuals who are more experienced and knowledgeable in the topic (Patton, 2014). Therefore, to ensure the credibility of the findings, some sampling criteria were used such as participants' attendance, commitment to complete the multimodal tasks, and gender balance between male and female participants. The initial plan was to interview 8-12 students. However, as the researchers (interviewers) analyzed the initial responses, more participants were added in order to collect all the data needed to answer the research questions; the process continued until no more new themes or ideas added by the new respondents. Thus, saturation was thought to have been achieved by 17 participants. The interviews lasted between 15 and 25 minutes. The interviews were conducted in English; however, the participants were told to switch between English and Kurdish if they felt more comfortable with one of the languages, or if they believed they could express themselves better in one of the languages. Before starting the actual interviews, in order to enhance participant' motivation to answer the questions willingly and in depth (Dornyei, 2007), the researchers (interviewers) explained the purpose of the interviews and the questions to the participants. During the interviews, the researchers

asked the participants questions regarding their experiences with creating multimodal composing tasks in their writing classes. More specifically, participants were asked questions regarding their general perceptions of the experience, what they perceived as benefits, and what challenges they faced while creating their multimodal texts. The interview concluded with an open-ended question that asked participants to share any additional thoughts or suggestions related to their experiences with multimodal composing.
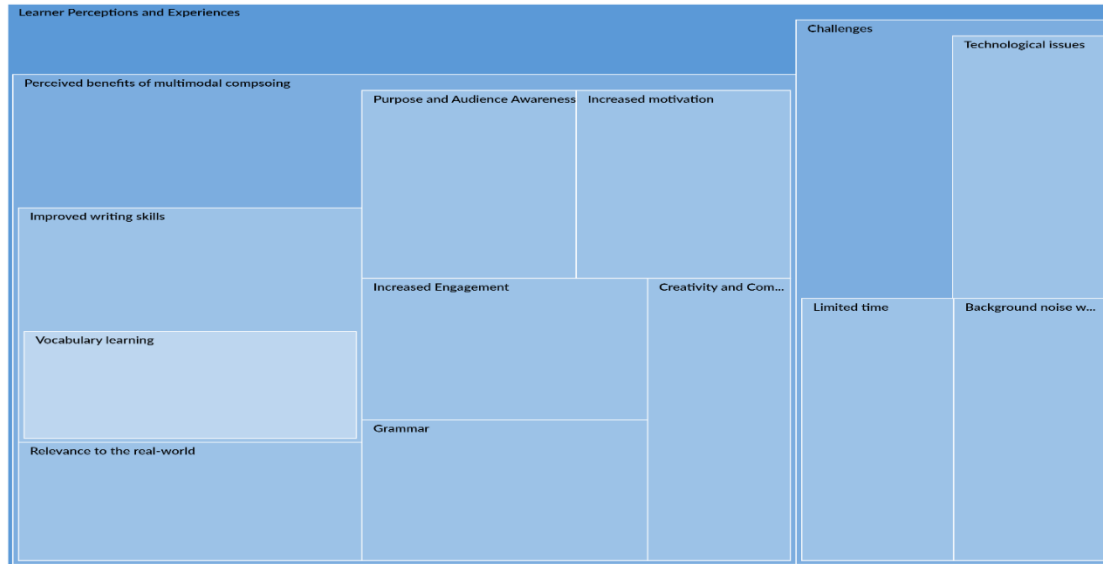
3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

The current study used both quantitative and qualitative data analyses methods to answer the research questions. Data collected from the reflection survey were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS 27. First, The Shapiro–Wilk test was run to assess the normality of the data distribution. Since the data did not meet the assumption of normality, non-parametric tests were used for further analysis. Second, descriptive statistics including median and interquartile (IQR) was used to summarize their general perceptions. Third, the Kruskal–Wallis H test (non-parametric), as an alternative to one-way ANOVA (Dornyei, 2007), was conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences in learners' perceptions across the three tasks. Fourth, since significant resulted emerged, post hoc pairwise comparisons using Dunn's procedure was run to identify where the differences located.

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews. The analysis was conducted mainly using inductive approach. Since there were some general opened-ended questions regarding the benefits, challenges of multimodal composing, and questions about their feelings and experiences, new themes emerged as their responses were read and coded. However, there were also two specific questions regarding motivation and engagement which are considered to be two beneficial aspects of multimodal composing in the literature. The interview audios were transcribed manually one by one. Since a few participants responded to the questions partially in Kurdish, these were first transcribed verbatim in Kurdish, and then translated into English. The translations were reviewed by an expert who is fluent both in Kurdish and English to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the translations. The transcriptions were later imported into NVivo 15, and read several times by the researchers. Similar ideas and

patterns were grouped and coded. After reading and coding process finished, themes emerged and they were categorized as follows:

Fig. 1: Hierarchical Chart of Learners' Perceptions of Multimodal Composing

4. Results

4.1 Results of the Reflection Surveys

Table 1: Results of Shapiro-Wilks Normality Test for Task 1, 2 and 3

Non- Parametric procedures were used to analyze the quantitative data for two main reasons: First, as Table 1 shows, Shapiro-Wilk test was run to empirically assess the normality of the data. Results of Shapiro-Wilk test showed that p-values of all the variables

