



Integrating Multimodal Texts in Genre-Based Approach: Teacher's and Students' Challenges and Benefits

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Abstract

Integrating multimodal text in Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is demanded in our recent era as well as the curriculum. Teachers and students will definitely experience challenges and benefits in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this study aimed to find out the challenges and benefits of integrating multimodal text in GBA. A qualitative study was employed as the methodology. This research was conducted at a public senior high school in West Java, involving one English teacher and 36 students from the twelfth grade as a research participant. The data was collected by classroom observation and interviews. The results were analyzed using inductive analysis by dividing the findings into two main themes, the challenges and the benefits experienced by the teacher and students. The research shows that major challenges that students and the teacher faced, included difficulties with resource accessibility, technical proficiency, time allocation, and preparation stage. As for the benefits, the results point to enhanced communication creativity, improved critical thinking abilities, accommodated differences in student learning styles, and increased engagement among students as essential advantages. In conclusion, integrating multimodal text in GBA provides more benefits than challenges for both the teacher and students. Therefore, it is recommended to integrate multimodal text in GBA, especially in teaching English.

Keywords: Genre-based Approach; Multimodal Text; Multimodality

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an important shift in education towards the integration of multimodality, recognizing the diverse ways individuals process and interact with information. Multimodal theories, which is rooted in social semiotics, posits that meaning-making is a multimodal process that involves the interaction of different semiotic resources, including language, images, gestures, and sounds (Kress, 2010). According to Kress, modes are not isolated entities but interconnected systems that contribute to the communicative function of a text as a whole. Ways of communication that combine two or more semiotic modes, such as linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial elements, to convey meaning are defined as multimodal texts (Kress, 2010; Kress & Leeuwen, 2001). This integration of various communication methods creates a rich and varied experience, enhancing understanding and interaction. This evolution is very important in various contexts of approaches to learning, one of which is the genre-based approach, which has great potential to enrich the learning experience.

The genre-based approach (GBA) in the learning process emphasizes the importance of language teaching through the exploration of various genres and their associated linguistic features, rhetorical structures, and communicative purposes (Martin & Rose, 2008). It aims to develop students' genre awareness and proficiency in using language effectively in different contexts. Complementing this approach, multimodal text integration introduces multiple modes of communication, such as visual, auditory, and spatial elements, to increase student understanding and engagement (The New London Group, 2000). Multimodal texts offer students multiple entry points to access and interact with content, meeting a variety of learning preferences and strengths (Jewitt, 2008). By integrating multimodal texts in GBA, teachers can create learning environments that encourage deeper understanding, critical thinking skills, and creativity among learners. Thus, the use of multimodal texts and GBA has many advantages in the learning process but also presents a series of challenges that must be faced by teachers and students.

Previous research has found, based on the use of multimodal texts in the classroom, Lim, Amos, and Yoon (2020) conducted research that focused on the challenges educators face in designing multimodal tasks that are effective and aligned with curriculum goals. They highlight the need for ongoing professional development to adapt teaching strategies and seamlessly integrate technology. Additionally, Williams and Walker (2018) emphasize the benefits of using multimodal texts in inclusive classrooms, where a variety of learning styles and needs can be met through multimodal literacy instruction. Furthermore, a researcher found that focused on the challenges teachers face in implementing multimodal tasks effectively, including issues related to access to technology and diverse learning styles (Lim Fei et al., 2015).

Additionally, in terms of multimodal texts and GBA, research conducted by Green and Bloome (2012) revealed that integrating multimodal texts within a genre-based framework provides students with opportunities to engage deeply with content and develop analytical skills across multiple modes of communication. Callow (2018) underscore the potential of multimodal genre-based teaching in enhancing meaningful learning experiences and improving students' overall academic achievement. Although there are challenges associated with designing and implementing multimodal texts. Based on the research above, it can be concluded that there is still little research that seeks to find out the challenges and benefits of integrating multimodal text and GBA, especially in the Indonesian context.

The previous studies above have not discussed further the challenges and benefits of the relationship between multimodal text and GBA. Therefore, this research focuses on finding out the challenges and benefits for teachers and students in integrating multimodal texts and GBA in the Indonesian context to fill the existing gaps.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides an overview of this study with three main sections. Such as multimodal texts, the genre-based approach, and previous studies.

