

Please cite this paper as follows:

Karimi, V., Alipour, M., & Shafiee, S. (2024). Impact of Multimedia Technology Use in English Classes on the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Self-Concept. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 12 (48), 115-124. <http://doi.org/10.30495/IJFL.2023.707677>

Research Paper

Impact of Multimedia Technology Use in English Classes on the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Self-Concept

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Received: October 28, 2023

Accepted: December 26, 2023

Abstract

The present research aimed to determine the possible effect of multimedia use in English classes on the development of EFL learners' self-concept. For this purpose, 80 EFL students were selected through covariance sampling from among all the male high school English students in Ahvaz and were equally divided into an experimental group (n=40) and a control group (n=40). To collect the needed data for the aims of the study, Chen & Thompson's (2004) self-concept questionnaire was employed. Then, based on the quasi-experimental, pre-test, and post-test methods of the study, the elicited data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and covariance analysis. The obtained results showed that using multimedia in instruction has a significant impact on EFL learners' self-concept. These findings have some implications for teaching English as a foreign language. First, the use of up-to-date multimedia technology needs to be encouraged more than before in schools, language institutes, and universities. Second, teachers' interest, readiness, and expertise to use multimedia facilities need to be evaluated before appointing them as English language instructors. Finally, suitable grounds for the implementation of multimedia technology should be provided in educational settings.

Keywords: *Multimedia technology; EFL learners; self-concept*

تأثیر استفاده از فناوری چند رسانه ای در کلاس های انگلیسی بر تقویت خودپنداره زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی

پژوهش حاضر با هدف تعیین تأثیر احتمالی استفاده از چند رسانه ای در کلاس های زبان انگلیسی بر رشد خودپنداره زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی انجام شد. بدین منظور، ۸۰ دانش آموز زبان انگلیسی به روش نمونه گیری کوواریانس از بین کلیه دانش آموزان پسر دبیرستان انگلیسی شهر اهواز انتخاب و به طور مساوی به دو گروه آزمایش (۴۰ نفر) و کنترل (۴۰ نفر) تقسیم شدند. برای جمع آوری داده های مورد نیاز برای اهداف پژوهش از پرسشنامه خودپنداره چن و تامپسون (۲۰۰۴) استفاده شد. سپس بر اساس روش های شبه آزمایشی، پیش آزمون و پس آزمون، داده های استخراج شده با استفاده از آمار توصیفی و تحلیل کوواریانس مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. نتایج به دست آمده نشان داد که استفاده از چند رسانه ای در آموزش تأثیر معناداری بر خودپنداره زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی دارد. این یافته ها پیامدهایی برای آموزش زبان انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان خارجی دارد. اول، استفاده از فناوری چند رسانه ای به روز باید بیش از پیش در مدارس، موسسات زبان و دانشگاه ها تشویق شود. دوم، علاقه، آمادگی و تخصص معلمان برای استفاده از امکانات چند رسانه ای باید قبل از انتصاب آنها به عنوان مدرس زبان انگلیسی ارزیابی شود. در نهایت باید زمینه های مناسب برای اجرای فناوری چند رسانه ای در محیط های آموزشی فراهم شود.

کلمات کلیدی: فناوری چند رسانه ای، زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی، خودپنداره

Introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT), in Iran, has gained significant prominence and status in recent years due to the spread and development of English worldwide. As the number of English learners in Iran continues to increase, various teaching methods have been implemented to assess the effectiveness of the teaching process (Kapi et al., 2017). Multimedia has revolutionized the traditional classroom setting by offering innovative and engaging approaches to instruction (Jiang et al., 2018). One significant advantage of multimedia in education is its ability to captivate and sustain learners' attention. Traditional lectures and textbooks often struggle to sustain students' interest and involvement throughout the learning process (Kapi et al., 2017). Multimedia education offers interactive and personalized learning experiences, which can significantly impact EFL learners' motivation (Stevenson, 2021). These interactive elements provide immediate feedback, rewards, and a sense of achievement, which can boost learners' motivation and self-esteem (Jiang et al., 2018).