Variables	Tasks	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	p-value
Difficulty	Task 1	0.85	0.0004
Difficulty	Task 2	0.85	0.0003
Difficulty	Task 3	0.79	<0.0001
Frustration	Task 1	0.89	0.0038
Frustration	Task 2	0.80	<0.0001
Frustration	Task 3	0.86	0.0005
Performance	Task 1	0.89	0.0022
Performance	Task 2	0.83	0.0001
Performance	Task 3	0.86	0.0005
Interest	Task 1	0.78	<0.0001
Interest	Task 2	0.82	0.0001
Interest	Task 3	0.87	0.0009
Motivation	Task 1	0.86	0.0006
Motivation	Task 2	0.79	<0.0001
Motivation	Task 3	0.86	0.0006
Learning opportunity	Task 1	0.82	0.0001
Learning opportunity	Task 2	0.70	<0.0001
Learning opportunity	Task 3	0.81	<0.0001

of the three tasks were below the significance level of α=0.05 (see table 1). This means that the data do not follow normal distribution. Second, the data were collected using a 9-point Likert scale which is ordinal quantitative data not interval (Dornyei, 2007). Therefore, for these two reasons, non-parametric tests are the most appropriate choice for this study.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Task 1

		1.Difficulty	2. Frustration	3. Performance	4. Interesting	5. Motivation	6. Learning Opportunities
N	Valid	33	33	33	33	33	33
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		7.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	7.00	8.00
Minimum		1	3	3	2	1	4
Maximum		9	9	9	9	9	9
Percentiles	25	5.00	5.00	7.00	7.00	6.00	7.00
	50	7.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	7.00	8.00
	75	8.00	8.00	8.00	9.00	8.00	9.00
	IQR	3	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for task one. The results indicate that participants generally held positive perceptions of the task they completed. Regarding the first two items (difficulty and frustration), the median score was 7 with Interquartile Range 3 (IQR = 3). This indicates that most learners' perceived the task easy, and they felt very relaxed while working the multimodal task. Concerning their performance on the task and whether they perceived the task interesting, the median score for both items was 8 with (IQR = 1, 2 respectively). This shows that participants believed that they had performed well on the task, and they perceived it very interesting and engaging. Regarding the question whether they want to do more similar tasks, the median score was 7 (IQR=2), indicating their moderate positive perceptions and showing their willingness to engage in more tasks. Participants were also asked whether multimodal tasks provided learning opportunity, the median was 8 (IQR=2). This result reveals learners' strong agreement that the task was educational. Overall, the results of the six items show consistent positive perceptions with narrow IQRs which reflect general agreement among participants.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Task 2

		1. Difficulty	2. Frustration	3. Performance	4. Interesting	5. Motivation	6. Lerning opportunities
N	Valid	33	33	33	33	33	33
	Missing	3	3	3	3	3	3
Median		8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	7.00	9.00
Minimum		5	2	4	1	1	2
Maximum		9	9	9	9	9	9
Percentiles	25	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	6.00	7.00
	75	9.00	9.00	9.00	8.00	8.00	9.00
	IQR	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00

The results for task 2 showed consistent positive perceptions which was an argumentative multimodal essay (see table 3). For the first four items (difficulty, frustration, performance and interest) the median score is 8 (IQR= 2,2,2,1 respectively). This shows that the vast majority of the participants found the task easy, and they felt relaxed while creating their multimodal argumentative essays. They also enjoyed working on the task and found it interesting. They also believed that they had completed the task successfully. The median score for motivation was 7. Although it was the lowest comparing it to other items, it still shows moderate positive perceptions concerning their willingness to engage in more multimodal tasks. Learning opportunity received the highest median score (9) reflecting an extremely positive perception. Participants genuinely understood the pedagogical importance of the task, and they considered it to provide valuable learning opportunity. The narrow IQRs is also an suggestion of a strong agreement among the participants.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Task 3

		1.Difficulty	2. Frustration	3. Performance	4. Interesting	5.Motivation	6. Learning opportunities
N	Valid	33	33	33	33	33	33
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	7.00	8.00
Minimum		6	4	6	3	3	2
Maximum		9	9	9	9	9	9
Percentiles	25	8.00	7.00	7.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
	75	9.00	9.00	9.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
	IQR	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00

The results again for task 3 showed a positive tendency in participants' perceptions (see table 4). Regarding the difficulty of the task, the median score was 8 (IQR=1). This shows

that the task was considered easy by the participants. Regarding the question whether they felt relaxed or frustrated during completing the task, participants stated that they had felt relaxed to a great extent. The median score was 8 (IQR=2) which suggests that they felt comfortable when creating their multimodal projects. Concerning their performance, again, the median score was 8 (IQR=2) implying that participants felt that they had performed the task well. Regarding the question whether they perceived this task motivating, the median score for this item was 7 (IQR=2), indicating that learners evaluated Task 3 to be moderately motivating and interesting. The last item was about whether this multimodal project provided learning opportunities, the item received a high median score 8 (IQR=2), showing that participants held the same positive perceptions regarding the pedagogical value of multimodal practices in writing class.

Table 5: Kruskal-Wallis H test Statistics (a, b)

	Difficulty	Frustration	Performance	Interest	Motivation	Learning
Kruskal-Wallis H	18.526	13.413	2.561	1.874	.715	6.686
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	<.001	.001	.278	.392	.700	.035

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Task

Table 5 shows Kruskal–Wallis test results which was conducted to comapre learners' perceptions across the three tasks for all six variables. The results revealed significant differences among the tasks for Difficulty, $\chi^2(2) = 18.53$, $p < .001$, Frustration, $\chi^2(2) = 13.41$, $p = .001$, and Learning Opportunities, $\chi^2(2) = 6.69$, $p = .035$. However, no significant differences were found for Performance, $\chi^2(2) = 2.56$, $p = .278$, Interest, $\chi^2(2) = 1.87$, $p = .392$, or Motivation, $\chi^2(2) = 0.72$, $p = .700$. These results indicate that learners' perceptions of Difficulty, Frustration, and Learning Opportunities variables were different across the

three tasks, whereas their perceptions of Performance, Interest, and Motivation remained consistent.

