

A Study on Understanding the Effectiveness of Audiovisual Aids in Improving English Vocabulary in ESL Classrooms

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Abstract

Vocabulary is essential for comprehension and linguistic development for English language learners. This study used a survey method to identify the effectiveness of vocabulary learning, proper retention, cognitive skills, and technology-based learning in the English language classroom. Thus, the research aims to explore the effectiveness of visual and audio materials in developing vocabulary. The study employed a quantitative approach, and statistical tools were employed for quantitative analysis. The study examines the advantages of audio-visual resources for enhancing vocabulary retention. The participants are tertiary-level students from a reputed university in Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. Around 120 students participated in the survey. A self-designed questionnaire with 10 items was circulated, and data was collected in the Google Form. The results of the data prove the need for audio-visuals in Indian English classrooms, and the students find the audio-visuals interesting and attentive to learning the vocabulary. The Cronbach alpha value of the questionnaire is 0.845; hence, it is concluded that the data is reliable. The survey results show that using multimedia materials in language classrooms will effectively develop English vocabulary among students in Vellore district. Students find it interesting and have an enjoyable learning environment.

Keywords: audio-visual aids, English language learning, memory, multimedia, vocabulary

1. Introduction

Technology application is scientific knowledge to practical issues by organizations made up of both people and machines. It is an intricate process that calls for ongoing interaction. It is true that technology and society are deeply interconnected. The social foundations of machines come from social requirements. As a result, educators want technology that is suitable for the teaching and learning environment. If educators want students to be equipped for the digital age, all of the following must be changed: the curriculum, instructional aid, teaching methodology, and budget. It is commonly accepted that audio-visual materials may be highly beneficial in fostering and boosting the learning of a language. Language learners may benefit from a range of media and visual presentation techniques (Wright, 1976). To put it another way, any audio-visual components may aid language learning if they are employed effectively and when necessary. Although the eyes are essential to learning, the learner also uses their ears throughout the process of acquiring a language. It surely helps with the understanding of a new culture by providing a virtual connection with language speakers through audio and visual means (Rivers, 1981). In accordance with Krashen (1989), reading will increase learners' possibilities to absorb language more deeply and build semantic networks and other linkages that will aid in their learning. According to Far (2006), "linguistic researchers view vocabulary acquisition as a major area of language teaching. According to studies on vocabulary development, reading comprehension and word knowledge go hand in hand. As stated in the National Reading Panel's report (2000), "the importance of vocabulary knowledge has long been recognized in the development of reading skills. As early as 1924, researchers noted that growth in reading power relies on continuous growth in word knowledge". Some researchers (Harmon et al., 2009; Linse & Nunan, 2005) believe that the evolution of a language is extremely dependent on the evolution of its terms. Schmitt (2000) emphasized the significance of vocabulary in communication, claiming that "lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and the acquisition of a second language".

A lexical syllabus was created in 1980, after the extensive research in language and discourse analysis, it renewed the importance of vocabulary (Willis, 1990). Later, the implementation of the lexical syllabus in the instructional process seemed difficult. To assist students in learning certain language structures, audiovisual teaching aids are employed in schools and universities. The best example is showing a discussion from a movie scene to help students practice vocabulary words. It can also be the only thing used to sustain the entire course, such as having students develop extra exercises for the videos, record themselves, and give comments. Audio and visual aids considerably enhance the stimulation and facilitation of learning a second language. Regarding long-term memory, auditory and visual information have been researched separately instead of in combination with other forms of representation (recall or recognition) (Talamini et al., 2022). According to this research, visual memory representations have a significant capacity.

According to Wright (1976), a language learner may gain by mixing media and visual instructional strategies. Students who use audio-visual resources at the right time and in the right environment can learn languages. In learning and teaching a language, the learner uses both audio and visual aids. It is widely acknowledged that information intake greatly influences learning a second language (L2). According to Joshi (1995) audio and visual aids are essential tools for teaching and learning English effectively. A rich form of second-language audio-visual input includes video and television (TV). To improve other aspects of second language learning, such as comprehension and vocabulary, it exposes learners to formal language and various input formats, like visual and audio.

