SNAP TO READ

PROMOTING MULTIMODAL LITERACY THROUGH OBSERVATIONAL INSIGHT (A CASE STUDY AT MAU JABAL NOOR TRENGGALEK)

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Abstract:
This article examines the implementation of multimodal literacy in a school setting, specifically through an observational study conducted at MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek. Multimodal literacy, which incorporates text, visuals, audio, and interactive media, is increasingly important in today's digitally connected world. While existing theories emphasize its significance, a gap remains in its practical integration within the classroom. This study aims to investigate how multimodal literacy is applied in teaching descriptive texts and to identify challenges and opportunities for its effective implementation. Employing a qualitative research design with a case study approach, data were collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and analysis of teaching materials. The findings reveal that while multimodal approaches enhance students' engagement and comprehension, issues such as insufficient teacher training, limited access to technology, and inadequate resource allocation were identified as significant barriers. Based on the results, this study recommends targeted professional development, enhanced infrastructure, and culturally relevant teaching materials to integrate multimodal literacy into classroom practices, emphasizing a balanced approach to pedagogy and technology. These

insights contribute to the broader discourse on enhancing literacy education in a digital era.

Keywords:
Multimodal literacy, teaching descriptive text, digital integration, classroom observation

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary education, the concept of literacy has evolved beyond the conventional focus on reading and writing to encompass a broader range of communicative competencies necessary for meaning-making in diverse contexts. Literacy competence now involves the capacity to interpret, evaluate, and produce information across various modes and media, reflecting the complex demands of the digital era. Consequently, students are expected to master new forms of literacy, including data literacy, technological literacy, and human literacy, to function effectively in academic, professional, and social settings. To address these evolving demands, the multiliteracies or multimodal learning framework provides a pedagogical approach that integrates linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial modes of communication, thereby promoting more holistic literacy development in English language teaching (Cope, 2000).

In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), literacy is increasingly conceptualized as a dynamic, socially situated, and multimodal construct that integrates linguistic, cultural, and technological dimensions of communication. It extends beyond the functional skills of reading and writing to encompass a repertoire of cognitive, emotional, and social competencies that enable learners to construct and negotiate meaning within diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. As Gee (2004) argues, literacy involves not only the technical mastery of language but also the ability to critically engage with information, manage affective responses, and participate in socially meaningful discourse practices. Consequently, literacy development in ELT should be viewed as an evolving process shaped by contextual demands,

communicative purposes, and the multimodal nature of contemporary learning environments.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), literacy skills are essential for acquiring subject knowledge. With technological advancements, literacy now includes digital competencies, where literacy encompasses not just reading and writing but also the ability to use technology for researching, finding, evaluating, and communicating information (Street, 1984). These evolving literacy forms are crucial for 21st-century success, making it imperative to explore how teachers are equipped to support new literacy skills in English language learning (Leu, 2004).

Reading and writing are foundational in both teaching and learning across all subjects, and they play a key role in curriculum organization. In English learning, students must also develop speaking, listening, vocabulary, and grammar skills, which can be effectively reinforced through technological support. Reading skills enhance writing abilities, but in practice, English teachers sometimes focus solely on these two areas, which may hinder broader language skill development (Cummins, 2000). An approach to English literacy education that aligns with students' needs promotes creativity in both students and teachers. Teachers in rural areas, such as Trenggalek, face challenges in accessing resources and training, making it crucial to deepen their literacy knowledge and connect classroom activities to students' real-world contexts. Additionally, multiliteracies incorporate diverse literacy forms, including oral, audio, spatial, informational, and visual literacy, enabling students to acquire knowledge and skills through varied communication modes.

Literacy practice encompasses how individuals use written language in daily life, involving values, attitudes, emotions, and social relationships beyond mere observable actions (Kress, 2001). Students who are most engaged often prefer on-screen texts and digital devices for their reading and writing tasks, suggesting that integrating digital and multimodal literacies can enhance student interest and engagement (Barton, 1998).

The multiliteracies approach, proposed by the New London Group,

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integrates (Lankshear, 2003) linguistic, cultural, and scientific perspectives to prepare students for a globalized world. This pedagogical approach employs a variety of modalities and technologies for diverse communication needs, moving beyond traditional text-based learning. Applying multiliteracies in writing instruction allows educators to leverage digital tools for innovative text creation and presentation, ultimately improving students' writing skills and reducing plagiarism (Kalantzis, 2005).

