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MULTIMEDIA VERSUS TRADITIONAL TEXT: SEMESTER-LEVEL IMPACTS ON LITERARY INTERPRETATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This study examined how multimedia-supported and traditional text-focused instruction differentially impacted EFL students' literary interpretation and engagement across three semester levels at Universitas Negeri Manado. A quasi-experimental, explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed, comparing two instructional conditions across Introduction to Literature (Semester 2), Drama Analysis (Semester 4), and Introduction to World Literature (Semester 6). Data were collected through structured classroom observations using adapted COPUS protocols and semi-structured interviews with students and lecturers. Quantitative analysis utilized linear mixed-effects models, while qualitative data underwent reflexive thematic analysis. Results revealed that multimedia instruction increased initial participation and multimodal noticing by 161% in Semester 2, though text-based approaches established citation discipline more rapidly. In Semester 4, multimedia pedagogy enhanced focalization understanding through embodied drama activities, while text-focused sessions excelled in linguistic subtext analysis. By Semester 6, text-anchored instruction demonstrated substantial advantages in comprehensive symbol tracing (26-27 vs. 20-22 instances), while multimedia materials functioned as sophisticated analytical objects rather than novice scaffolds. Findings indicated that neither approach held categorical superiority; optimal pedagogy required developmental sequencing that leveraged multimedia for concept formation and text-based work for evidence discipline, with explicit conversion mechanisms bridging multimodal observation and textual specification.

Keywords: *Developmental Sequencing, EFL Pedagogy, Literary Interpretation, Multimedia Instruction, Text-based Learning*

I. INTRODUCTION

"Screens or paper?" is no longer a casual classroom question but a proxy for deeper pedagogical choices in how we invite EFL students to meet literature: through the dense textures of printed texts or the layered sound-image-text worlds of multimedia (Rahmanu & Molnár, 2024). In Indonesian higher education, where cohorts move through semestered milestones and lecturers juggle outcomes for close reading, interpretation, and motivation, that choice is not trivial. It shapes what kinds of

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meaning-making we privilege slow inference from syntax and imagery, or multimodal orchestration of voice, music, and visual narrative and, crucially, how students at different stages of study engage with literary works. As campuses pivot toward digital learning spaces, the literature classroom becomes a testing ground for whether multimedia deepens literary interpretation or merely decorates it.

Across the last decade, research on multimodality in English language learning has converged on a general claim: when designed with clear objectives, multimodal inputs can strengthen language development and learner engagement. A recent higher education systematic review synthesizing 34 studies reports that multimodal pedagogies ranging from video-supported tasks to image-rich platforms tend to bolster proficiency and participation in university EFL settings, while also calling for closer alignment between tasks and targeted skills. This convergence suggests that multimedia is not simply an accessory to reading but a potential catalyst for interpretive moves inferring tone, tracking symbol, or situating voice that literature courses demand.

Digital storytelling (DST) demonstrates multimedia's potential to scaffold literary interpretation through narrative design and audience awareness. Bai and Xian (2024) found DST improved L2 speaking and self-regulation, supporting interpretive engagement, while robot-assisted DST enhanced multimodal storytelling and narrative focus (Liang & Hwang, 2023). However, literature teaching remains anchored in reading. A meta-analysis confirmed extensive reading strengthens comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary, reinforcing close reading and textual analysis as essential to critical literary interpretation (Sangers et al., 2025).

Emerging evidence challenges simple "screens versus print" claims. Augmented-reality storybooks improved comprehension, while print and standard digital reading showed no significant difference, highlighting the importance of design and multimodal cues over format alone (Koparan, 2025). In Indonesian EFL literature contexts, semester-sensitive evidence remains limited. This study compares multimedia-supported and text-focused instruction across cohorts to examine differences in interpretive performance and engagement, generating practical guidance for sequencing multimedia and textual approaches effectively across curriculum stages.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on technology-enhanced language learning increasingly supports the use of multimedia to foster learner engagement and comprehension in EFL contexts. Multimedia tools—such as interactive videos, digital storytelling, and infographics—provide multimodal input that taps into visual, auditory, and textual channels, which according to the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, can enhance meaning-making processes (Mayer, 2009). Recent empirical studies have found that the use of

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multimedia in EFL classrooms positively impacts student engagement and comprehension. For instance, Agustini, Heriyawati, and Mustofa (2024) reported that ICT-based interactive videos significantly increased EFL students' engagement during descriptive writing lessons, a finding that suggests similar engagement benefits could extend to literary interpretation tasks. Furthermore, Maruf and Halyna (2023) documented that digital storytelling not only motivated learners but also supported their interpretive discussions of narrative elements in English texts, highlighting the pedagogical potential of multimedia for developing deeper literary understanding.

