

ENHANCING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF RECOUNT TEXT WITH MULTIMODAL DIGITAL LITERACY

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Abstract: This study aims firstly to explain the use of multimodal digital literacy to boost students' reading comprehension of recount text. Secondly, to describe students' engagement in joining this learning model. It employed a qualitative method. Classroom action research with two cycles was used as the research design. Each cycle consisted of planning, acting, observing, and evaluating. The participants were thirty-ninth graders at the Islamic secondary school in Semarang Regency in the academic year 2024-2025. The pre-test, posttests, and observation guidelines were provided as data collection techniques. The results show that incorporating a genre-based approach and multimodal digital literacy can enhance students' reading comprehension of recount text. Based on students' achievement in the pretest, they reached 69, in post-test cycle 1, they achieved 75, and in post-test cycle 2, they obtained 84. Because students were intrigued by multimodal digital literacy, they were also delighted in putting this learning approach into practice. Their grasp of reading comprehension of recall texts was enhanced by the teacher. Together with their peers and the teacher, they studied the course materials. It can be concluded, this learning paradigm improves group work and interpersonal skills, raises learning motivation, and promotes active learners' involvement.

Keywords: digital literacy, multimodal; reading comprehension; recount text; revolutionizing.

INTRODUCTION

Multimodal digital literacy is the ability to understand, interpret, and create meaning from multiple modes of communication beyond just written text. These modes can include: 1). Textual (written words) 2). Visual (images, charts, videos); 3). Auditory (sounds, music, spoken words); 4). Gestural (body language, facial expressions); 5). Spatial (layout, design, organization of elements).

Why is it important for? In today's digital world, information often combines these modes—for example, in websites, advertisements, and multimedia presentations. Developing multimodal literacy helps learners engage with diverse forms of media, improving comprehension and critical thinking. These statements are supported by Marza & Gomez (2022); Fedorenko et al. (2021); Hellwig (2022); Kartika-Ningsih (2019); Khoiriyah (2023);

Lee & Sylven (2021); Lin et al. (2021); Querol-Julian (2023). In addition to enrich learning experiences, for example: combining text with visuals can help students understand complex ideas. Using videos or audio clips in teaching reading can reinforce concepts through different sensory channels. Teachers make interactive activities that will encourage students to create their multimodal content. Overall, multimodal literacy equips learners to navigate and interpret the complex information landscape of the 21st century effectively. This study aims to explain the incorporation of multimodal literacy and genre based approach in teaching reading of recount text and also to describe students' engagement in utilizing these learning strategies. Not much research that combines a genre-based approach with multimodal literacy in learning, reading comprehension, and recounting text.

Teachers can apply text and images. They can present recount texts alongside relevant images or infographics. For example, use historical photos if the recount text is about a real event.

They can play video or audio. They show short videos or play audio clips related to the text's content. This helps students visualize the setting and grasp the emotions conveyed in the story. Teachers can use digital storytelling: It will encourage students to create their multimodal recount texts using digital tools, combining written narratives with multimedia elements. By incorporating multimodal literacy, teachers can create a dynamic and supportive environment that caters to diverse learning styles, enhancing students' reading skills and overall literacy development. These in line with several researchers Firmansyah (2021); Jiang & Gao (2020); Khoiriyah & Ilmi (2023); Kim & Belcher (2020); Lawrence (2020); Lee et al. (2021); Pham (2022).

This study also used the genre-based approach (GBA) in teaching the reading of recount texts. It focuses on familiarizing students with the structure, language features, and purpose of the genre. This approach helps learners understand how different texts are organized and why specific language choices are made. According to Ahmed (2020); Krismadayanti & Zainil (2022); Kristina (2019); Lee, n.d.; Megawati & Utami (2020); Ross et al. (2020); Wu (2020) in their research that key principles of the genre-based approach: 1). Teaching of the genre is run explicitly. Students are guided through the stages and features of recount texts,

namely, orientation, sequence of events, and conclusion. This stage is Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF). Teachers gave scaffolding in the teaching-learning process. They provide support at each stage, gradually reducing it as students gain confidence in reading and analyzing recount texts independently. 2). The second stage is Modeling of the Text (MoT). It means that teachers use model texts to illustrate the typical structure and language of recounts. This helps students identify key components and patterns. 3). The third stage is Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT). In this stage, teachers work with the class to read and deconstruct another recount text collaboratively. They guide students in creating their recount text as a group, reinforcing structure and language use. 4.) The last stage is the Independent Construction of the Text (ICoT). Students read and analyze recount texts on their own. Encourage them to write their recounts, applying what they have learned.