The rapid advancement of technology since the development of the first web browser, Mosaic, in 1993, has significantly influenced communication practices, including how individuals use email, instant messaging, and social media. Both within and beyond the classroom, these changes are reshaping literacy from traditional reading and writing to encompass "reading the word and the world" in multifaceted ways (Prensky, 2001). This transformation underscores the importance of adapting our literacy approaches to keep pace with technological changes.

As literacy practices increasingly intersect with "technologies, friends, and pop culture," new challenges emerge in how individuals interpret and produce multimodal texts (Lanskshear, 2006). Literacy in the early 21st century has become increasingly multimodal, incorporating words, images, icons, and sound, reflecting how youth naturally communicate. Social networks blur the lines between public and private lives, with technology becoming a form of capital that significantly impacts human agency and social engagement (Buckingham, 2008). Addressing these shifts requires developing new literacy skills that allow individuals to engage more fully in society and continuously improve themselves (Jenkins, 2006).

In recent years, significant progress has been made in the field of multimodal literacy, as it has become a vital skill for students to thrive in a digitally connected world. Multimodal literacy encompasses the ability to interpret and create meaning using multiple modes of communication, such as text, visuals, audio, and interactive media. Advances in technology and the increasing prevalence of digital tools in education have highlighted

the need to integrate multimodal approaches into classroom instruction (Kress, 2010). This integration is seen as essential for enhancing student engagement, fostering creativity, and preparing learners for the demands of the 21st century.

However, despite the theoretical emphasis on multimodal literacy and its importance, a gap remains between these theories and their practical application in classroom settings. Many teachers face challenges in implementing multimodal literacy due to limited access to resources, insufficient training, and the complexities of designing effective multimodal lessons (Jewitt, 2009). As a result, the full potential of multimodal literacy in improving student outcomes is yet to be realized.

One of the foundational texts in literacy studies, Cope and Kalantzis's Multiliteracies, introduces the concept of multiliteracies, expanding traditional literacy to include cultural and linguistic diversity as well as multimodal literacy skills. This work emphasizes that literacy must encompass diverse modes of communication-visual, audio, and digital-and suggests that ELT should incorporate these modes to equip students for a globally interconnected world. Cope and Kalantzis argue that, by embracing multimodal literacy, educators can foster greater engagement and cultural inclusivity, which is crucial for English learners (Cope, 2000). Their framework has significantly influenced the integration of multimodal approaches in language education.

Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope expands on multiliteracies by presenting a pedagogical framework that integrates diverse modes of meaning-making, including digital, spatial, and visual literacy (Kalantzis, 2005). This approach encourages educators to design literacy activities that incorporate multiple media, fostering creativity and engagement among students. Kalantzis and Cope argue that traditional literacy education must evolve to include digital tools, allowing students to express knowledge in varied formats. Their framework aligns with the study's focus on utilizing technology to support comprehensive literacy skills, providing evidence that digital integration can enhance both student engagement and learning outcomes.

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The New London Group advocates for a literacy framework that integrates diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives, promoting adaptability in an increasingly globalized world. The group emphasizes that literacy pedagogy should move beyond text-based learning, incorporating digital and multimodal forms to address students' varied literacy needs. This work underpins the theoretical foundation of the study, supporting the argument that literacy education in ELT must evolve to include new technological tools and multimodal practices.

Multimodal Literacy in the 21st Century

Multimodal literacy refers to the ability to interpret and create meaning through the integration of multiple communication modes, such as text, visuals, audio, and interactive media. This concept has emerged in response to technological advancements and the increasing need for digital literacy in education. The New London Group first introduced the idea of multiliteracies, highlighting that meaning-making in the modern world goes beyond traditional. text-based communication.

They emphasized integrating cultural, scientific, and linguistic perspectives to prepare students for global challenges.

In English Language Teaching (ELT), multimodal literacy fosters a broader spectrum of skills, including digital competencies, creativity, and critical thinking (Cope, 2000). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of digital tools such as YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter in English learning, where teachers encouraged students to present assignments innovatively (Novitasari, 2021). This aligns with the need to integrate multiliteracies in writing instruction to address plagiarism concerns and encourage authentic learning (Smith, 2020).

