

# Voices From the EFL Literature Classroom: Students' Attitudes Towards the Use of Multimodal Literature to Improve Their CEFR Literary Reading Competence at C1 Level

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**Abstract**—The purpose of this research was to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to develop their literary reading competence at C1 level. The participants included 10 fourth-year English major students who were enrolled in the Contemporary World Literature course at a university in Thailand in semester three, 2023. The instruments used for the study included a questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions. Mean and standard deviation calculations including content analysis were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that the students had a positive attitude towards engaging in learning experiences with multimodal literature in the literature studies class. They also reflected the students' thoughts about studying with multimodal literature in the literature course to improve their multimodal literature applications in the EFL literature classroom.

**Index Terms**—multimodal literature, EFL literature classroom, CEFR, literary reading

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education today involves more than just imparting knowledge; it also involves assisting students in acquiring an essential compass and skills necessary to deal with the world which is more complex and uncertain (OECD, 2021). Being literate in this global connectivity world not only refers to the ability to read and write effectively, but also expands the skills to include the capacities to understand, identify, interpret, create, and communicate in a digital or text-mediated platform. In this context, literacy includes media literacy, digital literacy, global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and job-specific skills (UNESCO, 2023). In the past, teachers could instruct their students to search for information in textbooks and accept it as accurate and true. They can now access millions of answers on Google without anyone dictating what is true or false. It is more crucial than ever to cultivate deep comprehension as well as the ability to negotiate ambiguity, triangulate opinions, and make sense of content given how much knowledge technology allows us to search for and access (OECD, 2021). In this respect, students in contemporary society need to hone their skills at understanding both traditional print-based texts or monomodal texts and other texts beyond the traditional or multimodal texts (Kress, 2010). These skills in need of development include to produce / design, consume, interpret, and analyse texts in new and more interactive ways (Anstey & Bull, 2006).

Multimodal texts convey their message through more than one semiotic mode or channel of communication. This is, meaning is communicated by incorporating spoken or written language, and still or moving images created either on paper or on electronic screen, with or without sound (Boshraadi & Biria, 2014). This definition implies that there are two categories to describe multimodal texts: printed texts including picture books, newspapers, magazines, and reference books as its initial type of text; and non-printed texts including videos, films, and digital media (Baharani & Ghafournia, 2015).

Multimodal literature comprises a variety of audio, visual, and other symbolic representations. In contrast to the linear reading of monomodal texts, multimodal materials entail the processing of more than one communication mode and recognition of the connections between these modes (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020). Thus, it is likely that different modes convey different meaning (Kress, 2010). The addition of images to verbal learning can result in significant improvements in higher-order learning. As such, multimodal learning may be more effective than conventional unimodal learning. Moreover, multimodal instructional resources facilitate reading comprehension through the interaction of text and visuals. By affording language learners the ability to listen to multimodal materials, especially non-printed texts, their pronunciation skills can be improved. Multimodal texts also increase the motivation of language learners to understand reading comprehension texts. When using multimodal texts, second language learners are more inclined to read texts in-depth than when using linear texts (Baharani & Ghafournia, 2015).

Previous studies of students' attitudes and perceptions of multimodal-text based learning in the classroom suggested they are viewed as positive learning experiences (Djamdjuri et al., 2021; Jocius, 2013). A review of the literature also revealed that most studies related to the attitudes and perceptions of students and teachers towards the integration of

multimodality into the classroom tended to be conducted in non-literature courses. Nevertheless, research on students' attitude towards the use of multimodal texts is scarce, particularly around the use of multimodal literature to promote EFL students' literary reading competence with reference to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language at C1 level. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence at C1 level.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Multimodal Literature*

Multimodal literature generally refers to a book or a digital literary text like a picture book, informational text, or graphic novel. As opposed to the linear reading of monomodal texts, multimodal literature requires the processing of multiple channels of communication and an understanding of the connections between those modes. Multimodal literature includes several auditory, visual, and other symbolic representations. When reading multimodal materials, it is necessary to analyse many modes and recognise the relationships between them (Eizenmann & Summer, 2020). Thus, it is possible that various modalities convey meaning in varying ways (Kress, 2010).

