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BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING DIGITAL MULTIMODAL TEXTS: A CASE STUDY OF TWO EFL TEACHERS

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Abstract: The integration of digital technology in education has encouraged teachers to adopt innovative approaches that support students' learning needs. One such approach is the use of digital multimodal texts, which combine visual, audio, video, and textual elements to enhance learning experiences. While previous studies have mainly focused on students' perspectives, limited research has explored teachers' views in Indonesian EFL contexts. This study aimed to investigate English teachers' perceptions of digital multimodal texts and identify the benefits and challenges of their implementation in English language teaching. Using a descriptive qualitative design, data were collected through a pre-interview reflective checklist and follow-up semi-structured interviews with two English teachers at SMA Al-Ma'soem, West Java, Indonesia.. The findings revealed that teachers held positive perceptions toward the use of digital multimodal texts. They reported that digital multimodal texts enhanced students' motivation, creativity, critical thinking, and comprehension while accommodating diverse learning styles. However, challenges related to internet connectivity and technical difficulties during the initial implementation were also identified. The study highlights the importance of adequate technological infrastructure and continuous professional development to support the effective integration of digital multimodal texts in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: digital multimodal texts, teacher perception, EFL classroom, educational technology, English language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

English plays an important role as an international language used in global communication, education, business, and international cooperation. In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject in secondary education with the expectation that students will be able to communicate effectively and participate in the global community. However, despite its importance, English language learning outcomes among Indonesian students

remain unsatisfactory. Previous studies have reported that many students demonstrate low engagement and limited participation in English learning activities even when they possess both integrative and instrumental motivation (Usman & Mustofa, 2023). This condition suggests the need for more innovative and engaging teaching approaches that can improve students' learning experiences and outcomes.

One factor contributing to the limited success of English language learning is the use of conventional teaching methods that often fail to attract students' interest. Traditional approaches frequently emphasize printed texts and teacher-centered instruction, which may not effectively support active learning and meaningful engagement. As a result, students tend to become less motivated and reluctant to participate in English learning activities (Lubis et al., 2024). Furthermore, students have different learning preferences and needs. Then individual differences in learning styles require teachers to employ more flexible and adaptive instructional approaches that can accommodate diverse learners. (Fahrozi & Sutikno, 2024).

In response to these challenges, the integration of digital technology has become increasingly important in educational practices (Sakina et al., 2020). The rapid development of technology has created opportunities for teachers to design learning environments that are interactive, collaborative, creative, and engaging (Taufik et al., 2023; Sakina & Astuti, 2024). Technology-assisted learning not only supports students' understanding of learning materials but also helps them develop digital literacy skills that are essential in the contemporary world (Syata et al., 2024). Consequently, educational institutions are increasingly encouraged to integrate digital resources into classroom instruction.

One instructional approach that has gained growing attention is the use of digital multimodal texts. Digital multimodal texts refer to the integration of multiple modes of communication, such as written language, images, audio, video, animation, and gestures, within a single learning resource (Ikasari et al., 2019). Through the combination of various semiotic resources, digital multimodal texts provide richer learning experiences and allow students to access information through multiple channels. The development of digital technology has also contributed significantly to the growing use of multimodality in language learning, making it a relevant approach in contemporary educational settings (Uli, 2024)

Previous studies have highlighted the educational benefits of digital multimodal texts. Digital multimodal media can increase students' enthusiasm and motivation in learning English, particularly in reading activities (Uli, 2024). It is also reported that students perceived digital multimodal texts as helpful in facilitating their understanding of English learning materials and supporting the development of skills that are useful for their future (Rusydah, 2022). In addition, Ilmi et al., (2022) revealed that multimodal activities encourage students to utilize various communication modes and promote collaborative learning experiences. Furthermore, Molin & Godhe, (2020) argued that digital multimodal texts contribute to the development of students' critical thinking and critical awareness of texts. These findings indicate that multimodal learning has considerable potential to enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes.