The use of videos in language instruction brought attention to the development of communicative language teaching approaches. Because of its multimodal properties, general accessibility, and ease of use, this medium draws increased attention from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) academics. Studies on the value of experiences gained outside of the classroom help to explain the advantages of video for second language acquisition. Data from extracurricular activities shows that watching TV and videos is common among young language learners. According to research on television viewing, it can help students with their vocabulary knowledge, listening skills, and reading skills (Lindgren & Munoz, 2013; Peters, 2018).

According to Mayer and Moreno (1998), the two primary channels for processing information are the visual and the auditory. With the aid of multimedia learning, vocabulary is expanded and the memory is stimulated to retain information over time. In Paivio's Dual Coding Theory (DCT), Paivio (2014) elucidates that visual and aural cues aid in storing new knowledge in the brain to improve memory when reading and listening in class. When teachers have access to multimedia learning resources, they can concentrate more on being learning facilitators with their students. Multimedia encourages positive concept development among learners (Srivastava, 2012). The use of visual and auditory activities in language classes, including listening to lessons, conversing with others, and viewing movies, aids in the development of word recognition in English. With the right equipment, this approach may be used in conventional language schools.

1.1 Audio-Visuals in Vocabulary Learning

Audio-visual tools are repeatedly and more frequently used to improve vocabulary learning. According to Anzaku Francis (2011), "audio-visual materials" often refer to instructional resources that can convey meaning without relying on verbal signals or language. Teaching tools called audio-visual aids are used in schools to encourage learning and make it easier and more enjoyable. Instructional aids include diagrams, maps, models, film strips, projectors, radios, and televisions (Rather, 2004). Teachers have employed audio-visual materials as one of their resources for instruction and learning to set up a tech-based classroom. Audio-visual materials encourage continuous instruction and learning for both teachers and students. According to Guterres and Quintas (2018), academics and authors provide numerous definitions of audio-visual content. The use of audiovisual aids in the classroom is an excellent way to promote the development of other language skills in addition to grammatical comprehension. Therefore, if you want to increase learning for students, it is recommended that you use visual resources. These visual tools help students learn new languages by encouraging them to participate and concentrate more. Additionally, they help learners focus more intently and have higher-quality interactions. It encourages students to actively engage in the educational process. The positive impact towards audio-visual cues on student learning has also been confirmed in the investigation of Wang et al. (2020). Teachers may use a wide range of media to teach the course information to their pupils, including classroom computers, videos, movies, television channels, and projectors. Using audio-visual tools helps students understand concepts better and expand their vocabulary.

Audio-visual tools support a more engaging learning environment. Based on the preceding description, the researchers are interested in determining how audio (sense of hearing) and visual (sense of seeing and watching) learning aids affect English vocabulary acquisition in slow learners. According to Jurich (2001), having access to images makes it easier for students to complete a particular class assignment. Employing images and graphics may help learners quickly grasp and memorize information. Alkhuli (2006) emphasized the benefits of using images in the classroom. Visuals assist children in focusing and paying attention while also facilitating learning new words by increasing picture-word familiarity. Goldstein (2008) also emphasized the significance of visuals in vocabulary learning and instruction. Additionally, he claimed that visual aids provide excellent strength for both spoken and written words. Vocabulary learning with audio-visual aid improves the listening, speaking, reading, and writing of words. From an educational perspective, audio-visual support provides interesting and intellectual understanding. Learning with multimedia materials motivates students to learn vibrantly with an effective learning outcome.