In addition to engagement, multimedia approaches have been shown to influence students' interpretive and literacy skills. Riansih, Arsyad, and Adnan (2025) found that multimodal instructional design improved both reading comprehension and classroom involvement among EFL learners over time, suggesting sustained instructional use may affect how learners construct meaning from texts. Carcamo and Pino (2025) further reported that the integration of infographics helped students synthesize textual information and interpret abstract concepts more effectively, which is particularly relevant for literary analysis where figurative language and thematic exploration are required. These studies indicate that multimedia can serve as a scaffold that supports interpretive strategies beyond what print may alone provide, especially when implemented consistently across an academic semester.

Traditional text-based instruction remains essential for cultivating close reading and critical reflection in EFL literary learning. Simel (2024) emphasized that print texts foster cultural awareness, historical understanding, and disciplined interpretation through sustained engagement. Likewise, digital literacy research indicates technology enhances access and motivation but does not replace cognitive processes developed through traditional reading (Nurlita & Taufiq, 2025). However, semester-level comparative studies examining multimedia, traditional texts, and their effects on literary interpretation and engagement remain limited.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

Types of Research

This inquiry uses a quasi-experimental, explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to compare multimedia-supported and text-focused instruction across Introduction to Literature (Semester 2), Drama Analysis (Semester 4), and Introduction to World Literature (Semester 6). Intact classes receive parallel multimedia or text-anchored units to estimate condition effects despite randomization constraints. Quantitative results guide purposeful interview sampling to explain mechanisms influencing interpretation. Qualitative themes are integrated with model estimates through joint displays to generate meta-inferences about semester-specific affordances. This design strengthens interpretive validity, clarifies sequencing implications, and

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ensures coherent timing, priority, and integration, consistent with mixed-methods guidance (Tuilan et al., 2025) in practice contexts.

Data Sources

Participants are undergraduate EFL students at Universitas Negeri Manado enrolled in Semester 2, 4, and 6 literature courses, with two intact classes per course (multimedia vs. text) taught over 4–6 meetings. Outcomes include interpretive performance tasks assessed using an analytic rubric and classroom engagement measured through structured observation. Rubric calibration ensures scoring reliability and transparency (Brookhart & Chen, 2024; Dawson, 2020). Engagement is documented using adapted COPUS/O-COPUS protocols, capturing interpretive talk, textual citation, and multimodal references in online and face-to-face literature seminars (Signorini & Kranzfelder, 2021; Sambeka & Ali, 2024).

Methods of Collecting Data

Structured classroom observation is conducted by trained, non-participant observers who record instructor and student behaviors at two-minute intervals using an adapted COPUS/O-COPUS protocol across all sessions. Observers complete preparation workshops with codebook review, video practice, and consensus discussion to ensure reliable descriptive coding (Signorini & Kranzfelder, 2021). The protocol includes literature-specific indicators to capture interpretive behaviors. Semi-structured interviews follow quantitative analysis, using purposeful sampling of students and lecturers. Interviews explore how multimedia and textual features influence interpretation and engagement and are analyzed through reflexive thematic analysis with member checks for accuracy (Ahmed & Barkat, 2025).

Analyzing Data

The analysis includes three stages: estimating inter-rater reliability using Krippendorff's alpha and Cohen's kappa during calibration (Pelenkahu et al., 2025); testing condition, semester, and interaction effects using linear mixed-effects models suited for clustered educational data, with difference-in-differences robustness checks (Carnoli et al., 2024; Brysbaert, 2025); and conducting sensitivity analyses controlling for proficiency and attendance. Qualitative analysis follows reflexive thematic analysis procedures to ensure methodological rigor (Ali & Ismail, 2023). Integration uses joint displays aligning statistical effects with thematic mechanisms to generate meta-inferences about multimedia and text-based instruction effectiveness across semester levels (Oroh et al., 2025).

IV. FINDING

This section presents results from a longitudinal classroom investigation that tracked literature learning across three critical junctures in an undergraduate program: Semester 2 (Introduction to Literature), Semester 4 (Drama Analysis), and Semester 6 (World Literature). The study employed a comparative design, systematically observing two instructional conditions Multimedia-oriented (MM) sessions, which integrated film clips, soundtracks, staged readings, and digital adaptations, and Text-anchored (Text) sessions, which centered on close reading of printed literary texts with traditional annotation practices.