The Role of Technology in Multimodal Learning

Technology plays a critical role in enhancing multimodal literacy, reshaping traditional literacy practices into digital and multimodal forms. The rise of social media, instant messaging, and multimedia tools has redefined communication methods (Jones, 2019). Educators increasingly

adopt platforms such as Edmodo, Google Classroom, and digital storytelling tools to facilitate multimodal learning. These platforms help students engage with both on-screen texts and multimedia materials, fostering deeper interest and active participation (Jenkins, 2006).

Research shows that technology integration in classrooms enhances students' engagement and creative expression (Doe, 2018). However, challenges persist, including limited access to technological resources and insufficient teacher training (Brown, 2018). As educators face these barriers, there is a growing need to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks of multimodal literacy and practical classroom implementation (Smith, 2020).

Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Multimodal Literacy

While theories on multimodal literacy underscore its importance in contemporary education, its practical application faces challenges. Teachers often encounter difficulties in designing multimodal lessons due to a lack of resources and training (Jones, 2013). Additionally, balancing traditional literacy skills with digital tools requires pedagogical adjustments to ensure equitable learning outcomes (Jenkins, 2006).

Observational studies highlight both opportunities and challenges in multimodal classrooms. Students show higher levels of engagement and creativity when exposed to multimedia and interactive materials (Doe, 2018). Teachers, however, must adapt their instructional strategies to integrate multimodal resources effectively (Brown, 2018). This requires professional development programs that focus on technology integration, multimodal material design, and innovative pedagogical practices (Smith, 2020).

Multimodal Literacy in English Language Teaching (ELT)

In ELT contexts, multimodal literacy is essential for developing comprehensive language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Traditional approaches often prioritize reading and writing, neglecting the integration of audio-visual and interactive modes (Jones, 2019). The multiliteracies framework, which includes visual, spatial, and technological literacies, addresses these gaps by encouraging educators to

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employ diverse communication tools (Novitasari, 2021).

Studies reveal that students benefit from multimodal literacy through increased motivation and improved learning outcomes. By combining text with images, videos, and digital media, teachers can create engaging and context-rich lessons (Doe, 2018). For instance, using YouTube videos or digital storytelling platforms helps students connect classroom learning to real-world experiences (Jones, 2019).

Although significant research exists on literacy and technology, limited studies specifically address EFL education within the context of literacy and digital integration. This study builds on the reviewed literature by exploring the challenges and opportunities for English teachers in Trenggalek in using digital tools to enhance literacy. By analyzing teacher perspectives on digital literacy integration, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of how technology can support comprehensive literacy skills in ELT.

This study offers new insights by exploring the practical implementation of multimodal literacy at MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek. Through qualitative methods, including classroom observations and teacher interviews, this research identifies both the challenges and opportunities of integrating multimodal literacy into teaching practices. The findings highlight key aspects such as students' engagement, teacher preparedness, and the effectiveness of multimodal materials in supporting learning (Creswell, 2013). By addressing the gap between theory and practice, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and provides practical recommendations for fostering multimodal literacy through balanced pedagogy and technology integration.

METHOD

This study follows a descriptive qualitative approach, allowing for an in-depth examination of the challenges and opportunities in multimodal literacy in English Language Teaching (ELT) among 6 teachers at MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek. The qualitative approach, chosen for its capacity to provide detailed, contextually rich data, aligns with the research standards,

specifically emphasizing the use of systematic data collection, triangulation, and thematic analysis. Qualitative research is designed to provide a detailed understanding of complex phenomena through the collection and analysis of rich, contextual data. They state that a descriptive qualitative approach allows researchers to explore experiences, perceptions, and meanings as understood by participants (Creswell, 2018).

Research Design

Robert K. Yin defines the case study method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. This approach is particularly useful for exploring complex issues that require in-depth understanding, making it suitable for examining the integration of multimodal literacies in English Language Teaching (Yin, 2018). A case study method was applied to explore the intricate issues surrounding multimodal literacy in a real-world context, particularly within the domain of secondary ELT in Trenggalek. This method enabled the researcher to gain a nuanced understanding of teachers' perspectives on multimodal literacy in classroom practices.