1.2 The Role of Audio-Visual Material in Employing Memory Retention

The theory of cognitive load introduces the idea of memory. Cognitive load implies that working memory is limited and that changing the instructional strategy can reduce extraneous cognitive load (Sweller J. et al., 1998). Lehmann and Murray (2005) used a continuous recognition task to illustrate the impact of logical consistency. The researcher displayed three different stimulus types: visual only, visual and semantically appropriate sound, and visual and inappropriate sound. When participants were instructed to write their names on the objects they had never seen, performance was better when a sound input accompanied a visual. Picture-word congruency (Heikkila J. et al., 2015), the effect of auditory and visual cues on drawings (Chen & Spence, 2010), and motion direction identification (Kim et al., 2008) have all been looked at, and the results have mostly been the same. The study aims to investigate tertiary-level students' perspectives on audio-visual materials in vocabulary teaching. The study defines and evaluate the impact of audio-visual materials on developing learners' working memory in English language classrooms. The survey's principal objective is to evaluate the benefits of audio-visual aids in developing working memory and provide suggestions based on the survey results.

The study investigates the advantages of using audio-visual language activities in classroom settings. Language classrooms that include audio-visual elements would raise vocabulary learning. Continuous exposure to visually auditory words will expand the learners' memory level when learning English vocabulary. Multimedia aids could be incorporated into the curriculum framework despite their alteration. While preparing audio and video learning materials for the curriculum, precise procedures must be followed. Educators are responsible for maximizing the use of multimedia resources to advance language acquisition. The main purpose of the present study is to predict and estimate how useful and suitable the use of audiovisual aids is and how they could benefit both students and teachers. According to Willingham's theory (2009, p. 41), the use of audiovisual resources may help students learn more efficiently and have more rewarding educational experiences. Students often remember what they see and forget what lecturers say in lectures. The learning process is eventually made more meaningful when instructors use visual aids to introduce new vocabulary and assist in the formation of the students' memories. Therefore, the research aims to explore the effectiveness of multimedia materials in developing vocabulary acquisition with greater memory capacity. There must be more extensive use of multimedia resources in the classrooms, and instructors should concentrate on teaching from the curriculum. Educators are responsible for maximizing the use of multimedia resources to advance language acquisition.

2. Method

The survey method was carried out in an English language learning classroom. The survey is a deliberate way to gather information about attitudes and opinions from a large group. As cited in Mackey and Gass (2015), Brown defines questionnaires as "any written instruments that offer respondents a series of questions or statements to which they are to respond by either writing out their replies or selecting among the available answers". In order to learn more about students' opinions on employing audio-visual-based activities in English classes, the research employed a questionnaire. The researcher employed a quantifiable approach with likert scale to collect the data for the language learners to provide accurate, reliable, time-saving, and pertinent responses to the study question. Significant consideration was given to the administration, reliability, clarity, and quality of the questions while developing the questionnaire (Al Mamun et al., 2012). The researcher employed a self-designed questionnaire consisting of 10 items to analyze the role of audiovisuals in English language vocabulary acquisition. The researcher used the quantitative method to analyze the data, and the survey was circulated in the university of Vellore district, Tamil Nadu, India.

The students were given a survey by the researcher using Google Forms. Four categories of questions are used in the survey to evaluate the learners' opinions towards implementing audio-visuals in English classrooms. Table 2, the survey questionnaire consists of 10 items; a five-point Likert scale was used with the options, from strongly agree =5, agree =4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. The survey questionnaire was initially circulated to 120 participants. The main objective of the questionnaire was to assess the students' perceptions of vocabulary acquisition in language classes using audio-visual aids. On the first Google Form page, students' consent was obtained for their willingness to take the survey, and after obtaining their consent, a questionnaire was circulated on the latter pages of the Google Form. Students who wanted to share their opinions on audio-visual vocabulary exercises in English classes completed the survey. The data were analysed using SPSS software. Tests like descriptive statistics and frequency tests were performed on the collected data.