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Our data collection encompassed structured classroom observations and in-depth interviews with both students and lecturers. Observations were coded according to five key indicators of literary interpretation: Multimodal Noticing (the ability to identify and name visual, auditory, and performative elements), Cites Textual Evidence (direct quotation from source texts to support claims), Negotiates Focalization (awareness and articulation of narrative perspective and knowledge distribution among characters), Performative Reading/Scene Blocking (embodied engagement with texts through voice, gesture, and spatial arrangement), and Symbol Tracing (systematic tracking of recurring images, motifs, and symbolic patterns across a literary work). Interview data provided critical explanatory depth, illuminating why certain behaviors increased or plateaued under specific conditions and how students themselves understood the relationship between different modalities of literary engagement.

The findings reveal that neither condition holds categorical superiority; rather, each offers distinct affordances that become more or less salient depending on developmental stage, literary concept being taught, and pedagogical sequencing. What emerges is a nuanced picture of how different entry points into literature sensory and immediate versus textual and deliberate shape the pathway toward warranted interpretation.

4.1 Semester 2: Lowering Barriers and Establishing Evidence Discipline

4.1.1 The Context of Beginning Engagement

Semester 2 represents students' first sustained encounter with literary analysis in an academic setting. At this developmental stage, many students carry uncertainties about their ability to "say the right thing" about literature, often viewing interpretation as a mysterious practice reserved for those with innate literary sensibility. The pedagogical challenge, therefore, involves not only introducing analytical concepts but also creating conditions where students feel authorized to make interpretive claims.

4.1.2 Multimedia as Participatory Gateway

Classroom observations in MM sessions during Semester 2 revealed a consistent pattern: multimedia materials functioned as powerful participation activators. Table 1 presents the aggregate performance across both conditions, showing striking differences in engagement patterns.

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Table 1. Semester 2 Aggregate Performance by Instructional Condition

Metric	MM (Mean ± SD)	Text (Mean ± SD)	Δ (MM − Text)	Interpretation
Cites Textual Evidence	20.0 ± 2.0	25.7 ± 2.1	−5.7	Text establishes evidence discipline earlier
Multimodal Noticing	31.3 ± 2.1	12.0 ± 1.0	+19.3	MM dramatically increases observational participation
Negotiates Focalization	15.0 ± 1.0	13.7 ± 1.5	+1.3	Minimal difference at novice stage
Performative Reading	16.7 ± 1.2	10.3 ± 1.5	+6.4	MM encourages embodied engagement
Symbol Tracing	15.3 ± 0.6	18.3 ± 1.5	−3.0	Text supports systematic pattern tracking
Time on Task (min)	47.7 ± 1.5	46.7 ± 1.5	+1.0	Equivalent sustained engagement

Note: N = 3 sessions per condition; class sizes ranged from 30-31 students

The data in Table 1 reveal that MM sessions logged substantially higher instances of Multimodal Noticing a difference of more than 19 counts per session representing a 161% increase over Text sessions. This advantage manifested most visibly in the opening minutes of class. When a session began with a film clip or soundtrack, students who typically remained silent during text-only discussions quickly volunteered observations about what they saw and heard the ominous quality of background music, the intimacy suggested by a close-up shot, the physical distance between characters revealed through blocking.

Interview data illuminated why this pattern emerged so consistently. As one student (S2-ST03) explained: *"Kalau ada musik dan gambar dulu, saya berani ngomong duluan; terus cari kalimat yang pas untuk memperkuatnya"* (When there's music and images first, I dare to speak first; then I look for the right line to strengthen it). This comment captures a crucial psychological dynamic: multimedia materials provided students with something concrete and shared to respond to, reducing the perceived risk of "getting it wrong." The sensory immediacy of film and sound created what students experienced as a safer entry point—they were describing what they noticed rather than declaring what a text "meant."

However, Table 1 also shows that this participatory advantage did not automatically translate into the kind of text-grounded analysis that defines disciplinary practice. The MM condition showed lower Cites Textual Evidence counts (20.0 vs. 25.7), revealing a gap of nearly six citations per session. This gap only closed when instructional design explicitly required students to anchor their multimedia observations in specific textual language. Detailed session-level data (Table 2) illustrate how this conversion process operated within individual class meetings.

Table 2. Selected Semester 2 Session-Level Observation Data

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Session ID	Date	Cond.	N	Cites Evidence	Multimodal Noticing	Focalization	Performative	Symbol Tracing	Time (min)	Prompt Focus	Observer Notes
S2-01	2025-03	MM	31	20	33	15	16	15	49	Tone via soundtrack; claim–evidence	High participation; smooth conversion to quotes when prompted
S2-02	2025-03	MM	30	18	31	14	18	16	47	Visual metaphor → textual image	Strong initial noticing; some drift without anchoring tasks
S2-03	2025-03	MM	32	22	30	16	16	15	47	Character blocking → dialogue analysis	Improved quote discipline with structured worksheets
S2-04	2025-03	Text	30	26	12	13	10	19	48	Close reading: pronouns & deixis	Strong anchoring to lines; steady group talk
S2-05	2025-03	Text	31	27	11	15	11	18	46	Annotation workshop: symbol tracking	Systematic marking practices; dense marginal notes
S2-06	2025-03	Text	29	24	13	13	10	18	46	Evidence-based argumentation	Clear "name the line" routines established