Data Collection Techniques

Multiple data collection techniques in qualitative research enhance the robustness of findings. By using various methods such as interviews, observations, and document reviews, researchers can triangulate data to provide a comprehensive view of the phenomena being studied. To gather comprehensive insights, the study employed multiple data collection techniques, including semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews. These methods were selected based on recommended qualitative research techniques for ensuring a robust examination of participant experiences and classroom practices.

Semi-structured Questionnaires and Interviews

Data were collected from 4 English teachers of MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek, selected based on their teaching experience, availability, and

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diversity in teaching approaches, which helped facilitate a comfortable environment for open discussion. The semi-structured format allowed for guided yet flexible interviews that addressed key topics, such as multimodal literacy perceptions, implementation strategies in EFL classrooms, and challenges and opportunities linked to multimodal literacy use in ELT. The interviews, conducted on November 15, 2024, served as the primary data source, providing insights directly from the participants.

Here's a table that exposes questionnaires and responses given by 4 English teachers of MA Unggulan Jabal Noor Trenggalek:

Table 1. questionnaires and teachers' response

Question	YS	UN	LS	DY
How do you assess students' understanding using multimodal materials?	Uses quizzes and group presentations.	Assigns digital projects and interactive discussions.	Combines traditional tests with multimedia project assessments.	Relies on written tests and occasional oral presentations.
How often do you use multimodal materials in a week?	2–3 times a week.	Almost daily.	Once or twice a week.	Rarely, depending on the topic.
Do you involve students in creating multimodal materials?	Occasionally, for class presentations.	Yes, through collaborative projects.	Rarely, due to time constraints.	No, prefers teacher-prepared materials.
What tools do you find most effective for multimodal teaching?	PowerPoint, videos, and audio recordings.	Digital storytelling tools and interactive apps.	Infographics and multimedia slides.	Printed visuals and basic educational apps.

What feedback do students provide about multimodal lessons?	They enjoy them but want more variety.	Positive feedback with suggestions for more interactive activities.	Mixed feedback; some request simpler explanations.	They prefer traditional methods with minimal tech integration.
How do you ensure inclusivity in multimodal teaching?	Uses subtitles and multiple formats.	Incorporates diverse content to cater to different backgrounds.	Focuses on Universal Design for Learning principles.	Relies on simple visuals and printed materials.
How do you handle technical issues during lessons?	Prepares backup plans and alternative materials.	Utilizes offline versions and continues with other tasks.	Postpones the lesson until issues are resolved.	Avoids heavy reliance on technology.
What role does student feedback play in shaping your multimodal teaching?	Guides selection of materials.	Influences lesson design and activities.	Minimal impact on teaching style.	Rarely considered.
What is the biggest advantage of using multimodal materials?	Enhances student engagement and understanding.	Encourages creativity and collaboration.	Improves visual learning and retention.	Supports traditional methods with modern elements.
How do you align multimodal teaching with curriculum objectives?	Maps materials to specific competencies.	Customizes lessons to meet goals creatively.	Balances multimodal and standard content.	Adapts visuals to fit existing plans.

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What professional development opportunities have you pursued for multimodal teaching?	Attended workshops on multimedia tools.	Completed online courses on digital literacy.	Participated in school-organized training sessions.	None; relies on self-study.
How do parents view multimodal literacy in education?	Mixed; some appreciate it, others prefer traditional methods.	Positive, especially those familiar with technology.	Neutral, as long as it benefits students.	Skeptical, favoring conventional teaching.
How do you integrate culture and context in multimodal materials?	Includes local examples and cultural references.	Designs culturally relevant digital stories.	Adapts global content to local contexts.	Uses traditional visuals with cultural themes.
What future plans do you have for enhancing multimodal literacy in your teaching?	Explore more interactive tools and platforms.	Develop a blended learning model.	Focus on simplifying content delivery.	Upgrade resources if funding permits.

Classroom Observations

Observations were conducted, in class 10A which consisted of 24 students, to triangulate data from the interviews, focusing on how teachers integrate literacy and technology in their classrooms. Four observation sessions were conducted from November 18-21, 2024, with detailed field notes recorded. Observational data offered insights into teachers' practical applications and student engagement with multimodal literacy.