Table 6: Pairwise comparisons (Dunn's posthoc) tests with Bonferroni Correction

Pairwise comparisons (Dunn's posthoc) tests with Bonferroni correction was run to determine where the differences exactly are among the three tasks. The results show that learners' perceptions of difficulty changed significantly when comparing Task1 to Task2 (p = .012) and Task3 (p < .001), but there was no significant difference between Task2 and Task3 (p = .544). This shows that Task2 and Task3 were considered easier than Task1 by participants. Learners' frustration level was significantly higher in Task1 comparing it to Task2 (p = .003) and Task3 (p = .009), but there was no significant difference between Task2 and Task3 (p = 1.000).   As for learning opportunities, only Task2 vs. Task3 reached significance (p = .033); it suggests that students considered the third task more valuable for learning. (see table 6)

Variables	Task1 vs Task2	Task1 vs Task3	Task2 vs Task3	Interpretation
Difficulty	.012	<.001	.544	Task1 > Task2 & Task3
Frustration	.003	.009	1.000	Task1 > Task2 & Task3
Learning	1.000	.270	.033	Task3 > Task2
Performance	–	–	–	non-significant
Interest	–	–	–	non-significant
Motivation	–	–	–	non-significant

4.2 Results of the Interviews

4.2.1 Learners' Perceptions and Experiences

Concerning their overall perceptions of and experiences with multimodal composing, out of 17 students who participated in the interviews, 15 participants showed a positive attitude toward incorporating multimodal composing into their writing classes. Many of them described multimodal composing as a "new experience" (P2, P3, P8), "good

experience" (P4, P10, P11), "interesting experience" (P2, P12, P15), "useful" experience (P5, P13, P16), "enjoyable, nice, beautiful'' experience (P6, P1, P9). Furthermore, some participants compared multimodal composing with their previous semesters of traditional writing. They described it as different, engaging, and meaningful. P8 further explained, "In fact it was a new experience for me. I have never experienced such activities in the past". P9 stated that it was "really, really different from other semesters… It was a successful approach as we experienced through this whole semester". Similarly, P1 highlighted that "multimodal composing was a new way. It was really different and I think it was a nice way to understand the text better."

Regarding the question whether they preferred multimodal composing or traditional writing, again, 15 participants out of 17 preferred multimodal composing over traditional writing. Some participants described it as a more effective and motivating approach for teaching writing. For instance, P10 claimed that it was "better and more useful because it is very motivating and… a new approach to studying writing." P17 emphasized that "combining the text with videos, sound and visuals… the outcome is much better than only the text". Multimodal composing is preferred over traditional because "it helps us to understand things better… and learn some new skills about creating video" (P1). Another student confirmed, "I think using multimodal composing instead of traditional writing is much better" (P3).

Several students preferred multimodal composing over traditional writing because they believed that the process of "creating a multimodal text is much more enjoyable than just writing a traditional essay." (P13); and "When you enjoy something… you will remember [it] for a longer time." (P12). Multimodal composing is modern and reflects the realities of today's digital society. P9 noted that "We are living in… a modern society of technology… it is better to use different digital things… more engaging than the traditional one". Multimodal composing is preferred because "Only writing is not an interesting experience'' (p6), and using multiple modes "was something interesting" (P6). P6 also described traditional writing as "boring in class" and multimodal composing as "more enjoyable and less boring". P8 emphasized the need to for instruction innovation by stating that "Teachers need to adopt more effective and modern approaches of teaching like multimodal composing."

Out of 17 students who participated in the interviews, only two participants –in spite of acknowledging the benefits of multimodal composing tasks, they still preferred traditional writing over multimodal composing because they believed that writing a traditional essay is easier than creating a multimodal text. One participant said that MC is "a lot of work", and he/she preferred to "write down this [a traditional essay] and give it to [the teacher]." Similarly P5 preferred traditional writing by stating that "I think traditional writing is better because… I don't do [video tasks] until the last minute… but "if it's traditional writing, I will write it in class."

4.2.2 Perceived Benefits of Multimodal Composing

Depending on the themes emerged from the qualitative analysis, participants reported several perceived benefits of MC. For the purpose of clarity, they will be categorized into sub-themes:

4.2.2.1 Increased Motivation

When participants were asked about their experience with multimodal composing, almost every one of them believed that the multimodal activities made their learning more enjoyable, engaging and motivating. P6 and P11 described MC as "enjoyable", and "new approach" of teaching writing. P5 stated that he/she was "very motivated to create multimodal essays'', and P13 also reflected "the multimodal composing approach is very motivating. It makes the class less boring and less tough." P2 found the process of creating multimodal videos "very interesting and "engaging", he/she also explained that if there were more time participants "could create even better multimodal videos."

