

## Characteristics of Oral- Written Discourse Through Pictures as an Educational Means

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### Abstract

This article aims to answer questions related to the image or picture as a means of communication and education, such as the following: What is the role of the picture in the process of communication? Does the message conveyed by the picture carries all the principles of linguistics and pragmatics? How have pictures (photos, images, designs, etc.) gained the status of didactic material? Are there any common communicative characteristics with the written text? Therefore, we try to explore the characteristics of spoken- written discourse through the picture. Our attention focuses on the use of the picture as a teaching tool for learning a foreign language.

**KEYWORDS:** Picture, text, pragmatics principles, multidimensional communicaton, teaching process

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### 1. Introduction

The picture is a visual representation of something. Picture establish a direct resemblance to the object referred to or is related with this object in a symbolic order.

The word "image" comes from the Latin language "imago" which determened a funeral masc. In this definition, the image appears simply as a term to define a certain moment of a ceremony during human life.

Plato gave quite different opinions about the definition of the word image. He pretended that image : " firstly, I call "images" the shadows, and then the reflection on what we see in people". Plato considered the imazhe not only as something that can be seen, with shape and size, but also as something that is abstract and related to the psychological aspect of the human being.

In this article, we are interesed to treat the image as a picture.

English dictionary for advanced learner (2001) defines the picture as something which consist of lines, shapes which are drawn, painted or printed on a surface and show a person, thing or scene.

Le petit Robert (2004) mention that the picture gives the representation, the suggestion of visible or imaginary world on a flat surface using colors. Also, the photo as nearly the same definition as the picture.

The picture in this study implies the picture, image, design and photo. We can devide them in some cathegories: the vision, pictures, design, poster, photographie, video, digital image, etc.

The picture does not serve only to show but also to tell something. George Jean (1989) mention that in the Aztec picture communication system, pictures are read literally from left to right. These message pictures implied at that time a fundamental fact for the whole system of communication. The interpretation of a message involves the recognition of a code.

Semiotics and semiology science define the image as a special language product.

A picture may give to “the reader” a better idea, more accurate about what he is reading.

### Literature review

## 2. Characteristics of the picture as a means of pragmatic communication

As a result, even if we are faced with two different means of communication, picture against the word, we acquire the same message. Therefore, the question is whether these two means of language are really different from each other or it is just a matter of appearance.

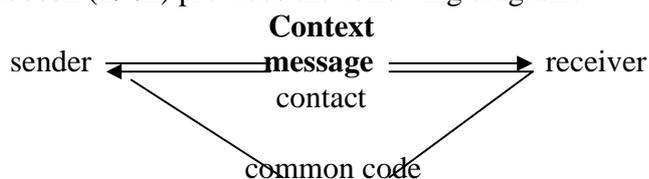
The fact that they transmit repeatedly and exactly the same message, makes us think that they have many common elements in the communication process.

Saussure (1975) explains that "the word as a linguistic sign is an object of a concrete nature. It is not an abstraction. ... In addition, the signs of language are virtually tangible; writing can fix them in conventional images,...». So the word is in itself an image as it is visible when it expresses its function of communication through the writing process.

The picture is also used to communicate. It allows you to represent reality as well as to express an emotion, to clarify an explanation, to persuade, to tell, and sometimes to convey the will of the State. Pictures are selected according to the intention of the message. However, the specificity of the act of communication by the picture does not have the same features as that of the word.

The authors Hadaj D. and Lilo R. (2002) explain what happens in general, in order for the message to be transmitted and interpreted, a code shared by both participants is required. The transmission will be carried out if the contact is established: this contact is the result of a physical connection (the support of sound to the verbal message, the visual support for the written message), physiological and psychological connection (both sender and receiver intend to communicate).

Jakobson (1962) provides the following diagram:



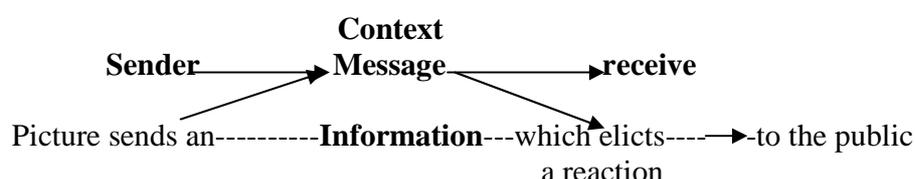
Generally, to enable communication, we must establish a real contact between the sender and the receiver (first diagram). There is also a search for exchange or return. In this case, the message will be the means to establish the necessary conditions for a form of realization. The sender addresses a message that elicits a reaction, a response. In order to have a return, there is an effort to make a decision on the part of the receiver.

On the other hand, communication through picture imposes a form of passivity on the part of the sender that is not directly related to the receiver. The pictures below, (Palnikaj M., 2007), are not used solely as a simple means of communication, but in this case they represent legislative authority. They are called administrative acts. The administrative act may be an order, a decision made by the administrative authority to manage a particular situation. It is a unilateral and conventional act, because on the other side there

is always the will of the State. They communicate commands and prohibitions which require the citizen to perform a defined behavior. Such acts are various road signs :



These pictures provide information, permissions and orders and required information. We note that the signs say things that make sense in specific situations, in very specific contexts. In this case, the interaction is not established between the two interlocutors and communication scheme appears a bit different from that of general communication.



This communicative scheme is no more between speaker 1 and speaker 2 but the picture on one side and the receiver on the other side and always in the same direction.

The receiver is always a specialized audience. In the case of the pictures, this form of communication requires a form of “passivity” on the part of the sender which is not directly related to the receiver.

The picture, as a means of communication, realizes all these forms of discourse and the range of activities that can be arranged through images in a language classroom is immense because the visual side of the documents selected for the organization of work in a language class is a source full of discursive elements.