Although studies on digital multimodal texts have increased in recent years, most previous research has focused primarily on students' perspectives and learning experiences. Existing studies have investigated students' perceptions of multimodal learning, their attitudes toward multimodal tasks, and the impact of multimodal texts on language learning outcomes (Rusydah, 2022; Dahlström, 2022; Fitriani et al., 2024; Yawiloeng, 2022). However, limited attention has been given to teachers' perspectives regarding the implementation of

digital multimodal texts in English language classrooms. Since teachers play a crucial role in selecting, designing, and implementing instructional materials, understanding their perceptions is essential for the successful integration of multimodal pedagogies.

In addition, previous studies have rarely examined both the benefits and challenges of digital multimodal texts from teachers' perspectives simultaneously. Exploring teachers' experiences can provide deeper insights into the practical implementation of digital multimodal texts, including the advantages they offer and the difficulties teachers encounter during classroom application. Such understanding is particularly important in Indonesian EFL contexts, where technological infrastructure, digital competence, and access to educational resources may vary across institutions.

Although previous studies have highlighted the pedagogical benefits of digital multimodal texts, relatively little is known about how Indonesian EFL teachers operationalize these resources in their everyday classroom practices and negotiate the practical challenges that emerge during implementation. Most existing studies focus primarily on students' outcomes or technology integration in general rather than teachers' lived instructional experiences within specific school contexts. Therefore, this study investigates how two Indonesian EFL teachers perceive, implement, and negotiate the use of digital multimodal texts in their English classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Multimodal Texts

The advancement of digital technology has transformed the ways information is created, delivered, and consumed in educational settings. One approach that has emerged from this development is the use of digital multimodal texts. Multimodality refers to the integration of multiple semiotic modes, including linguistic, visual, auditory, spatial, and gestural elements, to construct meaning and facilitate communication (Ikasari et al., 2019). In educational contexts, digital multimodal texts combine these modes through digital platforms, allowing learners to access information through written texts, images, videos, audio recordings, animations, and other interactive features.

The increasing use of multimodal texts has significantly influenced English language teaching. Cowan & Kress, (2017) argue that the development of digital environments has expanded opportunities for language teachers to integrate multiple communication modes into classroom instruction. Similarly, Adami, (2015) emphasizes that digital environments enable teachers to combine various media formats more effectively, creating richer learning experiences for students. As a result, multimodal texts have become an important instructional resource that supports contemporary language learning practices.

In English language classrooms, digital multimodal texts provide students with opportunities to interact with learning materials through multiple channels simultaneously. According to Miclea & Roman (2024), multimodal texts create more dynamic learning experiences by integrating visual, textual, and auditory elements, enabling students to construct meaning more effectively. Consequently, multimodal learning environments have become increasingly relevant in addressing the demands of twenty-first-century education.

Teachers' Perceptions of Digital Multimodal Texts

Perception refers to the process through which individuals receive, interpret, and understand information obtained through their senses. In educational settings, teachers' perceptions influence their attitudes, decisions, and instructional practices. Kahfii (2020) explains that perception involves the process of interpreting observed phenomena and generating meaning based on individual experiences and knowledge.

Teachers' perceptions of technology integration are influenced by several factors. Singhavi & Basargekar, (2020) identify experience as one of the most influential factors shaping teachers' views toward educational technology. Teachers who frequently utilize technology in their instructional practices tend to develop more positive attitudes toward its implementation. In addition, adequate training and access to technological resources contribute to teachers' confidence in using technology effectively in classroom instruction.

Understanding teachers' perceptions is important because positive perceptions often encourage technology adoption, while negative perceptions may hinder implementation. Therefore, investigating teachers' views regarding digital multimodal texts can provide valuable insights into how such resources are integrated into English language teaching practices.

Benefits of Digital Multimodal Texts in English Language Learning

Rather than functioning as merely technological resources, digital multimodal texts reshape how teachers design instruction, facilitate classroom interaction, and respond to diverse learner needs. Previous studies consistently report pedagogical benefits; however, they also suggest that successful implementation depends on teachers' pedagogical beliefs, digital competence, institutional support, and classroom contexts. Thus, the effectiveness of multimodal texts cannot be separated from teachers' decision-making processes.