Document Review

To supplement the interviews and observations, a document review of teachers' lesson plans was conducted. This helped identify the planned

integration of multimodal literacies, providing an additional layer of understanding regarding instructional design and the alignment with contemporary multimodal literacy practices.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. This flexible approach enables researchers to derive meaningful insights from data, aligning with the overarching research questions and objectives (Braun, 2006). Data were analyzed through thematic analysis, following the six-step process outlined in qualitative guidelines. First, a familiarization stage was conducted in which the researcher thoroughly reviewed the entire dataset to gain an initial understanding of emerging ideas. In the coding phase, significant phrases and sentences were highlighted and assigned descriptive codes that represented the core meaning of each segment. These codes were then organized into broader categories during the theme generation stage, allowing patterns and central issues to emerge. A subsequent theme review was undertaken to verify that the identified themes accurately reflected the data and remained consistent throughout. Each theme was then clearly defined and labeled to ensure conceptual clarity and analytical precision. Finally, the report writing phase involved organizing and interpreting the findings in relation to the research questions, highlighting their practical implications and providing recommendations relevant to English Language Teaching (ELT) practices.

Data Validation

To ensure validity and reliability, the study employed triangulation through multiple data sources: interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews. This triangulation approach aligns with qualitative guidelines, helping to minimize bias and verify the accuracy of findings. Triangulation enhances the validity of qualitative research findings by incorporating multiple methods and sources of data. This approach mitigates bias and provides a more holistic understanding of the research context (Denzin, (1978). The combination of these techniques provides a

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comprehensive view of the multimodal literacy integration, challenges and opportunities faced by English teachers in MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek, offering practical insights to inform future ELT practices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Enhanced Student Engagement and Comprehension

The integration of multimodal literacy in teaching descriptive texts proved to be effective in increasing student engagement. Classroom observations revealed that students demonstrated higher attentiveness and participation during lessons that employed visual aids, such as PowerPoint slides, audio clips, and interactive digital tools, as observed in 3 out of 4 sessions. This multimodal approach facilitated a deeper comprehension of descriptive texts as students were able to connect textual information with visual and auditory stimuli.

The table below is based on observational data for 24 students, focusing on their engagement, challenges, and responses to multimodal literacy practices in a classroom setting:

Table 2. classroom observation

No.	Student	Level of Engage ment	Challenges Observed	Response to Multimodal Activities	Notes
1	AND	High	None	Actively participated, highly engaged	Strong visual learner
2	ANN	Moderate	Difficulty using technology	Engaged with visual and interactive elements	Needed assistance with digital tools
3	BIN	Low	Limited compre-hension of tasks	Minimal participation	Struggles with both text and visual modalities

4	DEV	High	None	Enthusiastic about audio and interactive media	Excelled in group activities
5	FAD	Moderate	Difficulty transitioning between tasks	Responded well to audio explanations	Improved with guided practice
6	KHO	High	None	Actively engaged in creating multimodal texts	Strong grasp of digital tools
7	LIZ	Low	Poor focus on activities	Limited interaction with materials	Required one-on-one attention
8	FAH	Moderate	Initial hesitation with group activities	Gradual improvement in engagement	Benefited from peer collaboration
9	AJI	High	None	Fully engaged with interactive presentations	Excellent comprehension of multimodal content
10	FDL	Low	Resistance to use of digital media	Minimal response to tasks	Preferred traditional learning methods
11	FJR	High	None	Showed creativity in multimodal assignments	Enjoyed hands-on activities
12	RSQ	Moderate	Limited vocabulary	Improved with visual aids	Responded well to multimedia support
13	SYA	High	None	Fully engaged, especially with visuals	Strong communication skills
14	MUT	Low	Lack of interest in topics	Passive participation	Required frequent encouragement