Reading multimodal literature or multimodal texts encourages students to explore plot, point of view, and voice through visual imagery. Moreover, students can compare and analyse the same story presented across several formats and media. The multimodal method also enables teachers to successfully accommodate the different learning styles of students (Thompson & McInay, 2019). The benefits of using multimodal texts in the classrooms have been acknowledged by numerous English language instructors across many countries. Firstly, multimodal texts support learning by students representing diverse learning preferences. Although a student may have a preferred learning method, the multimodal text's multiple channels or modes of learning can cater to distinct student learning styles. For instance, kinaesthetic or tactile learners may learn best when they actively participate in classroom activities, auditory learners may benefit from listening to verbal instructions, and visual learners may learn best by observing the teachers' demonstrations (Jewitt, 2008; Kellner, 2008). In this respect, multimodal texts can be presented in a variety of ways to provide students with the opportunity to learn in a way that best suits them and which helps to improve their learning abilities. Secondly, employing multimodal texts in teaching and learning enhances student engagement and motivation. According to Lee's (2014) study, student motivation and confidence to learn increases after participating in multimodal learning experiences. Thirdly, students learn through various modes of communication and multimodal texts thus help to promote comprehension and learning retention. For instance, a visual presentation can solve the communication problem when written words are unable to convey the meaning (Chen & Fu, 2003). Additionally, studies show that student learn more in lessons that include words and images compared to lessons that use words only (Mayer, 2008).

### B. *Literary Reading Competence Based on CEFR at C1 Level*

The CEFR for Languages is an international standard describing the language proficiency of English language users at different levels (Council of Europe, 2018). The framework was initially employed as a major language acquisition strategy for speakers of different languages as part of the administrative policies in education, workplace entry, immigration, and citizenship in Europe (Council of Europe, 2001; Tylor, 2004). More recently it has been widely used as a framework for developing foreign language instruction and learning in other non-European countries. According to Cambridge English (2016), there are six language competency levels on the CEFR scales: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. The "can do" statements are used to illustrate the range of tasks that students can complete at different proficiency levels. These statements outline the language ability that students at each level should demonstrate regarding a range of skills such as speaking, writing, interaction, and production (Council of Europe, 2018).

According to the CEFR, reading literature is important for developing communicative competency in the aesthetic uses of language for writing and speaking. The three illustrative descriptor scales on the topics related to literature are: 'reading as a leisure activity,' 'expressing a personal response to creative texts including literature,' and 'analysis and criticism of creative texts including literature' (Council of Europe, 2018). Literary reading competence at C1 level is defined as the ability to articulate a personal response to literature, including the capacity to analyse and criticise a literary work. In the first instance, learners should be able to clearly present their reactions to the work, develop their ideas, and provide examples and arguments to support them. They must also identify character traits, emotional states, motivations for actions, and the consequences of those actions. Furthermore, learners should be able to identify and interpret how the plot, characters, and themes develop within a story. Finally, they should be able to identify and interpret their personal interpretation of the work in detail and explain their reaction to specific features and explain their significance. The latter involves critically evaluating a wide array of texts including literary works of different descriptions and commenting on how the work engages the audience (Council of Europe, 2018).

## III. METHODOLOGY

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in this study to investigate the students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level.

### A. Participant Recruitment

The participants of the study consisted of 10 fourth-year English major students (4 men and 6 women) who were enrolled in the Contemporary World Literature course during semester three in 2023 at a medium-size public university in Northern Thailand. The participants were purposively chosen based on the researcher's designated teaching course. The researcher met with the participants prior to commencing the study to thoroughly explain its goals and to solicit their voluntary involvement. Each participant received an invitation letter along with a Consent Form outlining their right to withdraw consent and discontinue participating in the research project at any time. By filling out and returning the Consent Form within a week, the participant confirmed her or his consent to participate.

### B. Study Instruments

The questionnaire instrument to collect quantitative data was developed by the researcher and comprised 22 rating-scale questions and one open-ended question. The 5-point rating-scale questions were divided into four parts: attitudes toward studying literature; attitudes toward multimodal literature; attitudes toward using multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level; and attitudes toward the learning activities implemented in the classroom. The questionnaire required the participants to consider each item carefully and to indicate their responses to statements related to the use of multimodal literature, choosing from five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The open-ended question referred to other comments or suggestions related to the use of multimodal literature in the classroom. The questions were approved by three experts in the field of English literature and English language teaching. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was used to establish content validity. Items with scores lower than 0.5 were revised, whereas items with scores higher than or equal to 0.5 were reserved. The overall IOC score of the questionnaire was 0.96. Content reliability was determined to ensure that the responses collected via the questionnaire instrument were reliable and consistent. The questionnaire was piloted with 25 fourth-year English major students studying at a university in the northern part of Thailand (the researcher's workplace), none of whom were in the study sample. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied to assess the reliability (internal consistency) of the items in the questionnaire, resulting in a reliability value of 0.88.