Digital multimodal texts offer various pedagogical benefits for both teachers and students. One of the primary advantages is their ability to accommodate different learning styles. Since students possess diverse preferences for processing information, multimodal texts allow them to engage with learning materials through visual, auditory, and interactive elements simultaneously (Hidayat et al., 2024). This flexibility helps teachers create more inclusive learning environments.

Another significant benefit is the enhancement of students' motivation and engagement. The integration of images, videos, audio, and interactive content can make learning activities more attractive and meaningful. Fitriani et al., (2024) found that multimodal texts increase students' interest in learning because they provide more varied and interactive learning experiences compared to conventional text-based instruction. As students become more actively involved in learning activities, their motivation to participate also increases.

Furthermore, digital multimodal texts contribute to the development of higher-order thinking skills. Molin & Godhe, (2020) argue that multimodal learning encourages students to analyse information from multiple perspectives and develop critical awareness toward texts. Similarly, . Ilmi et al., (2022) highlight that multimodal activities promote creativity and collaboration by encouraging students to utilize different communication modes when completing learning tasks. These benefits

demonstrate the potential of digital multimodal texts to support meaningful language learning experiences.

Challenges of Digital Multimodal Texts in English Language Learning

Despite their potential benefits, the implementation of digital multimodal texts also presents several challenges. One common challenge relates to technological infrastructure. Jeong (2025) notes that advanced digital technologies often require reliable internet access and adequate technological resources to function effectively. Limited infrastructure may therefore hinder the successful implementation of multimodal learning activities.

Another challenge concerns teachers' technological competence and preparedness. According to Pereira et al., (2023), designing and implementing multimodal learning materials requires teachers to possess sufficient digital literacy and technical skills. Teachers who lack experience with digital tools may encounter difficulties during the preparation and implementation stages.

Additionally, the effective use of multimodal texts requires careful instructional planning. Rahate et al., (2022) emphasize that the integration of multiple modes must be balanced and purposeful to avoid creating unnecessary complexity for learners. Therefore, successful implementation depends not only on technological resources but also on teachers' ability to design meaningful learning experiences using multimodal materials.

Considering both the benefits and challenges of digital multimodal texts, exploring teachers' perceptions becomes essential for understanding how these resources are implemented in real classroom contexts. Such understanding can provide useful insights for improving technology-enhanced English language teaching practices.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore English teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of digital multimodal texts in classroom instruction. Qualitative research enables researchers to understand and interpret participants' experiences, perspectives, and meanings within a particular context (Gunawan, 2013). A descriptive qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to provide a detailed description of teachers' views and experiences regarding the use of digital multimodal texts in English language teaching.

SMA Al-Ma'soem was selected as the research site because it has actively integrated digital technologies into English language teaching, making it an information-rich case for investigating teachers' experiences with digital multimodal texts. The school was selected because digital multimodal texts had been integrated into English language learning practices. The participants consisted of two English teachers who had experience implementing digital multimodal texts in their classrooms. The participants were purposively selected based on their teaching experience and their familiarity with the use of multimodal resources in English instruction.

Data were collected through a structured teacher reflection checklist and semi-structured interviews. The reflection checklist was used as a preliminary qualitative instrument to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences with digital multimodal texts before the interview sessions. It focused on three areas: teachers' attitudes toward integrating digital multimodal texts into classroom instruction, their

experiences in using multimodal resources during teaching, and their professional development related to multimodal teaching practices. The checklist included a combination of reflective prompts and brief response items adapted Jayanti & Damayanti, (2023), serving as a guide for the subsequent interviews rather than as a quantitative measurement instrument.