Genre-based Approach has clear framework and benefits. It provides students with a structured approach to understanding and producing texts. It can enhance understanding by focusing on language and content, improving both comprehension and writing skills. It covers contextual learning and relates reading activities to real-world examples, making learning more meaningful and engaging. This approach ensures that students not only grasp the content of recount texts but also develop a deeper understanding of their form and function Dao, (2019); Marza & Gomez (2022); Fedorenko et al. (2021); Hellwig (2022); Mezhuyev et al. (2019); Querol-Julian (2023); Sari et al. (2021); Uday (2022).

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method in accordance with Creswell & Timothy, (2019); Creswell, (2014); Miles et al. (2014); Tracy (2013). The research design was classroom action research which applied two cycles. Every cycle consists of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each cycle was provided a treatment. These are in line with the studies of Burns, (2010); Efron & Ravid (2013); Mettetal (2001); Phillips & Car (2014). Classroom Action Research (CAR) serves several important functions in the educational setting.

The choice of research design is based on the purposes of classroom action research, namely 1). It can improve teaching practices. Teachers can

identify problems or challenges in their classrooms and develop strategies to address them, enhancing the effectiveness of their teaching methods. 2). It enhances student learning. CAR helps teachers implement interventions aimed at improving student engagement, understanding, and performance. By analyzing the outcomes, they can adjust their techniques to better meet students' needs. 3). It supports professional development. Teachers engage in reflective practice, which promotes continuous learning and professional growth. It fosters a deeper understanding of their teaching and its impact on students. 4). It also solves classroom problems. CAR is used to address specific issues, such as low participation, behavioral challenges, or poor academic performance, through targeted interventions and data collection. 5). It can promote collaborative learning. Teachers often collaborate with colleagues during CAR projects, sharing insights and best practices. This teamwork fosters a culture of continuous improvement within the school. 6). It can also inform curriculum development. Findings from CAR can help refine curricula, ensuring they are more relevant and effective for students' needs. 7). It empowers teachers. CAR enables teachers to take control of their professional practice, making data-driven decisions to enhance classroom experiences. In other words, Classroom action research is a powerful tool for fostering an evidence-based, reflective approach to teaching and learning. These statements are supported by Burns, (2010); Efron & Ravid, (2013); Mettetal (2001); Phillips & Car (2014); Somekh (2006).

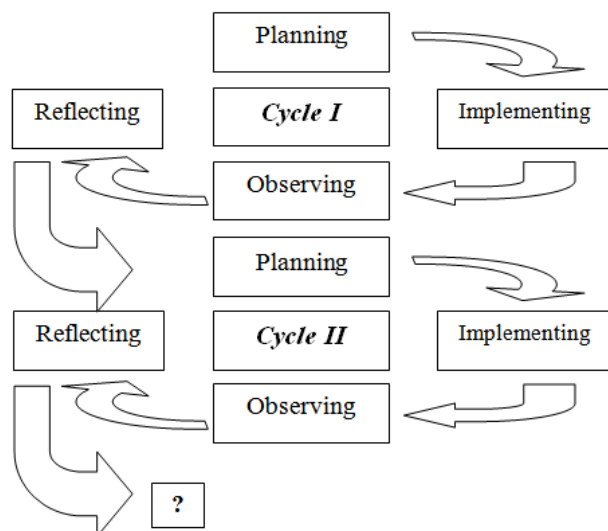


Figure 1. Model of classroom action research

Data collection techniques used classroom observation, pretest, and posttest. In this study, classroom action research was used to test students' reading comprehension of recount text. The research participants were thirty-ninth graders at the Islamic secondary school in Semarang Regency in the academic year 2024-2025. The research instruments used observation checklists and reading comprehension of recount text.

Before conducting the research, the researchers gave the pretest. The purpose was to identify how high the students were able to comprehend the reading of the recount text. It consisted of short answers, cloze tests, and vocabulary development. The mean score of the pretest was 69. In this phase, the students were asked to answer 40 reading comprehension exercises. The test was divided into short answer (20 items), cloze test (10 items), and vocabulary development (10 items).