### C. Data Collection

The participants were instructed with a variety of multimodal literature over the course of 10 weeks in the Contemporary World Literature course classroom. Each lesson was three hours' duration, for a total of 30 hours. In addition to administering the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain more in-depth insights into the students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level. The participants' attitudes towards three main aspects—the literary texts used, the multimodal literature used to develop literary reading ability, and the activities employed in class—were targeted in flexibly constructed questions to collect qualitative data. There were subsequent questions embedded in each main part. The same experts reviewed the interview questions and changes were subsequently made based on their feedback to make them more straightforward and clearer. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes, was conducted in Thai, and was audio recorded with each participant's consent.

### D. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaire instrument were analysed to generate descriptive statistics of the mean (M) score and standard deviation (SD), based on the Likert-scale criteria. Means scores were interpreted in this study according to the follow criteria:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 4.51-5.00 | students reported strongly agree             |
| 3.51-4.50 | students reported agree                      |
| 2.51-3.50 | students reported neither agree nor disagree |
| 1.51-2.50 | students reported disagree                   |
| 0.00-1.50 | students reported strongly disagree          |

Qualitative data from the individual semi-structured interview were descriptively analysed using content analysis.

## IV. RESULTS

### Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Multimodal Literature to Improve Literary Reading Competence at C1 Level

#### A. Questionnaire Results

The current study explored students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level. In terms of the demographic results, 4 males (40%) and 6 females (60%) were administered the questionnaire

TABLE 1  
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDYING LITERATURE (N=10)

| Statements   | M    | S.D. | Level   |
|--|------|------|---------|
| 1. I think that studying literature is useful for improving my English reading skills.                                 | 4.40 | 0.70 | High    |
| 2. I think that studying literature helps me to develop critical thinking skills.                                      | 4.20 | 0.79 | High    |
| 3. I think that studying literature is useful since I can gain moral lessons from each story to apply in my real life. | 4.50 | 0.53 | High    |
| 4. I think that studying literature is difficult and hard to provide an interpretation.                                | 4.60 | 0.70 | Highest |

According to Table 1, item 4: *I think that studying literature is difficult and hard to provide an interpretation* achieved the highest mean ( $M=4.60$ ,  $SD=0.70$ ), while the second highest mean was for item 3: *I think that studying literature is useful since I can gain moral lessons from each story to apply in my real life* ( $M=4.50$ ,  $SD=0.53$ ). Item 2: *I think that studying literature helps me to develop critical thinking skills* achieved the lowest mean ( $M=4.20$ ,  $SD=0.79$ ).

TABLE 2  
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MULTIMODAL LITERATURE (N=10)

| Statements   | M    | S.D. | Level   |
|--|------|------|---------|
| 5. I like to study literature through graphic novel.   | 4.40 | 0.70 | High    |
| 6. I like to study literature through picture book.  | 4.40 | 0.70 | High    |
| 7. I like to study literature through animated video.  | 4.40 | 0.70 | High    |
| 8. I like to study literature through film.  | 4.20 | 1.14 | High    |
| 9. I think that studying literature using multimodal literature is more interesting than the traditional text-based methods because I can learn through various modes of learning such as seeing still images, moving images and listening to characters' voices and soundtrack rather than reading verbal texts only. | 4.70 | 0.67 | Highest |
| 10. I prefer studying literature using multimodal literature compared to the traditional text-based method.  | 4.80 | 0.42 | Highest |

According to Table 2, item 10: *I prefer studying literature using multimodal literature compared to the traditional text-based method* achieved the highest mean ( $M=4.80$ ,  $SD=0.42$ ), while item 9: *I think that studying literature using multimodal literature is more interesting than the traditional text-based method because I can learn through various modes of learning such as seeing still images, moving images and listening to characters' voices and soundtrack rather than read verbal texts only as in traditional text-based method* is the second highest ( $M=4.70$ ,  $SD=0.67$ ). The lowest mean was achieved by item 8: *I like to study literature through film* ( $M=4.20$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ).