Table 1. Reliability statistics

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.845	10

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the Vocabulary Questionnaire (VQ). Table 1 represents the reliability test that was conducted in SPSS for the survey questionnaire. For 10 items, Cronbach's value is 0.845; since the value is above 0.7, the reliability of the set of questions given in the survey is reliable and valuable.

3. Results

Table 2 presents the statistical description data analyzed for the mean, standard deviation, and frequency using SPSS software. In Table 2, N represents the 120 participants. 79% of participants affirmed that learning through video and audio helps me improve my listening and speaking skills. 80% of the participants have confirmed that learning through video and audio helps me improve my reading and writing skills. 82% of the participants have stated that they can develop vocabulary skills by watching a video and listening to the audio. 75% of the survey respondents concluded that they have a positive attitude towards integrating video and audio into English language learning. However, 20% of the participants remained neutral about the survey statements. Almost 89% of the participants admitted that they felt learning was more entertaining with the integration of video with audio in vocabulary learning. Nearly 90% of the participants asserted that pictures and sounds make me feel excited to learn vocabulary in an English classroom. They have concluded that pictures and sounds draw their attention, making the learning pace easier and faster. 76% of the learners affirmed that they are willing to use video with audio to help them improve their English vocabulary when they are reviewing the lesson outside classroom hours. 92% of the participants confessed that they could easily remember vocabulary while learning when the teaching and learning materials were incorporated with audio-visual materials. Almost 94% of the participants have confirmed that listening and observing vocabulary with video lessons will help the learners remember and use words while speaking and writing. Over 89% of the participants have stated that audio-visual materials help strengthen vocabulary learning. Hence, from the survey data, it is concluded that students' engagement was really high when they were introduced to the audio-visuals, and their interest was drawn to effective language acquisition.

Table 2. Survey Questionnaire (N=120)

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Frequency				
				1	2	3	4	5
Questionnaires								
1. Learning through video and audio helps me improve my listening and speaking skills.	3.7250	1.32819	120	17	3	15	46	39
2. Learning through video and audio helps me improve my reading and writing skills.	3.6500	1.04238	120	6	12	21	60	21
3. I can develop vocabulary skills by watching a video and listening to the audio.	3.7500	1.21094	120	11	9	13	53	34
4. I have a positive attitude towards integrating video and audio into English language learning.	3.5250	1.31547	120	18	6	19	49	28
5. I feel learning is more entertaining with the integration of video with audio in vocabulary learning.	3.8417	1.12269	120	9	9	5	66	31
6. Pictures and sounds make me feel excited to learn vocabulary in the English classroom.	3.8583	1.04757	120	6	11	6	68	29
7. I am willing to use video with audio to help me improve my English vocabulary when I am reviewing the lesson outside classroom hours.	3.7083	1.27942	120	10	15	15	40	40
8. I can easily remember vocabulary while learning with audio-visual materials.	3.8750	1.22002	120	12	5	10	52	41
9. Listening and observing vocabulary with video lessons will help to remember and use words in further studies.	4.0083	1.12643	120	8	6	9	51	46
10. Audio-visual materials help in strengthening the memory of vocabulary learning.	3.8333	1.09493	120	10	3	14	63	30

3.1 Development of Language Skills (Questions 1 to 3)

The answers to questions relate to the students’ perceptions of vocabulary, reading, and writing, speaking, and listening in an English language course. The purpose of these inquiries was to provide participants with information about the study. These questions received affirmative responses from the participants. 60 students believed that their reading and writing skills had improved, while 46 agreed that their listening and speaking abilities had effectively improved. According to 53 students, it improved vocabulary acquisition. It suggests that the students are learning English in a pleasant setting with the aid of audio-visuals.

