

EMPOWERING STUDENTS' CRITICAL LITERACY THROUGH MULTIMODALITY APPROACH AT A SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN AMBON

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Abstrak

Program Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PKM) ini dirancang untuk memperkenalkan literasi kritis melalui pembelajaran bahasa Inggris multimodal yang didukung oleh kecerdasan buatan atau artificial intelligence (AI) di SMA Negeri 6 Ambon. Program ini dilaksanakan melalui empat tahapan yang saling berkaitan, yaitu orientasi dan koordinasi, pelaksanaan pelatihan, pendampingan dan evaluasi, serta perencanaan keberlanjutan. Sebanyak 72 siswa sekolah menengah atas mengikuti lokakarya selama satu hari. Dalam kegiatan tersebut, siswa menganalisis video, poster, dan teks media sosial sebelum menghasilkan poster multimodal bertema tertentu. Selanjutnya, siswa memanfaatkan perangkat berbasis AI, khususnya Gemini untuk menghasilkan dan menyempurnakan visual serta Google AI Studio untuk menyusun prompt secara kolaboratif. Pemanfaatan perangkat tersebut dilakukan untuk menyempurnakan desain melalui proses evaluasi kritis, bukan dengan menerima secara langsung hasil yang dihasilkan oleh AI. Hasil observasi kelas dan tanggapan terhadap kuesioner pascalokakarya menunjukkan keterlibatan positif siswa dalam kegiatan kolaboratif. Siswa memperlihatkan kemauan yang lebih besar untuk menafsirkan pesan visual, menegosiasikan makna dalam diskusi kelompok, serta mengekspresikan gagasan melalui berbagai moda. Para guru juga mencatat bahwa tugas-tugas multimodal cenderung mendorong partisipasi siswa yang lebih luas dibandingkan dengan kegiatan konvensional berbasis teks. Temuan observasional tersebut menunjukkan bahwa integrasi literasi kritis, multimodalitas, dan penggunaan AI secara terbimbing dapat menciptakan kondisi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang lebih kontekstual dan partisipatif dalam kelas bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing atau English as a Foreign Language (EFL) di tingkat lokal. Laporan ini mendokumentasikan suatu model praktik literasi berbasis keterlibatan masyarakat yang dapat direplikasi dan relevan untuk konteks pembelajaran EFL pada jenjang pendidikan menengah di kawasan Indonesia Timur, tanpa mengajukan klaim mengenai adanya peningkatan kemampuan literasi yang telah diukur secara empiris.

Kata kunci: Kecerdasan buatan, Literasi kritis, Multimodalitas

Abstract

This community service program (PKM) was designed to introduce critical literacy through multimodal English learning supported by artificial intelligence (AI) at SMA Negeri 6 Ambon. The program was implemented through four interconnected stages: orientation and coordination, training implementation, mentoring and evaluation, and sustainability planning. Seventy-two senior high school students participated in a one-day workshop in which they analysed videos, posters, and social media texts before creating thematic multimodal posters. Students subsequently used AI tools, specifically Gemini for visual generation and enhancement and Google AI Studio for collaborative prompt construction, to refine their designs through a process of critical evaluation rather than uncritical acceptance of AI-generated outputs. Classroom observations and post-workshop questionnaire responses indicated positive engagement during collaborative activities, with students demonstrating greater willingness to interpret visual messages, negotiate meaning in group discussions, and express ideas across modes. Teachers noted that multimodal tasks appeared to encourage broader participation compared to conventional text-based activities. These observations suggest that integrating critical literacy, multimodality, and guided AI use can create conditions for more contextually engaged English learning in local EFL classrooms. This report documents a replicable model of community-engaged literacy practice relevant to secondary EFL contexts in eastern Indonesia rather than advancing claims of measured literacy improvement.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Critical literacy, Multimodal

1. INTRODUCTION

In many English classrooms today, students encounter language not only through printed textbooks but also through short videos, images, songs, and digital communication platforms that influence how they interpret information. These everyday learning experiences have gradually broadened discussions of literacy beyond basic reading and writing toward practices that emphasise critical thinking, communication, and the ability to work with information across media. Trilling and Fadel highlight that learners are expected to navigate complex information environments and develop critical thinking, information literacy, and media literacy skills suited to contemporary digital contexts (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). In response, teachers increasingly adapt classroom activities so that students do not only practise language forms but also engage with visual and digital texts that reflect current communication practices. As information and communication technologies become more embedded in everyday learning, English classrooms begin to integrate visual, textual, and auditory materials as part of broader multimodal literacy practices supported by ICT (Tan & Guo, 2009). Rather than focusing solely on decoding language structures, many learning tasks now encourage students to analyse ideas, compare sources, and present their understanding through different forms of representation.