Multimodal Texts

Multimodal texts are texts that include multiple modes (or genres) of representation, with combined elements of print, visual images, and design (Groenke & Prickett, 2012; Kress & Leeuwen, 2001). The multimodal text presents information or text in a variety of modes of semiotic sources (Serafini, 2012). These texts can include anything from a combination of images, videos, music, and written text to interactive digital media. Multimodal texts can be classified into various types, according to The New London Group (2000) identifies several key types of multimodal texts that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of communication and meaning-making. These include linguistic modes, which encompass written and spoken language; visual modes, which involve images, symbols, and graphic elements; audio modes, which incorporate sound, music, and spoken words; gestural modes, including body language and gestures; and spatial modes, which involve the arrangement and organization of elements in physical or digital spaces.

The integration of digital technology further expands possibilities, allowing for the creation of multimodal texts that combine text, images, animations, and sound, thereby enhancing meaning-making in language education (Apriani et al., 2021; Magnusson & Godhe, 2019). These diverse modes interact and combine to create complex multimodal texts such as advertisements, films, websites, and interactive digital media. The New London Group's framework emphasizes the importance of considering multiple modes of representation in analyzing and creating texts, highlighting the dynamic and interactive nature of communication in contemporary contexts.

However, integrating multimodal texts into educational contexts poses certain challenges. Unsworth (2021) discusses the complexity of designing tasks that effectively leverage multimodal resources while aligning with curriculum objectives. Challenges may also arise in terms of technological access and proficiency, equitable resource distribution, and the development of assessment practices that accurately measure students' proficiency in multimodal literacy skills (Lim et al., 2020). Despite these challenges, numerous studies have highlighted the benefits of using multimodal texts in education. For instance, Williams and Walker (2018) emphasize the inclusivity and engagement fostered by multimodal literacy instruction in diverse classrooms. Additionally, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) argue that multimodal learning environments promote deeper comprehension, enhance creativity, and allow for varied forms of expression among students. These previous studies collectively underscore the potential of multimodal texts to enrich educational experiences and cater to diverse learning preferences and needs.

Genre-Based Approach

The genre-based approach in education refers to a pedagogical framework that emphasizes teaching and learning through the exploration and analysis of various genres. Genres are

defined as socially recognized types of texts that have specific communicative purposes, structures, and language features (Martin & Rose, 2008). In the classroom, the genre-based approach involves exposing students to authentic examples of genres, such as narratives, reports, and explanations, and guiding them in understanding the conventions and strategies used in each genre (Martin, 2009). This approach helps students develop genre awareness, enabling them to effectively navigate and produce texts across different contexts and disciplines. The genre-based approach is divided into four phases: Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF), Modelling of Text (MoT), Joint Construction of Text (JCoT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICoT) are the four steps included in each cycle (Piriyasilpa, 2016). In the initial BKoF stage, the educator enhances students' comprehension of the subject matter and establishes the cultural context surrounding the text being taught. Moving to the second stage, referred to as MoT, the teacher provides students with both written and spoken examples of the text, serving as a model for their own work production. Transitioning to the third stage, JCoT, collaborative efforts between the teacher and students are employed to develop texts, with the teacher offering guidance throughout. Finally, in the last stage, ICoT, students create both oral and written texts independently.

Furthermore, challenges in implementing the genre-based approach may include designing tasks that align with curriculum objectives, providing adequate support for students to develop genre proficiency, and addressing diverse student needs and abilities (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). However, research has shown several benefits of using the genre-based approach in education. For example, studies by Christie & Derewianka (2008) highlight how the genre-based approach enhances students' writing skills, critical thinking abilities, and language development. Additionally, Martin (2009) emphasizes the role of genre-based instruction in promoting deeper understanding and engagement among students. These previous studies underscore the effectiveness of the genre-based approach in fostering meaningful learning experiences and preparing students for academic success.

Previous Studies

Several research studies were found, related to the integration of multimodal texts within a genre-based approach in educational contexts. Gilakjani, Ismail, and Ahmadi (2011) investigated the benefits of using multimodal texts in language learning, highlighting improvements in students' language proficiency, communication skills, and cultural understanding. Similarly, a study was found that focused on the challenges faced by teachers in implementing multimodal tasks effectively, such as ensuring equitable access to technology and designing tasks that cater to diverse learning preferences (Bouchey et al., 2021). Additionally, research by Abdullah, Tandiana, and Saputra (2020) explored the impact of multimodal texts on student engagement and motivation within a genre-based framework. These studies collectively demonstrate the interaction between multimodal texts and the genre-based approach, showcasing the potential benefits of enhancing student learning experiences and outcomes.