Cycle 1. *Planning*. During this phase, the researchers collaborated with the English teacher to select the learning materials, which included reading comprehension of recount text. They also created a lesson plan based on the learning materials and a post-test. They created observation checklists as well. The collaborators prepared for their task of observing students' actions and conduct during the learning process. Additionally, multimodal digital literacy was designed. *Acting*. The English teacher gave the first treatment in teaching reading comprehension of recount text. She integrated two strategies namely multimodal digital literacy as learning media and genre-based approach as a learning model. The students were divided into some groups for work. Each group consisted of four students. So there were eight groups because the participants were thirty- two. The genre-based approach was implemented to make students understand a recount text. This is in line with Garcia-Pinar (2019); Henry & Thorsen (2020); Hira & Anderson (2021); Hiver, Al-Hoorie, Vitta, & Wu (2021); Kaminski (2019); Kohnke, Jarvis, & Ting (2021); Liu & Chen (2022); Mohamed (2023); Wu (2020).

The teacher played digital storytelling about a famous tourism object namely Rawapening Lake. Then she provided a text about someone's experiences when he went there. Students are guided through the stages and features of recount texts (e.g., orientation, sequence of events, and conclusion). The teacher gave a scaffolding: She provided

support at each stage, gradually reducing it as students gained confidence in reading and analyzing recount texts independently. Teachers used model texts to illustrate the typical structure and language of recounts. This helped students identify key components and patterns. The function of a recount text is to retell events or experiences that have occurred in the past. It aims to inform or entertain the reader by presenting a chronological sequence of events, often with a personal perspective or reflection.

Recount texts can be used to describe personal experiences, historical events, or significant incidents in detail, focusing on what happened, where, and when. Common examples include diaries, autobiographies, personal letters, or reports of events Abdullah et al. (2022); Kohnke, Jarvis, and Ting (2021); Liang and Lim (2020); Liu and Brown (2019); Nagy (2020); Unsworth and Mills (2020); Wang et al. (2021); Xia and Hafner (2021).

The language features of recount text. Recount texts describe events that have already happened, so verbs are often in the past tense (e.g., went, played, saw). 2). Chronological Order: The events are

presented in the order they occurred, often using time connectives (e.g., first, then, next, finally). 3. Action Verbs: These describe what happened (e.g., visited, walked, laughed). 4. Personal Pronouns: Depending on the type of recount, first-person pronouns (I, we) or third-person pronouns (he, she, they) are used. The generic structure of a recount text includes: Orientation: This part introduces the background information such as who was involved, what happened, where it took place, and when it happened. It sets the scene for the events that will follow. Events: This section presents a sequence of events in the order they occurred. The recount can contain one or more events, often written in a series of paragraphs. The events should be described logically and chronologically. Re-orientation (optional): This is a concluding section that provides a summary of the events or may express the writer's comments or reflections on the events described. Recount texts typically use past tense verbs and connectives (like "first," "next," "then," etc.) to show the sequence of events.

This is the teacher's recount text to be discussed together with the students.

Fishing at Rawa Pening Lake

Orientation

I made the decision to visit Rawapening Lake with my friends, Doni and Raffi last Saturday. We had a plan two months prior, so it was a pleasant time to go fishing. Ambarawa city is a good option for natural attractions because it is a part of Semarang Regency. In this instance, Rawa Pening Lake is regarded as Indonesia's most well-known tourist destination. The lake is part of multiple regions, including Tuntang, Ambarawa, Banyubiru, and Bawen in Central Java.

Events

I got ready early in the morning and then went to the market with my companions to buy some shrimp to use as bait for fishing. We then proceeded to the lake to begin fishing. We rented a boat there so we could go fishing in the center of the lake. I waited for the fish to consume my bait after throwing my hook as far as I could. Finally, with thirty minutes remaining, a fish ate my bait. It was my first fish of a suitable size. On that day, we caught seven small fish and fifteen large fish. We were overjoyed. We cook the fish at home, and after that, I invite my friends over for a little celebration. However, we were unlucky because we came upon a beggar on the way home. He was an elderly, destitute beggar.

Reorientation

He received all of our fish, and we hope he will be pleased with them. He might be able to sell them at the market and earn enough cash to purchase some food.

Observing. Using checklists and observation guidelines, the researcher and research collaborators recorded data while monitoring the teaching and learning of recount text. The research partner also watched how the students behaved while the

researchers were treating them. In group work, each leader explains it to their peers. The teacher and students work together in this Joint Construction of the Text stage. They analyzed with the class to read and deconstruct another recount text collaboratively.

They also guided students in creating their own recount text as a group, reinforcing structure and language use.