TABLE 3  
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD USING MULTIMODAL LITERATURE TO IMPROVE LITERARY READING COMPETENCE AT C1 LEVEL (N=10)

| Statements   | M    | S.D. | Level   |
|--|------|------|---------|
| 11. I think that studying literature using a graphic novel helps to develop literary reading ability because narrating the story with pictures makes reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring. | 4.60 | 0.52 | Highest |
| 12. I think that studying literature using a picture book helps to develop literary reading ability because the image illustration makes the story interesting.  | 4.30 | 0.48 | High    |
| 13. I think that studying literature using an animated video helps to develop literary reading ability because the motion picture narrative makes the story easy for me to follow.                             | 4.40 | 0.70 | High    |
| 14. I think that studying literature using a film helps to develop literary reading ability because watching a film with sound audio and motion picture is fun and relaxing.                                   | 4.50 | 0.85 | High    |
| 15. I think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to develop literary reading ability better than traditional printed-based text.   | 4.50 | 0.71 | High    |

According to Table 3, item 11: *I think that studying literature using a graphic novel helps to develop literary reading ability because narrating the story with pictures makes reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring* achieved the highest mean ( $M=4.60$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ), while item 14: *I think that studying literature using a film helps to develop literary reading ability because watching a film with sound audio and motion picture is fun and relaxing* ( $M=4.50$ ,  $SD=0.85$ ), and item 15: *I think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to develop literary reading ability better than traditional printed-based text* achieved the second highest mean scores ( $M=4.50$ ,  $SD=0.71$ ). The lowest mean was achieved by item 12: *I think that studying literature with picture book helps develop literary reading ability because the image illustration makes the story interesting* ( $M=4.30$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ).

TABLE 4  
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ACTIVITIES USED IN CLASS (N=10)

| Statements   | M    | S.D. | Level |
|--|------|------|-------|
| 16. I think that the <i>Discussion</i> activity helps me to identify character's motives for actions and the consequences of those actions.  | 4.40 | 0.70 | High  |
| 17. I think that the <i>Picture Talk</i> activity helps me to identify and interpret the development of a plot, characters, and themes in a story.   | 4.40 | 0.52 | High  |
| 18. I think that the <i>Me-Telling</i> activity helps me to describe personal interpretations towards the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain the significance. | 4.40 | 0.70 | High  |
| 19. I think that the <i>Move to Talk</i> activity helps me to give a clear presentation of my reactions to a work, develop my ideas, and support them with examples and arguments.                       | 4.10 | 0.74 | High  |
| 20. I think that <i>Reflective Writing</i> helps me to evaluate how effectively a work follows to the conventions of its genre.  | 4.30 | 0.82 | High  |
| 21. I think that <i>Role Play</i> helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance.                | 3.90 | 1.20 | High  |
| 22. I think that the <i>Drawing Picture</i> activity helps to stimulate my imagination and activate my background experiences necessary for text understanding.  | 4.00 | 0.67 | High  |

Regarding Table 4, the highest mean score was achieved by items 16, 17, and 18: *I think that the Discussion activity helps me to identify character's motives for actions and the consequences of those actions* (M=4.40, SD=0.70), *I think that the Picture Talk activity helps me to identify and interpret the development of a plot, characters, and themes in a story* (M=4.40, SD=0.52), and *I think that the Me-Telling activity helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance* (M=4.40, SD=0.70). The second highest mean was achieved by item 20: *I think that Reflective Writing helps me to evaluate how effectively a work follows to the conventions of its genre* (M=4.30, SD=0.82). The lowest mean of this group was achieved by item 21: *I think that Role Play helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance* (M=3.90, SD=1.20).

#### B. Interview Results

Regarding the qualitative data, six females and four males participated in the individual semi-structured interviews. Content analysis of the participants' interview responses was performed using the three main topics addressed in the interview: the literary texts used, the multimodal literature used to develop literary reading ability, and the activities employed in class. All interview data were transcribed into English. Examples of the students' attitudes toward the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level are illustrated in Tables 5-10, respectively.