DOI: dx.doi.org/10.21274/ls.2025.17.1.163-188

15	NIK	Moderate	Difficulty following instructions	Improved over time with teacher guidance	Preferred visual and interactive content
16	NIN	High	None	Proficient in digital tool usage	Helped peers with technological challenges
17	NOV	Low	Struggled with multitasking	Limited output in multimodal tasks	Needs support with task comprehension
18	NUZ	Moderate	Nervous in group settings	Active once comfortable with group dynamics	Shy but improved over time
19	RAF	High	None	Demonstrated leadership in group activities	Highly adaptable to different modalities
20	RIZ	Moderate	Distracted by non-academic use of devices	Engaged when monitored closely	Benefits from structured tasks
21	SUL	Low	Difficulty grasping multimodal concepts	Minimal participation	Required remedial assistance
22	TSA	Moderate	Struggled with integrating multiple modes	Gradual improvement with feedback	Responded well to constructive feedback
23	WID	High	None	Fully engaged and creative with tasks	Excelled in visual and written modalities
24	EMA	Moderate	Limited time management skills	Active but needed reminders to stay on task	Benefits from timed, clear instructions

Table 2 illustrates the levels of engagement, challenges observed, and responses of students to multimodal activities during classroom observations, capturing varied student experiences and identifying individual challenges in their engagement with multimodal literacy activities.

Table 3 Comparison of Traditional and Multimodal Teaching Methods Across Key Aspects

Aspect	Traditional Method	Multimodal Method	Observations
Level of Student Engagement	Lower engagement, especially among students preferring digital tools.	Higher engagement, particularly for visual and interactive learners.	Students with high engagement actively participated and showed enthusiasm.
Challenges	Struggles with comprehension or interest for low-engagement students.	Difficulty in multitasking or using digital tools for some students.	Students required guidance and training to optimize their multimodal usage.
Response to Activities	Preferred by students resistant to technology (e.g., M. Fadilah).	Highly effective for visual and interactive learners (e.g., Andini).	Multimodal activities appeal to diverse learning styles but need adjustments.
Learning Outcomes	Stable outcomes but limited creativity and collaboration.	Improved retention, creativity, and collaboration (e.g., Khoirul).	Multimodal methods enhanced both comprehension and group participation.
Inclusivity	Relies on simplicity, limiting appeal to advanced learners.	Caters to a wider range of learners through visual and digital media.	Students like M. Risqi improved comprehension with multimedia tools.

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Teacher Preparedness	More reliant on teacher-prepared materials, less flexibility.	Flexible and diverse, requiring teacher training and resource access.	Teachers reported challenges such as limited time and lack of technological resources, especially in rural schools like MAU Jabal Noor.
Student Preferences	Preferred by students like M. Fadilah who resist technology.	Preferred by students like Andini and Khoirul.	Strong preference for multimodal teaching among digitally adept students.
Perceptions	Skeptical, favoring familiarity and traditional methods.	Positive, especially among tech-savvy families.	Mixed perceptions based on familiarity with multimodal approaches.
Biggest Advantage	Stability and simplicity for reluctant learners.	Enhanced creativity, engagement, and collaborative opportunities.	Multimodal approaches align well with 21st-century skills development.

Table 3 provides a comparative overview of traditional and multimodal teaching methods, drawing on patterns observed in the previous student engagement table. The earlier results showed that students generally responded more positively to multimodal activities, with higher engagement and improved comprehension among visual and interactive learners. Building on these findings, Table 2 highlights how key instructional aspects—such as engagement, learning outcomes, inclusivity, and student preferences—differ between the two approaches, emphasizing the advantages of multimodal teaching in addressing diverse learner needs.

Building on this comparative understanding, the following bar chart visually reinforces the trend observed across both tables by illustrating how student engagement levels vary when multimodal literacy strategies are implemented. By depicting the distribution of students across high, moderate,

and low engagement categories, it provides a clear, data-driven complement to the earlier findings, showing how multimodal methods translate into tangible improvements in classroom participation and attentiveness.

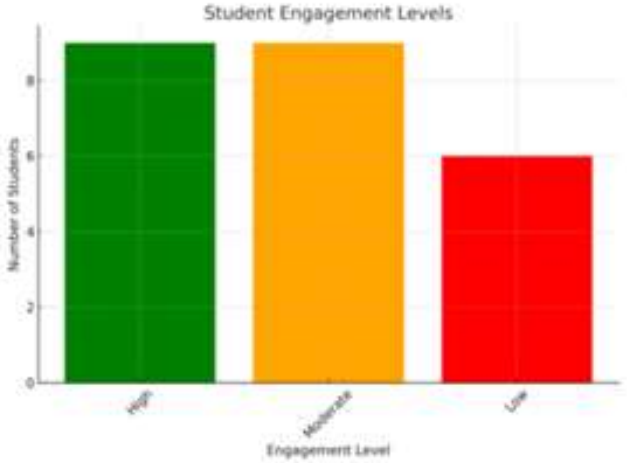

Figure 1. Distribution of Student Engagement Levels in Multimodal Literacy Activities

