

VISUALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

by

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the effectiveness of visuals in the language classroom. Two types of visual aids commonly used in the language classroom, video and still pictures, are used to elicit narratives from L2 English speakers, and these narratives are subsequently compared.

The data come from eleven international students from a university English Language Program, who voluntarily participated in two separate 15-minute interviews. In each interview session, they were shown either a series of pictures or a video, both depicting a story. Upon completion of the presentation of each visual, participants were asked a prompt question and their narration of the events portrayed in the visuals recorded.

The narratives were transcribed and analyzed in order to test (1) if still pictures and video are equally effective in eliciting elaboration in the narratives, defined in this case, as the number of new referents introduced and the number of adjective and verb types produced; and (2) if exposure to still pictures and video elicit narrations of similar length.

Both kinds of visuals stimulated learners to create narratives and elaborate on what had been shown in them. The video task elicited narratives roughly 10% longer than the picture task in regards to the raw number of words. When linguistic factors were compared, participants introduced new referents at comparable rates in both tasks while they employed 10% more verb types in the video task. Additionally, the series of still pictures prompted participants to employ a much higher number of adjective types. These observations suggest that a series of still pictures are an effective alternative for video for eliciting narratives. This study provides support for the

use of still pictures as an equivalent to videos in situations where videos are less accessible in language classrooms (due to lack of technological access).

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii
Dedication.....	x
Chapter 1 – Introduction .....	1
1.1 Visuals in the Foreign Language Classroom .....	1
Chapter 2 – Literature Review.....	5
2.1 Video in the Language Instruction.....	7
2.2 Pictures in Language Instruction .....	10
Chapter 3 -- Methodology.....	16
3.1 Materials Design.....	16
3.1.1 Picture .....	16
3.1.2 Video.....	17
3.2 Participants.....	18
3.3 Data Collection/Elicitation of Narratives .....	19
3.4 Selection and Transcription of Data .....	21
3.5 Length of Narrative.....	21
3.6 Linguistic Factors Considered in Analysis .....	21
3.6.1 Adjective Use.....	22
3.6.2 Introduction of New Referents.....	22
3.6.3 Verb Type Use .....	23
Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion.....	25
4. 1. Length of Narrative.....	28
4.2 Elaboration of Narrative: Introduction of New Referents .....	29
4.3 Elaboration of Narratives: Adjective Types .....	31
4.4 Elaboration of Narrative: Verb Types .....	33
4.3 Discussion.....	37
4.4 Implications for Language Instruction.....	38
4.5 Limitation of Study.....	42

4.6 Avenues for Future Research.....	42
References.....	44
Appendix A: Visual Evaluation Criteria.....	46
Appendix B: Transcription Conventions .....	48
Appendix C: Verb Types .....	49

## List of Tables

Table 1 Length of Narrative for Task (P) and (V).....	28
Table 2 Number of New Referents .....	30
Table 3 Ratio of Words Produced to Referents Introduced.....	31
Table 4 Distribution of Adjectives.....	32
Table 5 Ratio of Words Produced to Adjectives Introduced .....	33
Table 6 Number of verb types .....	34
Table 7a Verb Types in Picture Task.....	35
Table 7b Verb Types in Video Task.....	36

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research to my parents, Sayed Nasir Zewary and Homa Zewary, and my uncle, Sayed Khabir Zewary, who deserve the credit for inspiring me.

# **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

## **1.1 Visuals in the Foreign Language Classroom**

Textbooks are commonly used in language classrooms in order to create learning conditions and language practice. Since textbooks are very much pre-determined and structured for a particular socio-cultural context, textbooks may need adapting, justifying, and supplementing. Teachers may need to use visuals to provide authentic material (e.g. sample of target language lifestyle, behavior, and places) about the target language to facilitate language practice so that learners experience contextualized situations. Multiple exposure to a variety of situations through visuals assist learners to store examples of real-life language use. Teachers may adopt visuals to create communication conditions and enrich the classroom situation in order to make learning context- and culture-specific. Visuals may be enjoyable for students because visuals stimulate and motivate students' interest in the target language. Visuals provide rich contextual examples of target language situations and culture and support a variety of practices in language teaching. Students with different linguistic proficiency may benefit from the use of visuals as it has been determined that visuals activate previous life experiences in learners developing interlanguage so that the learner may associate and add meaning to such experiences (Canning-Wilson 2000, 2001). Television and the Internet are key sources for providing video visuals while print media provide an extensive variety of images from which both language teachers and students may benefit. Because of these culturally rooted sources, visuals add authenticity for language input. Visuals may also simplify and clarify language points.

In language learning and teaching, visuals, particularly video, are often seen to be an effective tool to provide conditions for familiarizing learners with the target culture. Videos are not only useful for listening exercises, but also to activate and connect previously stored experiences to the new material. Video provides authentic raw material to enhance learner's critical thinking and awareness through providing rich contextual examples of input and language use. Through videos, learners may compare and contrast societal and cultural values of their home language and target language. The sociolinguistic markers available from context help learners relate them to familiar experiences within their L1. Video allows students access to nonverbal language features. Videos may be shown in computer-aided learning labs or multimedia classrooms. However, not very many developing countries have such facilities. Nevertheless, pictures are easily accessible in most countries so that teachers may integrate them in their instruction. It is important to determine if pictures are equally effective as video as an alternative supplemental teaching tool in situations where videos are difficult or impossible to use.

Pictures also provide authentic input through visualization of the target culture and encourage oral and written practice. Pictures, like video, may create awareness of cross-cultural similarities and differences so that learners construct contextual and cultural attitudes. Pictures combine home language and target language objects, concepts, and experiences. Integrating pictures in language input may lower anxiety level and make students more receptive to classroom linguistic input by looking at situational scenes. In addition, teachers can create learning conditions by questioning students about the pictures wherein the level of proficiency determines the types of responses given. Questioning may facilitate acquisition of grammatical structures as well as the vocabulary referenced in the content of pictures (e.g. naming and

describing objects). Pictures may be used to provide a background for interaction. Description is one of the most common instructional activities with pictures. Beyond beginning level, the narration of story events with pictures facilitates oral and written language practice. Research has shown that providing learners with an advanced organizer (e.g. picture), prior to the listening or reading of a passage, helps learners to comprehend that passage (Arey, 1999; Herron, Hanley & Cole, 1995; Hodapp, 1978; Mueller, 1980; Rossiter, 2008; Canning-Wilson, 2001). Not only do pictures provide a situational context for developing vocabulary and language comprehension, it is believed that learners store information better when it is tied to mental images, and that some learning styles may receive exceptional benefits from visualization (Sintara, 1981). Pictures may stimulate interesting and meaningful practice in the vocabulary and structure of language. Pictures help learners strengthen and organize their verbal recall.

The effect of both pictures and video in aiding learners in the retention and comprehension of information is well-established (Abraham, 2007; Akhtar, 1999; Arey, 1993; Benson, 1997; Canning-Wilson, 2001; Dwyer, 1968; Herron, Secules & Lisa, 1995; Ikeguchi, 1997; Mueller, 1980; Rossiter, 2008; Weyers, 1999). Yet, until now (a) experimental studies focus on reading comprehension and listening rather than oral narration/production; (b) most studies have been conducted with one type of visual compared to text or audio, and it has not been determined how the type of visual affects oral narrative production. In particular, the efficacy of still pictures and video in eliciting oral narrative have not been compared in order to determine whether pictures function as an effective alternative in language classrooms where video is not very accessible for technological reasons. This experiment will therefore compare the language elicited by different types of visual, specifically, if still pictures and video elicit oral narrative of equal length and complexity. The implications of this research will be applicable in

developing countries where dynamic visuals (i.e. video) are not as accessible as still visuals (i.e. pictures) are.

Chapter 2 will discuss previous research on the use of visuals as an instructional tool in the language classroom and where the current experiment may fit within that body of work.

Chapter 3 will elaborate on the methodology of the current study and the reasons for its design, and present the hypotheses. The results and discussion will be presented in Chapter 4 before continuing with implications for teaching and future research possibilities.

## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Visuals are language teaching materials that can be used at all levels of language instruction. Visual aids include a wide range of materials such as posters, wall charts, pictures, flashcards, video (including TV, film, video podcasts, and YouTube clips), and slides. Still pictures are a rich and often easily accessible resource in the language classroom since they can easily be obtained from magazines, newspapers, catalogs, posters, photos, and advertisements. Visuals carry many valuable extra-linguistic clues that provide examples from different contexts and situations. The philosopher Aristotle stated, “Thinking without image is impossible” (cited in Benson, 1997). Similarly, Canning Wilson (2001) points out, “we see before we think”. Researchers have reported that visuals are beneficial in providing natural, rich content examples of target language that facilitate language learners’ developing comprehension (Canning Wilson, 2001; Stein, Brock, and Ballard, 1987; Tuttle, 1975; Valiquette, et al., 2006). The availability of visual elements for teaching and learning is increasing as image integration with textbooks, classroom material, instructional manuals, computer, and media broadens (Benson, 1997).