Regarding the challenges and benefits of using multimodal texts and GBA in the classroom, there is still little research regarding the interaction of the two, especially in the Indonesian context. Many studies still focus on the advantages of each variable, so this research aims to find the challenges and advantages that teachers and students feel in using multimodal texts with GBA in English classes.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative case study design. It allows for an in-depth exploration of the phenomena under investigation within a specific context (Creswell, 2009). The case study design is particularly suitable for investigating complex educational practices and interactions within a real-world setting, such as a classroom environment (Baškarada, 2014). The participants in this research were an English teacher with 36 students in twelfth grade, at a public senior high school in West Java. The choice of a public senior high school in West Java provides a diverse and representative sample of teachers and students and also educational practices within the Indonesian context.

Data collection in this study involved two main methods: observation and interviews. Classroom observations focus on the activities and interactions of teachers and students during the learning process (Cohen, 1994). In this research, interviews are used as secondary evidence in the form of questioning the independent thinking of research participants (Silverman, 2005). Data analysis was conducted using inductive analysis, which involves identifying themes, patterns, and insights from the collected data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Thomas, 2003).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to find out the challenges and advantages of multimodal text in GBA in the classroom. After conducting research using data collection techniques in the form of classroom observations and interviews, the results were found as explained in two subsections below.

The challenges faced by the teacher and students

Based on data collection, this research found several challenges faced by teachers and students in integrating multimodal texts in a genre-based approach. The teacher faced major challenges regarding technical proficiency and resource accessibility.

"In using multimodal text the challenges I face are mainly in my proficiency in using multiple digital tools and platforms."

They expressed difficulty in navigating digital platforms and acquiring appropriate software. In addition, designing meaningful and engaging multimodal text learning tools to achieve learning objectives was a major challenge that requires special training and expertise.

"In using both GBA and multimodal texts, we as teachers must be able to provide various sources that can achieve learning objectives. That is quite difficult because we have to adapt to students' needs and also the curriculum."

The teacher also faced challenges in accurately assessing student learning outcomes on multimodal text tasks.

"It is difficult to assess students' writing results in multimodal form, because of the differences in the processes students face in creating multimodal texts which can be seen from the expertise of each student."

The teacher stated that there was little bias in assessing students, especially in capturing the various skills and competencies developed through multimodal text integration.

The challenges faced by teachers and students in integrating multimodal texts in a GBA were critical to overcome for successful implementation. Technical proficiency, resource accessibility, and pedagogical considerations all played an important role in overcoming these challenges. Teachers need ongoing support and professional development to improve their skills and effectively integrate multimodal texts into their teaching practices (Choi & Yi, 2016). In terms of GBA, the challenge was in preparation and planning and also the time allocation, based on the teacher's interview. In line with, research by Martin and Rose (2008) highlights that designing and implementing genre-based lessons require significant time and effort in identifying relevant genres, analyzing their linguistic features, and developing appropriate teaching materials. This process can be time-consuming for educators, especially when balancing other teaching responsibilities.

Likewise, students faced their own challenges in adapting to multimodal text integration. Many students had difficulty using tools and various types of multimodal texts effectively. This led to varying levels of student engagement and understanding, and some students found it difficult to fully comprehend the multimodal content of the text.

"The difficulty is when we use a digital platform that we are not familiar with. So it takes quite a lot of our time to do the assignment because we are confused too."

Students stated that they were quite confused about using various digital platforms as multimodal text resources. This is in line with Gilakjani, Ismail, and Ahmadi (2011) that students have difficulty integrating information from different multimodal texts effectively, giving rise to potential confusion or misunderstandings caused by various methods.

"It's difficult when I have to be creative in using various types of multimodal texts that the teacher recommends. Because I lack media outside of school."

Based on the statement above, students used a variety of multimodal texts that they had just encountered and they found it difficult to maximize them outside of school. Students' challenges in adapting to multimodal integration highlighted the need for differentiated instruction and scaffolded learning experiences (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Moreover, teachers must provide explicit guidance and opportunities for students to develop skills, navigate platforms, and maximize the use of multimodal texts with confidence. Additionally, assessments should be designed to align with the diverse skills and competencies developed through multimodal tasks (Binkley et al., 2012).

In conclusion, addressing the challenges faced by teachers and students in integrating multimodal texts within a GBA requires a comprehensive approach that includes professional development, equitable access to resources, differentiated instruction, and robust assessment practices. By acknowledging and actively addressing these challenges, educators can create more engaging and inclusive learning environments that leverage the full potential of multimodal integration.

The benefits faced by the teacher and students

Not only a challenge, but the integration of multimodal texts in a genre-based approach provides many benefits for the teacher and students. Based on the results of observations, it was found that the use of multimodal texts increases student engagement and motivation

during learning, resulting in a more interactive learning environment. This is also in line with the results of teacher interviews,

"Students become more involved in learning, using various types of multimodal texts also makes learning more interesting."

