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CHALLENGES FACED BY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN INTEGRATING MULTIMODAL TOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The integration of multimodal teaching tools in English instruction has strong potential to enhance learner engagement and comprehension. This study explored the challenges encountered by Junior High School English teachers in integrating multimodal tools. It was conducted in 5 private schools in Oroquieta City. Participants included 10 Junior High School English teachers and 10 learners selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews using Interview Guides. Yin's method of analysis (2009) was used in analyzing the data gathered. Findings revealed persistent technological and infrastructural constraints, instructional disruptions, learner-related challenges such as varying digital literacy and distraction, and time limitations. Teachers addressed these challenges through contingency planning, low-tech alternatives, real-time troubleshooting, and adaptive classroom management. The study concludes that while teachers exhibit resilience in integrating multimodal tools, the sustainability of multimodal instruction requires strong institutional commitment. It is recommended that school administrators prioritize technological infrastructure development, provide continuous professional development for teachers, and establish supportive policies that promote effective multimodal teaching in English classes.

Keywords: *English language teaching, digital pedagogy, institutional support, multimodal instruction, teacher adaptability*

Introduction

In contemporary English language education, the integration of multimodal teaching tools has emerged as a vital strategy to address the diverse learning preferences of students. Multimodal tools refer to instructional resources that utilize more than one mode of communication such as text, visuals, audio, video, gestures, and interactive technologies to facilitate deeper understanding and engagement (Kessler, 2022; Laadem & Mallahi, 2020; Veliz & Véliz-Campos, 2023). In the English language classroom, these resources are integrated through various instructional such as visual aids can help learners grasp language structures (Halwani, 2017; Lin, 2019), auditory activities like pronunciation drills and immersive listening exercises that develop auditory competency (Harsa et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2020) and kinesthetic strategies such as gesture-based learning that provide hands-on engagement (González-Carriedo et al., 2020; Kuo et al., 2014).

These tools are integrated in various English language teaching contexts. In vocabulary instruction, multimodal flashcards and digital annotations help reinforce word recognition and usage (Weerasinghe et al., 2022). Literature and poetry lessons benefit from the use of audio recordings, visual illustrations, dramatizations, and digital storytelling to enhance student interpretation and emotional engagement (Daulay & Dewi, 2023). Writing instruction can be enriched with multimodal composition platforms that allow for collaboration and creativity (Zeng, 2024). These varied applications illustrate how multimodal strategies support differentiated instruction and improve learner motivation, participation, and academic outcomes.

However, despite the pedagogical value of multimodal tools, many junior high school teachers still encounter significant challenges in their integration. A study in Indonesian EFL classrooms found that while teachers used multimodal texts such as videos, diagrams, and picture books, they faced limitations including poor internet access, insufficient resources, and lack of training (Kusumaningrum et al., 2024). Similarly, EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia reported limited professional development opportunities and institutional support, hindering effective technology integration (Aghaziarati et al., 2023). In Australian primary classrooms, Lim et al. (2023) found disparities in teacher confidence and readiness in using multimodal tools, with many citing a lack of infrastructure and training. These studies emphasize the need to address availability of materials, in-service training, and ongoing support both internationally and within the Philippine context for successful implementation of multimodal teaching tools.

A study by Molines (2023) reported that most English teachers remain at the entry level in terms of digital tool proficiency, limiting their confidence and ability to implement such approaches. Moreover, Karim and Ismail (2025) claimed that time constraints and limited institutional resources often hinder teachers from planning and delivering multimodal lessons effectively. Teachers are also faced with the difficulty of tailoring multimodal instruction to suit the diverse needs, learning styles, and proficiency levels of their students. These complexities require advanced pedagogical skills, access to digital infrastructure, and sustained professional support.

In spite of the fact that modern pedagogical paradigms place more focus on the use of multimodal teaching aids in English language teaching, there is still a gap in understanding the challenges faced by junior high school teachers in integrating these tools effectively (Karim & Ismail, 2025). While research has highlighted the benefits of multimodal learning for enhancing student engagement and language outcomes (Anis & Khan, 2023), most existing studies are conducted in higher education settings or utilize quantitative approaches, which may not fully capture the lived experiences of basic education teachers (Molines, 2023). Furthermore, many of these studies do not sufficiently consider contextual limitations such as institutional support, infrastructure readiness, or training needs, particularly in local junior high school environments (Karim & Ismail, 2025). This gap in lack of qualitative research exploring the challenges faced by Junior High School teachers in integrating multimodal tools in teaching English, contextual research calls for a deeper exploration of the specific barriers that teachers face in their daily classroom practice.