Visual cues are important since they provide a platform for learner understanding. Picture stories are often used by researchers to elicit language samples from second language learners (e.g. Rossiter, et al., 2008). Canning Wilson (2001) presents an example to illustrate the importance of visual input in second language learning: “if you were asked to count the windows in your home, would you be more apt to take a mental picture of the room before counting?” She explains that this is because humans have the ability to form mental pictures. She structured a study to measure how visual images aid in a particular area of second language learning. In this

case, when students hear a word, they create a mental picture of the object or letters of the word. Visuals leave an instant picture of an object or event on learners' memories that can be processed. In order to explain the impact of visuals, Canning Wilson (2001) presents a comprehension system for the processing of a visual image: first, a learner recognizes and produces a mental picture. Second, a learner goes through an analytic period during which the learner separates, identifies, and compares components. Finally, the learner combines components and generalizes information based on input. The outcome is the learner's production and application.

The use of visuals in the foreign language classroom has been the subject of numerous studies such as Hodapp (1978), Mueller (1980), Arey (1993), Herron, Morris, and Curtis (1995), Ikeguchi (1997), Weyers (1999), Canning-Wilson (2001), Valiquette, Gerin-Lajoie, and Sutton (2006), Rossiter, Derwing, and Jones (2008), and Wagner (2010), with emphasis placed on visuals' benefits and their effectiveness in increasing comprehension and production. These studies investigated the effects of visuals on learners over a period of time such as a semester or a week. Each study evaluated the effect of only one type of visual either on production or comprehension (mostly listening). Additionally, Baltova (1994), Shin (1998), and Sueyoshi (2005) investigated the effect of video versus audio-only with college students. However, to date, there is no research that compares the effectiveness of pictures and video in eliciting learner's oral production. In particular, the effect of still pictures or video on increasing elaboration in learners' free oral narratives has not been researched. Hence, the present study is designed to compare these two types of visual aids to determine if they have equal impact on language production, in particular, length and complexity.



## 2.1 Video in the Language Instruction

Video, as an instructional medium to teach language, has been defined as the “selection and sequence of messages in an audio-visual context” (Canning-Wilson, 2001). Video adds authenticity to a task, situation, or language input (Canning-Wilson, 2001). Videos include rich extra-linguistic and cultural features such as gesture, eye contact, and facial expression that convey meaning, which are helpful for learners to observe in the context of target language use. Video may provide more environmental stimuli (i.e. contextual clues) that can assist learners to generate prediction and activate background knowledge (Canning-Wilson, 2001).

Wagner (2010) investigated the effect that the non-verbal information in a video has on an ESL learner’s listening test performance. He found that video contributes to a learner’s superior performance in testing. Students listened to a selection with or without accompanying video and then responded to questions. Those students exposed to video showed a 6.5% higher score on the listening post-test than the group not presented with video. The results support the notion that the visual components of video contribute to increased listening comprehension.

Balatova (1994), Shin (1998), and Sueyoshi (2005) also conclude that participants in their studies who were presented with video scored significantly higher than those exposed to audio only. Balatova (1994) points out that scenes supported by action and/or body language were considered easier to understand by language learners. Scenes with long conversation turns, without visuals, were considered more difficult. This illustrates that visual cues are important since they facilitate understanding. The study also concludes that experimental conditions without visuals were less successful in maintaining interest and attention in listening. The study adds to the body of literature that proposes visuals as advanced organizers which help learners to improve comprehension and retention of information (Canning-Wilson, 2001). Canning Wilson

(2001) posits that students' comprehension of video may be due to the visual clues available in video. She claims that use of pictures, mental images, figures, cartoons, charts, colors, or any other visual hints used to help one see and interpret meaning benefits learners by helping to clarify and simplify the message and/or language point. Video can help enhance clarity and give meaning to a text; however, Balatova (1994) points out that video should be shown in segments and not a whole. The attention span of students is lowered when watching video: after four minutes, distraction spreads and students lose concentration after six minutes.

Ikeguchi (1997) states that the outstanding feature of video is its ability to present a complete communication situation. Ikeguchi's (1997) research outlines the usefulness of video in language teaching. She found that, firstly, visual aspects help activate previous knowledge. Secondly, sociolinguistic markers available in the video's context help students relate L2 concepts to their L1 (familiar) knowledge. Video also allows students access to nonverbal language and culture. Finally, video is quickly retainable. Ikeguchi (1997) specifically focused her research on how the use of video increased students' comprehension of text. However, the study did not include equal conditions to test the effectiveness of visuals. The set-up for her study was as follows:

Ninety-three college students, in three groups of 31, were randomly selected from first year college classes. The participants were given two tests using a reading passage from a college text with accompanying video material. The reading passage was measured for its difficulty on a scale from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating the easiest to read. The text used scored a 65 on this scale (Ikeguchi, 1997, p 152). Two experiments were administered for two groups of students. In the first stage, students were given text with no visual and were then given a 15-item written test of recall and comprehension on print. It took the fastest student 10 minutes to

complete all the questions. In the second stage, students watched a video segment and similar questions of recall and comprehension were read aloud by the teacher. It took the fastest student 5 minutes to complete all the test items.

Contrary to expectations, the results on the test scores were almost the same for each group (i.e. 10.8 for the first task and 10.9 for the second task). The similar test scores may be due to the second test being oral and students needing to understand the questions being read to them. However, the length differed from 10 minutes for the first task to 5 minutes for the second one.

It is important to notice that Ikeguchi (1997) did not study similar experimental conditions (e.g. the use of aural method in the second test) to test the effectiveness of visuals which may have influenced her results. Thus, it would therefore be useful to test these findings with similar experimental conditions in order to compare the effectiveness of visuals.

Video as a visual medium for language instruction has been shown to affect a learner's comprehension. It has also been confirmed that video provides contextual clues about the target language. However, in many (developing) countries video would not be accessible because teachers and learners may have technological barriers to displaying videos. Therefore, the question arises as to whether still pictures could function as an effective alternative to video in language instruction and whether pictures facilitate equivalent comprehension and production of the L2.

## **2.2 Pictures in Language Instruction**

According to Canning-Wilson (2001), pictures may facilitate learning, help learners predict and infer information, enhance clarity, and give meaning to text. Stein, et al. (1987) state that visual illustrations are frequently used with learners to help them understand confusing information. They believe that images facilitate learning in that they help learners relate new ideas to previous experiences and also provide an additional way to represent verbal relationships. It has also been postulated that pictures help teachers manipulate situations and add authenticity to the language learning environment (Canning-Wilson, 2001). In Canning-Wilson's (2001) study, one hundred forty-five female students of intermediate level were asked to write an essay about a technical item (e.g. a blender). These students were divided in two groups: one group was provided a visual reference with written task instructions while a second group received only the written task instructions. The study was designed to determine whether or not visuals prompted extended content in writing. The data revealed that 93% of the candidates who were given the prompt with visual were able to describe the blender in detailed sentences while 52% of those with no visual stimulus wrote simple sentences about basic elements of the blender. The essays from the students who were provided with a visual described the individual parts of the blender and the whole body with more details and grammatical and lexical accuracy than did those of the second group. It was concluded that visuals positively affect the production capability of nonnative learners of English regardless of language background.

Visuals are believed to stimulate student's creative elaboration and help learners in creating extended utterances (Tuttle, 1975). Tuttle (1975) also posits that visual material adds excitement and interest to the language classroom as students associate their background

knowledge with trying to produce accurate structure in their second language. Visuals are important for learning and instruction as students can match pictures to narration, answer true-false questions based on visuals, select pictures in response to questions, ask questions, re-state an action in another tense, arrange pictures in sequence, compare or contrast items in two pictures and explain why a certain situation exists in a picture by speculating about facts and developments outside of the situation shown (Tuttle, 1975)

It is significant to understand how still pictures are useful for learning a particular structure or feature of language and the usefulness of visual intervention in language teaching. Valiquette, Lajoie, and Sutton (2006) explored the teaching of syntactic structures to a developmentally delayed 11-year French child “Mary” using an elicitation task. A pre-test and post-test were designed to study the results of their visual intervention. The pre-test showed that Mary could only produce multi-word utterances. She lacked personal pronouns and function words, and had difficulty comprehending complete sentences. Pre-test analysis showed that she needed to learn the appropriate use of subject and object pronouns. A teaching program where visuals represented different arguments of a sentence was conducted in order to teach her the placement and order of sentence elements.