Furthermore, even when participants compared multimodal composing to traditional writing in relation to motivation, they reported that multimodal composing was more motivating and interesting than traditional writing tasks. For example, P2 explained that, although it required more time and effort, the process of creating multimodal texts "was more motivating than traditional writing", and "more enjoyable than a traditional essay" (P13). P10 reflected on the overall experience by stating that "our motivation increased when we engaged with multimodal composing because we went through a very different experience." Some participants also expressed their genuine enjoyment and enthusiasm they had while they were producing their multimodal video essays. P3 and P10 expressed their feeling that they were "very enthusiastic about these tasks'', and P8 stated that

he/she is "very interested in creating more videos like these if teachers ask us." P10 further appreciated the process and stated, "it makes you love the subject even more… makes the class more interesting and enjoyable." (P10)

A few participants found the multimodal tasks challenging at the early stages of creating multimodal texts; however, they still believed that the tasks were motivating. For example P9 stated that the tasks were "somehow difficult", particularly at the beginning, P4 also affirmed they were "more challenging than other ones [traditional writing]… more difficult", but "enjoyable." They found motivation in the challenge of integrating multiple modes because it encouraged them to think more creatively. P5 further explained: "Although it was somehow challenging, it was very useful for us. Yes, it took a long time, but we learned how to effectively combine different modes to create a multimodal essay. Yes, it was really an interesting experience."

4.2.2.2 Increased Engagement

Enhanced engagement was another theme emerged from the analysis. When participants were asked different questions, they consistently compared MC with traditional writing. They stated that MC required more focus and immersion than traditional writing, and this led to a higher level of immersion in the tasks. P7 described traditional writing as "easy and sometimes boring", but multimodal composing as "very engaging." Furthermore, P11 stated that the level of engagement in MC tasks is much higher than traditional writing tasks and MC is "more engaging even if it takes more time." P9 also explained: "if we compare it to traditional writing, of course the level of engagement was higher… you have to have an exact focus."

Furthermore, some participants emphasized that the process of creating multimodal texts requires more time, but it is engaging as well. For example, P1 said that the process "takes a lot of time and effort." However, even the extra time required, stemmed from enthusiasm as P10 explained "it took me a longer time… because of my passion for the work… I wanted to create the videos better." P12 described his/her commitment to finish the project by stating "you have to use different skills, different modes… it [is] kind of motivates me to finish the job and finish the video." Searching for images and visuals took a lot of time but the process enhanced learners' engagement. For example, P15 stated that

he/she "spent a lot of time searching for suitable images." Similarly, P16 said that the process requires "more practice… of course it increases your engagement." Even though the process took more time than writing a traditional essay, it provided them with learning opportunities as P4 explained "We learned a lot from creating the multimodal essays… students are obliged to spend more time for studying."

Involvement in the process of creating multimodal texts has also resulted in enjoying specific moments by some participants and that kept them engaged in the process. For example, P9 described the moment he/she was integrating audio and video by stating "When I put my voice to the video and read the essay… it feels more natural than traditional writing." In the same way, viewing the final product was described as "so enjoyable" by (P7).

4.2.2.3 Purpose and Audience Awareness

Based on the participants' responses, one of the sources of their motivation appeared to be closely linked to audience awareness. Many participants reported that knowing their multimodal essays would be viewed by others apart from the teacher encouraged them to make an effort to understand and anticipate the needs expectations of their audience. This audience awareness created a sense of responsibility and purpose, as a result, it enhanced their willingness and interest in learning to design and present their work more effectively. This also changed their class activities into communicative acts. Participants also reported that having the feeling that their work would be viewed by an audience makes the process more interesting and engaging. P6 stated that "The whole process was enjoyable especially when… other people can see my videos." Posting their videos online was also interesting for the students. P15 said that "posting [it] to the YouTube channel and the feeling that other students watched my videos was so interesting." P12 offered another important point by stating that "when you know that there is an audience… you have a purpose to finish the project".

Furthermore, some participants explained that preparing multimodal videos for a wider audience required more attention to tone, topic choice, and intonation. For example, one participant, P12, highlighted that he had to "adjust [his/her] tone… to be suitable for [the] audience." P5 stated "my narrative was scary, so I recorded my voice in a very low pitch."

Similarly, P17 pointed out that "your tone in the narrative is different… in the argumentative one is different… that's your way of conveying your message." Audience awareness also influenced students' choices in terms of content and topics. As one participant, P11, explained, "I tried to consider my audience and what might be interesting for them." Similarly, P16 stated "you have to be careful about the topic… find something that attracts the attention."

Knowing that their work would be shared on YouTube or viewed by others was a source of motivation for learners which resulted in improving quality, accuracy, and presentation of their work. P5 claimed that, "if the videos were only for you [the teacher], we wouldn't pay careful attention… but when you asked us to upload… we paid more attention to the voice, the pronunciation, the images, almost everything." P13 also stated "I paid very careful attention to the video, the text and the quality." Another participant, P9, stated that since others can see the videos "so I just try to make the video free of mistakes." Furthermore, P14 stated that the awareness of a broader audience inspired him/her to work harder and produce better work. "Thinking about a bigger audience made me work harder and do my best" (P7), and feeling that other people can see my videos encouraged learners to "to do it better."

Receiving positive feedback and reactions from their peers have also encouraged some participants to continue participate in the activities which resulted in their personal satisfaction. P6 said "when I felt that my audience liked my videos, this gave me a feeling of success… it motivated me and made me [be] interested in creating more videos." Posting their videos online also enhanced participants' motivation. P14 stated that "It was very motivating when I saw that my videos were receiving positive feedback from [the audience]."

Participants also reported that creating multimodal essay to a bigger audience encouraged them to think about how to convey meaning effectively. P3 noted multimodal composing "makes you pay attention to the text and the quality of the video. The audience can get the message more effectively."   P9 shared through using multiple modes of communication "you can just convey the meaning.". P6 claimed "I had to consider my audience while I was preparing the videos."