**1. Pictures as multidimensional communication tools and means of didactic purpose.**

We can say that the "reading" of a visual message is essential and the verbal message is subordinate. The visual message is characterized by speed, power and strength of the symbolic mode of expression. Reading a picture is faster than a text and it has the perceived benefits of involvement, retention and engagement. Everything contributes to the purpose of the communication and to cause a reaction on the part of the receiver.

We note that the image, as a means of communication, carries all the principles of pragmatic aspect. The picture makes the interaction and it is a perfect example of linguistic economy, successful adaptation and it transmits all the information. In the pragmatic conception of meaning defended by Austin J. (1975), there are two complementary ideas. First, the words serve to communicate and the meaning of words depends on the intentions of the human beings who use it for communication with their fellows. Secondly, language is not only used to represent or describe the world but it can also be used to perform certain actions that change the world. Language can also be used to make a promise, give an order, make a bet, or start a session. The picture also has the linguistic and pragmatic potential to express these things. It makes sense in a context

built by the communicative intentions of a community. The meaning of a picture is defined by the way it gives and receives responses, by the place it occupies in the sequence of interaction; therefore, it is the context of use.

The context appears to us as a password to decode the message expressed by the word or by the picture. The context can be translated as the skill of deciphering. In order to have a successful comprehension, it is necessary to have negotiation, adaptation and confirmation. This operation requires other skills in addition to the only linguistic and sociolinguistic competence. It is estimated that there is necessarily a skill called discursive (it allows us to recognize the types of discourse) and a socio-cultural competence that will allow the speaker and the listener to implement strategies to understand the "pictures" and "abstractions" conveyed during interactions, which is why we can say that a person must master multidimensional communication skills.

The goal is to capture the greatest amount of information in a very short time.

For example, when attempting to activate a tool or appliance, we do not want to waste time reading the instructions but we just look at the information from pictures and illustrations in the same manual use.

Regarding the teaching process, Ruth Gaims and Stuart Redman (1986) emphasise that many teachers build up a library of pictures; these may include wallcharts, commercially-produced flashcards, magazine picture, hand-drawn pictures and illustrations from course books. These aids can be used for presentation, practice, revision and testing.

The material chosen in class must arouse the curiosity of the learner, it should aim primarily at communication, should be clear, realistic, useful and appropriate for the language level of the learners.

Context must coherently relate the meaning, form and use. It should promote cooperation and exchange. It provides the learner with information that helps them overcome learning difficulties.

The picture has the potential (the linguistic, socio-cultural, etc.) to provide all characteristics of didactic materials. We can use images in discussion and sharing information activities, which are organized on a collective work of writing.

Russell N, Carney I. and Levin J. R. (2002), mention that Fang (1996) lists six roles that pictures play in storybooks. Pictures may serve to help (a) establish the setting, (b) define/develop the characters, (c) extend/develop the plot, (d) provide a different viewpoint, (e) contribute to the text's coherence, and (f) reinforce the text. Fang goes on to list several benefits that pictures provide, such as motivating the reader, promoting creativity, serving as mental scaffolds, fostering aesthetic appreciation, etc.

For example, written advertisements are sources of creative writing and entertaining activities and enhance description and persuasion. After familiarization, we sensitize students to the structure of advertising and the way it is used to seduce and persuade through slogans and pictures.

Rachel Marie-Crane Williams (2008) pretends that teachers who skillfully use comics and graphic novels in their curriculum present numerous opportunities for students to deconstruct these texts on multiple levels. This layered deconstruction may include examining the story; the creator's intention, characters, and context; as well as the relationship between the design, words, and images. While words, images, layout, and story are all elements in these texts, none dominate the act of "reading." Students are usually comfortable decoding (reading) the visual system of letters and words. Comics

offer an opportunity for students to scrutinize how interdependent images and words can create a strong sequential narrative.

### **Conclusion**

Communicative competence is not only the amount of linguistic knowledge, it is also a reflection of different language skills, of speech acts that are finalized by the needs of communication and social interaction. In this way, it is recognized that language is primarily a social practice and linguistic analysis should focus on the performance of various speakers, i.e. the various ways to communicate in everyday activities. But not only the word incites action. Seeing also facilitates action. Seeing is being visually aware of your surroundings. Seeing often means acting effectively. Seeing is exercising a conceptual capacity. Since the picture allows the communication and transmits the message, they can be used as didactic means for teaching.

The signs have always told the story. According George J., (1989), pictural images also involve a fact fundamental to any communication system. It is appropriate that the receiver does not ignore the code or graphic conventions used by the sender. This is not the case for drawings, messages whose interpretation is actually a reading that implies knowledge of a code.

Picture in a scholarly context can perform several functions in teaching-learning process. It can inform, symbolize, illustrate and create funny situations in class.

Information should be the primary function of the picture. It can be or represent the subject or bring a new element. This avoids losing the reader in a data stream and names. The picture is descriptive as it shows the details of an object, a scene, the physical characteristics of a person, etc. It captures the attention and allows the reader to imagine more clearly what we mean or we are talking about.

Also, a picture in a scholar text can represent a character, drawing, caricature, a funny photo, and in this way, it can become a means of diversion in the process of learning.

Pictures must be rich in information because this helps to work with different lexical levels and fields. In principle, a picture is first created for a suitable public, one which interprets it according to the context and its socio-ideological environment. For school students, the same picture will have different interpretations. The various activities can prepare students for these texts, by preceding difficulties as well as by communicating necessary cultural information and data which will affect their wish.

The pictures speak and perform the act of speaking and we can pretend that to say with words is to do but also, to see pictures is to do, too.

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