Mary was taught during 12 sessions lasting 45 minutes each. Each session was preceded by a pre-test and followed by a post-test. The patterns of SVO and SOV were illustrated by the movement of objects, including action pictures and a game board, in the teaching program. Sentence word order (e.g. Subject, Verb, Object) was chosen since Mary had difficulty positioning the subject and object pronouns. Components were color-coded according to their grammatical category. Pre-test and post-test results were obtained by elicitation tasks consisting of describing action pictures of naturalistic environments (e.g. what is the girl in the picture

doing?). During the post-test, samples were collected from Mary making an anniversary card. She had used the target structure (pronoun) only 3% of the time on the pre-test, while on the post-test, her utterances contained pronouns 33% of the time, 86% of which were grammatical and were developed structures. Moreover, incomplete structures dropped from 43% to 3% while one-word utterances (i.e. use of verb only) decreased from 20% to 3%. The post-test revealed that complete sentence structures (e.g. SVO, SOV) increased from 28% to 58%. Mary's speech still had 14% subject omission and transformation (formerly 64%). Valiquette, et al.'s (2006) results show that teaching with visual aids may result in an increase in production of a particular target structure. Moreover, picture intervention increased Mary's sentence production/elaboration (i.e. one-word utterances decreased in favor of multi-word utterances). Mary began to elaborate and produce complete grammatical sentences. More experiments should add to this body of research in order to measure if similar results are obtained for other grammatical feature and if speakers without developmental delays exhibit similar results in improved elaboration.

Pictures are useful learning tools that assist learners with recall and comprehension of the content of the visual. Mueller (1980) hypothesized that visuals that provide contextual cues for a listening passage enhance learner's comprehension. This study was unlike Ikeguchi's (1997) design (in which different conditions were used for measuring the effect of visuals). Participants in Mueller's (1980) study were exposed to texts with or without visuals and were then tested using the same instrument (a free-recall written summary of the listening passage immediately following its delivery). Visuals were presented either before or after the presentation of the passage or no visuals were used. Participants were college students studying German. The materials used included contextual visuals and a 300-word taped interview. The participants

listened to the interview once and the picture was projected for 30 seconds (either before or after their listening experience) if they were selected for the groups using the visual image. The results showed that the visual had a significant impact on the students' ability to recall facts, or to make logical inferences. Students who were presented with the visual before scored significantly better than the other groups, but those who received the visuals after still scored significantly higher than those who were not exposed to visuals at all. This study suggests that seeing visuals enhances comprehension and recall. Also, visuals assist learners to produce higher number of propositions which were caused by the visuals to be retained. As a conclusion, Mueller (1980) posits that a visual serves as an advanced organizer activating relevant elements of memory, preventing students from formulating wrong conclusions, helping them to guess unfamiliar words, and helping to increase students' interest in paying attention. In short, "visuals affect the process of comprehension as well as what (content) is comprehended" (Mueller, 1980: p. 340).

Pictures are helpful for data collection and in analyzing learner's speech since visual aids facilitate learners to elaborate on their utterances and produce realistic and authentic samples of their speaking proficiency (Rossiter, Derwing, and Jones, 2008). Their research revealed that there may be problems with using visuals that needs to be addressed. They recommend enhancing the picture through coloring, eliminating confusing details, adding elements for clarification, and ensuring the pictures are consistent throughout (e.g. clothing, characters). They suggested enhancement and evaluation of pictures before administering experiments and teaching based on 100 L2 participants' narratives from five different stories. After analysis of the transcripts, they developed guidelines (See Appendix A) for selecting and creating effective picture stories for L2 research. Their suggestions help eliminate confusing visual elements so that participants may focus on the linguistic demands of the story. These guidelines applied when

selecting both visuals for the current research. They further suggest that pictures should be chosen in accordance with the type of language samples that the stories are used to elicit, the purpose of the study, and the proficiency and background of the L2 participants. Their research deals with issues that arise directly from the visual aspect of the picture stories rather than comparing types of visuals.

In conclusion, visuals should be integrated in language teaching material (Benson, 1997). Language learners with different proficiency levels may benefit from visuals available in the language textbooks and outside the classroom since visuals strengthen comprehension. Visuals help learners retain a mental image of a situation to recall information. Researchers have used visuals to elicit language samples and to test comprehension of learners. The literature on the use of visuals illustrates that visuals increase written production and comprehension test scores for language learners as visuals facilitate understanding. However, the types of visuals when used for oral language production and instruction have not been compared. This experiment will compare two types of visuals, still pictures and video, to analyze how learners may benefit from different types of visuals. In particular, this study seeks to measure if exposure to still pictures and video elicit narrations of similar length and complexity.

This experiment hypothesizes that 1) still pictures and video are equally effective in eliciting narratives of equal length and that 2) exposure to still pictures and video elicit oral narrations of similar complexity. If supported, this study will provide justification for the use of still pictures as an equivalent to videos in situations where videos are less accessible, for technological reasons, in the foreign language classrooms. It is assumed that still picture and video will elicit equally long and elaborate oral narratives since they both include contextual and cultural clues about the target language and culture. The main difference is that video is dynamic



with extensive motion while pictures are static and more presentational in nature. Thus, this experiment will compare participants' oral narratives elicited after watching visuals to compare the effect of dynamic visual (video) and a static series of still pictures, both depicting stories.

## Chapter 3 -- Methodology

This experiment focuses on the efficacy of two types of visual aids by comparing the effects of still pictures and video on increasing elaboration in learners' free oral production. In order to analyze if still pictures and video elicit language of equal length and complexity, two elicitation sessions with a series of story pictures or a video clip were conducted during which students' oral narrations were audio- and video-recorded.

### 3.1 Materials Design

#### 3.1.1 Picture

The episode, "New Apartment" from *New Interchange 2* (Richards, Hull, and Proctor, 2004) was selected for conversion to a series of still images for this experiment. The episode was chosen because the textbook for which the video is designed to accompany is geared toward advanced-level students and the episode portrays a narrative. The video was played in VLC player (free downloadable software: <http://vlcplayers.org/download-vlc/?campaign=google-ppc>) and snap shots of frames which represented the story in an abbreviated manner were selected. Forty eight screen caps were selected. The images were then imported into the Photoshop program (free downloadable software: <http://gofree.com/download/Windows-Software/Graphic-Design/gimp.php?gclid=CKuhxYD77qYCFQPsKgod6xj6BA>) in order to change the color of the images to black and white. The color was removed in order to control for how participants might interpret colors differently. The images' colors were changed to black and white as they are

considered “neutral” (Su and Ma, 2010) colors. In their comparison of color usage/perception in different cultures, Bortoli and Maroto (2001) posit that all languages have designations for black and white. They studied how color can be a critical factor in communication and how it is perceived in various cultures. Bortoli and Maroto (2001) posit that every country and culture attaches certain symbolic values to color. However, black and white are among the colors that are associated with relatively similar meanings cross-culturally (e.g. black is associated with “death” or “ceremony” and white represents “clean” and “purity”) (Bortoli and Maroto, 2001).

The next step was to import the entire set of images into Vegas Video, an editing program (free downloadable software: <http://sony-vegas-video.en.softonic.com/>). Each image was set to display for five seconds. The display of the complete set of images took four minutes (as recommended given that the learners get distracted after four minutes and students lose concentration after six minutes (Balatova (1994)). The sequence was exported out of Vegas Video as an MP4 so that the video could not be edited after exporting.

### **3.1.2 Video**

In order to find a video clip that would match the level of the participants in this study and the duration of the picture presentation, educational clips made for teaching language were reviewed. “A thousand words – short film” (Chung, 2009) was chosen because the clip depicted a narrative and was created for foreign language teaching purposes. In addition, this video was comparable with the picture sequence in color (i.e. black and white) and length (i.e. four minutes).

Both of these source materials are under Creative Common License so they could be used for educational purposes without permission from the author/creator. The visuals did not include voices or subtitles in order to avoid providing linguistic cues.

### **3.2 Participants**

Students in advanced classes were chosen because they are capable of creating extended utterances. According to the ACTFL guidelines, advanced speakers are capable of narrating with detail, and using precise vocabulary (Sanders, Lowe, Miles, & Swender, 1999). The current study's participants included international undergraduate students who were studying in the English Language Program (ELP) as part of an entrance requirement at Kansas State University. ELP advanced classes (i.e. after passing this level, students may enroll in university classes) were chosen. Students are placed in advanced classes based on their English Proficiency Test (EPT) score. The EPT, an English language test designed by the ELP, has been correlated with the TOEFL, which is published by Education Testing Services. In addition, students must score at least 70% on their achievement tests on all skills in order to place in advanced classes. That means, students receive two chances to place at the advanced level: If a student passes one of the tests, he/she will be placed in an advanced class. The data does not equate necessarily with advanced level proficiency in ACTFL standards.