4.2.2.4 Writing skills

The majority of participants perceived multimodal composing as beneficial for improving various aspects of their writing skills. MC helped participants improve their writing skills and their confidence as well. For example, P9 said, "before… I couldn't write the essay… but after this activity, [I] could write better." P9 and P10 expressed that over the course of the project, their writing ability and confidence grew noticeably. P9 indicated "I learned how to write the full essay better… after this experience… I could just write better." P10 stated that MC was "something different… very effective… it made us pay attention to the different part of the essay." Another participant, P14, stated that "it motivated me in terms of writing since it helped us to be more accurate when writing the scripts." P10 further explained: "when we were reading the text several times, we could find some mistakes… so we improved our writing skill."

 P4, P10, and P11 reported that multimodal composing deepened their knowledge of essay organization particularly essay structure and its key components such as introduction, thesis statement and conclusion. P4 reflected "now I know how the structure of the essay and how I can write it in a clear way." This sense of progress was also supported by P10, who explained "We learned… the different parts of an essay like introduction and thesis statement… and how to write a good conclusion." Similarly, P11 admitted that before the task, they were unfamiliar with such concepts before writing this essay, I didn't know what a thesis statement is… now I learn [-ed] what it is and how to write an essay."

When asked how MC might help them improve their writing skills, participants attributed this improvement to several factors associated with the process of creating multimodal texts. For example, P13 said they had to "review and revise [their texts] many times", and restructure their sentences in order to align with the images and the videos effectively. P2 also added "sometimes you have to re-write the text or change the structure in order to go well with the images." Similarly, P6 explained "I had to restructure the sentences to match with the content of the video and convey the message more properly." This was also evident in P3's experience: "I even tried to create the sentences in a way that they would reflect the meaning of the images." Furthermore, the integration of multiple modes required participants to revise and restructure their sentences to achieve more clarity and coherence. P10 stated "we tried to match the images with the text… had to rewrite the

text… so the viewer/reader [could] understand it easily." This point was also emphasized by P6 who stated "you have to match the words, the structures with the content of the videos and the images". This enhanced their writing in terms of cohesion and coherence.

A few participants reported that they had improved their writing skills particularly in language mechanics, punctuation marks, and transition signals. Preparing a text to integrate with visuals and read it aloud required participants to pay closer attention to accuracy and clarity than in traditional essay writing. P13 explained "I don't pay attention to punctuation marks when I write a traditional essay, but for the multimodal video… I had to use correct pauses and stops when reading the text." Furthermore, P4 emphasized the usefulness of MC in terms of learning transition signals by stating "especially transition signals in the essays… I learned a lot from them and I know how to use them now."

4.2.2.5 Vocabulary Learning

Participants' responses to the questions showed that multimodal composing played a significant role in developing their vocabulary knowledge. During the process of creating their multimodal essays, participants had to search for new terms, refine their choices, and eventually expand their vocabulary. P1, P2, P3, P11 and P14 said that they had "learned a lot of new vocabularies" while creating the videos. P7 emphasized the importance of word choice by stating "you need to search for some suitable words that go with the content of the video." Other students elaborated on the process of searching for new vocabulary which supported their learning. P5 claimed, "I searched for vocabulary which would match the essay… this helped me expand my vocabulary." Moreover, P14 reflected, "it can help you improve your vocabulary because you try to match the words and the sentences with the video." P9 further explained, "When you want to find some new vocabularies for your pictures… it is a good way to improve your vocabulary."

One of the ways that learners improved their vocabulary knowledge was that they had to carefully search for words which specifically describe the images and the videos in their multimodal texts. In other words, the use of images in MC further supported their vocabulary learning; and this process has made vocabulary learning more memorable and purposeful for the participants. P3 confirmed that "the images also helped me… learn even more vocabulary… they help [-ed] me remember the vocabularies." P12 also reflected on

this process by stating "I learned new vocabulary when I searched for the images." P6 emphasized the same point "I had to search for vocabularies which best describe the images… I always search [-ed] for synonyms." This process required a great deal of flexibility and revisions as pointed out by P9 "you want to find suitable vocabularies for the sentences to the videos or… pictures… we can change vocabularies, we can change the sentences." Therefore, as it can be seen from their responses, this process of integration of images and videos with text has provided them with rich learning opportunities to carefully select words, phrases and sentences in order to produce a coherent multimodal text. Consequently this supports their vocabulary learning and retention through multimodal composing tasks.

4.2.2.6 Grammatical Accuracy

Some participants' responses suggest that multimodal composing contributed to their grammar development and their overall language accuracy. P15 stated that preparing their texts for multimodal projects "helped [them] in terms of grammar", and they also made them "focus more on grammar" as P7 claimed. MC also encouraged them to be more attentive to grammar, accuracy and coherence. For example, P4 explained the practice of adding subtitles to videos reinforced grammar learning in an effective way: "when I did subtitles for my essays… I remembered in the exam that in the video I did it, and I managed to do it in the exams too." Multimodal texts also helped in terms of accuracy and coherence as P6 reflected "I was very accurate in grammar… I tried to write more accurately." Furthermore, P14 emphasized the same point that the process "helps to use more appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures."