Reflecting. Cycle 1 treatment was examined and assessed by the investigator and associates. The post-test findings of the students were discussed. In the Independent Construction of the Text stage, students read and analyzed recount texts on their own. Encourage them to write their recounts, applying what they have learned. They continued to discover that students had difficulty reading of recount text. Their achievement was 75 according to the mean score. In the end, they agreed to carry out the following cycle to ensure that the students received good recount text outcomes.

Cycle 2. Planning. Multimodal digital literacy and lesson plans created by the researchers were used in cycle 2. The subject of students' mastery of reading comprehension in recount text, but in this cycle it focused on the generic structure and language features. They also created a checklist for observations and assessed the students. Every cycle, a full evaluation of the student's cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains was carried out using authentic assessment.

Acting. The researchers and the English teacher continued to teach reading comprehension in recount text. The use of multimodal digital literacy and genre-based approaches were also integrated into the learning model. For the enrichment of the students,

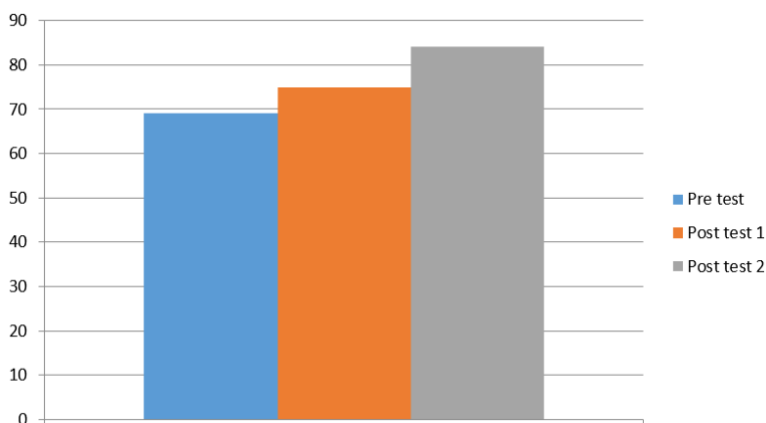
the researchers provided exercises from the Quizizz application to enhance their understanding of the concept. Students also were provided digital storytelling about Telomoyo Mountain. They tried to analyze the generic structure and language features.

Observing. Students prepared to answer the exercise reading comprehension of recount text. The researchers assessed their post-test results. The collaborators observed students' responses to this learning paradigm. They also photographed the learning sessions.

Reflecting. The final stage was to assess the results of the students' post-test. Both researchers and collaborators discussed students' use of passive voice in the simple present test. They judged that students' performance had significantly improved. It meant the second cycle was successful. The mean score was 84.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A pretest was administered to each participant. Its goal is to determine the students' past proficiency with reading comprehension of recount text. The pretest mean for the students was 69. It made sense because the majority of students were still having trouble grasping the concept of recount texts. Students continued to frequently language features in this genre. They were encouraged to master the past tense.



Planning. Cycle 1 was initiated by the research collaborators and the teacher. All of the treatment materials, including the lesson plan, classroom observation checklists, pretest, and post-test, were developed during this phase.

Acting. They administered the first treatment. According to the research, all activities could

function smoothly. All of the students paid close attention as the teacher explained the learning materials. They didn't seem nervous. They were delighted because they watched the digital storytelling. They were also quite enthusiastic. The teacher also assessed by administering a post-test after providing treatment. The average post-test

score in Cycle 1 was 74. There was an improvement in students' reading comprehension of recount texts. However, the score can be improved beyond the results of the first cycle.

Observing. The researchers looked at how engaged students were in following Cycle 1. They observed each student individually learning recount texts. The students collaborated with their companions to answer the reading of the recount text. Following their preparation, participants were given a post-test.

Reflecting. During this phase, the researcher assessed the outcomes of cycle 1 treatment. Despite the fact that they had already achieved the goal, their progress was accelerated to the highest level possible. Most students struggled to comprehend reading recount text. Recognizing the students' achievement, the researcher and collaborators agreed to continue with cycle 2.

Analysis of the cycle 2

Planning. During this step, the researchers developed multimodal digital literacy, lesson plans as learning scenarios, assessment forms, interview guidelines, and classroom observation guidelines.

Acting. During this step, the researchers developed multimodal digital literacy, lesson plans as learning scenarios, assessment forms, interview guidelines, and classroom observation guidelines. The acting step involved treating students. The activities were essentially identical to the previous cycle. During this meeting, students also completed the reading comprehension of recount text exercises. Students collaborated with their peers in group projects.