Note: Full 18-session dataset available in supplementary materials

Session S2-01 exemplifies the successful conversion pattern. When the lecturer used a focused prompt ("Identify how the soundtrack creates tone, then find the exact line that describes that emotional quality"), the initially high Multimodal Noticing (33 instances) translated into solid Cites Textual Evidence (20 instances). The observer noted "smooth conversion to quotes when prompted," indicating that the bridging task finding corresponding textual language was the critical instructional move. In contrast, Session S2-02 showed "some drift without anchoring tasks," suggesting that multimedia observation alone, without explicit requirements to cite text, did not automatically produce disciplined analysis.

4.2 Semester 4: Embodiment, Focalization, and the Drama-Specific Advantage

4.2.1 The Developmental Context: Conceptual Readiness and Genre Demands

By Semester 4, students have internalized basic expectations of literary analysis and bring more conceptual sophistication to their work. The genre focus on drama introduces specific analytical demands that differ from Semester 2's primarily narrative

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and lyric texts. Drama requires attention to how knowledge is distributed among characters, how information is withheld and revealed, and how audience awareness differs from character awareness. These focalization dynamics, though present in all narrative forms, become especially visible and pedagogically accessible in dramatic texts where staging, blocking, and dialogue structure explicitly manage information flow.

4.2.2 Comparative Performance and the Focalization Breakthrough

Table 3 presents Semester 4 aggregate data, revealing both developmental gains from Semester 2 and condition specific patterns related to drama pedagogy.

Table 3. *Semester 4 Aggregate Performance by Instructional Condition*

Metric	MM	Text	Comparison to S2	Key Pattern
Cites Textual Evidence	High	High	Both conditions show gains	Gap narrows with maturity
Multimodal Noticing	High, stable	Moderate	MM maintains advantage	Consistent with S2 pattern
Negotiates Focalization	**Highest**	High	Strong gains in both; MM leads	Drama + embodiment = breakthrough
Performative Reading	High	Moderate-high	Both conditions increase	Genre demands drive participation
Symbol Tracing	Moderate	Moderate-high	Text maintains edge	Continued text advantage in accumulation
Time on Task (min)	48–50	45–47	Slight increase overall	Genre complexity factor

Note: Directional comparisons shown; exact means ± SD in supplementary materials; N = 3 sessions per condition; class sizes ranged from 28-34 students

The most striking finding in Table 3 is the focalization breakthrough under the MM condition. While both conditions showed substantial improvement in Negotiates Focalization compared to Semester 2 (where the difference was minimal at 1.3 counts), MM sessions achieved notably higher counts when drama-specific pedagogy employed embodied activities. Session-level data (Table 4) reveal how this advantage emerged in practice.

Table 4. *Selected Semester 4 Session-Level Observation Data*

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Session ID	Date	Cond.	N	Cites Evidence	Multimodal Noticing	Focalization	Performative	Symbol Tracing	Time (min)	Prompt Focus	Observer Notes
S4-09	2025-04	MM	29	21	31	18	17	16	48	Contrasting stagings: same scene	Rapid focus shifts visible; strong concept grasp
S4-10	2025-04	MM	27	20	30	19	16	15	49	Blocking workshop → script annotation	Physical knowledge positions clear
S4-11	2025-04	MM	28	22	32	20	18	17	50	Knowledge asymmetry via blocking	High participation; smooth conversion to quotes
S4-12	2025-04	Text	33	28	14	17	14	19	46	Subtext: ellipsis & repetition	Dense linguistic pattern analysis
S4-13	2025-04	Text	32	29	12	19	17	20	44	Table-read → pauses & avoided terms	Strong attention to unsaid
S4-14	2025-04	Text	34	30	13	19	16	20	45	Subtext in dialogue; implicature	Strong anchoring to lines; steady group talk

Session S4-11 exemplifies the focalization gains possible through embodied multimedia work. The prompt focused explicitly on "knowledge asymmetry via blocking" asking students to observe how character positioning-controlled information access. The session achieved the semester's highest Negotiates Focalization count (20

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instances) while maintaining strong Cites Textual Evidence (22 instances). The observer noted "high participation; smooth conversion to quotes," indicating successful integration of embodied understanding and textual specification.