Multimodal literacy is often discussed as an approach that supports learners in interpreting information through multiple modes within English learning contexts. Research highlights that students benefit when they are encouraged not only to read and write but also to view, respond to, and produce multimodal texts that combine linguistic, visual, and digital elements (Simanjuntak et al., 2022). In many classrooms, integrating multimodal resources helps students connect academic tasks with familiar communication practices, making English learning more meaningful to their everyday experiences. Analytical discussions of multimodal-based instruction further indicate that such approaches can enhance learners' motivation, engagement, and critical awareness when students analyse and create diverse forms of texts (Kustini et al., 2018). Rather than separating language learning from students' daily communication practices, multimodal activities invite learners to explore meaning across modes while reflecting on how messages are constructed and interpreted.

Research on transmedia learning and digital engagement illustrates how multimodal experiences shape learners' understanding of meaning across different media. When students interact with narratives presented through books, films, or interactive applications, they begin to notice how images, sound, layout, and other semiotic resources influence interpretation, rather than relying only on linguistic forms (Djonov et al., 2021). Discussions of multiliteracies further suggest that contemporary literacy practices extend beyond written language toward multimodal communication shaped by digital technologies, encouraging learners to construct meaning through diverse modes (Hong & Hua, 2020; The New London Group, 1996). Within English language education, such perspectives have encouraged teachers to reconsider how learners engage with texts and participate in digital communication, particularly as multimodal environments become increasingly central to everyday learning (Brosseau & Downes, 2024).

Alongside these developments, multimedia integration has opened opportunities for more participatory learning experiences in English classrooms. Discussions of multimedia-assisted instruction highlight how integrating text, graphics, sound, and video can provide richer sources of information while engaging multiple sensory channels during learning (Zhen, 2016). When students work with visual and auditory materials alongside written texts, classroom activities often become more vivid and interactive, encouraging imagination and active participation. In several lessons, students appeared more willing to participate when activities involved short videos, songs, or visual prompts rather than printed passages alone.

Global literacy assessments provide a broader picture of students' reading development and the challenges faced by many education systems. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), conducted by the OECD every three years, evaluates how well students apply knowledge and skills to real-life contexts rather than simply recalling information (OECD, 2023).

In the 2022 cycle, Indonesia's average reading score was reported at 359, remaining below the OECD average and reflecting ongoing concerns about students' literacy development. Similar issues are visible at the regional level. In Maluku Province, a regional literacy index report indicated a score of 58.55%, placing the province 31st among 38 regions in Indonesia (Kantor Wilayah Kementerian Agama Provinsi Maluku, 2025). These figures suggest the need for learning approaches that support deeper engagement with texts and strengthen students' interpretive abilities in English learning contexts.

These findings point to the need for English learning approaches that move beyond basic comprehension activities toward more interpretive and reflective engagement with texts. In classroom practice, developing critical literacy involves encouraging students to question ideas, compare information sources, and discuss how messages relate to their social and cultural experiences. Rather than introducing entirely new content, teachers often seek practical ways to adapt familiar materials so that students can analyse meaning more deeply and participate more actively in learning. Strengthening this kind of engagement requires not only appropriate instructional strategies but also access to relevant learning resources and sustained pedagogical support for teachers.

For many students, digital content has become part of everyday communication, yet classroom practices do not always reflect this shift. In Maluku, various school literacy initiatives have been introduced, yet challenges remain in supporting students to engage critically with digital and multimodal texts. Observations from local classroom contexts indicate that English learning activities still tend to prioritise foundational reading and writing practices, while opportunities to analyse visual and multimedia texts are relatively limited. Similar tensions between the growing presence of multimodal literacy and conventional assessment practices have been noted in broader educational research, where teachers often rely on language-dominant criteria and face challenges in integrating multimodal approaches into classroom practice (Tan et al., 2020). Developing multimodal learning activities may therefore help students move beyond functional literacy by encouraging reflection, creativity, and participation in contemporary communication practices.

