LEVERAGING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH WITH MULTIMODAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Dalam situasi di mana bahasa Inggris dipelajari sebagai bahasa asing (EFL), motivasi sangat penting. Pendekatan multimodal mengintegrasikan beberapa bentuk representasi dan komunikasi, termasuk elemen tekstual, visual, auditori, dan kinestetik, untuk meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran. Metode-metode ini semakin diakui secara luas karena efek positifnya terhadap motivasi siswa, terutama dalam konteks pembelajaran bahasa. Studi ini mengeksplorasi penerapan pendekatan multimodal di kelas EFL dan dampaknya terhadap motivasi siswa, khususnya melalui lensa Model ARCS Keller: Perhatian, Relevansi, Kepercayaan Diri, dan Kepuasan. Menggunakan data wawancara dari seorang guru bahasa Inggris di sekolah menengah pertama, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa sumber daya multimodal, seperti materi visual, video, dan tugas berbasis kehidupan nyata, secara signifikan meningkatkan motivasi siswa, terutama dalam hal keterlibatan perhatian dan kepuasan tugas. Temuan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa praktik multimodal dapat mendorong lingkungan kelas yang lebih responsif dan menarik secara emosional, sehingga memperkuat keinginan siswa untuk berpartisipasi dan belajar.

Kata kunci*: pendekatan multimodal, motivasi, model ARCS, kelas EFL.*

ABSTRACT

In situations where English is being learned as a foreign language (EFL), motivation is especially important. Multimodal approaches integrate several forms of representation and communication, including textual, visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic elements, to improve learning outcomes. These methods are becoming more widely acknowledged for their positive effects on student motivation, particularly in language learning contexts. This study explores the implementation of the multimodal approach in EFL classrooms and its effect on students' motivation, specifically through the lens of Keller's ARCS Model: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. Using interview data from a junior high school English teacher, the research reveals that multimodal resources, such as visual materials, videos, and real-life-based tasks, significantly enhance students' motivation, particularly in terms of attentional engagement and task satisfaction. The findings suggest that multimodal practices can foster more responsive and emotionally engaging classroom environments, thereby strengthening students' willingness to participate and learn.

Keywords: multimodal approach, motivation, ARCS model, EFL classroom.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Indonesia, maintaining and enhancing students' motivation remains a persistent challenge. Many classrooms still rely heavily on conventional, text-based instruction, which often fails to actively engage learners and results in low levels of participation and enthusiasm (Ilmi & Dewi, 2022). Recognizing these challenges, the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum advocates for student-centered learning, which necessitates more adaptive and engaging instructional strategies to foster motivation and active involvement in language learning.

One such strategy is the multimodal approach, which has gained attention as a means to stimulate students' interest and motivation. A multimodal approach involves the integration of two or more semiotic modes (such as visual, auditory, gestural, spatial, and linguistic elements)

into teaching and learning activities (Lei & Zhang, 2024). This pedagogical practice acknowledges that students make meaning not only through written or spoken language but also through visual images, sounds, movements, and digital tools (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Using multimodal aspects allows EFL teachers to offer knowledge in more dynamic, accessible, and engaging ways, which is critical for motivating learners with diverse preferences and proficiencies (Rahmawati & Kurniawati, 2023).

Incorporating multimodal resources can positively influence key components of student motivation, such as attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction factors that are central to (Keller, 2010) ARCS model of motivational design. For instance, combining verbal explanations with videos or infographics can enhance students' attentiveness, while using culturally relevant images or music can increase the perceived relevance of the lesson. Furthermore, well-structured multimodal tasks may boost students' confidence by clarifying instructions and reducing cognitive load, and collaborative activities involving multimedia often lead to a stronger sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

Despite its promising potential, the application of multimodal approaches in Indonesian EFL classrooms remains inconsistent, often hindered by gaps in teacher training, limited access to digital resources, and a lack of practical guidance. While some teachers are aware of the benefits of multimodal instruction, many struggle to implement it effectively. This highlights the need for further empirical studies focusing on how multimodal approaches are used in real classroom settings and how they influence learners' motivation.