In addition, self-concept, or the perception and evaluation of oneself, plays a significant role in language learning and development (Leflot et al., 2010). In the EFL learning context, learners' self-concept can impact their motivation, engagement, and overall language proficiency (Tiedemann, 2000). However, the impact of multimedia on the self-concept of EFL learners can be both positive and negative, depending on various factors. Multimedia offers a non-threatening context for EFL learners to practice and hone their language skills (Tiedemann, 2000). For example, interactive language exercises or virtual simulations can allow learners to engage in real-life scenarios without the fear of making mistakes. As learners gain confidence in their abilities, their self-concept can be improved. Moreover, multimedia often offers various modalities for language input and output, such as listening to audio recordings, watching videos, and participating in interactive exercises (Leflot et al., 2010). This multimodal exposure can help learners develop different language skills simultaneously, leading to a more well-rounded self-concept as they perceive their progress in multiple areas. While multimedia can be engaging, it can also overwhelm or distract some learners (Tiedemann, 2000). Excessive use of multimedia without clear instructional objectives or guidance may lead to information overload, reduced focus, and decreased self-confidence (Tiedemann, 2000). It is important to strike a balance and ensure that multimedia resources are used purposefully to support language learning goals.

Theoretical Backgrounds

Self-concept

Academic Self-Concept (ASC) encompasses individuals' perceptions of their own academic abilities and overall competence within an educational setting (Shavelson et al., 1976). The concept of ASC is a component of the multidimensional and hierarchical self-concept model initially proposed by Shavelson et al. (1976) and later refined by Marsh and Martin (2011). According to this model, self-concept operates within a hierarchical structure, with global self-concept positioned at the highest level. It then branches out into two facets: ASC and non-ASC, further subdividing into specific domains or areas (Tiedemann, 2000). ASC develops and changes as individuals grow older. Tiedemann's research (2000) suggests that ASC begins developing in early childhood, around the ages of 3 to 5, influenced by parents, family, and early educators. However, other studies argue that ASC fully develops at around ages 7 or 8 when children start evaluating their own academic abilities based on feedback from parents, teachers, and peers (Leflot et al., 2010). By the age of 10 or 11, children begin comparing their academic abilities to those of their peers (Rubie-Davies, 2006). Various social factors play a role in shaping ASC, and developing a positive ASC has been found to have implications for behaviors and emotions in different areas of life, such as happiness, self-esteem, and anxiety levels (Marsh &

Martin, 2011). Given the vital effect of ASC on an individual's life, it is important for educational systems to prioritize fostering positive development of self-concept in children (Marsh & Martin, 2011). In this study, the intended self-concept inventory was developed by Chen & Thompson (2004). It is specifically designed to assess the self-concept of students at different levels of study. The inventory consists of 15 five-point Likert-Scale items that measure various aspects of school self-concept, including general self-concept, academic self-concept, and non-academic self-concept.

The Effectiveness of Multimedia on Self-concept

Chipangura (2019) carried out a research work to explore how the use of multimedia affects students' learning experience in mathematics. The study compared two groups of students: one group had regular exposure to multimedia in their classes, while the other group did not have access to multimedia. The researchers gathered data through surveys, where students provided information about their engagement levels, and also conducted observations and interviews with students and teachers to gain more insights into the integration of multimedia in mathematics education. The results of the study indicated significant differences between the two groups. Students who were exposed to multimedia reported higher levels of motivation, value for the tasks, confidence in their abilities, and self-regulation compared to their peers who did not have access to multimedia. Furthermore, the impact of multimedia varied based on the gender of the students. There were notable interactions between multimedia exposure, gender, and students' learning goals, task value, and self-efficacy. Males demonstrated greater engagement in classes with frequent multimedia use, while females showed lower engagement in classes without multimedia. These findings provide valuable information for educators, presenting potential strategies to enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics through the effective incorporation of multimedia.