Based on these considerations, this Community Service Program (Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat or PKM) is designed to strengthen students' critical literacy through multimodal-based English learning at SMA Negeri 6 Ambon. The school, located on Jalan Aman Huse in Amahusu Village, Nusaniwe District, Ambon City, was selected due to its ongoing collaboration with the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) at Pattimura University. Previous academic activities conducted in the school have provided opportunities to observe classroom practices and identify several challenges, including limited reading engagement, restricted access to contextual learning materials, and the continued use of conventional instructional approaches. Through multimodal learning activities, students will work with videos, posters, advertisements, social media content, and songs, allowing them to interpret meaning through visual, auditory, and textual elements. These activities aim to encourage critical thinking, communication, and creativity, culminating in student-produced multimodal projects that respond to current social issues. Based on these considerations, the program is guided by the following objectives:

- a. To develop students' understanding of critical literacy in English learning so that they can interpret texts from linguistic, social, and cultural perspectives.
- b. To support students' critical and reflective thinking by analyzing multimodal texts, including videos, posters, advertisements, and digital media.
- c. To encourage creativity and communication by engaging students in the creation of multimodal projects that combine text, images, audio, and visual elements through digital applications.

2. METHOD

This community service program was carried out through a workshop-based training model that introduced critical literacy through multimodal English learning activities. The program took place at SMA Negeri 6 Ambon and involved 72 senior high school students who participated in a one-day workshop. The activities were arranged as a sequence of interconnected stages that combined preparation, training, mentoring, and reflection. The overall implementation flow is illustrated in Figure 1.

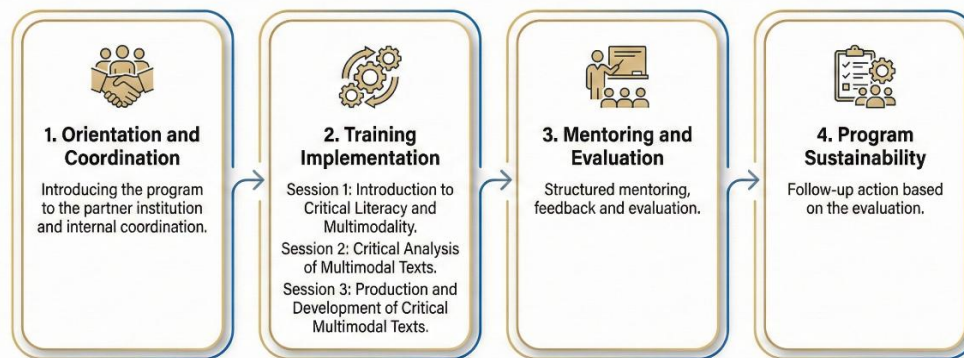


Figure 1. Method of Community Service Activities

a. Orientation and Coordination

The orientation stage focused on establishing shared expectations between the PKM team and the partner school. Discussions with the school principal and English teachers were held to determine the number of participants, scheduling, and the workshop structure. At the same time, internal coordination among the facilitators was conducted to refine learning materials, organise facilitation roles, and ensure that the activities aligned with the students' learning context.

b. Training Implementation

The training sessions were delivered according to the agreed schedule and were organised into three main modules: introduction to critical literacy and multimodality, critical analysis of multimodal texts, and multimodal text production. The modules were designed as a gradual learning sequence, allowing students to move from understanding key concepts to applying them through collaborative analysis and creative tasks. Activities were conducted through short presentations, guided discussions, and small-group work to encourage active participation.

c. Mentoring and Evaluation

After the main training activities, the PKM team provided mentoring through classroom observation and informal feedback during students' collaborative work. The evaluation used a post-workshop questionnaire to capture students' responses to the learning experience. The collected information provided a general picture of students' engagement and perceptions of the multimodal approach implemented during the program.

d. Program Sustainability

Consideration for sustainability was integrated through documentation of student outputs and reflection on the overall implementation process. These materials serve as references for future collaboration between the university and the partner school and support the continuation of similar learning initiatives in subsequent activities.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Orientation and coordination