4.2.2.7 Creativity and Communication

Creativity was another benefit of multimodal composing reported by many students participated in the interviews. Based on their responses for their questions, MC provided them with a great deal of opportunities for creativity and self-expression, particularly when MC is compared to traditional writing. Having access to multiple semiotic resources such as visuals, audio, and text provided them with tools to communicate their knowledge and convey their messages in different and more engaging ways. In this regard, P4 claimed that "students can show their creativity… their knowledge in another way… they have more

tools… they can express themselves in a different way using different modes." This point was also confirmed by P14, who stated that, "It allows students to be more creative and express themselves in a better way." Furthermore, P15 emphasized the role of non-linguistic modes of communication in making learning more effective by stating "multimodal composing involves not only text but also visuals like images and audio… students will learn easier through multimodal composing."

Furthermore, multimodal composing also allowed learners –while integrating linguistic and non-linguistic modes- to think more carefully and creatively about the relationship between text and visuals. P 13 explained when creating the multimodal texts "I had to be very creative in combining videos, images and the text." Another participant, P8, further explained: "It helped us to match the texts with the videos and the images which help [-ed] us be more creative in general." P1 also reflected on the necessity of being accurate in writing so that visuals could complement the text effectively: "when I wrote the text, I had to think about how I bring some pictures… so I had to write the text very perfectly… so the reader can understand it totally."

Some students emphasized the amount of cognitive effort required to align written texts with multimodal elements. In this regard, P13 stated that "you have to think carefully and deeply on how to match the images with the grammar and the vocabulary of the text." P13 went on claiming that MC requires deeper thinking "I had to think very deeply… adding the text to the video took me a long time". Furthermore, P15 described the process of revising language in relation to visuals, "when you try to write or restructure the sentences, you have to also think about the images in order for the image and the text to match."

Several participants mentioned that having multiple modes of communication at their disposal helped them communicate ideas more effectively. Their reflections indicate that combining text with images or other modalities offered various ways of expressing meaning than relying on a single mode. In relation to this, P13 explained that "using different modes… can help to convey your message more effectively." Similarly, P7 highlighted the importance of multimodal comping, stating "When you use different modes… it's not only one mode… it's more helpful." P15 also emphasized the same point by stating "using images with text can convey different meanings… you have more ways to express the same idea."

4.2.2.8 Relevance to the Real World

Two participants observed that the multimodal composing is relevant to the real world communication. They believed that MC reflects the nature of communication in real contexts outside the classroom. P2 stated that multimodal composing activities "reflect the real-world multimodal texts." P2 and P8 also pointed out that classroom practices should reflect contemporary communication. For example, P8 stated that, "Nowadays we need to adapt our teaching with the world outside the classroom," and P02 added "Since things are changing very quickly in the world, I think this new approach is very interesting and engaging for students and reflects the real world multimodal texts."

4.3 Challenges

Despite the many benefits of multimodal composing reported by students, some acknowledged they experienced difficulties especially at the beginning of the semester when they were unfamiliar with essay structure and multimodal tasks. P5 stated "At the beginning we didn't know how to write an essay... although it was somehow challenging, it was very useful." P8 also shared, "when I worked on the task for the first time it was a little bit difficult." P15 described the process of creating multimodal texts as "difficult at the beginning, but after creating the first video, it got easier." Another student, P17, mentioned that "it is somehow more hard work... you have to put more effort in it"; however, he/she still admitted "the outcome is much better than only the text [only traditional writing]." One participant, P16, described his/her feelings stating that "The first one I was so stressed and nervous, but the second one... it was like just more natural."

The challenge most frequently mentioned by participants was background noise, particularly for students living in dormitories. Out of 17 students who participated in the interviews, 12 (P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, P8, P11, P13, P14, P15, P16, and P17) mentioned that background "noise" or not being able to find a "quiet" place to record their voices was the main challenge during creating their multimodal texts. Noise from other students disrupted their voice recording and forced them to repeat the recordings multiple times. P1 pointed out that "there was a lot of noise... I had to record it many times and delete [-ed] it and recorded it again". P2 affirmed the difficulty of creating their multimodal videos in the dormitory environment, he/she stated "it was very difficult... to find a quiet place in

the dorm… we had to choose a time when the students were asleep." This problem was also confirmed by other participants, such as P13, who said "I had to repeat the recording several times because of the noisy place".

Another issue raised by participants was the limited time available to complete the multimodal tasks. A minority of participants noted that the time provided to complete the tasks was insufficient because the process of creating a multimodal text is time-consuming. P12 reflected on the pressure of the deadlines they had to complete their tasks by stating "the time was short… we had a deadline, so I had to finish it quickly." P15 also highlighted that even though "it was also difficult to find suitable images", the "limited time" posed another challenge. More broadly, P13 referred to the timeframe of the course itself and described it as insufficient, by claiming "we need more time… one semester is not long enough to experience multimodal composing well".

In addition to time constraints, three participants mentioned challenges in connection with technology and editing applications as a significant challenge. Some of the students had little or no prior experience with digital tools; this made the process demanding and at times frustrating. For example, P3 admitted that "I had no knowledge of using [editing applications]." Similarly, P4 described his/her struggles at the beginning stating "I didn't like editing at the beginning… I just spent four or five hours… it was too much time." P5 further elaborated on the complexity of the task by stating "we had problems with editing… combining the text with the images and the voice recording."

5. Discussion

5.1 First Research question: How do EFL learners reflect on their experiences with one semester-long incorporating multimodal composing into their writing classes?