Parvathy and Sawhney (2016) conducted an insightful research study that focused on the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in strengthening the self-concept of low-achieving students. The primary objective of the study was to examine the impact of labeling on these students' self-perception and, more specifically, to explore how ICT can be used in classrooms to enhance their self-representations. Throughout the study, the researchers discovered several noteworthy findings. One significant observation was the positive attitude displayed by the low-achieving students towards the use of technology and multimedia in their learning environment. The incorporation of ICT in the classroom proved to be an effective tool in fostering their engagement and motivation. ICT acted as a powerful enabler of learning for these students. It not only heightened their interest in the subject matter but also motivated them to actively explore and acquire new knowledge. The benefits of technology were manifold. For instance, it provided students with opportunities to learn at their own pace, catering to their individual learning styles. This personalized approach helped create an inclusive and supportive environment that promoted their self-confidence and self-efficacy. Furthermore, the study highlighted how integrating ICT into pedagogy could significantly benefit low-achieving students. By providing them with better learning experiences, it helped them overcome the challenges associated with their initial labels. As a result, their academic performance improved, challenging the preconceived notions that had been attached to them. In conclusion, the paper emphasized the need for educators to harness the potential of ICT in order to enhance students' self-concept and self-representations. The judicious use of technology in classrooms can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that empowers low-achieving students to excel academically. By leveraging the advantages of ICT, educators can challenge existing labels and provide students with the tools they need to succeed.



To summarize, Pellas' (2014) study investigated the influence of computer self-efficacy, metacognitive self-regulation, and self-esteem on students' engagement in online learning. The research emphasized the significance of fostering cognitive and emotional engagement while addressing challenges related to behavioral engagement. The findings also emphasized the importance of implementing effective instructional strategies in Second Life-based online courses, with a focus on sequencing and pacing, to create meaningful teaching and learning experiences.

RQ1. Does the use of multimedia technology in English language classes increase EFL learners' self-concept?

Ho1. Multimedia technology in English language course doesn't increase students' self-concept.

Methodology

Research Design

This study has adopted a quantitative quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design to investigate the impact of using multimedia technology in English language classes on EFL learners' self-concept. The design allows for the comparison of participants' scores before and after the implementation of multimedia technology, with assignment of participants into control and experimental groups.

It is worth noting that the target population for this study were the EFL learners studying in a high school in Iran. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants. The students who had enrolled in the intended high school and were assigned in different classes were selected as the participants of the study.

The independent variable, in this study, was the use of multimedia technology in English language classes. The dependent variables included learners' self-concept. Self-concept was evaluated using Chen and Thompson's Self-concept Questionnaire.

Sampling and Participants

The study recruited 80 participants, who were divided into two groups: the control group consisting of 40 participants, and the experimental group also consisting of 40 participants. Convenience sampling was employed to choose the participants from Seyed-o-Shohada High School in Ahvaz, Iran.

The control group consisted of 40 participants who received traditional English language instruction without the use of multimedia technology. The participants, in this group, were assigned to their respective classes (two classes, each being composed of 20 students) based on their existing enrollment in the language program. The control group included fourth-grade male EFL learners, ranging in age from 16 to 17 years.

The experimental group also consisted of 40 participants who received English language instruction incorporating multimedia technology. The participants in this group were assigned to classes (two classes, each being composed of 20 students) that utilized interactive videos, online resources, and language learning applications such as Eita, Shad, and Rubika as part of the instructional materials. The experimental group also included fourth-grade male participants, ranging in age from 16 to 17 years.