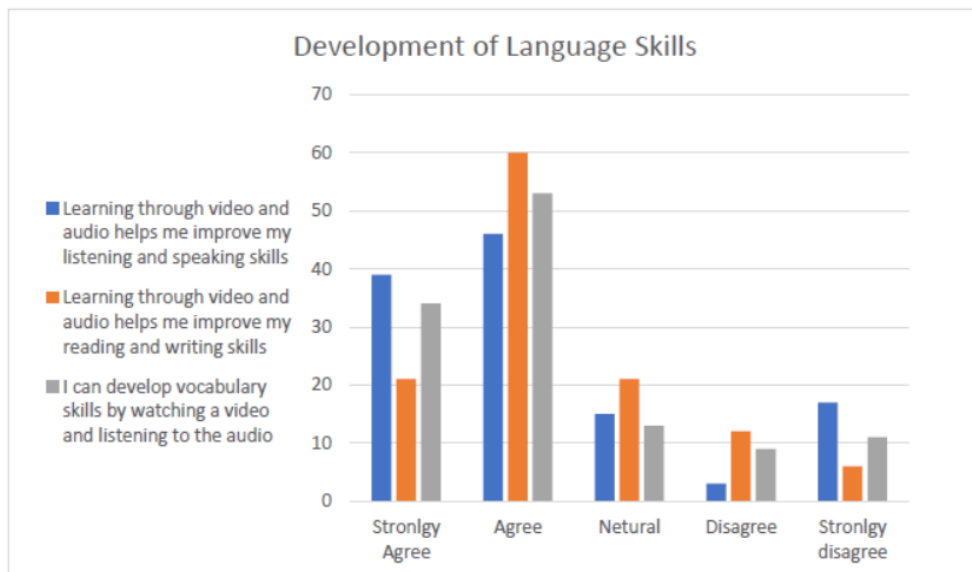


Figure 1. Development of Language Skills

3.2 Audio-Visual Materials in Vocabulary Learning (Questions 4 and 5)

When studying English, learning vocabulary is crucial. By selecting “agree,” the majority of those who participated in this survey area expressed their satisfaction with vocabulary acquisition. The ‘strongly disagree’ option has the bare minimum of participants. Table 2 presents the perceptions of the participants. Figure 2 displays the participants’ views on vocabulary acquisition using audio-visual exercises. On that note, 49 students had a favourable attitude towards utilising audio-visual resources in response to the issue of whether or not audio-visuals made students feel excited to study vocabulary during English language learning, and 66 students believed that audio-visual activities engaged them while they learned words.