The main purpose of the current study was to investigate EFL learners' overall perceptions of incorporating multimodal composing tasks into writing instruction. The results of both qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed that participants demonstrated strong positive perceptions of the multimodal tasks they engaged in. The descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative analysis (reflection survey), revealed that, the majority of the participants showed positive perceptions of the three multimodal tasks they completed. They believed that the multimodal tasks were more engaging, motiving and interesting

that the traditional writing tasks. This finding was also corroborated by the qualitative analysis (interviews). Participants described their engagement with multimodal tasks as a new and useful experience. The vast majority of participants preferred multimodal composing over traditional writing because they perceived their experiences with the multimodal tasks as more enjoyable, motivating, and engaging. They believed that MC reflects contemporary communication and the nature of today's digital society. These findings are in line with a number of previous studies (e.g., Chen, 2018; Dzekoe, 2017; Hafner, 2014; Kim & Kang, 2020; Kohnke et al., 2021; Yeh, 2018).

Moreover, the vast majority of learners believed that multimodal tasks were providing them with rich learning opportunities. This could be attributed to the nature of multimodal tasks that require learners to use and integrate multiple modes along with technological tools to express ideas more effectively than using linguistic mode alone. According to Manchón (2017, p. 1), the reported benefits of multimodal composing are often framed as "enabling conditions" or "opportunities" for learning. These benefits include: (a) engagement with tasks that help real-world application and this supports Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) research, (b) integration of various language skills, (c) participation in authentic communication, and (d) promoting learner autonomy, and increasing motivation and self-efficacy. This finding is supported by previous research, for example, Chen's (2018) reported learners' positive perceptions of multimodal projects; learners believed these projects provided learning opportunities such as collaboration, engagement in searching for information, and reflection on their own learning.

5.2 Second Research question: Do learners' perceptions change over time when engaging in different multimodal tasks?

Learners' responses of all the items across the three tasks were highly positive (median= 7, 8, and 9). In a case study conducted by Kang and Kim (2023), learners' perceptions of the importance of multimodal composing changed over time. One participant's perceptions grew more positive over time; however, another participant developed less positive perceptions. The researchers attributed this to not having a clear understanding of the concept of multimodal composing. Their responses across the three tasks were compared to see if any significant change occurred in their perceptions after completing each task. Learners' perceptions of task difficulty and frustration changed gradually across the tasks. As they completed more tasks, their frustration level decreased, and they

became more relaxed and found the tasks easier. This also suggests that students have gradually developed confidence and familiarity, and they felt more relaxed in dealing with various modes of meaning making. Another significance change in learners' perceptions was increase in perceived learning opportunity offered by multimodal tasks. This indicates that the more students worked on multimodal tasks, the better they appreciated the pedagogical value of multimodal composing. As for performance, interest and motivation, although their perceptions did not change significantly, they already demonstrated positive perceptions of individual tasks, and these perceptions remained consistent over the three tasks. This finding is in line with Alrajhi's (2023) results which confirmed that learners' interest, motivation, and confidence were high and remained positive throughout the course of 5 multimodal tasks.

5.3 Third Research Question: What benefits do EFL learners perceive from engaging in multimodal composing?

Thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed several major themes: increased motivation and engagement, language skills development, enhanced creativity, relevance of MC to the real-world and enhanced audience awareness. Research has highlighted the essential role of motivation in education. Motivation has a significant impact on various aspects of learning process such as engagement, determination and learning outcomes. One of the most commonly reported benefits of multimodal composing is learners' enhanced motivation (e.g. Hafner, 2014; Hafner & Miller, 2011; Hava, 2019 ; Jiang & Luk, 2016; Miller, 2010; Ryan et al., 2010; Kang & Kim, 2023; Vandommele et al., 2017). In the current study, multimodal tasks were perceived to be interesting and motivating by the participants. Results of both the reflection survey and the interviews revealed the tasks were enjoyable and motivating for the students. Students found the multimodal tasks more interesting than writing a traditional monomodal text. Smith (2014) reviewed 76 studies, one of the benefits of multimodal tasks which was revealed by the studies was enhanced motivation when it is applied with good instruction. Jiang and Luk (2016) conducted a study to explore the sources of motivation of multimodal practices. The findings showed that there are seven factors related to multimodal composing from which motivation originates: curiosity, control, challenge, fantasy, cooperation, competition and recognition.

Participants found the multimodal tasks beneficial in terms of writing development because-during the process of creating their multimodal texts- they reviewed and revised their texts several times. They have also restructured their sentences in order to align with the nonlinguistic modes such as images and videos. These findings are consistent with Castaneda (2013) and Dzekoe (2017). These studies revealed that the process of creating multimodal texts allowed learners to review and revise their writing. As a result, they become more conscious of their linguistic choices. Multimodal composing has also been beneficial in terms of grammar and vocabulary. Participants had been very accurate in writing up their sentences and in selecting the appropriate vocabulary. There might be two reasons for this. First, since other modes of communications are involved, and in order to orchestrate both linguistic and nonlinguistic modes effectively, learners have to pay more attention to the structure of the sentences and to the word choice. This finding was also confirmed by Yeh (2018) that EFL learners improved their vocabulary skills through narration and script writing. It is also consistent with Hava's (2019) study in which learners reported improvement in grammar and vocabulary while searching for word equivalents and using those words in the process of creating digital stories. Increasing confidence in writing was also reported by the participants of the current study. This finding is in line with previous studies (e.g., Kim and Kang, 2020; Kohnke et al., 2021) that reported learners' increased confidence in using English.