During classroom visits, the researcher spoke briefly about the nature of the research as part of thesis research and that participants would be shown a series of images or video and asked to narrate the story. They were informed that their narrations would be recorded and that the data collection would occur in a three week period and each one would participate for approximately 15 minutes in each session for a total of 30 minutes. Upon completion of the two

sessions, students would receive credit for an ungraded out-of-class assignment required in one of their ELP classes (prior arrangements had been made with ELP administration). Seventeen students volunteered to participate in this study. It was noticed during the stage of process that the data was more typical of ACTFL intermediate speech.

### **3.3 Data Collection/Elicitation of Narratives**

Data collection included two facilitators. One facilitator (the researcher) introduced the activity, asked for recording permission, and presented the visual, and the next facilitator asked a prompt question to elicit the narration. The second facilitator was used in order to have participants structure and narrate the story for an uninformed audience.

Upon arrival of the participants, each was asked to read information regarding the experiment and to sign informed consent. In addition, this information was communicated orally to make sure the participants understood. Participant's attention requirements were also communicated before the visuals were presented. The participants were informed that they would narrate for the second facilitator and that the second facilitator had not seen the visuals previously. The participants then participated in the first of two sessions (i.e. watching either the picture sequence or the video). Two weeks later, they returned for their second session and narrated the second visual. After that session, participants received a debriefing.

All participants were shown the same sequence of pictures and video, but the order of presentation varied across participants. For instance, if a participant received pictures in the first session; in the second session, the video was shown. The visual was selected randomly (e.g. the first participant received the pictures, the second received the video, the third received the video,

the fourth received the pictures). In the second session, careful attention was paid to have each participant narrate from the other visual in order to have equal number of participants for both tasks so that the data would be comparable for analysis. There was a two-week gap between the first and the second session in order to decrease the influence of the first task on the second one.

For the presentation of the visuals, the same procedure was followed. The visual material (i.e. either pictures or video) was projected on a TV through a laptop. The presentation of the visual material took approximately 4-6 minutes for each session. Participants were not allowed to take notes during the presentation/projection so that their narration would be limited to what they observed and remembered or decided to include in their narration. Participants did not have access to the visuals after the time allotted for viewing, and they were not provided time to prepare or brainstorm ideas. Upon completion of the presentation of the visuals, the participant was told he/she would narrate the story for the other facilitator. The first facilitator left the room. The second facilitator arrived in the room and asked the participant a prompt question (e.g. You have seen a series of images. Can you tell me about the story in as much detail as possible?). The second facilitator offered no aid or interruption during the participant's narration. This was done in order to minimize any co-creation of the narrative. However, the second facilitator asked one additional question (e.g. Can you tell me more?) if the participant did not predict what would happen in the story. The second facilitator had had no previous exposure to the visuals. The same second facilitator recorded the narrations for both sessions. The participant talked freely and narrated what had been projected for him/her in whatever sequence he/she remembered. Participants had only one chance to elaborate as much as they could rather than re-recording. Upon completion of the narration, the second facilitator stopped recording and the session ended.

### **3.4 Selection and Transcription of Data**

Since all seventeen participants did not participate in both sessions, only eleven participants' narrations were selected for transcription and analysis. The remaining six participants' narrations were not transcribed.

For the purpose of this study, transcription conventions (adapted from DuBois, 1991) were adopted (see Appendix B); these conventions do not reflect features like intonation curve or phonological variation, but do include truncation, fillers (e.g. *uh mmm*), and sounds (e.g. laughter). Voice Walker was used for transcription.

### **3.5 Length of Narrative**

Once transcription was completed, the second facilitator's turns were deleted since the experiment focuses only on participants' speech. In order to find the average length of narrative per task per participant, all words that each participant produced were counted. "Word count" in Microsoft Word was used. All incomprehensible words, pauses, conversation fillers (e.g. *uh, mmm*), and sounds (e.g. laughter) were subtracted in order to find the exact number of words of speech.

### **3.6 Linguistic Factors Considered in Analysis**

Adjective types, introduction of new referents, and verb types were counted and analyzed to determine the complexity of the narratives. These features were selected in order to provide evidence for supporting the main hypothesis that still pictures and video are equally effective in eliciting narrations of similar complexity.

### 3.6.1 Adjective Use

All adjectives were extracted for both tasks and copied into an Excel worksheet. Adjectives were selected as a variable in this experiment as the use of adjectives add descriptive detail to objects, extends the sentences, and make the narratives more elaborate. The more a referent is described, the more detailed an utterance. Moreover, the use of adjectives will provide instances in which the type of visual may assist participants to express reactions and feelings about the content of the visuals. Hence, the use of adjectives assists in testing the hypothesis that still pictures and video elicit equally complex narratives.

Each adjective token was classified for its type (Quirk, Greenbaum, & Svartvik, 1972). The position in which an adjective occurs in a phrase or sentence determines its type. Adjectives can be “attributive,” occurring in a noun phrase, as in “*It is a big city,*” or “predicative”, occurring as part of the predicate, as in “*The kitchen is big.*” (Quirk et al, 1972). Attributive adjectives extend the noun phrase, making it more elaborate. Predicative adjectives add detail to the subject of the sentence and make the utterance more elaborate. That is, in both cases, adjectives function to add complexity to the narratives. The use of adjectives will then provide examples of effectiveness of types of visuals on stimulating participants to introduce more description to their narratives.

### 3.6.2 Introduction of New Referents

Additionally, all new referents introduced by each participant in each narrative task were extracted. New referents were tracked in this study because referents add detail and complexity in the sequence of events in a narrative (Labov and Waletzky, 1967). The number of referents



shows how many entities (i.e. objects and concepts) are being introduced in a narrative. A larger number of referents show that participants introduce more content and objects to their narratives. Accordingly, a larger number of referents may show which type of visual triggers inclusion of more items. The number of new referents introduced, therefore, may be helpful in testing the hypothesis that pictures and video will elicit equally complex narratives. The more referents introduced, the more elaborate the narrative is because learners will talk about additional content of the visuals. In addition, referents dominate learners' speech because they are very frequent and they carry the message of the story. Referents are salient open categories in a learner's lexicon (Nelson, 1972). Thus, the introduction of new referents allows observation of elaborateness of the narratives and how visuals may assist learners in remembering the story and the objects in it. When referents were uttered several times during a narration, they were only counted one. For example, if a participant uttered the referent "*city*" four times, "*city*" was extracted and the number of times it was produced was noted, but it was only counted as one new referent. This was done in order to find the total number of referents, the total number of new referents, and the average number of referents for each task.

### **3.6.3 Verb Type Use**

Another open category studied in this experiment was verbs. All verb tokens were extracted in order to analyze the elaboration and detail of the narratives. Verbs show actions, movement, and states of being. Verb type was chosen since verbs show what the referents being introduced do or what happened to them. This measure once again was used to determine if pictures and video elicit equally complex narratives. Although verb types vary in the picture and video tasks as the narratives portrayed different stories with different content, study of the verbs

provided evidence about the scope of verbs participants used and to note how the visuals assisted learners in producing a variety of lexical verb types in their speech. A larger number of verb types produced reflect the availability of a larger lexicon. Thus, when more verb types are introduced, more specific actions are attributed to the referents, contributing to the narratives that are more elaborate.

Only main verbs (i.e. they may form a sentence by themselves, with noun phrases filling the appropriate semantic roles) were extracted (Dixon, 1993). Secondary type verbs (e.g. modal and auxiliary verbs) were not studied because they are normally associated with another verb to which they provide semantic modification.

## Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion

Attention is now turned to presentation and discussion of the results. In the following discussion, results from the picture task (P) and video task (V) are compared. The discussion will first treat the length of narratives, and then the complexity of the narratives, as measured by counts of new referents, adjective types, and verb types used in participants' speech. Both tasks (P) and (V) seem to reflect the strong connection between visuals and narrative storytelling as both triggered participants to re-tell the story, in the case of Task (P) a search by three roommates for a new apartment, in Task (V) a man attempts to return a woman's lost camera. Examples (1) and (2) display the narratives produced by one participant after viewing the series of pictures and video respectively.