Observing. The research collaborators observed students as they learned to read of recount texts. Students appeared to do their best. They learned reading comprehension of recount texts by incorporating multimodal digital literacy and a genre-based approach. to ensure their knowledge of the concepts. Following that, they completed the post-test. The researchers scored and graded the students' achievements. In each cycle, there was an achievement test for the students. Based on the results, students' performance in the second cycle indicated that they had enough mastery of reading recount texts. Students also responded adequately, and their vocabulary growth was enriched. The reading of recount texts achievement for cycle 2 was 84 points higher than the passing grade. In addition

to assessing cognitive and psycho-motor characteristics, the collaborators evaluated students' affective throughout learning participation.

According to the observation sheet, all students were present (100%). Fifty-five (50%) actively asked questions. All students (100%) listened to the teacher's explanation. 100% of students were excited about using the learning medium. 100% of students take responsibility for group work. 100% of students participated enthusiastically to answer exercises of reading recount text. 3 students (10%) made noise in class.

The examination was not only for students, but all of the researchers' treatments were evaluated from the student's perspective. The study collaborators conducted interviews with students. The researchers excelled at motivating students to achieve, organizing class management, assigning tasks, facilitating group projects, providing feedback on students' questions, assessing students' achievement, providing evaluation, and encouraging students to present.

Based on the results, the use of multimodal digital literacy using a combination of visual, auditory, and textual elements play a significant role in teaching reading comprehension of recount texts for several reasons: namely 1). Enhances Engagement: It means that visuals and audio can capture students' attention better than text alone, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. 2). Supports Understanding: Images or videos related to the recount text can help students visualize the events, which aids in comprehension, especially for learners who struggle with reading. 3). Caters to Different Learning Styles: Some students learn better through visual or auditory means. Multimodal media accommodates various learning preferences, ensuring more effective teaching. 4). Contextualization: Visual or audio elements provide context to the events described in the text, helping students connect abstract information to real-life scenarios. 5). Improves Vocabulary Retention: Seeing images or hearing words related to the text helps reinforce new vocabulary, especially for second-language learners. 6). Encourages Critical Thinking: Students can compare and analyze different modes of information, fostering deeper comprehension and critical thinking skills. This results are also supported by Araneda and Fredes (2021); Liang and Lim (2020); Liu and Read (2020);

Nagy (2020); Reyes-Torres and Raga (2020); Unsworth and Mills (2020).

By integrating multimodal digital literacy, teachers create a richer, more dynamic learning environment, enhancing students' understanding of recount texts. Meanwhile incorporating multimodal digital literacy and the Genre-Based Approach in teaching reading comprehension offers a dynamic way to enhance students' understanding and engagement, especially with recount texts. By blending these approaches, teachers can provide a richer, more interactive learning experience while ensuring that students understand both the structure and meaning of the genre.

This study implemented several steps to integrate both approaches namely: 1). Building Knowledge of the Field (Context Setting) Multimodal integration, the teacher used images, videos, or audio clips related to the topic of the recount text to build background knowledge. Before reading a recount about a historical event, she showed a short documentary or relevant visuals. 2.) Modeling the Text (Exploring the Genre) Multimodal integration, the teacher presented a model recount text with multimodal elements (e.g., a text paired with visuals or an audio book version). The teacher created classroom activities by highlighting key genre features (orientation, sequence of events, reorientation) while showing how visual or audio elements support the text. 3). Joint Construction (Guided Practice) Multimodal integration: Collaboratively read and analyze a recount text using different modes (e.g., dissecting an infographic recount or analyzing a multimedia presentation). The teacher designed classroom activities by working together to create a digital recount story with images, text, and audio narration. 4). Independent Construction (Student Application) Multimodal integration: Encourage students to create their recount texts using multimodal tools (e.g., slideshows, video storytelling, or digital posters). The teacher arranged classroom activities by assigning projects where students use text, visuals, and audio to retell a personal or historical event (Abdullah et al., 2022 ; Araneda & Fredes, 2021; Kohnke et al., 2021; Liang & Lim, 2020; Lim, 2019; Reyes-Torres & Raga, 2020; Xia & Hafner, 2021).

According to Kohnke et al. (2021); Liang and Lim (2020); Nagy (2020); Wu (2020); Xia and Hafner (2021) by combining both approaches, there are some benefits in the classroom environment.