Several recent studies have affirmed the motivational benefits of multimodal instruction. Bashir et al. (2025), for example, found that university students exposed to CALL-based multimodal materials—including audio, video, and visual texts—showed increased motivation and willingness to communicate in English. Similarly, Fedorenko and Kravchenko (2023) observed that the integration of interactive, image-based materials in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses significantly enhanced student engagement. In the Indonesian context, Djamdjuri

et al. (2021) reported that students who used Islamic-themed digital media, including YouTube videos and multimedia e-books, felt more motivated and connected to English writing tasks. In another research, (Utami & Suriyani Djamdjuri, 2021) found that Canva has a beneficial influence by increasing students' motivation in writing classes, improving students' abilities in writing classes, and assisting students in writing classes.

Given these findings, this study seeks to examine the impact of implementing a multimodal approach on students' motivation in the EFL classroom. Specifically, it investigates how English teachers integrate multimodal elements into their instruction and how these practices influence students' motivation to learn English. Employing a qualitative design and narrative inquiry approach, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on multimodal pedagogy and offer practical insights for EFL educators striving to enhance learner motivation and engagement.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design to investigate how the implementation of a multimodal approach affects students' motivation in learning English. The research aimed to understand the teacher's experiences and perceptions in applying multimodal instruction in an EFL classroom, focusing on how it influences students' motivation based on Keller's ARCS model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction).

The participant in this study was an English teacher at a public junior high school in Indonesia who had incorporated multimodal practices in her teaching. The participant was selected through purposive sampling based on her active use of multimodal resources in the classroom. The school was chosen due to its implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum, which supports student-centered and flexible learning approaches.

The primary data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview. The interview protocol was designed to explore the teacher's narrative regarding the use of multimodal materials and their impact on students' motivation. The questions were structured based on the four components of Keller's ARCS model

to ensure comprehensive coverage of motivational aspects.

Data were collected through in-depth, one-on-one interviews with the teacher, which were audio-recorded with the participant's consent. To support and contextualize the interview data, relevant teaching documents such as PowerPoint slides, worksheets, and lesson plan were also gathered. These documents served as supplementary data reflecting the multimodal practices used by the teacher.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis. The analysis procedure involved the following steps: (1) transcribing the interview verbatim, (2) identifying narrative segments that reflect multimodal teaching experiences, (3) categorizing the findings according to the ARCS model components—Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction—and (4) interpreting the themes to understand how multimodal elements influenced students' motivation. To ensure the credibility of the data, member checking was conducted with the participant, and document triangulation was employed to validate and enrich the findings.

This method allowed the researcher to gain a deeper, contextual understanding of how multimodal instructional strategies are experienced by the teacher and how these strategies impact students' motivation in an EFL setting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this part there is 1 main theme taken from the instruments which is students' motivation that are afterwards divided into 4 categories: 1) Attention; 2) Relevance; 3) Confidence; 4) Satisfaction. This section aims to provide a deeper understanding about what are the effect of implementing multimodal approach on students' motivation in learning English.

Attention

In this first category focuses on teachers' views regarding students' attention levels during learning activities that incorporate a multimodal approach. Specifically, it explores how the integration of various modes, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements affects students' ability to stay focused and engaged. The following

section presents findings from the interviews, highlighting participants' observations on students' attentiveness when instructional materials are delivered through multiple modes of communication.