##### (a). Attitudes Towards the Literary Texts Used

TABLE 5  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LITERARY TEXTS USED

| Question  | Students' Attitudes  | Themes   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. What do you think about the contents used in the course? | For me, I like all the stories in the course because they contain various moral lessons which I can apply in my daily life. The story that I like most in this course is <i>The Alchemist</i> . It seems like actually our dream is not beyond our reach. We can achieve it as long as we do not give up (Student 10). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining moral lessons from stories</li> <li>▪ Applying lessons in daily life</li> <li>▪ <i>The Alchemist</i></li> </ul> |
|   | I like <i>The Alchemist</i> . It can be compared to human life when we determine to do something, sometimes we may encounter some difficulties and obstacles. I think the story reflects what we really face in real life (Student 8).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The Alchemist</i></li> <li>▪ Reflecting on everyday life</li> </ul>  |
|   | All of the stories are interesting. However, I like <i>The Alchemist</i> the most because the plot is captivating and I also like an adventure story (Student 6).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The Alchemist</i></li> </ul>   |

Table 5 presents some of the students' attitudes towards the literary texts used in the course. The interview data gained from Students 10, 8, and 6 indicates that they liked the stories taught in the course, with *The Alchemist* selected as their favourite. They also asserted that they learned many moral lessons from *The Alchemist* that could be applied in their daily lives.

##### (b). Attitudes Towards the Multimodal Literature Used to Develop Literary Reading Ability

TABLE 6  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDYING LITERATURE USING MULTIMODAL LITERATURE

| Question  | Students' Attitudes   | Themes   |
|---|---|--|
| 2. What do you think about studying literature using multimodal literature? | I think the use of multimodal literature creates a lively learning atmosphere in the classroom. In the previous courses, I am bored when I learn with the traditional texts because there are only written texts. I like to see pictures and to listen to YouTube (Student 10).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating a lively learning atmosphere</li> <li>▪ Preferring to see pictures and to listen to YouTube</li> </ul>                                 |
|   | I think that using pictures or video helps me to understand the story plot or sequences of the events in the story. Moreover, the character's actions are clearly presented in the video, so I gain more understanding about the character's actions compared to reading the traditional texts (Student 8).                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preferring the use of pictures or video</li> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding about the story's plot and the character's actions</li> </ul> |
|   | I like watching video; for example, <i>The Man Who Planted Trees</i> , because it is like a short summary of the story. Moreover, the illustrations in the video help me to understand the story plot (Student 1).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story's plot from illustrations in the video</li> </ul>   |
|   | I think that using multimodal literature is something new for me. I have never experienced this kind of learning before. It seems like studying with multimodal literature in this course gives me new experiences. For example, I think that the use of film is very interesting, not boring (Student 2).                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing new learning experiences</li> <li>▪ Using film is interesting, not boring</li> </ul>  |
|   | I like graphic novels, animated video, and film. I get a better understanding of the story through audio and images. Reading written texts without pictures and sounds makes me bored. However, when multimodal literature is employed in the classroom, I feel that the learning atmosphere is livelier and fun (Student 6). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story through audio and picture</li> <li>▪ Creating a lively learning atmosphere</li> </ul>               |

As can be seen in Table 6, most students expressed the attitude that studying literature through multimodal literature helps them to gain a better understanding of the story's plot and the character's actions (Students 8, 1, and 6). Additionally, Student 2 expressed that learning with multimodal literature opens up new learning experiences for her because she had not previously used multimodal texts for learning. Moreover, Students 10 and 6 indicated that implementing multimodal literature in the literature classroom created a lively and fun learning atmosphere compared to studying with traditional texts and their focus on the written word without any pictures or sounds.

TABLE 7  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE MULTIMODAL LITERATURE USED TO DEVELOP LITERARY READING ABILITY

| Question   | Students' Attitudes   | Themes   |
|--|---|--|
| 3. Do you think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to improve your literary reading ability? Why? How? | Yes, I do. When I read a text while looking at the illustrations at the same time, I can better understand the story. Sometimes, watching a video on YouTube makes me want to read the written texts more (Student 10).                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story</li> </ul>                |
|  | Yes, I do. I think that using multimodal literature such as film improves my vocabulary skills. Sometimes I learn new words from watching a video by guessing the contexts or moving images (Student 1).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving vocabulary skills</li> </ul>                                |
|  | Yes, I do. Studying literature through multimodal literature helps to increase my understanding of the story because there are pictures and sounds to capture my attention (Student 2).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capturing attention</li> </ul>  |
|  | Yes, I do. I think it helps a lot. Reading merely written texts sometimes is so boring. However, if we can see pictures or listen to the audio from a film or graphic novel, it increases our comprehension about the story and the characters (Student 6). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story and characters</li> </ul> |

It is clearly evidenced in Table 7 that most students had the attitude that studying literature through multimodal literature helps to improve their literary reading ability. Firstly, they indicated that they gain a better understanding of the story plot and the characters (Students 10 and 6). Secondly, it was expressed that using multimodal literature such as film helps to improve vocabulary skills because the students can learn new words from watching a video by using moving images and context to predict the meaning of unknown vocabulary (Student 1). Thirdly, Student 2 adds that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to increase her understanding of the story because there are pictures and sounds to capture the attention.