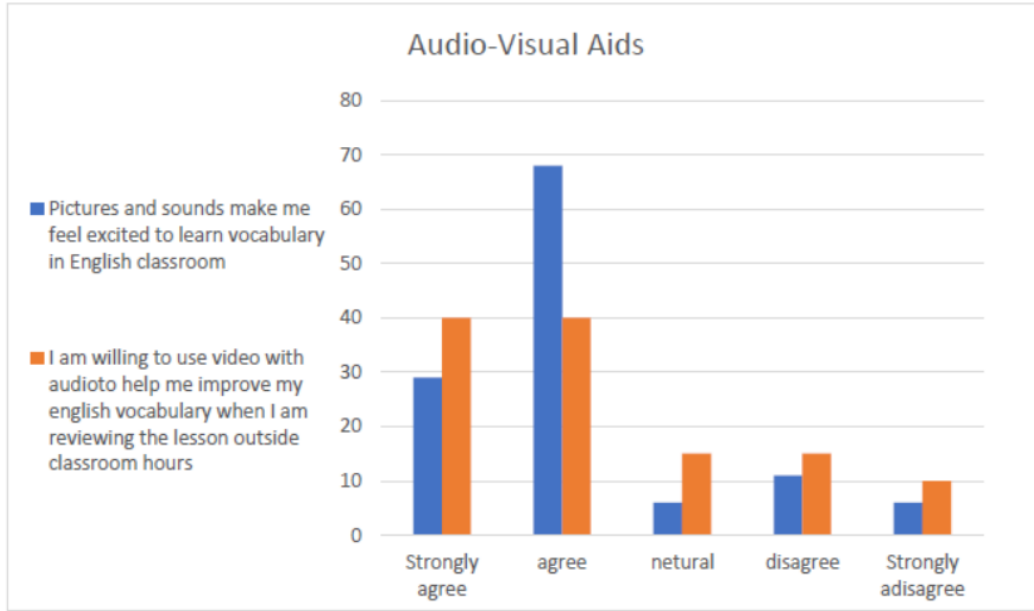


Figure 2. Audio – Visual Materials in Vocabulary Learning

3.3 Incorporating Audio-Visual Resources for English Language Learning and Learner Participation in the Classrooms (Questions 6 and 7)

Questions six and seven cover the advantages of utilising audio-visual exercises in English classrooms. According to Anzaku Francis (2011) “audio-visual resources are frequently used to refer to those instructional tools that may be used to convey meaning without completely relying upon vocal symbols or language”. Audio-visual instructional tools aided the development of the English language. By supporting this method, most of the respondents gave a positive answer. It proves that implementing audio and visual aids in the classroom encourages learners to learn vocabulary. Learners pick up vocabulary, understand the meaning of the words, and attempt to remember them while listening to and seeing the video material. After data analysis, the findings show that 68 respondents accept that audio-visual materials enhance vocabulary learning. 40 respondents stated that audio-visual materials help them learn lessons outside of the classroom.

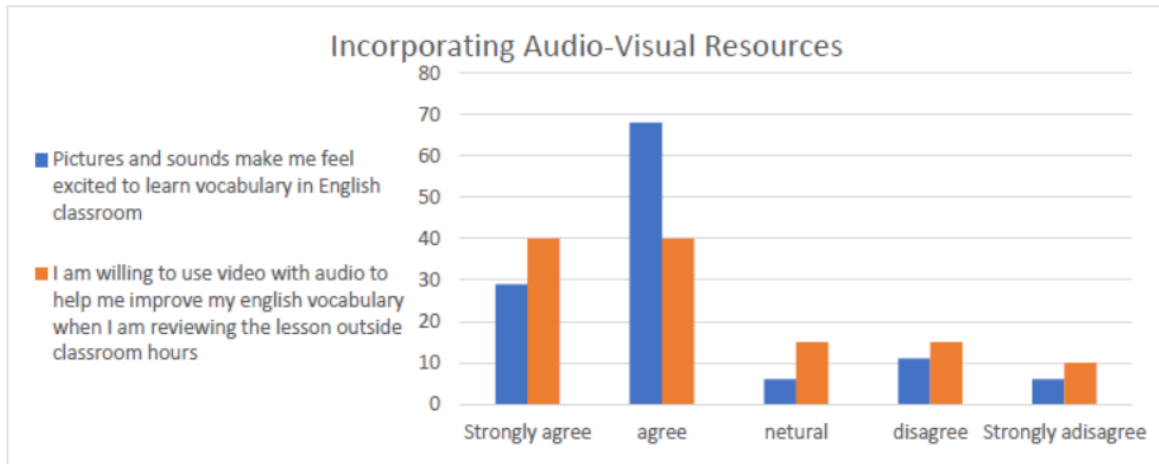


Figure 3. Incorporating Audio-Visual Resources for English Language Learning and Learner Participation in the Classroom

3.4 Effectiveness of Audio-Visual Materials in Improving Vocabulary Memory (Questions 8, 9 and 10)

Audio-visual materials give the learners a multisensory experience, triggering the memory. The human senses serve as the entry point for processing and storing newly learned words in memory. “Gates of Wisdom” is another name for the sense organs. They provide visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile experiences. According to Cobun’s (1968) research, our senses of taste, touch, smell, hearing, and sight account for 1%, 1.5%, 3.5%, 11%, and 83% of what we learn. In developing their memory of vocabulary, students agree with the concepts in their responses. Whereas, 52 respondents remembering vocabulary while learning with audio-visual materials, 51 say that it helps in further studies, 63 state that it strengthens the memory while learning vocabulary.