To obtain deeper insights into teachers' experiences, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both participants. The interviews explored teachers' perceptions of digital multimodal texts as well as the benefits and challenges encountered during implementation. The interview protocol was developed based on the theoretical framework proposed by Jayanti & Damayanti, (2023). and Hidayat et al., (2024). The interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted approximately twenty minutes for each participant.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data condensation stage, relevant information obtained from questionnaires and interviews was selected, categorized, and simplified according to the research objectives. Subsequently, the data were organized and presented through descriptive narratives and tables to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns, relationships, and themes related to teachers' perceptions, benefits, and challenges in implementing digital multimodal texts.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, methodological triangulation was employed by comparing data obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The use of multiple data sources enabled the researcher to verify the consistency of participants' responses and strengthen the credibility of the study findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher's Perception of Using Digital Multimodal in Teaching English

To answer the first research question regarding teachers' perceptions of digital multimodal texts, data were analyzed from the teacher reflection checklist and semi-structured interviews. Rather than quantifying teachers' responses, the analysis focused on identifying recurring themes that reflected how the participants perceived and implemented digital multimodal texts in English language teaching. Two interrelated themes emerged from the data: (1) positive attitudes toward the integration of digital multimodal texts and (2) classroom experiences in implementing multimodal instruction.

Positive Attitudes toward the Integration of Digital Multimodal Texts

Both participating teachers expressed positive attitudes toward the integration of digital multimodal texts into English language teaching. They believed that combining visual, audio, video, and interactive resources was more appropriate for today's learners, who are already familiar with digital media in their daily lives. Rather than relying solely on printed textbooks, both teachers considered multimodal resources essential for creating more engaging and meaningful learning experiences.

Excerpt 1

"Students prefer learning through multimedia. If we only use textbooks, they become bored after a while. They want visuals, videos, and real examples." (Teacher 1)

Similarly, Teacher 2 emphasized the importance of integrating different instructional media into English language teaching.

Excerpt 2

"Teachers should use various instructional media because students have different characteristics and different levels of English proficiency." (Teacher 2)

These findings indicate that both teachers perceived digital multimodal texts as pedagogical resources that support students' engagement and facilitate English language learning. This finding is consistent with Cowan & Kress, (2017), who argue that the development of digital technologies has transformed multimodality into an important approach to language learning.

Teachers' Classroom Experiences in Using Digital Multimodal Texts

The interview findings further revealed that both teachers had extensive experience integrating digital multimodal texts into their classroom instruction. Rather than depending solely on printed materials, they regularly combined various digital resources such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, audio recordings, online platforms, and interactive learning activities to support students' understanding.

Teacher 1 described how digital multimodal resources had become part of her daily teaching practice below.

Excerpt 3

"I usually prepare PowerPoint presentations, learning videos, Google Forms, and even upload my teaching materials to my educational website and YouTube channel." (Teacher 1)

Meanwhile, Teacher 2 also explained that multimedia resources were regularly incorporated into classroom instruction.

Excerpt 4

"We combine PowerPoint, videos, textbooks, and other learning media because students understand the lesson better when different media are used." (Teacher 2)

The findings suggest that both teachers had moved beyond conventional teaching practices and actively integrated digital multimodal resources into their instructional activities. Their teaching experiences also encouraged continuous professional learning, as they sought opportunities to improve their digital competencies and instructional practices.

These findings support Singhavi and Basargekar (2020), who argue that teachers' prior experience with educational technology contributes significantly to their

confidence and willingness to integrate technology into classroom instruction. Likewise, Jayanti and Damayanti (2023) reported that Indonesian EFL teachers generally viewed multimodal literacy positively because it enabled them to design more engaging learning experiences. Similar findings were also reported by Hidayat et al. (2024), who found that multimodal texts effectively supported student engagement and accommodated diverse learning needs.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the two participating teachers perceived digital multimodal texts as valuable pedagogical resources and consistently incorporated them into their classroom practices. Within the context of this case study, their positive perceptions were reflected not only in their beliefs but also in their instructional decisions and professional efforts to create more engaging English language learning experiences.

Benefits of Using Digital Multimodal Texts

The interview data revealed three major benefits of implementing digital multimodal texts in English language learning: enhancing students' creativity and critical thinking, accommodating diverse learning styles, and increasing students' motivation. These themes emerged consistently from both participants' responses and represent the primary pedagogical advantages perceived by the teachers.