TABLE 8  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE USE OF MULTIMODAL LITERATURE TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDYING LITERATURE

| Question  | Students' Attitudes  | Themes  |
|---|--|---|
| 4. Do you think studying literature using multimodal literature helps you to have a positive attitude towards studying literature? How? | Yes, I do. I feel that I have a positive attitude towards studying literature because I get a better understanding of the story through the use of multimodal literature (Student 3).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story</li> </ul> |
|   | Yes, I do. I think that I have a positive attitude towards studying literature when I learn through multimodal literature. In the past, I did not enjoy studying literature and felt discouraged when I had to read written texts even though they are quite easy to read and understand. It is more enjoyable when studying with multimodal literature (Student 4). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhancing enjoyment</li> </ul>                         |
|   | Yes, I do. Studying literature using traditional texts without any illustrations is not interesting and may discourage students when reading long texts. Studying with multimodal literature can capture the students' attention (Student 7).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capturing attention</li> </ul>                         |

Toward question 4, "Do you think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps you to have a positive attitude towards studying literature? How?" the interview data reveals that all students expressed a positive attitude towards studying literature through the use of multimodal literature. Learning with multimodal literature was found to support students to have a better understanding of the story; therefore, they feel positively about their learning experiences in the literature course (Student 3). Moreover, when compared to the students' previous courses which relied heavily on written texts, studying with multimodal literature was regarded as more enjoyable (Student 4). Lastly, using multimodal literature can also capture the students' attention in class more effectively than simple written texts, which may result in a positive attitude towards literature study (Student 7).

TABLE 9  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TYPES OF MULTIMODAL LITERATURE

| Question   | Students' Attitudes  | Themes   |
|--|--|--|
| 5. What type of multimodal literature do you like the most? Why? | I like picture books and animated video. I can see images and hear the sounds which is not boring (Student 10).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Picture book</li> <li>▪ Animated video</li> </ul> |
|  | I like animation because I like to see moving images which makes me understand the story more. The use of still images is also good, but I prefer animated video (Student 8).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Animated video</li> </ul>                         |
|  | I like the infographic because it is short and the information shown in it is the key idea or important topic presented in the story. When we read/view an infographic, we can understand the story's key idea in a very short time (Student 2). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infographic</li> </ul>                            |
|  | I like graphic novels and films. Graphic novels are like a cartoon, so we follow the narration by enjoying the colourful images. Also, both sounds and images from a film attract and motivate us to enjoy the story more (Student 6).           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Graphic novel</li> <li>▪ Film</li> </ul>          |

In terms of the types of multimodal literature most liked by the students, it emerged in the interview results that they varied in their choice of favourite. For example, Student 10 enjoyed reading picture books and watching animated videos because the images and sound make studying literature less boring. Student 8 echoed that watching animated video helps her to gain a better understanding of the story. Additionally, the infographic was mentioned as a favourite type by Student 2 as it provided a short message to convey the key idea or important information related to the story. Finally, a graphic novel was chosen by Student 6 as the favourite because it was similar to a cartoon and he could follow the narration by enjoying the colourful images. Regarding a film as a preferred multimodal text-type, Student 6 described how its sounds and images both attracted and motivated him to enjoy the story more.