Teacher Preparedness

Interviews with teachers highlighted varying levels of preparedness in implementing multimodal literacy. While some teachers exhibited enthusiasm and creativity in integrating multimedia tools, others faced challenges due to limited training or unfamiliarity with available technological resources. This discrepancy affected the consistency and quality of multimodal literacy implementation in the classroom. Teachers who were confident in using digital tools demonstrated greater creativity in lesson design, integrating multimodal elements that enhanced student engagement and comprehension. In contrast, teachers with minimal technological expertise tended to rely on traditional methods despite recognizing the potential benefits of multimodal instruction.

This finding suggests that teacher preparedness is not merely a matter of willingness, but is closely tied to institutional support, opportunities for professional development, and access to continuous mentorship. The inconsistency observed points to a systemic issue: without sustained

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investment in teacher capacity-building, multimodal literacy cannot be implemented effectively. This aligns with research emphasizing that teacher competence is a decisive factor in determining whether digital innovations succeed or remain superficial add-ons in instruction.

Access to Technology and Resources

One of the critical challenges identified was the lack of sufficient technological resources. The availability of devices such as projectors, computers, and internet connectivity was inconsistent. Teachers and students faced difficulties accessing digital tools, which limited the scope of multimodal activities.

In several cases, teachers were forced to postpone or modify planned activities due to malfunctioning equipment or limited device sharing among students. Such constraints reduced the frequency and quality of multimodal interactions, particularly in group-based or collaborative tasks that required simultaneous access to digital tools.

The impact of limited resources was particularly evident in rural contexts like MAU Jabal Noor, where infrastructural challenges pose persistent barriers to technological integration. This finding underscores the need for policy-level interventions aimed at improving digital infrastructure, ensuring equitable access, and reducing disparities between resource-rich and resource-constrained schools.

Student Adaptation to Multimodal Learning

Students demonstrated varying levels of adaptability to multimodal literacy. Those who were more accustomed to using digital tools outside the classroom adjusted quickly and performed better in activities requiring the use of multimedia. However, some students required additional guidance, indicating a need for scaffolding in multimodal literacy practices. These students often hesitated, expressed confusion, or relied heavily on teacher support.

This variation highlights the importance of scaffolding in multimodal literacy instruction. Teachers must provide explicit modeling, step-by-step

demonstrations, and ongoing feedback to help students develop confidence in using multimedia tools. Without such scaffolding, multimodal learning may unintentionally disadvantage learners with limited prior exposure to technology, thereby widening achievement gaps rather than reducing them.

Pedagogical Implications

The study found that effective integration of multimodal literacy required a balanced approach between traditional and digital teaching methods. Teachers who combined multimedia resources with direct instruction and hands-on activities achieved better learning outcomes compared to those who relied solely on digital tools.

Multimodal resources enriched lessons by capturing student interest and presenting information in multiple forms, which supported diverse learning preferences. However, when multimedia was used excessively or without clear pedagogical intention, students became distracted or overwhelmed, and the learning objectives lost clarity.

This reinforces the need for a balanced pedagogical model—one that recognizes the strengths of both traditional and digital approaches. Traditional methods provide structure, depth, and familiarity, while multimodal tools enhance engagement, creativity, and active participation. Together, they create a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

The implication is clear: multimodal literacy should not replace conventional teaching but complement it. Educators must develop the ability to strategically select multimodal elements that support learning goals, rather than incorporating technology for its novelty alone.

Discussion

The findings align with existing literature emphasizing the benefits of multimodal literacy in enhancing student engagement and comprehension. The observed increase in student attentiveness and participation confirms the potential of multimedia resources to cater to diverse learning styles. This finding resonates with theories of multimodal learning, which advocate for the use of multiple modes of representation to address individual differences

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in learning preferences. This aligns with the theoretical frameworks proposed by Kress (2010) and Jewitt (2008), who assert that learning is enhanced when students are exposed to multiple modes of meaning-making—visual, auditory, textual, and kinaesthetic. The case of MAU Jabal Noor Trenggalek demonstrates that multimodal interaction not only sustains learner interest but also facilitates richer interpretative and analytical processes, particularly in environments where traditional literacy practices have predominated.