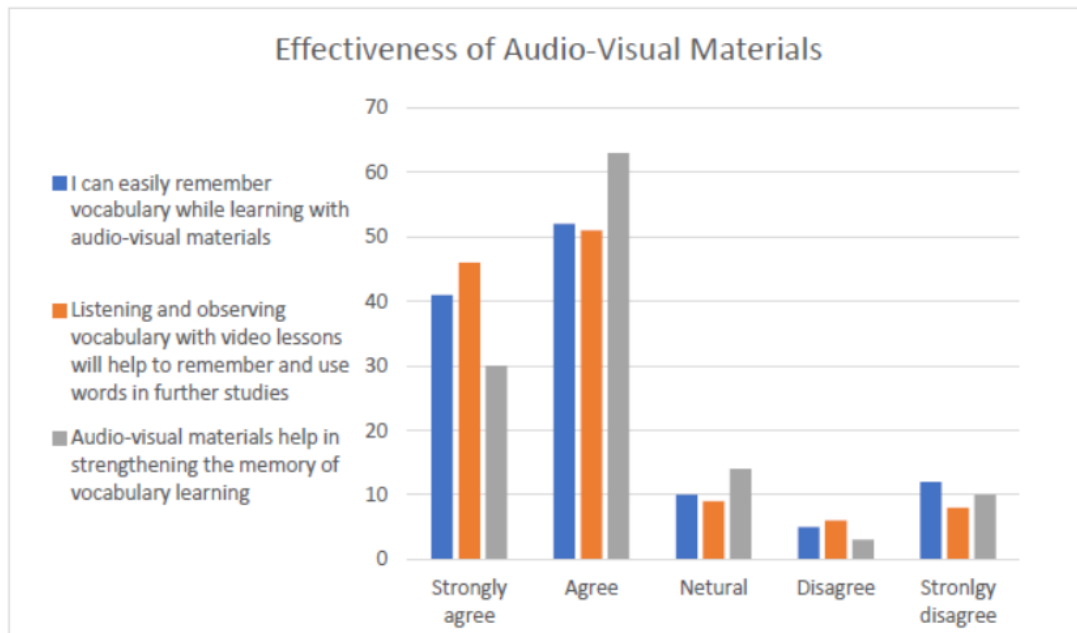


Figure 4. Effectiveness of Audio-Visual Materials in Improving Vocabulary Memory

4. Conclusion

The research has shown that using audio and visual aids in English classes enables the target audience to retain vocabulary. The reliability score of the survey demonstrates that the questions were well-crafted and successfully gathered accurate information from the students. Through this survey, the students were also made aware of the importance of studying vocabulary. Due to the enormous number of students in the classroom, the teachers could provide the students with less time and attention. A larger audience of students may be reached by using audio-visual aids in classes. Students in their collegiate years who consistently attended courses made up the study's participants. In order to acquire language efficiently, learners must have a strong sense of self-interest. In order to include audio-visual activities in conventional classrooms, it is necessary to conduct many surveys. The fact that this survey study included only a few individuals and questions is a significant drawback. The study did not explore the opinions of teachers and students on the use of audio-visual aids in the English classroom. The research did not involve additional students from different universities. Also, triangulation would have been a helpful procedure to understand the study's topic further. This study did not conduct interviews and case studies to fulfill the triangulation requirements of the research. Interactive resources like audio-visuals are used in the language classroom to encourage teaching and learning. The data results show that the respondents said that visual aids are beneficial in encouraging and motivating children to understand language through audio-visual aids. Audio-visual provided students' confidence in determining what a new word meant. There must be more extensive use of multimedia resources in the classrooms, and instructors should concentrate on teaching from the curriculum.

Conflicts of Interest

No conflict of interest

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