(c). *Attitudes Towards the Activities Employed in Class*

TABLE 10  
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ACTIVITIES EMPLOYED IN CLASS

| Question                                       | Students' Attitudes   | Themes   |
|--|---|--|
| 6. Which activities do you like the most? Why? | I like the Discussion activity. Sharing ideas with friends in class helps me to explore new perspectives. Sometimes I can learn new ideas from friends which I have never heard before. Also, it helps me to understand the story more (Student 8).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion</li> </ul> |
|  | I like the Discussion activity. I can learn what others think about the issues reflected in each story that we study in class. It is like we are sharing ideas with one another (Student 1).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion</li> </ul> |
|  | Personally, I like to do Role play. I find it is fun when the teacher asks me to create a scene and reflect what I think about the story or the character. It is not merely about acting skills. Instead, before you can do a role play, you need to understand the story and the character's emotion. We can also improve speaking skills from acting a scene which boosts our confidence (Student 6). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Role play</li> </ul>  |

Regarding the students' attitudes towards the activities employed in the classroom, it can be seen from the interview data that most students identified the Discussion activity as their most-liked classroom activity. They asserted that they gain new perspectives from their classmates when sharing and exchanging ideas toward the issues reflected in each story, and that this helped them get a better understanding of the story (Students 8 and 1). Moreover, Role play was the most-liked activity for Student 6. He reported that he gains many benefits from doing a role play activity such as developing his speaking skills, acting skills, and reading comprehension skills. Boosting self-confidence is also another skill that he developed from participating in the role play activity.

## V. DISCUSSION

Results from the analyses of both the quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data reflected the students' attitudes towards three important aspects: studying literature and the contents used in the course, the use of multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence, and the activities employed in the classroom.

Regarding the attitudes towards studying literature and the contents used in the course, most students reported that they found studying literature difficult and hard to provide an interpretation (see item 4, Table 1). In terms of the literary texts used in the course, the students asserted that all the stories were interesting and that they provided moral lessons which could be applied in real life (Students 8, 10 and 6). In line with Nita and Mustofa (2022), students' attitudes towards teaching and learning are influenced by the teacher's instructional methods and the literature used in class. Moreover, students' attitudes can be affected by a variety of factors such as selecting appropriate literary resources that align with the students' abilities, providing suggestions, and conveying the importance of studying literature including to facilitate students to engage deeply with the literary texts and to become active learners.

In terms of the students' attitudes towards using multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence, analyses of both the questionnaire and interview data indicated that they prefer to study literature using multimodal literature rather than traditional text-based methods (see item 10, Table 2). Moreover, the students also expressed during interview (Table 6) that studying literature through multimodal literature benefited them in three ways: to gain a better understanding of the story's plot and the character's actions (Students 8, 1, and 6), to access various new modes of learning (Student 2), and to engage them in a lively and fun learning atmosphere compared to studying with traditional texts and their focus on written words without pictures or sounds (Students 10 and 6). These findings are consistent with Kizil's (2017) depiction of the characteristics of students in the digital age. These include their propensity for versatility and their capacity to obtain information through a range of media with a preference for images, sounds, and video over traditional linear texts.

Moreover, the students pointed out that studying multimodal literature in the classroom helps them to improve their literary reading competence, particularly when engaging with a graphic novel. Some students claimed that studying literature with this type of multimodal text helped to develop their reading skills because narrating the story with pictures made reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring (see item 11, Table 3). This is echoed in the findings from the analysis of the interview responses (see Table 7) which revealed that most students agreed that studying literature through multimodal literature helped them to improve their literary reading ability. To illustrate, they indicated that it helped them to gain a better understanding of the story's plotline and character (Students 10 and 6), to improve their vocabulary (i.e., learning new words) while watching videos by using moving images and contexts to predict the meaning of unknown vocabulary (Student 1), and to improve their understanding of the story as there were pictures and sounds to capture their attention (Student 2). These findings corroborate Haren's (2010) assertion that multimodality fosters critical thinking as well as creative thinking. It can enhance students' academic performance and participation, in contrast to traditional teaching methods.

Furthermore, this study found that the students had a positive attitude towards literary study when studying literature using multimodal literature. Analysis of the interview data revealed that the students perceived they could better understand the story when learning with multimodal literature; and subsequently they felt more positively about their learning experiences in literature course (Student 3). Moreover, when making a comparison with their learning experiences in previous courses which relied heavily on written texts, the students conveyed that studying with multimodal literature was more enjoyable, potentially contributing to a more positive attitude towards literature study (Students 7 and 4). These findings align with those reported by Varaporn and Sitthitikul (2019) in their study that when Thai university students interact with multimodal texts in the classroom their motivation levels tend to increase.