When discussing multimodal literacy, all participants agreed that technology is to stay and will continue to shape literacy practices. They acknowledged that multimodal literacy has grown significantly and will likely keep expanding. The participants highlighted the impact of new technologies such as text messaging, instant messaging, social media, and blogging on both their students' and their own literacy habits. The integration of text messaging, social media platforms, and digital content creation into students' daily routines underscores what Leu et al. (2013) describe as the "new literacies" of online environments. All participants recognized that multimodal literacy is inevitable, and teachers must prepare themselves for it. Thus, the teachers' acknowledgment of multimodal literacy as an unavoidable dimension of modern education indicates a broader cultural transition toward digitally mediated learning.

However, the challenges of teacher preparedness and resource availability underscore the need for systemic support in adopting multimodal literacy. Professional development programs focusing on multimedia integration and the provision of technological infrastructure are essential to bridge this gap. Schools must also prioritize equitable access to digital tools to ensure all students can benefit from multimodal learning opportunities. Furthermore, the varying adaptability of students to multimodal learning highlights the importance of differentiated instruction. Teachers must recognize and address individual needs by providing scaffolding and support for students who may struggle with technology-based tasks. This aligns with prior research (e.g., Rowsell & Walsh, 2011), which notes that

teachers require structured professional development to build confidence and competence in designing multimodal learning experiences. Institutional support—in the form of technological infrastructure, reliable internet access, and ongoing training—becomes crucial in enabling teachers to fully enact multimodal pedagogies.

Finally, the study underscores the necessity of a balanced pedagogical approach. While digital tools enhance learning, over-reliance on technology can hinder critical thinking and interaction. Teachers must strive to blend traditional teaching methods with multimodal strategies to create a comprehensive and inclusive learning environment.

CONCLUSION

The successful implementation of multimodal literacy in teaching descriptive texts demonstrates its potential to enhance student engagement and comprehension. However, this requires systemic efforts, including professional development, equitable access to technology, and culturally responsive pedagogy, to address challenges faced in rural schools. This study has demonstrated that multimodal approaches, which integrate text, visuals, audio, and interactive media, create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles. By using these approaches, students are more likely to actively participate in the learning process, connect abstract ideas to concrete representations, and retain information more effectively.

However, this study also revealed several challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the successful integration of multimodal literacy in classrooms. The level of teacher preparedness emerged as a critical factor; educators must be equipped with the necessary skills, training, and confidence to utilize multimodal tools effectively. Moreover, access to technology and resources, such as devices, software, and reliable internet connectivity, remains a significant barrier, particularly in schools with limited funding or infrastructure.

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Additionally, the varying levels of student adaptation to multimodal learning point to the necessity of differentiated instruction. Teachers must employ scaffolding techniques to support students who are less familiar with technology while fostering independence and creativity among those who adapt quickly. This balance ensures that all students, regardless of their background or prior exposure to digital tools, can benefit from multimodal learning.

This study underscores the importance of adopting a balanced approach to pedagogy, combining traditional teaching methods with digital and interactive tools. While technology enriches the learning experience, it should not overshadow the foundational principles of teaching, such as fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and interpersonal skills. The integration of multimodal literacy should be guided by thoughtful planning, ongoing teacher development, and a clear understanding of students' diverse needs.

This study recommends that educational institutions provide continuous professional development to strengthen teachers' practical skills in designing and delivering multimodal instruction. At the same time, improvements in technological infrastructure are essential, and policymakers and school administrators should prioritize equitable access to digital tools and reliable connectivity for both teachers and students. In classroom practice, teachers are encouraged to adopt differentiated instructional strategies that respond to varying levels of digital readiness and learning preferences. Finally, future research should investigate innovative and context-appropriate approaches for applying multimodal literacy across different subjects and school settings, addressing the gaps and questions highlighted in this study.

By addressing these areas, educators and stakeholders can create a robust framework for the effective integration of multimodal literacy, ensuring its sustainability and impact in the digital era. This study contributes to the broader discourse on literacy education by highlighting both the opportunities and challenges of multimodal approaches and offering practical strategies to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

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