Regarding creativity and critical thinking, both participants explained that digital multimodal texts encourage students to become more creative in presenting ideas while simultaneously developing their critical thinking and comprehension skills in English learning. The teachers emphasized that students were able to explore various forms of communication by combining visual, audio, video, and textual elements when completing classroom tasks.

Excerpt 5

*"So, they read the news. They find the news; it's up to the source. It can be Indonesian, it can be overseas, local, international. You present it like it's on television. Give the music intro first. You can find a lot on YouTube. **So, they are more creative.** It turns out to be good ... **So, they are more critical after seeing the examples in the videos that I show**". (Teacher 1)*

Excerpt 6

*"Just understand more, understand more when they will use something, they will use the language, they will use it with that way of thinking, they will think more about it. How to express the language. Because one of the factors that is the goal is that they **can express their language and even create their own words** that can be applied by themselves to convey. That's the point". (Teacher 2)*

From the statement above, it can be seen that the application of multimodal text is able to create learning that enhancing students' creativity and engagement. The findings of this study are in line with the literature that have been discussed, especially those reviewed by Borysiuk cited in Dirane, (2024) which mention the various benefits of technology in education, including: 1) Development of skills and abilities for creative endeavors - seen in tasks such as making videos, composing passive sentences from

movies, or conveying ideas in original formats. 2) Activation of learning through the use of visually striking and rapidly evolving forms of information presentation - multimodal activities such as playing videos and creating projects, show increased student engagement over conventional text-based methods alone. 3) Reinforcement of independent study - students are able to express ideas in their own words and dare to experiment linguistically.

In terms of accommodating students' different learning styles, the interview results show that the use of multimodal texts in English learning significantly helps teachers accommodate students' different learning styles, particularly between audio, visual and kinesthetic learning styles. This can be seen from the following statements:

Excerpt 7

*"Yes, the learning style is different. Yes, it's different. With multimodal, the children sometimes **understand after watching**. With books, they understand after reading. With books, they read. If with watching, **understand by seeing**, with him watching so, understand. Kinesthetic children don't like to read. So given a book, open this page, they can just see, read but not understand. It's different if they are given examples in pictures, in the form of pictures, animations". (Teacher 1)*

Excerpt 8

*"It is **clear that digital multimodal text accommodates students' learning styles**. Because the purpose of one of the media **is for everyone to understand**. Now that's why if we already understand in it we will make our own, create our own learning media, one of which is in pictures and fields and so on put into our method. Because we ourselves will know the character of each student. That way they can better understand the methods taught". (Teacher 2)*

From the above statement, it can be seen that digital multimodal text provides pedagogical benefits by bridging students' learning needs. This finding is consistent with previous literature, especially that proposed by Borysiuk cited in Dirane (2024), which emphasizes that one of the benefits of technology in learning is Individualization of instruction, which is the ability of teachers to adapt teaching methods to the needs of individual students.

In terms of increasing students' motivation, the interview results show that digital multimodal texts significantly increase students' motivation in learning. This can be seen from the following statements:

Excerpt 9

*"It's fun to use that. So yes, **they are more likely to ask for multimedia**. Not if it's just a book. Yes, some of them like it, but they get bored after a while. They also want the visuals. The visual is watching, seeing samples. **If the samples are all from me, for example if I demonstrate, talk, it's less exciting**. So, you hear directly from the foreigners. If in the video, the English person is with a real accent, English, or British, or American". (Teacher 1)*

Excerpt 10

*"**Student motivation Increases** one of them where the teacher also varies in it". (Teacher 2)*

From the above statement, it can be seen that the use of multimodal text in English learning can significantly increase students' motivation, especially when the media provides an interesting learning experience. The increase in motivation does not only occur because of the interesting content, but also because teachers are able to combine diverse learning methods. This finding is highly consistent with previous theories and literature. According to Borysiuk cited in Dirane (2024), one of the main benefits of technology in learning is increased student motivation and interest. This is explained in the point Stronger motivation and interest in learning: Visual and audio-based learning makes students more interested and less bored.