Multimodal texts and GBA also provided authentic, contextual, and structured learning materials. Additionally, the teacher observed improvements in students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and ability to express themselves through various means of communication.

"The advantages are many. Students are more facilitated to be able to achieve learning goals. We include it in differentiated learning to facilitate students. Thus, the achievement of learning objectives is more developed than without multimodal texts and GBA."

According to teacher interviews, by using multimodal texts, she can effectively cater to a variety of learning styles, ensuring that all students have equitable access to learning opportunities.

For students, the benefits of multimodal integration were equally important. They experienced a variety of learning opportunities that suited their individual learning preferences, thus encouraging involvement in the learning process.

"The teacher provides materials in various forms, whether digital, written or images. That makes learning more fun."

Visual learners benefit from visual aids and graphics, auditory learners engage with audio components, and kinesthetic learners participate in interactive activities. This is in line with the results of student interviews,

"We also have many choices in choosing the type of platform we can and we like to do our work."

Therefore, it can be concluded that students found many benefits from using multimodal texts in the classroom.

Based on the results of observations in the case of GBA, it not only increased understanding but also fostered a deeper understanding of the genre being studied and communication strategies. Furthermore the teacher said that,

"The benefits are many. Students are more facilitated to be able to achieve learning goals. That's the advantage. What I feel from GBA is that learning is more organized and according to the steps. And children are really guided to be able to write."

The benefits that teachers feel are based on the teacher's statement above, with SFL-GBA, the teacher and students are facilitated in a process, where the learning process is more organized step by step. Then, students are also well-guided in their writing process. Through this learning, students developed essential skills and became adept at navigating and producing text in a variety of multimodal text forms, preparing them for success in a technology-driven world. Overall, the integration of multimodal texts in a genre-based

approach resulted in improved learning outcomes and a more engaging educational experience for teachers and students.

There are major advantages for teachers and students when multimodal texts are incorporated within a genre-based approach (Choi & Yi, 2016). The teacher might see increased engagement and motivation among students during multimodal activities, fostering a dynamic classroom environment (Sholikhah, 2023). This is also accompanied by an increase in students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and ability to express themselves through various modes of communication (Suherdi et al., 2021). Multimodal text integration offers a range of learning possibilities that cater to individual learning preferences, promoting inclusion and active participation in the learning process (Bouchev et al., 2021). Furthermore, students' communication abilities are improved through practical experiences with multimodal texts (O'Halloran & Smith, 2012). Thus, the integration of multimodal texts in a genre-based approach leads to improved learning outcomes and a more engaging educational experience for teachers and students (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

Furthermore, based on the teacher's statement regarding the benefits of using multimodal texts in the findings, the teacher said that multimodal texts can facilitate students in various learning styles and students can learn comfortably according to their learning styles. This is in line with Ahmaida and Suliman (2018) who stated that multimodal texts make EFL teaching in the classroom easier for teachers and students because they create a funnier, more interesting, and more creative environment. Also supported by Nagao (2019), the use of GBA allows participants to focus more on a contextual, directed, and reader-oriented view of the learning genre. Therefore, the use of multimodal text and GBA is recommended.

In conclusion, integrating multimodal texts in a genre-based approach presents both challenges and benefits for teachers and students. Addressing technical proficiency, resource accessibility, time allocation, and preparation stage. Despite challenges, this approach offered more diverse learning opportunities, increased engagement, fostered critical thinking skills, facilitated students' different learning styles, and made it a valuable strategy in English education.

CONCLUSION

Investigation of the challenges and benefits of integrating multimodal texts into genre-based approaches reveals a different landscape in education. This study highlights significant barriers faced by educators and learners, such as technical proficiency barriers, resource accessibility issues, time allocation, and preparation stage. In terms of benefits, the findings highlight increased student engagement, improved critical thinking skills, allowed for the various learning styles of the students, and increased creativity in communication as key benefits of multimodal integration. These insights emphasized the value of utilizing multimodal texts within a genre-based framework to enhance the overall learning experience and cater to students of various learning styles. Thus, integrating multimodal text in GBA provides more benefits than challenges for both the teacher and students.

Moving forward, educators and institutions need to prioritize professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing teachers' pedagogical strategies for multimodal learning. Collaborative efforts among educators, administrators, and technology specialists are crucial for ensuring equitable access to digital resources and fostering a culture of innovation in educational practices. However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, such as the potential constraints of sample size and geographical scope. Future research should aim to address these limitations by incorporating larger and more diverse

samples, utilizing mixed-methods approaches, and exploring additional dimensions of multimodal integration in education to further enrich teaching and learning outcomes.

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