One student's interview comment (S4-ST07) crystallizes this mechanism: *"Begitu blocking diubah, saya paham posisi pengetahuan tokoh; lalu cocokkan dengan keterangan panggung"* (As soon as the blocking changed, I understood the character's knowledge position; then I matched it with stage directions). The embodied, visual experience of watching an actor turn away, move behind a door, or stand with back to the audience made epistemological relationships concrete. Students could *see* that one character possessed information another lacked, and they could observe the moment when that information asymmetry shifted.

4.2.3 Text Sessions and the Subtext Advantage

Text-anchored sessions in Semester 4, while showing fewer focalization spikes than MM sessions, excelled in a related but distinct area: the analysis of subtext through close attention to linguistic features. Sessions S4-12 through S4-14 in Table 4 demonstrate this pattern. All three Text sessions achieved higher Cites Textual Evidence counts (ranging from 28-30) than any MM session, while maintaining high Negotiates Focalization (17-19) and leading in Symbol Tracing (19-20).

Session S4-12's focus on "ellipsis & repetition" and Session S4-14's attention to "implicature" represent the kind of linguistic fine-tuning that printed texts particularly support. Students working primarily with scripts developed sophisticated attention to patterns of what characters *don't* say the pauses marked by stage directions, the topics conspicuously avoided, the repeated phrases that signal obsession or evasion. The observer notes for S4-12 captured this: "Dense linguistic pattern analysis."

One lecturer (S4-L02) described the instructional sequence that produced these outcomes: *"Table-read dulu untuk suara dan ritme; lalu fokus elipsis, repetisi, dan kata yang dihindari; baru bandingkan pilihan staging"* (Table-read first for voice and rhythm; then focus on ellipsis, repetition, and avoided words; then compare staging choices). This sequencing suggests that even Text-anchored sessions benefited from performative activity—Table 4 shows Text sessions achieving moderate-high Performative Reading counts (14-17)—but used embodiment as a launching point for linguistic analysis rather than as the primary site of interpretation.

4.2.4 The Oscillation Strategy: Evidence from Session Structure

The most significant pedagogical insight from Semester 4 concerned not which condition performed better but how oscillation frequency affected outcomes. While Table 3 and Table 4 cannot directly capture moment-to-moment instructional moves, the observer notes provide crucial evidence. Sessions described as having "smooth conversion" (S2-01, S4-11) or "rapid focus shifts" (S4-09) consistently outperformed sessions where such notation was absent.

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Interview data confirmed this pattern. Students and lecturers repeatedly emphasized the value of short cycles between embodied activity and textual specification. The mechanism appears to involve cognitive consolidation: embodied experience activates intuitive, procedural knowledge about human interaction and spatial relationships, but this knowledge remains largely tacit unless deliberately translated into propositional, language-based form. The act of immediately returning to printed text and naming "This stage direction means X," "This repeated phrase signals Y" converts procedural understanding into explicit concepts that can be manipulated, compared, and incorporated into formal analysis.

4.3 Semester 6: Symbol Networks, Text-First Discipline, and Multimedia as Provocation

4.3.1 The Advanced Context: Research Orientation and Disciplinary Identity

By Semester 6, many students are forming professional identities as future teachers, researchers, or literary scholars. Their relationship to literature has shifted from novice exploration to something approaching disciplinary practice. They are increasingly concerned with "sounding like the field" producing analyses that would be recognizable and credible within academic literary discourse. This professional orientation shapes both their work habits and their assessment of pedagogical approaches, creating a context where the purpose and sequencing of multimedia versus text-based work takes on new significance.

4.3.2 Condition Performance and the Symbol Network Advantage

Table 5 presents Semester 6 aggregate data, revealing the most pronounced condition differences of the entire study in certain metrics while showing convergence in others.

Table 5. *Semester 6 Aggregate Performance by Instructional Condition*

Metric	MM	Text	Pattern	Interpretation
Cites Textual Evidence	High (with structured prompts)	**Highest**	Gap remains but narrows	Discipline normalized; Text maintains edge
Multimodal Noticing	**Highest of all semesters**	Low-moderate	Largest gap	Now analytical rather than descriptive
Negotiates Focalization	High	High	Convergence	Maturity equalizes previously MM-dominant skill
Performative Reading	High	Moderate-high	Consistent with prior patterns	Genre and maturity factors
Symbol Tracing	High (if anchored)	**Highest**	Text leads substantially	Comprehensive accumulation advantage
Time on Task (min)	Mid-high	Mid	Slight MM advantage	Complexity of comparison work

Note: N = 3 sessions per condition; class sizes ranged from 29-33 students

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The most striking finding in Table 5 is the dual pattern in Symbol Tracing and Multimodal Noticing. Text sessions achieved their highest Symbol Tracing counts of the entire study, substantially outperforming MM sessions, while MM sessions paradoxically achieved their highest Multimodal Noticing counts. These seemingly contradictory patterns actually reveal complementary developmental trajectories: students had learned to leverage each modality for its particular strengths. Session-level data (Table 6) illuminate how this sophisticated division of labor operated in practice.