The orientation and coordination phase began with direct discussions between the PKM team and SMA Negeri 6 Ambon to clarify participant numbers, scheduling, and the workshop's overall structure. Rather than serving merely as an administrative step, these meetings allowed facilitators and teachers to align the program with existing classroom routines and literacy initiatives. The principal and English teachers expressed interest in activities that would help students interpret digital media more critically, which encouraged the facilitators to design sessions that combined familiar classroom practices with multimodal tasks. Collaborative planning between schools and universities has been recognised as an important element in sustaining literacy initiatives because instructional decisions emerge from local needs and shared dialogue (Rogers et al., 2024). The overall sequence of preparatory activities and coordination with the partner school is illustrated in Figure 1, showing how early planning informed the structure of the training sessions.

Internal preparation among PKM lecturers further shaped the program's implementation. Facilitators reviewed the teaching materials together, discussed how to introduce critical literacy concepts gradually, and divided the facilitation roles based on their teaching experience. These conversations helped ensure that multimodal activities remained accessible to students who were still developing confidence in English. Similar collaborative preparation has been described as a form of professional learning that encourages collective reflection among educators (Başar & Çomoğlu, 2024). As a result, the workshop design became more flexible and better aligned with students' learning context.

b. Training

The first training session, Introduction to Critical Literacy and Multimodality, introduced participants to the idea that literacy involves interpreting meaning across visual, textual, and digital forms. Instead of presenting the concept solely through theoretical explanation, facilitators invited students to discuss examples from advertisements, social media posts, and short videos encountered in everyday communication. Through this activity, participants began to view literacy not only as a technical skill but also as a socially situated practice shaped by cultural experience and interaction, reflecting perspectives on critical literacy in EFL contexts (Weng, 2023). An overview of the initial training atmosphere and facilitator–student interaction is shown in Figure 2, which illustrates how the introduction stage encouraged active participation and dialogue.



Figure 2. Training

During the session, facilitators demonstrated how to integrate multimodal resources such as videos, songs, and posters into English learning tasks. Students explored how visual and linguistic elements work together to convey meaning and shared different interpretations of the same media texts. Previous studies have shown that integrating visual analysis into language

learning activities can support collaborative meaning-making and promote deeper engagement with texts (Misa, 2023; Rod & Jamie, 2021). Many participants appeared more confident when discussing familiar digital content, gradually shifting the classroom atmosphere from passive listening to interactive discussion.

The shift from passive listening to interactive discussion observed in this program can be understood through several intersecting explanations grounded in multiliteracies theory and second language acquisition research. First, the use of familiar digital content such as social media posts and short videos reduced the affective distance between the learning task and students' everyday communicative practices, lowering what Krashen (1982) describes as the affective filter that often inhibits participation in second language classrooms. When students recognised the genres being discussed, including advertisements and campaign posters, as texts they encounter outside of school, the interpretive task became less abstract and more personally relevant. Second, the shift to small-group collaborative analysis reduced the social anxiety associated with individual performance in English, creating conditions where students negotiated meaning collectively rather than producing individually evaluated responses. This aligns with multiliteracies pedagogy's emphasis on situated practice as a foundational stage of learning, in which learners engage with familiar cultural and communicative contexts before moving toward critical and transformed practice (The New London Group, 1996). Third, the thematic relevance of the selected texts, which addressed social issues such as environmental responsibility and digital citizenship, provided intrinsic motivational anchors that extended beyond language practice. When students connected the content to issues they considered meaningful, their investment in the discussion increased correspondingly, a pattern consistent with findings on content-based approaches in EFL instruction where learner engagement deepens when tasks carry real-world significance (Patty, 2025).

Following the introductory session, the second activity shifted the focus toward collaborative critical analysis, allowing students to apply earlier concepts of multimodality through guided group exploration of authentic media texts. Students worked in small teams to examine public service advertisements, campaign posters, video clips, and social media content related to social issues. Rather than providing direct explanations, facilitators encouraged students to identify message intent, analyse visual design, and consider how language and imagery influence audience interpretation. While analysing these materials, several students began questioning the assumptions behind the visuals and discussing alternative interpretations, reflecting practices commonly associated with critical literacy-oriented multimodal analysis (Attaalla, 2020). Students' collaborative analysis and discussion process is presented in Figure 3, highlighting how group interaction encouraged interpretive engagement during the activity.