(1) *All right. First, there are a building. There are a building that have our own rest room have three person they live together three womans. And at the beginning they were sleeping and .. at at six o'clock, they be everyone is wake up and prepare for himself and they clean the place where he sleep where he slept I am sorry. And then they were .. they went to their .. kitchen and they ate their breakfast there. One of them she was eating X uh ... circle and one of them she was reading the news uh the .. newspaper and the another one she was listening to her about the newspaper and she I think she read a advertising about an apartment or house like that. So when they finish the breakfast they went to the this this place or this building to see the apartment. First, one of them she was surprising about the apartment because it was large and they live in one place and this is I think they lived in a room at the beginning. X so uh .. when they went to this apartment*

*uh she was surprised everyone was surprised about the large place and space. And she they went to the kitchen they saw that where they cook it have a little dirty or that not clean and she was .. not agree with with the that .. kitchen because no one agree with uh not a clear place. So I think they uh solve this problem that I think the person who own this apartment will fix it or clean it in the .. future. ... And they see the location of this apartment it look nice for them and they were happy for it. So I think they will buy it in the future after that this person whose own the apartment will clean it. .. that is that is story.*

*(2) All right. The beginning there was a man and a girl. They were in the train so when they were there uh the man was looking for the girl and she was .. looking for him also and she was carry a camera photographs so she took uh some picture .. from him and he was he doesn't know that she was doing that. When she left the X uh .. train in the .. bus station. She forget uh ... the camera in the seat. .. And .. he look he saw the camera. When he back to his apartment he was looking for .. uh for the pictures where she took it. and when he was looking for the picture he saw his picture on the camera. And he think that uh ... this girls or this girl were watch in love with him or have a feeling about him. So his .. he was trying to back this camera to her. By .. when he was watching the .. photograph he was uh he saw her home or no he was looking for a building near ho(me) near her home. And when he was researching or looking for her apartment he was looking this building so he upon this corner I will find this house. And when he went to her apartment her apartment he didn't point her because I think she was fixing .. her apartment. So he back to his apartment .. and he went I think he decided to send this*

*camera in a box in her email box-mail I mean. Uh he write in the box-mail uh that if you got this .. message please re .. call me or touch with me again so I can uh talk with each other.*

These examples are representative of the rest of the data. In the majority of the narratives, as in these examples, the participant first introduces the character and identifies the setting (e.g. place, time) answering the questions “who? when? where? what?” and then states “what happened then?”, followed by predicting “what will/may happen?” (Labov and Waletzky, 1967). Second, the number of words produced for each task by each speaker is comparable. Third, the order of the narrative clauses matches the order of events as they occurred in the visual.

The data elicited are representative of intermediate-level proficiency, according to ACTFL standards. The participants attempt to narrate and describe in different time frames, but exhibit frequent mistakes. Their narrations are longer discourse segments, and they generally produce compound and complex sentences rather than simple sentences, but once again exhibit errors in doing so. They are able to present their narratives successfully to a “sympathetic” audience, in this case, the second facilitator. Since all participants produced similar narratives and their narratives are comprehensible, examples (1) and (2) are viable samples to represent the data.

Although both pictures and video elicited elaborate narratives, a more critical analysis reveals differences in relative length and complexity between the narratives from task (P) and task (V).

#### 4. 1. Length of Narrative

The number of words for each participant was counted so that any difference in length of production could be determined. The total number of words elicited for the (P) task was 2546 words while task (V) elicited a total of 2818 words, yielding an average length for Task (P) of 231.4 words and for (V) of 256.1. Table 1 shows the number of words for each task per participant.

**Table 1 Length of Narrative for Task (P) and (V)**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Task (P)</b>	<b>Task (V)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	376	200	576
<b>2</b>	279	294	573
<b>3</b>	199	291	490
<b>4</b>	160	171	331
<b>5</b>	226	391	617
<b>6</b>	306	204	510
<b>7</b>	152	144	296
<b>8</b>	316	288	604
<b>9</b>	81	193	274
<b>10</b>	168	403	571
<b>11</b>	283	239	522
<b>Total</b>	<b>2546</b>	<b>2818</b>	<b>5364</b>

Average      231.5      256.2

At first glance, Table 1 supports that the video resulted in more word production. When comparing the average number of words produced, task (V) elicited 24.7 more words than task (P). That is, task (V) encouraged participants to produce roughly 9-10% longer narrations, suggesting that video, in this case, facilitated more language production. However, there was much variation across participants as five of the eleven participants (#1, 6, 7, 8, and 11) produced

longer narrations in task (P). When viewed in this manner, this suggests that pictures and video are both useful in eliciting oral narratives. A larger participant pool that could ameliorate individual effects could help determine if the two media do indeed produce narratives of unequal length. Analysis of narratives from participants in a bigger data set will be an object of future research.

Furthermore, simple length of narrative does not indicate the complexity of the story related. Attention was thus turned to other linguistic features that might reveal which narratives were more fully developed or elaborated.

## **4.2 Elaboration of Narrative: Introduction of New Referents**

The number of new referents introduced in each participant's narrative was analyzed in order to determine which type of visual elicited more elaborate narratives. The introduction of new referents reflects how much information each narrative includes and if a type of visual elicited the inclusion of more content. Additionally, referents add to the complexity of narratives because when a new referent is introduced, it allows the learner to utter a sentence explaining what it (e.g. place, object, person) does and thus the narrative becomes more detailed. Referents also allow the researcher to notice what type of visual aided the participant in remembering particular facets of the content. A review of the new referents in each task revealed that task (V) prompted inclusion of slightly more referents than task (P), with an average number of new referents of 23.5 in task (P) and of 24.8 in task (V). Table 2 shows the number of new referents across participants.

**Table 2 Number of New Referents**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Task (P)</b>	<b>Task (V)</b>
<b>1</b>	39	25
<b>2</b>	21	24
<b>3</b>	19	30
<b>4</b>	18	16
<b>5</b>	24	36
<b>6</b>	28	26
<b>7</b>	22	16
<b>8</b>	26	28
<b>9</b>	14	21
<b>10</b>	19	30
<b>11</b>	28	21
Total	<b>258</b>	<b>273</b>
Average	23.5	24.8

In order to more easily compare the structure of the narratives, the rate (per number of words) of the introduction of new referents was calculated for each participant. This ratio represents the frequency of introducing a new referent for each participant (see Table 3). As seen in Table 3, the rate of introduction of new referents is every 9.7 words for the picture task and every 10.2 words for the video task. Thus new referents are introduced more often in task (P) than in task (V); that is to say, participants elected to include fewer referents in their picture narratives, but their narratives are more dense as those referents are introduced more often. These differences are slight though (and once again vary across participants), so they are difficult to interpret. This difference might be due to the static nature of pictures: this quality perhaps causes participants to focus on the content and objects available in the picture, to try to determine what may be important later in the story, and then to later describe based on their observations. In



contrast, video may trigger participants to pay attention to the movements and actions of the objects and to elaborate on those rather than the entities themselves. The introduction of new referents decreases and shifts to the actions exhibited by the referents. If this is true, then the (V) task should exhibit greater use of verbs and more verb types.

**Table 3 Ratio of Words Produced to Referents Introduced**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Task (P)</b>	<b>Task (V)</b>
<b>1</b>	9.6	8.0
<b>2</b>	13.3	12.3
<b>3</b>	10.5	9.7
<b>4</b>	8.9	10.7
<b>5</b>	9.4	10.9
<b>6</b>	10.9	7.8
<b>7</b>	6.9	9.0
<b>8</b>	12.2	10.3
<b>9</b>	5.8	9.2
<b>10</b>	8.8	13.4
<b>11</b>	10.1	11.4
Average	9.7	10.2

### **4.3 Elaboration of Narratives: Adjective Types**

There were 133 adjectives used in the narratives. Table 4 displays the number of adjectives per task and the type of adjective used. From this table, it may be concluded that they type of visual made a difference in the number of adjectives produced.

**Table 4 Distribution of Adjectives**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Attributive</b>		<b>Predicative</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>P</b>	47	47	53	53	100
<b>V</b>	19	58	14	42	33

The use of adjectives is important because adjectives add descriptive detail to referents, allowing the participants to create more complex narratives. Task (P) resulted in much more frequent use of adjectives (N=100) than task (V) (N=33). Adjectives carry different functions in discourse: to modify a new referent (attributive), and to predicate a property on an already-established referent (predicative) (Englebretson, 1997). Attributive and predicative adjectives are used in dissimilar proportions across tasks, but the distribution of adjective type was determined not to be significant (Chi Square 1.11,  $p=0.29$ ) when the numbers for each type in each task were compared. This result demonstrates a clear difference between the two types of visuals: pictures elicited much greater use of adjectives than video. This result may occur because of the main difference still pictures have from dynamic video, as used in this experiment. Pictures do not portray movements and actions as videos do; rather, pictures portray objects and content. Still pictures projected for seconds (e.g. five) allow time for each scene to be studied, perhaps guiding participants to focus on the qualities of the objects depicted. Therefore, still pictures may trigger learners to introduce more description and qualification of those objects and the narrative will thus become more elaborate than videos.