Table 6. *Selected Semester 6 Session-Level Observation Data*

Session ID	Date	Cond.	N	Cites Ev.	Multi-modal Noticing	Focali-zation	Perfor-mative	Symbol Tracing	Time (min)	Prompt Focus	Observer Notes
S6-19	2025-05	MM	30	22	34	21	18	20	47	Cross-cultural adaptation analysis	Critical comparison; theoretical framing
S6-20	2025-05	MM	28	23	35	22	19	22	46	Medium specificity: novel → film	Strong analytical noticing; media theory application
S6-21	2025-05	MM	29	24	36	22	19	22	46	Adaptation vs source (world lit)	High participation; smooth conversion to quotes
S6-22	2025-05	Text	32	30	15	20	15	26	45	Comparative symbol systems across texts	Comprehensive textual mapping; cross-work analysis
S6-23	2025-05	Text	31	31	14	21	16	27	43	Symbol network mapping: global patterns	Dense annotation; systematic tracking
S6-24	2025-05	Text	33	32	14	21	16	27	44	Motif evolution across cultural contexts	Strong anchoring to lines; steady group talk

4.3.3 Text-First Dominance in Symbol Network Construction

Sessions S6-22 through S6-24 demonstrate the Text condition's substantial advantage in Symbol Tracing, with all three sessions achieving counts of 26-27 instances approximately 20-30% higher than the strongest MM sessions (20-22). The observer notes for these sessions capture the qualitative character of this work: "Comprehensive textual mapping" (S6-22), "Dense annotation; systematic tracking"

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(S6-23), and "Strong anchoring to lines" (S6-24). These descriptions point to the accumulated, cross-referenced nature of advanced symbol analysis.

Interview data explained this advantage clearly. As one student (S6-ST04) articulated: *"Untuk simbol, saya kumpulkan kutipan dulu dari awal sampai akhir; nonton adaptasi untuk mengetes interpretasi"* (For symbols, I collect quotations first from beginning to end; watch adaptations to test interpretation). This comment reveals a deliberate methodological approach: systematic textual collection first, multimedia provocation second. Students had learned that robust symbol analysis requires comprehensive textual coverage you cannot build a convincing argument about a symbol's evolution across a novel if you have only sporadic, unsystematic evidence.

The material and cognitive affordances of printed texts proved critical for this work. Session S6-23's focus on "symbol network mapping: global patterns" achieved the semester's highest Symbol Tracing count (27 instances) precisely because the task required students to track motifs across multiple texts. Students created elaborate annotation systems, color-coding different symbols, writing page numbers in margins to cross-reference earlier appearances, and generating lists or charts that tracked symbolic density across chapters. These practices required the kind of non-linear navigation, permanent marking, and cumulative record-keeping that printed texts facilitate far more readily than multimedia materials moving forward in time.

4.3.4 Multimedia as Sophisticated Analytical Tool

Despite Text sessions' lead in Symbol Tracing, MM sessions in Semester 6 achieved their highest Multimodal Noticing counts of the entire study (34-36 instances), as shown in Table 6. However, the character of this noticing had fundamentally changed from Semester 2. Where earlier noticing consisted largely of observations and descriptions, Semester 6 noticing involved analysis and critique. The observer notes for Session S6-20 captured this shift: "Strong analytical noticing; media theory application."

Sessions S6-19 through S6-21 reveal MM instruction functioning at its most sophisticated level. Prompts focused on "cross-cultural adaptation analysis," "medium specificity," and comparative work explicitly positioned multimedia materials as interpretive arguments to be evaluated rather than merely sensory experiences to be described. Students' Multimodal Noticing now included observations like how a film's color palette constituted an interpretive claim about the source text's imagery, why particular staging choices diminished textual ambiguity, and how adaptation necessarily transforms temporal experience. This represents a qualitatively different cognitive activity than Semester 2's "the music sounds sad" it is theoretically informed evaluation rather than naive description.

This sophisticated noticing emerged because students possessed robust textual knowledge to which multimedia materials could be compared. Session S6-21 achieved

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strong performance across all metrics (24 citations, 36 noticing, 22 focalization, 22 symbol tracing), suggesting successful integration. The observer noted "high participation; smooth conversion to quotes," indicating that even when starting from multimedia materials, advanced students could efficiently ground their observations in textual evidence. However, this efficiency depended on prior comprehensive textual knowledge—students had already done the systematic reading work that Text-condition classes centered.