As the discussion developed, students connected their analysis to real-world issues such as climate change and environmental awareness. Multimodal analysis of this kind has been associated with increased interpretive engagement in EFL contexts because learners consider multiple semiotic resources simultaneously (Kustini et al., 2018; Sutrisno et al., 2024). By the end of the activity, each group produced a short reflective report that summarised their interpretation of the chosen media text and proposed possible social actions based on their discussion.

The pattern of engagement observed during the critical analysis stage is broadly consistent with findings from comparable multimodal literacy interventions in Asian EFL contexts. Studies reported that secondary EFL students in Indonesia demonstrated an increased willingness to participate and articulate their interpretations when engaging with multimodal texts compared to conventional reading-based tasks (Rohi & Nurhayati, 2024), because distributing meaning across multiple representational resources helps them express opinions that they typically struggle to articulate when relying on the written mode alone (Kustini et al., 2018). Similarly, Sutrisno et al. (2024) found that multimodal activities involving visual, auditory, and digital materials produced measurably higher levels of student participation and engagement in group discussion activities within English language classrooms. The current program's observations align with these findings in that students who were ordinarily reticent in text-based

activities engaged more readily when analysis tasks involved visual and digital materials. However, a distinction worth noting is that the present program was delivered as a single-day intervention, whereas those studies reported findings from programs conducted across multiple class meetings. This difference in duration cautions against direct comparisons of outcome depth, while nevertheless suggesting that even a brief multimodal intervention can produce observable shifts in classroom participation patterns, particularly when the selected texts are contextually familiar to learners.



Figure 3. Group Work

The final training stage involved creative, multimodal production, in which students designed thematic posters addressing issues such as environmental protection, education, and responsible social media use. The activity began with manual poster drafting, allowing participants to focus on message clarity, visual balance, and audience awareness before moving to digital tools. This staged approach reflects principles of digital multimodal composing in which learners combine language, visuals, and layout to construct meaning across modes (Hafner, 2020).

After completing the initial designs, students were introduced to AI-supported digital tools to refine and extend their multimodal compositions. Rather than positioning AI as a replacement for creativity, facilitators framed it as a supportive resource that could help students revise visual elements, explore alternative layouts, and enhance presentation quality. Studies of AI-assisted multimodal composing show that learners often evaluate and refine AI-generated outputs while making their own semiotic decisions, allowing technology to support rather than replace student agency during design activities (Jiang & Lai, 2025; Li et al., 2025). Examples of students' original posters and their upgraded digital versions are presented in Figure 4, illustrating how manual design gradually evolved into digitally mediated multimodal production.

In this program, Gemini was used primarily for its image generation and visual enhancement capabilities, allowing students to input text-based descriptions of their poster themes and receive AI-generated visual suggestions that they could then compare against their own manual designs. Google AI Studio served as a platform for constructing and testing text prompts collaboratively, enabling students to experiment with how language choices in a prompt affect the resulting visual output. Crucially, students were not directed to accept AI-generated content uncritically; facilitators guided them to evaluate each AI suggestion against their own communicative intentions, deciding independently which visual elements to adopt, modify, or discard. This process encouraged learners to engage in what Li et al. (2025) describe as active multimodal semiotic decision-making, where AI functions as an imperfect collaborator that stimulates deeper engagement rather than a force that replaces human creativity. The ethical dimension of this approach was also addressed briefly during facilitation: students were reminded that AI outputs reflect patterns from training data and may not represent local cultural contexts accurately, encouraging them to apply critical judgment when selecting imagery relevant to Maluku social issues.