This study is significant as it explores the challenges Junior High School English teachers face in integrating multimodal teaching tools, offering insights that may enhance instructional practices and student learning. The findings will benefit teachers by identifying common barriers and practical strategies, assist school administrators and curriculum developers in improving training and materials, and inform policymakers in crafting supportive guidelines. Additionally, future researchers may use this study as a foundation for further investigations on multimodal instruction across varied educational contexts.

Methods

This study used the case study research design. A case study is a qualitative approach that involves an in-depth, contextual analysis of a specific bounded system, such as individuals, groups, or institutions, over a period of time (Creswell & Poth, 2016). It aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of a particular issue or phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). This design is considered appropriate for exploring the challenges encountered by Junior High School English teachers in integrating multimodal teaching tools into their instruction. Through detailed data collection methods such as interviews, document analysis, and observations within selected private schools in Oroquieta City, this case study sought to uncover patterns, insights, and implications that could inform educational practices and policy development.

The data analysis followed Yin's (2009) five components of an effective case study design, allowing for a systematic examination of the challenges encountered by Junior High School English teachers in integrating multimodal teaching tools. The process began with the formulation of research questions and clarification of the study's purpose, which focused on exploring teachers' lived classroom experiences in multimodal instruction. The unit of analysis included the challenges faced by teachers, their coping strategies, and the institutional support needed for effective integration. Interview data were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and significant insights. NVivo software was used to organize and manage qualitative data, ensuring systematic coding and theme development. Themes were generated and interpreted in relation to the research questions, focusing on technological, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions of multimodal integration. To ensure validity, findings were returned to participants for verification. The results were then used as basis for conclusions and recommendations aimed at improving multimodal teaching practices in English classrooms.

Results and Discussions

Technological and Infrastructural Barriers in Multimodal Integration

Technological and infrastructural barriers significantly hinder the integration of multimodal teaching tools in Junior High School English classrooms by disrupting instruction, limiting access to digital resources, and reducing interactive learning opportunities. Participants highlighted that unstable internet connectivity is a persistent issue that interrupts lesson flow and affects the use of multimedia materials (T1, T2, T3, T8). Inadequate classroom infrastructure, including the absence or malfunction of projectors, speakers, and cables, limits the effective delivery of visual and audio-based instruction and disrupts lesson continuity (T4, T6, T8). Unequal access to digital devices and varying levels of digital literacy among students affect participation and engagement in multimodal activities, as some learners struggle with access and navigation of digital tools (L1, L3, L8). These findings are supported by the Digital Divide Theory (2005), which emphasizes that unequal access to technology, infrastructure, and digital skills creates disparities in learning opportunities (Kusumaningrum et al., 2024; Uyun, 2025; OECD, 2023), as well as research on technological barriers (Ren et al., 2024; Ajani, 2025; Joshi, 2025; Zhang, 2025; Laar et al., 2020; van de Werfhorst, 2022). Collectively, these conditions show that without addressing access and digital literacy gaps, multimodal instruction may reinforce rather than reduce educational inequalities.

Learner-Centered Challenges in Multimodal Integration

Learner-centered challenges significantly affect the effectiveness of multimodal integration in Junior High School English classrooms, particularly in terms of digital literacy, readiness, engagement, and participation. Participants emphasized that variations in learners' digital competence lead to uneven participation, where some students navigate digital tools easily while others require constant guidance, slowing lesson delivery (T1, T3, T7, T9). Misuse of mobile phones and access to non-academic applications during multimodal activities cause distraction and raise concerns on academic integrity (T2, L4). Technical delays such as buffering videos, unstable connections, and loading issues reduce learner engagement, cause loss of focus, and increase impatience during lessons (L2, L9, L10). Multimodal instruction depends not only on technological tools but also on learners' readiness, discipline, and digital competence (Falloon, 2020; Zakir et al., 2025; Zhao et al., 2023; Tang and Chaw, 2022; Dontre, 2021; Lepp et al., 202; Hidayat-Ur-Rehman, 2024; Mejías-Acosta et al., 2024; Junco, 2020; Sana et al., 2020). Guided by Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988), Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), effective multimodal

instruction required not only access to technology but also learner-sensitive instructional design, motivational support, gradual scaffolding, and stable technological conditions.