They can enhance engagement. Multimodal content makes learning more interactive and appealing. They have a deeper understanding. Students explore the structure of recount texts more thoroughly by engaging with different modes. Students will increase their critical thinking development. Analyzing various modes helps students critically evaluate how meaning is conveyed through text, images, and sound.

This integrated approach ensures that students not only understand recount texts better but also become proficient in interpreting and creating multimodal content, equipping them for modern literacy challenges. As a learning approach, the genre-based approach also has strengths and weaknesses in teaching recount texts. Strengths: 1). Improved understanding of structure, for example: when students read a recount text about a family vacation, they identify the orientation (who, where, when), the events (the activities they did day by day), and the reorientation (the conclusion or reflection). This helps them understand how to organize their recounts. This is in line with Hoe et al. (2019) Kaminski (2019); Kartika-Ningsih (2019), Lin et al. (2021); Liu & Chen (2022), Mohamed (2023). 2.) Contextual learning: example: A recount text about "My First Day at School" demonstrates how such stories function to share personal experiences, helping students relate to the text and its purpose. 3). Systematic approach: example: The teacher introduces the text step-by-step, asking students to analyze the orientation first, then move to the events, and finally the reorientation. This guides students to process the text in an organized manner. 4.) Enhanced writing skills: example: After reading a recount text, students are asked to write about their most memorable birthday. Using the structure, they learned, they create a clear, organized, and engaging narrative. 5). Relevance to real life: example: Students read a recount about a school trip to a museum and discuss their own experiences on similar trips, making the lesson personal and engaging. Weaknesses: 1). Limited focus on other skills: example: While analyzing the structure of a recount text, students may not focus on making inferences about the author's feelings or the deeper meaning of the events. 2). Time-consuming: example: Teaching a recount text about a sports day might take multiple sessions—one for orientation, one for events, and another for reorientation—leaving less time to explore other text types or

reading skills.3). Overemphasis on Rules: example: Students may become overly concerned with identifying the exact stages (e.g., "Where is the orientation?") instead of enjoying the story or understanding the message. 4). Suitability for all learners: example: A student struggling with grammar may find it difficult to understand past tense usage in a recount text, hindering their overall comprehension and engagement. 5). Less exposure to diverse texts: example: Focusing only on recount texts might prevent students from exploring other genres, such as persuasive texts, narratives, or reports, which are equally important for developing comprehensive reading skills. These examples highlight how a genre-based approach can both support and limit students' learning depending on the context and implementation.

In this study classroom action research was used to address specific issues, such as low participation, behavioral challenges, or poor academic performance, through targeted interventions and data collection. Teachers usually often collaborate with colleagues during classroom action research projects, sharing insights and best practices. This teamwork fosters a culture of continuous improvement within the school. Findings from this research design can help refine curricula, ensuring they are more relevant and effective for students' needs. Additionally, classroom action research enables teachers to take control of their professional practice, making data-driven decisions to enhance classroom experiences. Burns (2010); Efron and Ravid (2013); Mettetal (2001); Phillips and Car (2014); Somekh (2006).

Both the use of multimodal digital literacies and genre based approach and have clear benefits but require careful implementation to overcome these limitations. Teachers must balance them with consideration of students' needs, technological resources, and cultural diversity to ensure effective learning outcome. However, teachers should implement some strategies for both approaches namely: 1) Giving regular feedback and reflection. They can encourage students to reflect on their learning process and provide regular, formative feedback to address challenges; 2) utilizing blend approaches. They should combine multimodal literacies with genre-based teaching to provide a balanced, engaging, and culturally responsive learning environment; 3) Conducting monitor and adapt. They continuously evaluate the effectiveness

of tools, strategies, and adjust based on student progress and feedback.

By addressing these limitations through targeted strategies, teachers can ensure that both multimodal digital literacies and genre-based approaches are effectively implemented to enhance learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Using the genre-based approach and multimodal digital literacy in the classroom is a dynamic way to improve students' engagement and comprehension, particularly when it comes to recount texts. By combining these strategies, teachers may guarantee that students comprehend the genre's structure and purpose while offering a more engaging, dynamic learning environment. With the help of this integrated approach, students will be better prepared for the literacy difficulties of the current world by improving their comprehension of recount texts as well as their ability to comprehend and produce multimodal information. In the meantime, this study's selection of classroom action research forces teachers to participate in reflective practice, which fosters ongoing education and career advancement. It helps them comprehend their instruction and how it affects the students on a deeper level. Additionally, it is an effective tool for encouraging a reflective, evidence-based approach to teaching and learning.

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