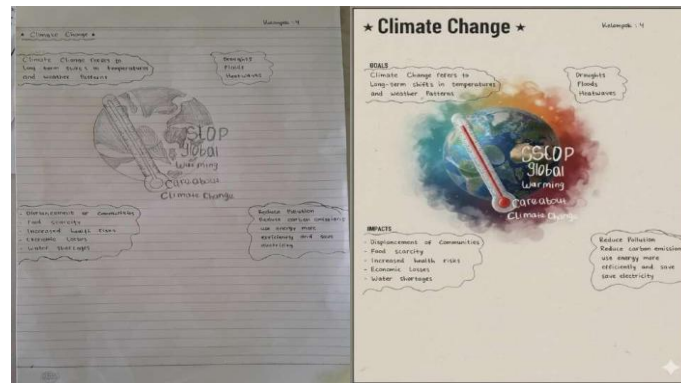


Figure 4. Sample of Students' Multimodal Poster (Original and Upgraded Poster using AI)

The use of AI tools in this program shares structural similarities with, yet also differs from, AI-assisted multimodal composing as documented in recent EFL research. Li et al. (2025) studied university-level EFL learners in China who used AI-powered text-to-video technology to convert technical proposals into digital video compositions. In that study, students demonstrated moderately positive levels of self-efficacy and meta-semiotic awareness when evaluating AI-generated outputs against their own communicative goals, a pattern consistent with what was observed in the present program during the poster production stage. However, the population in Li et al. comprised tertiary-level learners working within a multi-session academic course, whereas the present program involved secondary school students in a single-day workshop context. This difference is not trivial: the depth of semiotic decision-making that learners can sustain within one session is inherently more limited than what is possible across a multi-week intervention. Similarly, Jiang & Lai (2025) reported that generative AI-assisted composing groups at the secondary school level outperformed non-AI groups in developing compositional purpose and navigational clarity, suggesting that AI scaffolding produces qualitatively richer outputs by effectively assisting students in generating ideas and structuring outlines across a semester-long project. In the current program, the iteration cycle was compressed by the single-day format, meaning that students' engagement with AI suggestions was exploratory rather than deeply iterative. These comparisons indicate that the present program can be understood as an introductory AI literacy experience rather than a full AI-assisted composing intervention, and that its contribution lies in demonstrating the feasibility of contextualised AI integration at the secondary level in eastern Indonesia rather than replicating the depth of outcomes reported longer interventions or university-based programs.

The comparative contribution of the multimodal tasks and the AI-assisted tasks to student engagement warrants separate reflection, particularly given that the two components were integrated within the same program design. Observationally, the shift toward more active participation was most visibly concentrated during the critical analysis stage, before AI tools were introduced at all. At that point, the dynamic of small-group discussion around familiar visual texts appeared to generate its own momentum, with students voluntarily extending conversations beyond the structured prompts provided by facilitators. When AI tools were introduced in the production stage, the nature of engagement shifted from interpretive discussion toward collaborative decision-making, as groups evaluated AI-generated visual suggestions against their own design intentions. This suggests that multimodality functioned primarily as an entry point that activated critical engagement, while AI served as a production scaffold that extended and refined what students had already decided to communicate. These roles were complementary rather than equivalent: one opened interpretive space, the other provided technical affordances for inhabiting that space more fully. This distinction echoes the argument in Jiang & Lai (2025) that AI-assisted composing supports the development of purpose and overall composition quality without replacing the generative meaning-making processes that precede it. In future implementations, separating the evaluation of these two components through structured

observation protocols would allow for a more systematic account of their respective contributions.

c. Monitoring and Evaluation

During the monitoring stage, students collaboratively refined and improved their project outputs while receiving systematic guidance from the PKM team. Facilitators provided feedback on the clarity of the posters, the inclusion of essential information, and the balance between creativity and independent design decisions. Observations indicated that students showed strong enthusiasm when developing their posters; however, many designs were still influenced by visual examples found online, suggesting that learners were still negotiating confidence in generating ideas independently. To support greater originality in future activities, facilitators encouraged students to explain the reasoning behind their design choices and reflect on how visual elements communicated intended messages, aligning with dialogic feedback practices that emphasise reflective interaction between teachers and learners (Ducasse & Hill, 2019). The monitoring process and facilitator guidance during project refinement are illustrated in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Monitoring

Reflection sessions revealed noticeable changes in students' confidence and communicative awareness. Participants discussed challenges, reconsidered visual choices, and evaluated how effectively their posters conveyed social messages. Such reflective engagement aligns with feedback literacy practices in which learners actively interpret feedback and regulate their own learning strategies (De Angelis et al., 2023). Teachers adopted a facilitative role by encouraging students to connect their projects with broader social contexts, allowing collaborative inquiry to emerge through group dialogue (Wang, 2022). Students' responses also suggested that the integration of multimodality and digital tools encouraged more active participation in classroom discussion.