Teacher Coping Strategies through Preparedness, Adaptation, and Resilience

Teacher preparedness, adaptation, and resilience significantly affect the effectiveness of multimodal integration in Junior High School English classrooms, particularly in managing technological disruptions, instructional continuity, and classroom engagement. Participants emphasized that they mitigate technical failures through advance preparation, such as downloading instructional materials and testing equipment before class to ensure uninterrupted delivery of multimodal lessons (T1, T3, T4). Technical readiness by conducting routine equipment checks and applying immediate troubleshooting strategies during instruction, including the use of screen sharing and mobile hotspots when connectivity issues occur (T9, T6). Resilience is demonstrated through calmness, flexibility, and persistence in managing technical disruptions, allowing them to maintain lesson flow and reduce learner disengagement during multimodal instruction (T6, L1, L4). These findings aligned with TPACK Framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), teachers integrated technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge to respond effectively to multimodal teaching challenges and are supported by research highlighting effective multimodal instruction through teachers' preparedness, adaptability, and resilience (Tondeur et al., 2020; Mishra & Koehler, 2021; Trust et al., 2023; Scheel et al., 2022; Martin et al., 2025; Koehler et al., 2020; Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2021; Gillies, 2020; Johnson and Johnson, 2021; Day and Gu, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2020;). Together, effective multimodal instruction depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on teachers' preparedness, adaptability, and resilience.

The Need for Administrative and Institutional Support in Sustaining Multimodal Instruction

Administrative and institutional support significantly affect the sustainability of multimodal instruction in Junior High School English classrooms, particularly in terms of infrastructure, equipment, maintenance, training, and policy support. Participants highlighted that stable internet connectivity is essential for smooth lesson delivery and reduced instructional disruptions (T1, T2, T4, T7). Functional and updated classroom equipment such as projectors, televisions, and speakers are necessary for effective multimodal integration, as inadequate resources limit instructional quality and learner engagement (T3, T4, T5, T6). Participants emphasized that continuous training and professional development strengthen digital competence, confidence, and instructional effectiveness in multimodal teaching (T1, T2, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9). These practices reflect Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), which emphasizes the importance of administrative involvement, training opportunities, and technical assistance in shaping teachers' performance and commitment. They are also supported by studies highlighting that strong school leadership, adequate technological infrastructure, and sustained professional development are essential conditions for the successful integration of technology in teaching and learning environments (Dexter, 2021; Howard et al., 2021; Petko, 2022; Bond et al., 2021; Dhawan, 2020; Scherer, Siddiq, and Tondeur, 2021; Ottenbreit-Leftwich et al., 2021; Petko, 2022; Dexter, 2021; Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2021; Karim and Ismail, 2025; Scherer, Siddiq, and Tondeur, 2021; Howard and Mozejko, 2021). Colectively, multimodal instruction requires strong institutional support in terms of infrastructure, maintenance, training, and policy implementation.

Conclusions

Effective integration of multimodal teaching tools in Junior High School English classrooms is significantly constrained by technological, infrastructural, and resource-related limitations, including unstable internet connectivity, inadequate classroom equipment, and unequal student access to digital resources. Learner-related factors, such as differences in digital literacy, readiness, and learning preferences, further complicate the implementation of multimodal instruction and affect student engagement and participation. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrate adaptability and resilience in coping with difficulties through alternative instructional strategies, contingency planning, and flexible classroom management practices. Moreover, effective and sustainable multimodal instruction requires strong administrative and institutional support, including reliable technological infrastructure, regular equipment maintenance, technical assistance, and continuous professional development for teachers.

Recommendations

School administrators prioritize addressing technological and infrastructural limitations by providing stable internet connectivity and functional multimedia equipment through adequate budget allocation, installation of

reliable Wi-Fi access points, and provision of essential classroom technologies such as projectors, televisions, speakers, and updated computers. English teachers are also encouraged to address learner-related challenges by establishing clear guidelines for responsible digital device use and implementing strategies that gradually develop students' digital literacy and engagement in multimodal learning activities. To strengthen instructional practice, teachers should continue adopting flexible teaching strategies through advance preparation of lesson materials, downloading resources ahead of time, and collaborating with peers to share effective multimodal teaching practices. School administrators and educational leaders should likewise ensure the sustainability of multimodal integration by providing continuous professional development programs, regular equipment maintenance, and accessible technical support systems for teachers. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in other educational contexts and explore additional factors such as institutional readiness, teacher training effectiveness, and student digital competencies that influence multimodal integration in English language instruction.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares that they have no conflicts of interest

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