Participants also found multimodal composing beneficial in terms of creativity. One of the characteristics of multimodal writing is that it provides opportunities to be more creative compared to traditional writing. This aligns to with multimodality theory (Kress, 2010), using multiple modes of meaning making to create meaning, provides learners with more freedom to be able to express themselves and convey their messages more effectively. Learners need to skillfully consider selecting and integrating various modes in novel ways. Multimodal writing requires learners to move beyond traditional page-based thinking; it encourages them to engage more creatively and critically with form, content, and representation. The use of other modes also changes the forms, structures, and purposes of essay writing (Highland & Fedtke, 2023). This finding was supported by previous studies which investigated learners' perception of MC. In Highland and Fedtke (2023), participants described the multimodal projects as "freeing" and strongly appreciated the creativity it allowed in ideas and composing practices. They viewed it as one of the distinctive features of multimodal composing which is different from traditional essay writing. Enhanced

creativity was also reported by several other studies (e.g., Hafner, 2014; Yang, 2012). Furthermore, in Hafner and Ho's (2020) study, creativity and originality were attributed to aspects of multimodal writing such as content, organization, and delivery.

Moreover, knowing that the work will be read or viewed by other people will influence on how the choices are made regarding the content, tone, organization etc. It also encourages learners to anticipate the audience's needs, expectations, and attitudes to adapt their message accordingly. Creating multimodal texts for a wider audience has encouraged learners to pay careful attention to every aspect of their multimodal ensembles. Considering the needs and expectations of the audience required students to be more sensitive in designing their messages. Previous research (e.g., Kim & Belcher, 2020; Yeh, 2018) reported similar findings; they indicated that creating multimodal projects raised learners' audience awareness and enabled them to convey their communicative intent effectively to the target audience.

5.4 Fourth Research questions: what are the challenges experienced by EFL learners' when engaging with different multimodal tasks?

In addition to the benefits discussed above, some participants also reported a few challenges they experienced while working on their multimodal essays. In fact, very few studies have reported challenges learners face while creating multimodal texts. These challenges include unfamiliarity with multimodal composing process at the early stages, background noise during audio recording, time constraints, the effort required searching for suitable materials, and dealing with technological issues. Initial unfamiliarity is quite understandable since the majority of learners reported that this was their first time engaging with multimodal essays. It is obvious that the process of creating multimodal texts is quite different from that of writing traditional essays. A similar finding was reported in Hafner's (2014) study that students were initially struggling with using various modes to convey their messages to the target audience. One of the interesting findings reported by many learners was background noise while recording their audios. The majority of these learners reported that they were staying at dormitories, they stated that they had to repeat recording their audios due to the noise coming from other students in the neighboring rooms. This finding has not been commonly reported in previous studies. This is related to issues of infrastructure at the university such as lack of labs or quiet rooms at the library. Kress (2210) states that lack of necessary resources and materials will impact students'

ability to use multimodal elements. Time constraints was also reported by participants as one of the challenges they experienced. This might be attributed to the extra cognitive, affective and practical demands of creating a multimodal text compared to a traditional essay. A few learners faced challenges, particularly when using video editing software. Lack of experience and digital literacy skills may pose challenges for inexperienced learners. Howell et al. (2017) reported similar findings; in their study, learners reported that lack of technological skills influenced the effectiveness of multimodal composing. Jiang and Luk (2016) suggested that learners need technical guidance to provide them with skills they need to create multimodal texts, especially at the early stages.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results and findings of the study presented and discussed above, there exist some remarkable conclusions. Participants' reflections and experiences indicated strong positive perceptions of multimodal composing activities in writing instruction. The findings of the study revealed that students who engaged in multimodal composing perceived these experiences with MC as more motivating, engaging, and interesting than traditional writing activities. Participants also believed that the MC activities provided them with better learning opportunities. Furthermore, when they were asked whether they prefer multimodal composing to traditional writing, the vast majority of them preferred multimodal composing activities. Participants also reported the process of producing multimodal video essays created a better learning conditions for them. Creativity, deeper engagement, enhanced audience awareness and motivation were also among the beneficial aspects of MC perceived by most participants. Engaging with multimodal composing activities has also helped learners improve their language skills such as writing, vocabulary and grammar. Many participants confirmed that they improved their writing skills and grammatical accuracy because they had to review and revise their writing several times to match the content of their videos. Furthermore, participants expanded their vocabulary knowledge while searching for more appropriate vocabularies for their videos. Another interesting conclusion of the study was that, as they completed more activities, learners' perceptions became more positive, they grew more relaxed and comfortable with the tasks. Their motivation levels remained high and consistent throughout the course of the semester.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following implications and recommendations are presented.

1. Learners' consistent positive perceptions of the multimodal tasks suggest that incorporating multimodal composing into EFL writing instruction can provide students with a more engaging and effective learning experience.
2. Multimodal tasks in writing classes can serve as an effective approach to increase EFL learners' motivation and engagement.
3. The findings suggest that using various modes of communication to create meaning engages learners in a continuous process of reviewing and revising their texts, and consequently improving their writing skills. Instructors are encouraged to incorporate multimodal composing tasks into writing instruction.
4. The results revealed that students were very enthusiastic about publishing their multimodal essays on a YouTube channel. When learners think about a real audience, they usually pay more attention to grammatical accuracy and vocabulary choice. Therefore, teachers should encourage learners to publish their multimodal texts on appropriate platforms.
5. Teachers should provide learners with explicit instruction about integrating linguistic mode (text) with non-linguistic modes (e.g. audio, visuals) effectively.
6. It is also recommended that teachers give technical support to learners with lower level of digital literacy; this can help reduce their frustration.

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