Regarding the students' preferred multimodal text type implemented in the course, although graphic novel was chosen as their favourite type (based on mean score) in the questionnaire (see item 11, Table 3), during interview the students reported several favourite types including picture book, animated video, infographic, film, and graphic novel (Students 10, 8, 2, and 6). The finding suggests that students respond positively to the integration of different multimodal literature types to support learning as each type caters to a variety of learning modes and contributes to different ways of meaning making. Each of the five multimodal modes—linguistic, visual, aural, gestural, and spatial—has a unique quality that gives both message senders and recipients a distinct meaning or alternative way to communicate. Indeed, the interaction of many channels offers distinct and limitless opportunities for information transmission (The New London Group, 1996). To illustrate, the students can use visual and linguistic information to easily access the storytelling and to become more engaged with the characters in the picture book (Reyes-Torres et al.,

2020). The use of images and colours conveys a particular mood serving as a useful background indicator of the character's emotional state; constituting relationships between characters, objects, and events as well as establishing the character, setting, and plot development (Lewis, 2001; Martinez et al., 2020).

The study result confirmed the essential role of picture books in developing EFL students' language acquisition owing to the combination of written language and visual elements; therefore, they are effective learning and teaching materials to be used in the English language classroom (Nikolajeva, 2010; Serafini & Reid, 2022). With regard to the use of infographics, Noh et al. (2015) claim that it is a type of visual literacy media that can promote higher-level learning and best cater to the students' literacy interests. The finding reported in this study corresponds to claims in previous research of the positive effects of employing infographic in the classroom. For example, Bicen and Beheshti (2017) reported in their study the students' positive responses to learning with infographics. The students in their study expressed that studying with infographic materials encouraged them to become more creative thinkers and helped them to demonstrate various learning skills. They also claimed that they preferred to study with visual materials rather than the traditional materials such as books (Bicen & Beheshti, 2017).

The use of graphic novel not only motivates students to read but also improves their reading comprehension skills through the combination of texts and images. In the process of meaning-making, students need to develop skills for both textual and visual analysis (Cook & Kirchoff, 2017). The distinctive features of graphic novels encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills by questioning their preconceived beliefs and the information gained from different sources. Incorporating graphic novels into the curriculum and classrooms learning activities can introduce students to a medium that is consistently interesting and refreshing, while simultaneously addressing important skills and concepts (Hoover, 2012).

In terms of the learning activities implemented in the classroom, analysis of the quantitative data revealed that the students considered Discussion, Picture Talk, and Me-Telling as the top three activities to promote development of their literary reading competence. Each activity aimed to enhance the students' literary reading competence in different aspects. For example, the students felt enabled during the discussion activity to identify a character's motives for action and the consequences of those actions; supported during the Picture Talk activity to identify and interpret the development of plot, characters and themes in a story; and encouraged during the Me-Telling activity to describe their personal interpretation towards the work in detail and to express their reactions to particular features and explain their significance. Similarly, it emerged from the analysis of interview data that most students indicated the Discussion activity as their most-liked classroom activity. This was primarily because it provided an opportunity to gain new perspectives from their classmates toward the issues reflected in each story when sharing and exchanging ideas, which then helped them get a better understanding of the story (Students 8 and 1). Interestingly, although Role play was the least selected 'preferred' activity by the students in the questionnaire, one student seemed to appreciate the learning advantages of engaging in such an activity (Student 6). In addition to boosting self-confidence, this student found that he gained many benefits from engaging in Role play such as improving his speaking skills, acting skills, and reading comprehension skills.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The present study investigated students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in developing literary reading competence at C1 level. Data were collected using both questionnaire and individual interviews, with the findings revealing that the students' held positive attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in the classroom. The findings reported in this study can contribute to the improvement of multimodal literature applications in the EFL literature classroom. For the implication of the study, teachers and curriculum designers should consider about incorporating multimodal texts in literature classes and reading programs to support a variety of students' learning requirement and improve reading proficiency. Moreover, professional training is also vital for the teachers to learn how to incorporate multimodal literature into their lesson plans effectively.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The present study contributes new evidence related to students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in developing literary reading competence at C1 level. Interpretation and application of its reported findings, however, should consider the following study limitations. First, the research results gained from the small sample indicated the specific opinions from a particular group of students and thus may not reflect the opinions for all students across all universities. Further studies should be conducted with a larger participant sample to elicit more comprehensive findings. Moreover, it is recommended to study the effect of specific elements of multimodal literature on students' reading comprehension and engagement. In addition, it would be very useful to study teachers' attitudes toward the integration of multimodal literature into their teaching practices.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research was funded by Unit of Excellence, University of Phayao.

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