It is worth noting that the participants in both groups were studying in the same school enjoying the same level of educational facilities, had no prior experience with multimedia technology-based English language instruction, and did not suffer from any known learning disabilities or cognitive impairments that could significantly affect language learning outcomes. Moreover, the participants were checked regarding their language background and residence in

English-speaking countries. None of the students had traveled or lived in the mentioned countries and they did not enjoy significant levels of instruction in English (such as studying in language institutes). On the other hand, the participants were excluded from the study if they were absent for more than four consecutive sessions during the intervention period or did not complete both the pretest and posttest assessments.

Instrumentation

Chen and Thompson Inventory on Self-Concept

The self-concept inventory used in this study was developed by Chen & Thompson in 2004. It is specifically designed to assess the self-concept of students at different levels of study. This questionnaire is a self-report instrument, meaning that participants provide their own responses based on their perceptions of their self-concept.

The inventory consists of 15 items that measure various aspects of school self-concept, including general self-concept, academic self-concept, and non-academic self-concept. Each item is scored using a five-point Likert scale, allowing participants to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement.

The reliability of the inventory was examined by Marashian and Khorami (2012) using a sample of 36 students in Iran. They calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is a measure of internal consistency or the extent to which the items in the inventory correlate with each other. The reported Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this inventory was 0.93, indicating a high level of internal consistency and suggesting that the items in the inventory consistently measure the construct of self-concept. The high reliability coefficient of 0.93 suggests that the inventory demonstrates good internal consistency, meaning that the items are reliable indicators of the participants' self-concept. This indicates that the inventory is a robust and consistent tool for assessing self-concept in the context of the study.

Moreover, content validity was established by having a panel of experts, including a psychologist and educators (supervisor, advisor, and colleagues), review the inventory items. The experts assessed the relevance and representativeness of each item in measuring the different aspects of self-concept in the context of students' academic and non-academic experiences. Their feedback was used to refine and finalize the inventory, ensuring that it adequately covers the intended dimensions of self-concept.

Overall, this self-concept inventory developed by Chen & Thompson in 2004 is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing the self-concept of students at different levels of study. Its 15 items cover various aspects of school self-concept and its high Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93 suggests strong internal consistency.

Procedure

As mentioned before, this study has adopted a quantitative quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design. This design was chosen because it allows for the investigation of the impact of using multimedia technology in English language classes on EFL learners' motivation, performance, and self-concept. The target population for this study consisted of EFL learners studying in a high school in Iran. These learners were selected as the focus of the study due to their relevance and accessibility to the research context. Therefore, convenience sampling was used to select the participants.

The study involved two main groups: the experimental group and the control group. The participants in each group were assigned to the groups based on their average scores in the previous semesters. Prior to the implementation of the intended intervention, both the experimental and control groups underwent a pretest. This pretest aimed to establish a baseline measure of the participants' motivation, performance, and self-concept. The above-mentioned

tests and questionnaires were used in this regard. Then, the intended intervention was implemented.

Considering the control group, the English language class began with a brief introduction and a warm-up activity to engage the students and create a positive learning atmosphere. Then, the teacher would deliver the lesson using traditional instructional methods, such as lectures, textbooks, and written exercises. The focus was on grammar rules, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The students were given practice activities, which included completing worksheets, answering questions from the textbook, or engaging in pair or group discussions.

In the experimental group, similar to the control group, the English language class would begin with a brief introduction and a warm-up activity to create a positive learning environment. However, the teacher incorporated multimedia technology into the lesson. The treatment included showing videos related to the topic, using interactive software or apps for language practice, and utilizing digital resources for reading or listening activities. In fact, teachers utilized interactive videos, online resources, and language learning applications such as Eita, Shad, and Rubika as part of the instructional materials. Moreover, the students actively engaged with the multimedia technology by participating in interactive exercises, simulations, or virtual language learning games. The teacher encouraged collaborative learning by assigning group projects or activities that require students to work together using multimedia tools.

Throughout the intervention in both the control and experimental groups, the teachers maintained a supportive and encouraging learning environment. They addressed individual student needs, provided guidance, and facilitated class discussions to promote active engagement and learning. Moreover, regular informal oral or written assessments and feedback were provided to help the teacher track the students' progress and make adjustments to the instructional approach.