Findings across semesters and conditions show that multimedia and text-anchored instruction function as complementary, not competing, approaches, each offering developmentally distinct affordances. Multimedia enhances access, engagement, and conceptual visibility, while text-based methods strengthen evidence discipline, analytical rigor, and textual knowledge. Effective pedagogy integrates both, adjusting sequencing and emphasis by semester level, genre, and concept. Learning depends less on medium than mechanism—structured pacing, required textual citation, multimodal-textual alignment, and explicit scaffolding—enabling students to develop both aesthetic responsiveness and rigorous interpretive competence essential to literary studies.

V. DISCUSSION

Longitudinal findings presented across three critical semesters reveal a fundamentally developmental story about literary pedagogy, one that challenges simplistic assumptions about media superiority while illuminating how different instructional modalities serve distinct and complementary functions across students' intellectual maturation. At the novice stage (Semester 2), multimedia materials functioned primarily as participation activators, dramatically increasing observational engagement by providing concrete, sensory entry points that reduced the perceived risk of interpretive error. A 161% increase in Multimodal Noticing demonstrates how visual and auditory modes offer immediate accessibility. This finding resonates with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) theory of multimodal literacy, which argues that meaning making occurs across multiple semiotic systems, and that visual and auditory modes offer immediate accessibility that can lower cognitive and affective barriers to engagement. However, the concurrent deficit in textual citation practices within multimedia conditions demonstrates that accessibility alone does not constitute disciplinary competence. Students logged approximately six fewer citations per session in multimedia settings compared to text anchored sessions. Critical pedagogical moves involved what the data reveal as "conversion work," requiring students to translate their multimedia observations into precise textual language. Without this bridging mechanism, multimedia engagement remained at the level of description rather than advancing toward warranted interpretation, suggesting that affective engagement and

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analytical rigor follow different developmental trajectories that must be deliberately coordinated through instructional design.

Persistent text anchored advantages in establishing evidence discipline from the outset point to what might be termed the material politics of literary pedagogy. Sessions centered on printed texts consistently demonstrated higher citation counts, with means of 25.7 versus 20.0 in Semester 2, alongside superior symbol tracking performance of 18.3 versus 15.3 instances per session. Advantages derived not from inherent student preferences but from the affordances of printed materials: their permanence, annotatability, and support for non-linear navigation. As Hayles (2012) argues in *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*, different media formats encode different cognitive possibilities, with print particularly supporting the sustained attention and recursive reading practices that characterize deep literacy. Students working with printed texts found source material visually present and cognitively available, reducing the mental effort required to locate and reproduce specific language. In contrast, multimedia materials, which unfold temporally and disappear from view, impose additional retrieval demands that can interrupt the flow of analytical thinking. Material differences carry pedagogical consequences because text anchored instruction normalized evidence based argumentation more rapidly. Citation practices became structurally easier to perform and therefore more likely to become habitual. Debates about "digital natives" or generational media preferences may obscure more fundamental questions about how material formats shape the cognitive work students can accomplish.

Semester 4 findings on drama pedagogy reveal how genre specific demands interact with instructional modality to create powerful synergies, particularly around the conceptual challenge of focalization. Substantial increases in focalization negotiation within multimedia conditions, achieving counts of 18 to 20 instances compared to more modest gains in text conditions, occurred specifically when instruction leveraged drama's embodied and performance oriented nature through blocking exercises and contrasting stagings. Such patterns support theories of embodied cognition, which propose that abstract concepts are often grounded in sensorimotor experiences (Barsalou, 2008). By physically positioning students in space, manipulating sightlines, and controlling information access through blocking, multimedia drama pedagogy made epistemological relationships tangible. One student observed that "as soon as the blocking changed, I understood the character's knowledge position," capturing how spatial embodiment can precipitate conceptual insight. Data also demonstrate that these embodied breakthroughs only translated into analytical writing when instruction enforced what the findings describe as "tight loops" between physical experience and textual specification. Sessions achieving both high focalization counts and high textual citation, such as Session S4 11 with 20 focalization

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instances and 22 citations, shared a common instructional structure: rapid oscillation between embodied activity and immediate return to printed text to name the stage directions, dialogue patterns, or linguistic features that created the observed effects. Oscillation patterns suggest that procedural knowledge, the felt sense of how perspective works in drama, requires deliberate translation into propositional knowledge before it can be mobilized in formal analysis.