The teacher reported a substantial increase in student engagement after including multimodal resources into her instruction. Rather than depending exclusively on verbal explanations or whiteboard writing, she started using visually rich and engaging media including videos, photos, and Canva-based slide presentations. This adjustment was not only a question of instructional diversity, but also a pedagogical method with a demonstrated impact on student behavior and emotional response. She reflected:

> *"They're more curious compared to me just being a speaker in front talking like that, they're more enthusiastic like they want to listen or I give them my material, I don't have to write the materials on the board but I used Canva instead."*

Based on the data, it is clear that the teacher showed a transition from teacher-centered to student-responsive instruction. The teacher used technologies such as Canva and video media to create a visually attractive and intellectually engaging atmosphere. Her finding's that students became "more curious" and "enthusiastic" indicates improved intrinsic motivation, defined as genuine interest in the content rather than conformity with teacher directions.

Relevance

This second category emphasizes the importance of contextual relevance in multimodal teaching, specifically how using familiar, real-world resources affects students' motivation and comprehension. It emphasizes the significance of incorporating real resources such as product labels, popular media, or common songs to create a learning environment that can be meaningful and relatable to students. The following findings are based on interview data and demonstrate how familiarity and real-life applicability in educational content contribute to increased student attention and deeper understanding.

The teacher discovered that providing materials based on students' real experiences boosted engagement and strengthened conceptual

understanding. Rather than depending exclusively on textbook content or abstract examples, she deliberately chose resources including food labels, health product packaging, as well as familiar videos and songs. Which, she continued, helped students to better understand the lesson's background and feel intimately linked to the issue. She reflected:

> *"Yes, because now I more often use materials that are closely related to their daily lives, such as product labels, videos, or songs they are familiar with. That way, students can more easily understand the context and feel that the learning is relevant. For example, when I show them images of products like medicine or food, they can immediately relate it to their own experiences. That makes them more interested and actively engaged in discussions."*

According to the information gathered, it is obvious that the teacher employed contextually appropriate items to help students learn and engage. Through utilizing familiar objects such as product labels, famous songs, and movies, the teacher created a learning environment that felt more relevant to students' daily lives. Her discovery is that students could immediately relate it to their own experiences and become more interested and actively engaged in discussions suggests greater intrinsic motivation, which is motivated by the perceived relevance and personal meaning of the learning content.

Confidence

This category highlights the role of multimodal approach in influencing students' confidence during classroom activities. While the multimodal approach offered support for understanding, the teacher noted that students' self-confidence varied depending on their English proficiency and personal outlooks toward the subject. The following narrative shows how students with different levels of interest and ability responded to class participation.

The teacher observed that students who enjoyed English tended to be more confident in answering questions or completing tasks, while others remained hesitant or passive. She reflected:

> *"Not all of them are confident because in one class, students have different levels of English. Those who like English are confident, but those who don't or don't really enjoy it usually stay quiet—they just observe while I let the volunteers answer."*

This analysis suggests that while multimodal resources may support comprehension, confidence is also shaped by students' prior interest and comfort in using the language. It reveals that motivation through confidence is not uniformly experienced, and highlights the importance of differentiated support and encouragement to foster greater participation among less confident learners.

Satisfaction

This category explores how multimodal resources affect students' feelings of satisfaction when engaging with classroom tasks. It emphasizes how the combination of visual and textual elements in learning materials can help students feel more capable and independent.

The teacher shared that students showed greater satisfaction when completing multimodal worksheets, particularly because the visuals made the tasks easier to understand. She reflected:

> *"Yes, especially when using student worksheet, because they feel they can do it on their own without too much explanation from me. I usually include pictures or visuals in the worksheet, so they understand the instructions more easily. Some even said they felt happy finishing the tasks while discussing with friends, and that made them more confident."*

From this data, it appears that students gained a sense of accomplishment when they could work more independently and collaborate with peers. The multimodal design of the worksheet provided additional scaffolding, reducing their reliance on teacher explanation. This sense of ease and enjoyment contributed to their satisfaction, which in turn supported their motivation to complete tasks more willingly.

The Most Noticeable Motivational Impact of the Multimodal Approach

This category identifies the motivational elements most strongly influenced by the use of a multimodal approach in the classroom according to the teacher. Although all four ARCS components—attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction—are affected to varying degrees, the teacher perceived that attention and satisfaction stood out as the most visibly impacted.