After a designated period of instruction, both groups were administered to a posttest (replication of the pretests). The posttest aimed to measure any changes in motivation, performance, and self-concept that may have resulted from the use of multimedia technology. The posttest was conducted under similar conditions to the pretest, ensuring consistency in the assessment process.

The data collected from the pretest and posttest were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. A comparative analysis between the experimental and control groups was conducted to determine the impact of using multimedia technology on learners' motivation, performance, and self-concept.

Throughout the study, ethical considerations were prioritized. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their privacy and anonymity were protected.

Data Analysis

The present research work aimed to explore the effects of using multimedia technology in English language classes on EFL learners' motivation, performance, and self-concept. The SPSS 21 software was used to analyze the collected data. To start with, frequency and descriptive analyses were employed to obtain some preliminary findings concerning the variables and participants. Subsequently, some analyses of covariance were conducted to address the research questions. The findings of this research can contribute to a better understanding of the impact of multimedia technology in improving EFL learners' motivation, performance, and self-concept. The results can be valuable for policymakers, educators, and language teachers in their efforts to improve the quality of language teaching in Iran.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental and Control Groups

Groups	Frequency	Percentage	Compression percentage
Experimental group	40	50	50
Control Group	40	50	100
Total	80	100	

Figure 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental and Control Groups



As can be seen in Table 1, the total sample of language learners was 80, of which 50% were in the experimental group and 50% in the experimental group.

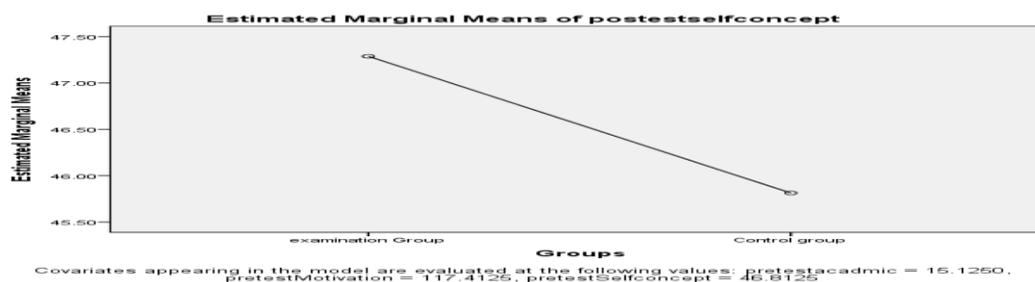
RQ1. Does the use of multimedia technology in English language classes increase EFL learners' self-concept?

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Table 2

The Results of Covariance Analysis on Average Scores Self-concept.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	1142.839 ^a	2	571.420	71.782	.000	.651	143.563	1.000
Intercept	268.824	1	268.824	33.770	.000	.305	33.770	1.000
pre-testSelfconcept	1106.389	1	1106.389	138.984	.000	.643	138.984	1.000
Groups	42.990	1	42.990	5.400	.023	.066	5.400	.631
Error	612.961	77	7.961					
Total	175108.000	80						
Corrected Total	1755.800	79						



As seen in Table 2 the effect of an independent variable of multimedia training method on the self-concept of learners in Ahvaz after removing the effect of pre-test ($F = 5.40$) and $P = 0.023$ is significant. The effect of the Partial Eta Squared is 0.066, indicating that the implementation of multimedia training method explains about 7% of the variance of increasing self-concept that is not explained by other variables. These results indicate that the implementation of multimedia training method has been effective on self-concept in Ahvaz. Therefore, the hypothesis of zero (H_0) is rejected and the research hypothesis (H_1) is approved.