The ratio of words produced to adjectives was also calculated for each participant (see Table 5) in order to compare rates across task. In other words, the ratio shows how often an adjective token was introduced in each participant's speech.

**Table 5 Ratio of Words Produced to Adjectives Introduced**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Task (P)</b>	<b>Task (V)</b>
<b>1</b>	37.6	200.0
<b>2</b>	21.5	98.0
<b>3</b>	15.3	97.0
<b>4</b>	26.7	42.8
<b>5</b>	22.6	30.1
<b>6</b>	34.0	204.0
<b>7</b>	25.3	72.0
<b>8</b>	39.5	0
<b>9</b>	27.0	96.5
<b>10</b>	28.0	403.0
<b>11</b>	17.7	79.7

Average 26.8 120.3

On average, the introduction of a new adjective in task (P) occurs every 26.8 words, much more frequently than in task (V) (every 120.3 words). The same pattern holds true for all participants. Therefore, the difference observed in Table 5 is not due to a particular participant's use of adjectives.

#### **4.4 Elaboration of Narrative: Verb Types**

In order to further test the hypothesis that pictures are as effective as video in regards to triggering learners to produce comparable language samples, all available verb types were extracted for each participant. The average number of verb types for each task for each participant appears in Table 6.

**Table 6 Number of verb types**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Task (P)</b>	<b>Task (V)</b>
<b>1</b>	23	23
<b>2</b>	21	24
<b>3</b>	15	20
<b>4</b>	16	16
<b>5</b>	20	23
<b>6</b>	23	25
<b>7</b>	13	13
<b>8</b>	23	22
<b>9</b>	11	20
<b>10</b>	18	26
<b>11</b>	20	21
<b>Total</b>	205	233
<b>Average</b>	18.5	21.2

The average number of verb types produced in task (P) is 18.5 while task (V) exhibits more verbs at 21.2. Task (V) then elicited about 10% more verb types than task (P). This is hypothesized to have occurred because video includes actions and movement to which learners would pay attention; this in turn led to more varied verb types as learners described those movements in more specific ways. Table 7 displays an example of how verb types for pictures and video vary. P6/V6's full narratives were presented earlier. Verb types are adapted from Dixon (1991, p. 504).

**Table 7a Verb Types in Picture Task**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Verb</b>	<b>Type</b>
6	clean	affect
6	cook	affect
6	fix	affect
6	surprise	annoying
6	listen	attention
6	see	attention
6	look	attention
6	finish	beginning
6	sleep	corporeal
6	wake up	corporeal
6	eat	corporeal
6	have	giving
6	buy	giving
6	to be	modal
6	live	motion and rest
6	go	motion and rest
6	own	own
6	read	speaking
6	advertise	speaking
6	agree	speaking
6	solve	thinking
6	think	thinking
6	prepare	wanting

**Table 7b Verb Types in Video Task**

<b>Part #</b>	<b>Verb</b>	<b>Type</b>
6	fix	affect
6	write	affect
6	touch	affect
6	look	attention
6	see	attention
6	watch	attention
6	research	attention
6	find	attention
6	decide	deciding
6	have	giving
6	do	happening
6	to be	modal
6	carry	motion and rest
6	take	motion and rest
6	leave	motion and rest
6	go	motion and rest
6	send	motion and rest
6	get	own
6	point	speaking
6	call	speaking
6	talk	speaking
6	think	thinking
6	know	thinking
6	forget	thinking
6	try	trying

From the examples in this table it can be seen that video elicited more specific verbs. For example, video elicited five “attention” type verbs (e.g. *find, look, research, see, and watch*), but pictures elicited three (e.g. *listen, look, see*). Also participants introduced specific “motion and rest” type verbs (e.g. *carry, go, leave, send, and take*) while pictures elicited only two (e.g. *go and live*). This result may occur because video causes the participants to focus on the action and triggers the activation and introduction of more specific verbs in each participant’s narrative. In

contrast, pictures elicited three “corporeal” type verbs (e.g. *sleep, wake up, eat*) while video did not elicit any (see Appendix C for verb categories). This may occur because pictures do not portray movements and causes participants to introduce static verb types in their narratives.

### **4.3 Discussion**

These findings support that both kinds of visuals stimulate learners to create narratives and to elaborate on what has been shown in them. Comparing the overall number of words produced in both tasks, task (V) elicited longer narrations than Task (P). This result suggests that video may encourage participants to construct more lengthy oral narratives, but there was much individual variance, so further study is needed.

This experiment supports that still pictures and video facilitate learners in creating oral narratives and elaborating their narratives, but that elaboration may occur in different ways depending on the type of visual used. The difference between pictures and video in eliciting oral narratives is that pictures are static and elicit higher number of referents and adjectives. Video is dynamic and learner’s focus will be on actions and movements and elicit higher number of verb types. These observations support the hypotheses that a series of story pictures is an effective alternative for eliciting lengthy oral narratives, and that pictures and video elicit comparably complex narratives, although there may be differences in the type of complexity. A series of pictures may be an alternative for eliciting language samples and practicing with the language; however, instructional goals may determine the efficiency of use of one or the other. Additionally, a series of pictures may be used as a substitute for videos where/when videos are less accessible if the instructor is aware of these differences and can plan for them.

#### **4.4 Implications for Language Instruction**

The present study hypothesized that still pictures may be an alternative tool that can substitute for video in developing countries' language classrooms where pictures are very easily accessible and videos are not. Video and pictures can equally facilitate conditions in different ways for practicing oral story-telling and elaboration. Video appears to be a more supportive tool for practicing verbs while still pictures can be a more supportive tool for practicing adjectives. This allows one to hypothesize that learners will perform different actions with the visuals. During the elicitation task, participants were not asked specifically to describe or narrate. All the participants assessed both visuals and created their own narratives. The results suggest that learners may benefit from still pictures for describing entities available in the pictures while they may benefit video to narrate the sequence of the actions in the visual. This result is important for language teachers for selecting the type of visual based on the objective of a lesson.

In addition, a series of images will allow learners to play around with pictures and create their own version of a story as they can re-organize the frames. Learners may describe the images and create a descriptive story. Later, students can be shown a pre-made version of the story or their peer's version to compare and contrast their version of story. The teacher may evaluate their description and allow them to notice elaboration, in this case, modifying and qualifying the objects in the visuals. On the other hand, teacher may use video clips (i.e. pre-sequences) to focus students more on the actions involved in the video. Students will benefit from talking about what could happen next. Here, the focus of the lesson could be on the introduction or use of referents and the actions being carried out by the referents. Learners may



practice verb types and tenses. Thus, the objective and focus of the lesson should be considered in determining the type of visual to be used.

This experiment recommends that in developing countries, where internet connections are often too slow to stream video, and electricity and projectors are lacking, pictures are then an effective alternative to video clips. Pictures are more easily accessible technology. Story pictures can be distributed for the learners individually to create and develop their own versions of the story. This way, students will develop their oral proficiency. In Afghanistan, particularly, learners have been exposed to newspaper photographs and textbooks include images, but learners have not been presented with a series of images that depict a story - perhaps because video is believed to be the only source of showing a story that assists learners to create oral narratives. Images have been used to supplement teaching instructions for introducing and practicing new vocabulary. The most common task has been to name objects and describe the property of the objects. This means that students are familiar with describing a picture, but not creating a narrative from a series of pictures. The potential use of visuals to assist language teachers in maximizing comprehension of a listening passage or a reading passage has been available, but series of images are not presented commonly. Hence, this experiment suggests using a series of pictures as an equivalent alternative for practicing oral narratives where video may not be practicable.

Teachers should supplement textbooks with series of story pictures to facilitate extended language practice. Learners will be exposed to contextualized series of pictures to create textual language. The level of students will determine the length and complexity of the passages produced and the objective of the lesson will determine upon what language feature to focus.

Furthermore, bringing a series of images to a foreign language classroom will maximize learning opportunities about the target language culture and situations, bringing authenticity to foreign language learning. Pictures exemplify the socio-contextual and real-life situations of the target language. Pictures, like any other instructional material, may need to be adjusted to a particular teaching goal or context. Discussion of unusual elements in the images may allow learners to notice cultural differences. Probable confusing objects of the target culture perhaps create a discussion of interpretation and description. Learners may acquire target language objectives through comparing and contrasting practice. In addition, the instructional goal may focus on language features. The teacher's role is crucial in order to plan the objective of a lesson and material. Depending on the purpose of the lesson, the teacher can decide which element of images to maximize. Another possibility is to invite students to bring their own story pictures that interest or confuse them about the target language/culture and then the class may discuss them.