She explained that students' reactions varied across the classroom, but overall, the combination of engaging visuals, relatable content, and interactive formats helped maintain their interest and boost their sense of accomplishment. She reflected: *"In one class, we can't really predict—some students are very enthusiastic, while others are just neutral. But in my opinion, the most significant impact is on their sense of satisfaction and their attention during the lesson."*

This insight reveals that while student motivation is influenced by multiple factors, the multimodal approach had its strongest impact on capturing students' attention and creating positive emotional responses during learning. These two factors, attention and satisfaction, appear to serve as key entry points for fostering motivation in diverse classroom contexts.

In conclusion, implementing the multimodal approach in the EFL classroom has had a considerable impact on students' motivation, particularly in terms of curiosity, satisfaction, and attentional engagement. The teacher found that using resources that are strongly tied to students' daily life, such as product labels, recognizable pictures, and songs, boosted relevance and involvement in classes. Visual aids offered through Canva or within worksheets assisted students in understanding activities on their own, promoting a sense of accomplishment and boosting peer engagement.

Discussion

The teacher's use of multimodal materials (videos, pictures, and Canva presentations) boosted student attention and relevance. She discovered that students were more curious and engaged when lessons featured visual information rather than just verbal explanation. This confirms theory from (Keller, 2010) that capturing attention is essential for motivation, as well as studies such as (Chang et al., 2021) demonstrating that multimodal tools improve engagement. The teacher made learning more accessible by employing common visuals such as product labels and familiar cultural elements, which aligned with Keller's concept of relevance and (Nguyen & Lee, 2022) findings on culturally meaningful input improving student interest.

Meanwhile, visual worksheets and group activities helped to boost confidence and satisfaction. Multimodal materials made it easier for students to follow instructions and work independently, particularly those with limited English proficiency, reflecting Keller's belief that clear, achievable objectives boost learner confidence. The teacher also stated that students felt proud and joyful after completing such exercises, especially in pairs or small groups, which aligns with Keller's concept of satisfaction as a crucial motivator. Similar findings were reported by (Hafner, 2021) and (Molina et al., 2024), who emphasize the emotional and social benefits of multimodal tasks in EFL courses.

When asked which of the four motivational variables had the most impact, the teacher picked satisfaction and attention as the most noticeable results of employing multimodal materials. Although student responses varied, she consistently found that visual and interactive content kept students focused and made them feel more accomplished following activities. This demonstrates how the multimodal strategy can consistently create emotional engagement, in line with (Keller, 2010) emphasis on reinforcement and persistent motivation, as well as (Molina et al., 2024) discovery that happy sensations from multimodal activities promote learning persistence.

In summary, this study discovered that the teacher multimodal approach had a strong influence on students' attention and satisfaction, consistent with Keller's motivational model. While student interest in English remained important, the deliberate use of visual, multimedia, and culturally appropriate materials seemed to improve classroom engagement and emotional connection to learning. These findings indicate that incorporating multimodal resources

can improve both teaching efficacy and student motivation in junior high school EFL settings.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the effect of implementing multimodal approach on students' motivation in learning English. Data were collected through interviews and document analysis, then analyzed using multimodal theory of (Bezemer & Kress, 2016; Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2010) and (Keller, 2010) ARCS model of motivation. The findings revealed the teacher perceived that the multimodal approach contributed to all four components of the ARCS model: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. However, she observed that the most significant effects were seen in Attention and Satisfaction. Visual and interactive materials helped capture students' focus and made them feel accomplished after completing activities. Nonetheless, the impact of these practices still depended on each student's interest in English, indicating that motivation remains partially influenced by individual factors. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of multimodal approaches for improving instructional quality and learner motivation in EFL classes, especially when digital tools and student-relevant content are effectively incorporated.

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