The Challenges of Using Digital Multimodal Text in English Learning

From the interview results found, there are two aspects that become teachers' difficulties in using multimodal texts in learning. They are the difficulty of resource accessibility and the initial stage. In terms of resource accessibility difficulties, the interview results show that one of the challenges teachers face in using digital multimodal texts is the difficulty of accessibility to a stable internet network, especially when many users connect simultaneously to the school Wi-Fi network. This can be seen from the following statement:

Excerpt 11

"Yes, the problem is when the wifi network is not smooth, but not too often. And we have a solution. We use tethering from cellphones, the internet. Or sometimes students also like to bring their own modems. Their own modem, because they want to be comfortable. If you fight over wifi, it's not good if everyone is connected. Access likes to be slow". (Teacher 1)

From the above statement, it can be seen that this finding is consistent with the literature which states that technical aspects are one of the problems in using multimodal text in learning. As stated by Jeong, (2025) complex digital multimodal technology requires adequate infrastructure for optimal use. This is reinforced by the findings which show that teachers and students still have to find alternative solutions e.g. tethering from cellphones or bringing their own modems.

In terms of technical difficulties, the interview results showed that teachers experienced technical difficulties in the early stages of using multimodal digital texts in English language teaching. However, teachers managed to find solutions to the difficulties they faced by searching for tutorials on YouTube. This can be seen from the following statements.

Excerpt 12

"In the beginning, it was quite difficult. The beginning is the learning stage. So, in the beginning it was quite difficult ... Many tutorials finally on YouTube, how to do this, how to do that?" (Teacher 2)

In the statement above, it can be seen that the initial stage of using digital multimodal text is still an obstacle for teachers, due to limited knowledge and experience. This result is in line with the theory of Pereira et al., (2023) which emphasizes that multimodal text design requires consideration of interactive elements and cultural context. This can be seen from the limited exploration of features in PPT because teachers do not know the full potential that can be utilized.

In conclusion, the use of digital multimodal text in English language learning does have some challenges that need to be considered. Based on interviews with two teachers at Al-Ma'soem High School, the teachers considered that digital multimodal text in English teaching had a positive impact. Multimodal text has been proven to improve students' creativity, understanding, critical thinking skills, and motivation to learn. The use of various media such as video, images, audio, and animation allows teachers to accommodate students' different learning styles and make learning more interesting, meaningful, and contextual. Despite this, the main challenges they face are the unstable internet access at the school and technical difficulties in the early stages of use, especially in terms of design and mastery of digital media. To master digital media teachers must learn independently through sources such as YouTube. For solutions when Wi-Fi is slow, they usually use tethering or personal modems. Thus, although there are still technical challenges, digital multimodal text remains a relevant and effective approach in the digital era, and needs to be continuously developed through teacher training and provision of adequate infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative case study explored how two English teachers at an Indonesian senior high school perceived and implemented digital multimodal texts in their English language teaching. The findings revealed that both teachers viewed digital multimodal texts as valuable pedagogical resources that supported more engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences. Their positive perceptions were closely associated with their classroom experiences in integrating various multimodal resources, including videos, visual images, audio materials, and interactive digital platforms.

The study further showed that the implementation of digital multimodal texts promoted students' creativity, critical thinking, motivation, and accommodated diverse learning styles. At the same time, the teachers experienced several contextual challenges, particularly related to technological infrastructure and the initial process of adapting to digital instructional practices. Despite these constraints, both teachers demonstrated professional adaptability by continuously developing their digital competencies and modifying their instructional strategies according to the available resources.

Rather than suggesting that these findings represent all English teachers, this case study demonstrates how localized institutional conditions, including technological facilities, infrastructure, and opportunities for professional development, influence the everyday pedagogical decisions of EFL teachers when implementing digital multimodal texts. The findings therefore highlight the importance of understanding technology integration as a context-dependent practice shaped by the interaction between teachers' professional agency and their local teaching environment.

The study contributes to the growing discussion on digital multimodality by providing an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences within a specific Indonesian EFL context. Future research may examine similar issues across different schools and educational settings to explore how variations in institutional contexts influence teachers' implementation of digital multimodal pedagogies.

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