Simultaneously, text anchored sessions in Semester 4 excelled at a related but distinct competence: the analysis of subtext through attention to linguistic micro patterns such as ellipsis, repetition, and implicature. Achieving citation counts of 28 to 30 instances, substantially higher than multimedia conditions, text sessions demonstrated that sustained contact with language enables a different kind of interpretive work, one focused on what is conspicuously absent or indirectly signaled rather than overtly performed. Such findings align with work in pragmatics and discourse analysis, which emphasizes that meaning often resides in what is left unsaid, in the gaps and tensions that linguistic patterns reveal (Ali & Lestari, 2024). Observational notation describing "dense linguistic pattern analysis" captures how printed texts support the kind of recursive, accumulative reading required to identify systematic avoidance, track subtle repetitions, and map conversational implicatures across extended dialogue. Where multimedia sessions excelled at making knowledge asymmetries visible through spatial positioning, text sessions excelled at making them audible through linguistic pattern. Drama as a genre fundamentally concerned with both staged action and crafted language requires integrated instruction that exploits both modalities' strengths: embodiment to tangibilize abstract concepts, close reading to expose the linguistic architecture that creates those concepts.

Semester 6 findings reveal the most sophisticated integration of textual and multimedia competencies, but also the most pronounced condition differences in symbol tracing, where text sessions achieved 26 to 27 instances compared to multimedia's 20 to 22. Substantial gaps of approximately 20% to 30% higher performance reflect the cumulative, cross referenced nature of advanced symbol analysis, which requires comprehensive textual coverage rather than selective attention. Students described developing elaborate annotation systems: color coding different symbols, writing page numbers to cross reference earlier appearances, and generating charts tracking symbolic density across chapters. Such practices exemplify what Iroth and Ali (2025) term "constructively responsive reading," where skilled readers actively build cognitive representations through strategic marking and note making. Material affordances of print proved essential for this work: the ability to hold a finger on one page while flipping to another, the visual memory of where on the page certain images appeared, the permanent record of marginal annotations that accumulate across multiple readings. Multimedia materials, which move forward in time and offer

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limited opportunities for simultaneous comparison across distant textual moments, simply cannot support this kind of comprehensive, recursive analysis with the same efficiency. Students explicitly described their methodology as collecting quotations first from beginning to end, then watching adaptations to test interpretation, demonstrating metacognitive awareness about media specific affordances and suggesting that advanced students have learned to orchestrate their own optimal pedagogical sequences.

Paradoxically, multimedia conditions in Semester 6 achieved their highest Multimodal Noticing counts of the entire study, ranging from 34 to 36 instances, but the character of this noticing had fundamentally transformed from descriptive observation to critical analysis. Where Semester 2 students noted that "the music sounds sad," Semester 6 students analyzed how a film's color palette constituted an interpretive argument about the source text's imagery, evaluated how particular staging choices diminished textual ambiguity, and critiqued how adaptation necessarily transforms temporal experience. Qualitative shifts represent what Bloom's taxonomy would classify as higher order thinking: evaluation and creation rather than comprehension and application (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Such shifts occurred because students possessed robust textual knowledge against which multimedia materials could be compared; multimedia materials no longer functioned as accessible entry points for novices but as interpretive arguments to be evaluated by experts. Repositioning of multimedia work from scaffold to object of critique demonstrates developmental progression: competencies that initially required multimedia support, such as participation and concept formation, eventually become durable knowledge that students can apply in any modality, while multimedia materials themselves become sites for demonstrating sophisticated comparative and theoretical awareness. Pedagogical implications challenge linear models of media integration, suggesting instead a recursive relationship where foundational textual competence enables advanced multimedia analysis, which in turn deepens textual understanding.

Persistent patterns across semesters indicate that instructional effectiveness depends not on modality superiority but on pedagogical orchestration that leverages modality-specific affordances at developmentally appropriate stages. Text-based instruction consistently strengthened citation accuracy and symbolic tracking, while multimedia enhanced engagement and multimodal noticing, with convergence in advanced competencies such as focalization. Equivalent time on task across conditions confirms that outcomes reflect instructional structure rather than duration. Core mechanisms—structured pacing, required citation, multimodal-textual alignment, and explicit scaffolding—functioned as “tools of intellectual adaptation” (Pabur et al., 2025). Effective literature pedagogy integrates multimedia to activate understanding

and text-based analysis to consolidate interpretive rigor, fostering comprehensive disciplinary expertise.

CONCLUSION

The longitudinal findings show that multimedia and text-based instruction serve complementary, developmentally distinct roles in EFL literature learning. Multimedia enhances early engagement and conceptual access, while text-based approaches establish evidence discipline and analytical habits through annotation and recursive reading. At intermediate stages, multimedia supports embodied understanding of drama, while text analysis reveals linguistic nuance. At advanced levels, students integrate both, using text for cumulative analysis and multimedia for critical comparison. Effective pedagogy strategically sequences modalities, using explicit scaffolding, citation requirements, and multimodal-textual alignment to develop comprehensive literary expertise and disciplinary mastery.

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