

ABSTRACT

The increasing integration of digital multimodal resources into English language learning has transformed the way students engage with narrative texts by combining written language with visual and auditory modes. However, limited studies have explored students' experiences of learning narrative texts through digital multimodal animated fable videos in rural educational contexts. This study aimed to explore how junior high school students comprehended narrative texts when engaged with digital multimodal animated fable videos and to identify the multimodal elements that facilitated their emotional engagement and understanding of story meaning. This study employed a qualitative case study design involving twenty eighth-grade students at an Islamic junior high school in Cidolog, Ciamis. Data were collected through classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews conducted across four instructional meetings. Classroom observations examined students' participation, interactions, and meaning-making processes, while document analysis identified the development of reading comprehension, vocabulary understanding, multimodal interpretation, and emotional engagement through students' worksheets. Semi-structured interviews with six selected students explored their learning experiences and perceptions of the multimodal elements. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that students gradually developed their narrative comprehension by integrating written texts, subtitles, images, character movements, narration, background music, and sound effects to construct meaning. The study also found that subtitles, facial expressions, character movements, background music, and sound effects were the multimodal elements that most effectively supported students' emotional engagement and understanding of story meaning. The study concludes that digital multimodal animated fable videos provide meaningful learning experiences that enhance students' narrative reading comprehension, emotional engagement, and multimodal literacy while offering practical insights for integrating multimodal resources into English reading instruction. However, the findings are limited to one rural Islamic junior high school with a relatively small number of participants and a short implementation period.