Since pictures facilitate oral language production, they can help learners achieve more advanced language proficiency. Pictures offer many possibilities for practicing proficiency and each level of proficiency can benefit from pictures. Novice students may identify basic vocabulary items dealing with what is shown and what the objects do while preparing associating these words with their L1 concepts, realizing the similarities and differences. Students working to building intermediate-level proficiency may practice creating with the language: describing the scenes, and asking and answering questions. Learners may ask each other to elaborate on objects and explain actions. Students working to building advanced-level proficiency may describe, report, and provide narration about present, past, and future actions. They can role-play/act out scenes and explain the story. Students working to achieve superior-level may create

narratives to resolve social issues depicted in the story, familiarize themselves with new topics, present opinions about the scenes, support their arguments, and predict and hypothesize about what will/might happen in the story or how the target culture approaches an issue. At all levels, students may create various versions of the story pictures by reorganizing the pictures, expressing their points of view and how they would like to see the story structured. They may express their attitudes toward social and cultural elements available in the pictures.

Another implication of the current study's finding may be for educational institutes that do not always have enough computers to project films for each student and there are too many students to focus on one small TV or laptop screen (i.e. projectors are not available since they require electricity). Indeed, copies of series of pictures can be distributed for each learner that will allow them to look at the pictures and to structure their narratives. In order to overcome the economic issue of printing or photocopying, pictures may be distributed to groups of students. Learners will still benefit from them in order to practice story-telling with their peers. Both speaking and listening will be practiced as students create their stories and try to convince each other about sequencing their thoughts. Students will utter sentences and realize their linguistic needs. Learners may question each other which will lead them to the creation of learning opportunities. Also, pictures empower a learner to set his/her pace in the learning process. Every student will then benefit from practicing with the language. The following exercises may be useful with series of images.

At the introductory stage the learners are asked to describe the objects, actions, feelings, or thoughts of the characters in the pictures. A few contextualized questions may help learners establish the picture story as a whole. Once learners realize they need specific vocabulary, the teacher can provide vocabulary aids in relevant context. The focus is creation

and development of narrative story by the learners rather than focusing on accuracy of grammatical structures and memorizing vocabulary. As a result, learners practice new contextualized linguistic input through oral practice with pictures.

Furthermore, learners may participate in provoking questions to the story. This way a form of dialogue develops about the narratives and the narrative become elaborate as every student questions and comments. Thus, co-creating the story requires a command of new vocabulary and grammatical structure. This allows eliciting more questions from learners and eliciting more elaborate narratives. Learners will concentrate on describing the picture story while they are indirectly expected to use a variety of linguistic features and different structures to make meaning.

#### **4.5 Limitation of Study**

This study on pictures and video for eliciting oral narrative, as does any study, has limitations. First, all findings are based on features such as the introduction of new referents, and adjective and verb types. Other factors such as use of adverbs, clause structure, and use of modal verbs were not considered. Analyzing adverbs may allow observing how the narrative's events are sequenced which may clarify which type of visual best assist learners to remember the sequence of events in a story.

#### **4.6 Avenues for Future Research**

The present experiment analyzed adjective and verb types, new referents and number of words for each participant in order to test whether pictures and video elicit equal length and complexity of oral narratives. It would be interesting to study how the narratives' clauses are

developed and whether static visual and dynamic visual elicit similar order of events and clausal structures. The narratives could be studied in order to determine which type of visual elicits more description or orientation clauses to the oral narrative (Labov and Waletzky, 1967). The use of orientation clauses may provide further means of evaluating the elaborateness of narratives.

Verb types could be studied for a different purpose to analyze which particular verb types are being selected by participants. Modals could be investigated to see whether pictures and video elicit equal amount and type of prediction and assumptions beyond the visuals. The participants could be grouped into cultural groups and their interpretation and prediction of the visuals subsequently analyzed. The interpretation of the visuals by a particular cultural group might bring a different perspective to the use of visuals.

The current study showed the visuals to the participants once. In the future, students might be asked to view the visuals more than once and each time they are asked to add elaboration and prediction to the story. This will allow observing if multiple exposures to the visuals elicit more elaborate narratives.

Lastly, a future study might investigate which type of visual may be effective for noticing cultural information of the target language. Perhaps, a comprehension test about the content of the series of pictures and video could be designed in order to observe whether still pictures and video assist participants in recalling cultural content.

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## **Appendix A: Visual Evaluation Criteria**

Adapted from Rossiter, et al. (2008)

### **The Story**

1. Is the context of the story clear?
2. Do the illustrations have a clear narrative?
3. Is there only one story line?
4. Does each picture frame depict a single event?
5. Is the relationship between each of the panels clear (e.g. logical sequence)?
6. Are the illustrations free of surreal or illogical elements?
7. Does the story happen over a perceivable period of time?
8. Do events follow in direct temporal sequence (e.g. no flashbacks or flash forwards)?
9. Is there an even flow of time?
10. Does the story have a satisfactory ending?

### **Cultural Content**

1. Is the picture story free of written text?
2. If there is written text, is it easy to read?
3. Are the illustrations free of word balloons and symbols (e.g. arrow)?
4. Are the illustrations free of cartoon conventions indicating movement?
5. Are the illustrations free of culture-specific body language and representations of emotional or physical states?



6. Do the illustrations require culture-specific knowledge of customs and images (e.g. flags)?

### **The Pictures**

1. Are the panels the same size and shape with distinct borders?
2. Are the panels in an easily readable order?
3. Are the proportions and the style realistic?
4. Is the perspective accurate or unambiguous?
5. Are characters and objects drawn in their entirety?
6. Does the use of color enhance clarity?
7. Are there few characters, and are they easily distinguishable?
8. Are the characters consistent?
9. Are actions clear?
10. Do the main characters interact with a limited number of objects?
11. Are the locations easily distinguishable?
12. Are there enough details to allow readers to understand the specific setting, context, and action?
13. Are the illustrations free of distracting extraneous details?

## Appendix B: Transcription Conventions

Adapted from Dubois (1991)

### Unit

1. Word                      space

### Pause

2. Pause, timed            (1.2)
3. Pause, short            (.)

### Meta-transcription

4. Unintelligible        (    )
5. Uncertain            (word)
6. Comment            ((word))
7. Incomprehensible    (X)

## Appendix C: Verb Types

Adapted from Dixon 1991

### Primary-A verb types

motion type (Roles: Moving, Locus)

- motion-a, the run subtype, e.g. run, walk, crawl, slide, spin, roll, turn,
- wriggle, swing, wave, rock, shake, climb, dive, stroll, trot, gallop, jog,
- dance, march, jump, bounce, swim, Xy, play; ride, drive
- motion-b, the arrive subtype, e.g. (i) arrive, return, go, come; (ii) enter,
- exit, cross, depart, travel, pass, escape; come in, go out; (iii) reach,
- approach, visit
- motion-c, the take subtype, e.g. (i) take, bring, fetch; (ii) send; (iii) move,
- raise, lift, steal
- motion-d, the follow subtype, e.g. (i) follow, track, lead, guide, precede,
- accompany; (ii) meet
- motion-e, the carry subtype, e.g. carry, bear, transport, cart
- motion-f, the throw subtype, e.g. throw, chuck, Xing, pour, spray, water;
- push, press; pull, jerk, drag, tug, draw
- motion-g, the drop subtype, e.g. fall, drop, spill, tip (over), upset, overturn,
- capsize, trip, slip

rest type (Roles: Resting, Locus)

- rest-a, the sit subtype, e.g. sit (down), stand (up), lie (down), kneel,
- crouch, squat, lean, hang (down), Xoat
- rest-b, the stay subtype, e.g. stay, settle (down), live, stop, remain, reside;
- attend
- rest-c, the put subtype, e.g. (i) put, place, set, arrange, install, put NP on,
- sow, plant, Wll, load, pack; hide; beach, land, shelve, dump; (ii) leave,
- desert, abandon, ground, take NP oV
- rest-d, the contain subtype, e.g. contain, enclose, encircle, adjoin; surround
- rest-e, the hold subtype, e.g. (i) hold, handle; (ii) grab; grasp, clutch,
- catch, gather, pick up; capture, trap
- rest-f, the open subtype, e.g. open, close, shut; lock

affect type (Roles: Agent, Target, Manip)