Discussion

Based on the provided hypothesis (H_0) that stated "The use of multimedia technology in English language classes does not develop EFL learners' self-concept," the findings obtained from the statistical analyses indicated a significant effect of multimedia instruction on EFL learners' self-concept, even after controlling for the pre-test effect. The Partial Eta Squared value of 0.066 suggested that the application of multimedia explained approximately 7% of the variance in increasing self-concept, which is not accounted for by other variables. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, indicating that the use of multimedia technology has been effective in developing learners' self-concept.

The findings of the current study align with the research conducted by Chipangura (2019), Parvathy and Sawhney (2016), Pellas (2014), and Netiga and Rogano (2016), which also reported positive effects of multimedia technology on learners' self-concept. These studies provide additional support and corroborate the notion that multimedia instruction can contribute to the development of positive self-perception among language learners. Chipangura's (2019) study, for instance, explored the impact of multimedia instruction on self-concept in the context of mathematics education. The findings indicated that learners who engaged with multimedia resources and interactive activities demonstrated increased self-confidence and a stronger belief in their mathematical abilities. This parallels the current study's results, which suggest that multimedia technology can enhance learners' self-concept in the English language learning domain. Similarly, Parvathy and Sawhney (2016) conducted a study examining the effect of multimedia-based instruction on the self-concept of science students. Their findings revealed that the use of multimedia resources positively influenced students' self-concept, particularly in terms of perceived competence and achievement. This parallels the findings of the current work, highlighting the consistent positive impact of multimedia technology on learners' self-perception across different subject areas.

Pellas (2014) investigated the role of multimedia in developing learners' self-concept in the context of distance education. The study reported that multimedia-supported instruction enhanced learners' self-concept by providing them with a sense of control, autonomy, and active engagement in the learning process. This aligns with the current study's findings, which emphasize the role of multimedia in creating an engaging and interactive learning environment that positively impacts learners' self-concept.

Additionally, Netiga and Rogano (2016) explored the influence of multimedia technology on self-concept and motivation in language learning among university students. Their findings indicated that multimedia instruction had a positive effect on learners' self-concept and enhanced their motivation to learn the language. This supports the current study's results, highlighting the beneficial impact of multimedia on learners' self-perception in the English language learning context.

Overall, the comparison of the findings of the current study with the mentioned studies indicates a consistent pattern of positive effects of multimedia technology on learners' self-



concept across different educational contexts and subject areas. These studies collectively suggest that multimedia instruction can enhance learners' self-confidence, perceived competence, and motivation, leading to a more positive self-perception in various domains of education. The convergence of these findings highlights the potential of multimedia technology as a valuable tool for promoting positive self-concept and empowering learners in their educational journey.

Conclusion

The utilization of multimedia resources has proven to be a valuable tool in enhancing the overall language performance and fostering a positive self-concept among EFL learners in Iran. The findings presented above indicate that multimedia lessons have the potential to alleviate learner anxiety and enhance learners' self-concept. The availability of technical equipment allows learners to experience a relaxed and dynamic learning environment.

The working of the impact of multimedia technology on EFL learners' self-concept contributes valuable insights into learners' perceptions of themselves as language learners. The research work indicates that the application of multimedia technology in English language classes may positively influence EFL learners' self-concept, enhancing their confidence, belief in their abilities, and overall self-image. By incorporating multimedia resources that facilitate self-reflection, self-assessment, and self-expression, educators can empower learners to develop a positive self-concept and foster a growth mindset towards language learning. This, in turn, can contribute to greater motivation and performance outcomes.

Implications for Self-Concept Development

The working of the impact of multimedia technology on EFL learners' self-concept contributes valuable insights into learners' perceptions of themselves as language learners. The research work indicates that the application of multimedia technology in English language classes may positively influence EFL learners' self-concept, enhancing their confidence, belief in their abilities, and overall self-image. By incorporating multimedia resources that facilitate self-reflection, self-assessment, and self-expression, educators can empower learners to develop a positive self-concept and foster a growth mindset towards language learning. This, in turn, can contribute to greater motivation and performance outcomes.

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