- affect-a, the touch subtype, e.g. touch, stroke

- affect-b, the hit subtype, e.g. hit, strike, punch, bump, kick, knock, tap,
- bash, slap, spank; whip, belt, stone, cane, hammer; shoot
- affect-c, the stab subtype, e.g. pierce, prick, stab, dig, sting, knife, spear;
- cut, prune, mow, saw, slice, chop, hack
- affect-d, the rub subtype, e.g. rub, wipe, scrape, scratch, mark; sweep,
- brush, shave, rake; polish, lick; wash
- affect-e, the wrap subtype, e.g. wrap; cover; butter, roof, veil, clothe,
- dress, grease; plaster, paint, coat; surround, frame; put NP on; unwrap,
- uncover, unroof, undress; take NP oV, peel, shell
- affect-f, the stretch subtype, e.g. stretch, extend, compress, bend, curl,
- fold, coil; twist, pinch, squeeze; vaporise, liquefy, solidify, melt; dissolve;
- freeze, cool (down), warm (up), heat (up), burn, singe
- affect-g, the build subtype (Product role), e.g. build, knit, tie, make,
- weave, sew, shape, form, stir, mix, knead; fry, bake, cook; mend, repair;
- draw, write, sign, forge
- affect-h, the break subtype (Breaking role), e.g. break, crush, squash,
- destroy, damage, wreck, collapse; tear, split, chip, crack, smash, crash;
- burst, explode, blow NP up, let NP oV, erupt

giving type (Roles: Donor, Gift, Recipient), e.g. give, hand (over), lend, sell,

- rent, hire, pay, owe, bequeath; serve, feed, supply; present; donate,
- contribute, deliver, let; tip; reward, bribe; market; exchange, trade;
- borrow, buy, purchase, accept, receive
- 486 list of adjective and verb types

own subtype (Roles: Owner, Possession) have, lack, get, obtain,

- come by, gain, own, possess; belong to; lose

corporeal type (Roles: Human, Substance), e.g. eat, dine (on), chew, suck,

- drink, smoke; bite, nibble, sip; smell, feel, taste, sniV, swallow, breathe,
- smile, fart, burp, cough, spit, shit, pee, vomit; live; yawn, sneeze, laugh,
- leer, wink, blink, sob, sleep, dream, think, die; weep, cry, shiver, faint,
- pass out, wheeze, sweat, rest, ache, suVer, come to, recover, be born;
- wake, waken, grow, swell, hurt, bleed, heal, drown; bring NP to, comfort,
- console, cure, soothe, ease, nurse, doctor; kill, murder, assassinate,
- beat up, injure, wound, poison, give birth to; kiss, embrace, hug, cuddle,
- fuck

weather type (no roles), e.g. rain, snow, hail, thunder

competition type (Competitor role), e.g. conquer, beat, overcome, race

- (against); resist, Wght, play; win, lose; attack, guard, shield, surrender;
- defend; compete (with), struggle (against)
- social contract type, e.g. appoint, employ, dismiss, sack, Wre; promote,
- nominate, convert, arrest, prosecute, impeach, punish; govern, rule,
- civilise, missionise, join; manage; apply for; qualify for, resign from;
- withdraw ( from), work (at); marry
- using type, e.g. use, operate, manipulate, work, employ, wear, waste, Wddle
- with
- obeying type, e.g. obey, execute, process, deal with, grant, refuse; perform

### **Primary-B verb types**

attention type (Roles: Perceiver, Impression)

- attention-a, the see subtype, e.g. see, hear, smell, taste, feel; observe,
- notice, perceive
- attention-b, the show subtype, e.g. show; demonstrate
- attention-c, the recognise subtype, e.g. recognise, spot
- attention-d, the discover subtype, e.g. discover, Wnd
- attention-e, the witness subtype—witness
- attention-f, the look subtype, e.g. look (at), listen (to); stare (at), glare
- (at), peep (at), peer (at), squint (at), eavesdrop (on); search ( for), look
- ( for), hunt ( for); inspect, study, investigate, scan, scrutinise, examine,
- check, view; explore, survey; visit
- attention-g, the watch subtype, e.g. watch, listen (to)
- Also: (i) ignore, disregard, overlook, pass NP over; (ii) appear, disappear;
- (iii) look, sound; smell, taste, feel

thinking type (Roles: Cogitator, Thought)

- thinking-a, the thinks subtype, e.g. think (of/about/over), consider, imagine
- thinking-b, the assume subtype, e.g. assume, suppose
- thinking-c, the ponder subtype, e.g. ponder (on/over), meditate (on/
- about), brood (on/over), speculate (on/about), wonder (at/about), reXect
- (on/about), dream (of/about), contemplate
- thinking-d, the remember subtype, e.g. remember, forget

- thinking-e, the know subtype, e.g. know, sense, feel, realise, learn,
- understand; teach
- thinking-f, the conclude subtype, e.g. conclude, infer, reason, argue,
- prove, demonstrate, show, guess
- thinking-g, the solve subtype, e.g. solve, work NP out, devise, make NP
- up; analyse
- thinking-h, the believe subtype, e.g. believe, suspect, doubt

deciding type (Roles: Decision-maker, Course)

- deciding-a, the resolve subtype, e.g. decide (on), determine (on), resolve,
- plan, settle
- deciding-b, the choose subtype, e.g. choose, select, pick (out), appoint,
- elect, vote ( for/on)

speaking type (Roles: Speaker, Addressee(s), Medium, Message—with

- components Message-Label and Message-Content)
- speaking-a, the talk subtype, e.g. speak, talk, chat, gossip, converse,
- communicate, quarrel, argue, joke; write
- speaking-b, the discuss subtype, e.g. discuss, refer to, describe
- speaking-c, the shout subtype, e.g. shout, call, cry, roar, swear, pray,
- preach, narrate, recite, intone, read, sing; whistle, warble; translate,
- pronounce, mispronounce, utter; name
- speaking-d, the report subtype
- set (i), e.g. say, declare, assert, observe, joke, put NP about, give NP out,
- let NP out, put NP across, let on about
- set (ii), e.g. state, aYrm, rumour
- set (iii), e.g. announce, proclaim, mention, note, report, regret
- set (iv), e.g. remark (on), comment (on); explain
- set (v), e.g. boast (about/of), brag (about/of), complain (about/of), grumble
- (about)
- set (vi), e.g. suggest, claim, acknowledge, admit, confess (to), repute
- set (vii), e.g. undertake, oVer, propose, agree (with)
- set (viii), e.g. promise, threaten
- speaking-e, the inform subtype, e.g. inform, lecture, agree (with); remind
- speaking-f, the tell subtype, e.g. tell, ask, request, beg, enquire, demand;
- answer, reply (to)
- speaking-g, the order subtype, e.g. (i) order, command, urge, instruct,
- encourage; warn, caution, persuade, invite, recommend (to); tell, remind,
- ask, request, beg; (ii) forbid, discourage, dissuade, prohibit
- speaking-h, the forgive subtype, e.g. (i) insult, slander, curse, abuse,

- scold, blame, rebuke, forgive, pardon, praise, thank, congratulate, compliment,
- tell NP oV, pick on; (ii) accuse, excuse; (iii) greet, welcome,
- introduce; (iv) cheer, applaud, apologise

liking type (Roles: Experiencer, Stimulus—with components Stimulus-

- Label and Stimulus-Content), e.g. (i) like, love, hate, prefer, fear;
- dread; (ii) dislike, loathe, abhor, admire, value; regret; rejoice in/at;
- (don' t) mind (about), (don' t) care (about); (iii) enjoy, favour, object to,
- approve of; (iv) worship, fall for; also: envy, pity

annoying type (same roles as liking), e.g. frighten, terrify, scare, shock,

- upset, surprise; oVend; delight, please, satisfy, entertain, amuse, excite,
- inspire; impress, concern, trouble, worry, grieve, dismay, depress, sadden;
- madden, infuriate, annoy, anger, disappoint; confuse, bewilder,
- deceive, trick, perplex, puzzle; interest, distract, bore; attract; embarrass,
- disgust; tire, exhaust, bother
- acting type, e.g. act, behave; adopt, copy, imitate, mimic, mime, reproduce
- happening type, e.g. happen, take place; organise, arrange, bring NP about;
- commit, attend to, neglect, put NP on, take NP on, do, tie NP in with,
- change, devise; experience, undergo; transpire
- comparing type, e.g. resemble, diVer ( from); take after; distinguish (between),
- compare; class, group, cost, grade; match, balance, measure,
- weigh, time, count; Wt, suit; equal; include, comprise, consist in/of, be
- made up of
- relating type, e.g. depend (on), result ( from), indicate; relate (to), imply, be
- due (to); show, demonstrate, suggest