The positive impressions gathered during reflection were reinforced by the program evaluation results. Based on students' responses to ten Likert-scale items, 64% of participants rated the activity as "Very Good," while 36% rated it as "Good." The distribution of responses is presented in Figure 6, indicating that students perceived the activity as supportive of their learning experience and creative expression. While these figures reflect students' subjective perceptions rather than measured literacy outcomes, the consistently positive distribution suggests that the program succeeded in creating a learning environment that participants found engaging and contextually relevant. Perceptual data of this kind is consistent with findings in multimodal literacy research where learner motivation and willingness to participate serve as meaningful early indicators of program reception, particularly in short-cycle community service contexts (Kustini et al., 2018; Sutrisno et al., 2024). Future implementations may benefit from incorporating structured written reflections or portfolio-based documentation to provide a richer basis for evaluating student progress beyond Likert-scale responses.

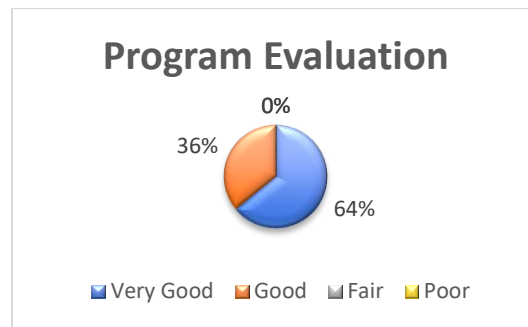


Figure 6. Result of Program Evaluation from Questionnaire

d. Program Sustainability

The workshop outcomes suggest promising possibilities for continued development and sustainability, particularly in strengthening critical literacy practices through a multimodal learning framework. Participants showed observable progress in engaging with multimodal texts, such as images, videos, and digital media, and expressed greater confidence in producing their own multimodal works. Teachers observed that students who were usually quiet during worksheet-based activities became more active when working with visual and digital materials, indicating that multimodal tasks can encourage broader participation and creative engagement in English learning (Coffey, 2021; Patty, 2025; Patty et al., 2025). Schools also expressed interest in extending collaborative partnerships to integrate multimodal critical literacy into broader classroom practices, and the workshop's development of teaching materials demonstrated how student-generated content could support ongoing classroom learning. The workshop further influenced teachers' motivation, as several participants became actively involved in mentoring students and exploring ways to adapt multimodal approaches in future lessons. To support the continuation of this initiative beyond the workshop cycle, three concrete follow-up directions are envisioned. First, the PKM team plans to conduct a follow-up professional development session for the English teachers at SMA Negeri 6 Ambon, focusing on how multimodal tasks can be adapted within existing curriculum structures and lesson planning frameworks. Second, the student-generated posters produced during this program will be compiled into a contextual teaching resource that can be used in future classes, allowing students to engage with locally produced multimodal texts rather than relying exclusively on imported commercial materials. Third, the university and school partnership will be developed through documented collaborative agreements that specify annual joint activities, ensuring that this initiative is institutionally embedded rather than remaining a single-cycle event. These steps reflect the broader principle that sustainable literacy programs depend on structural continuity and shared ownership between educational institutions (Rogers et al., 2024).

From an academic perspective, the activity provides practical insight into designing English learning experiences that combine critical literacy, multimodality, and project-based instruction within a local educational context. Sustaining the program will require continued collaboration between the university and the partner school through follow-up professional development that supports contextual and participatory learning practices aligned with multiliteracies pedagogy (Patty & Lekatompessy, 2024). The multimodal products created by students may serve as authentic instructional resources in future lessons, enabling classroom materials to evolve through students' creative outputs and reflective practice. Through this collaborative approach, the program demonstrates how multimodal literacy initiatives can remain responsive to contemporary communication practices while staying grounded in local teaching realities.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of this Community Service Program at SMA Negeri 6 Ambon suggests that conditions for critical literacy can be meaningfully developed when English learning moves beyond text-based activities and engages students in interpreting visual, digital, and social messages. Through a sequence of guided training, collaborative analysis, and creative multimodal production, students were encouraged to question how meaning is constructed across media rather than simply completing language exercises. Classroom observations and participant responses indicated that students became more willing to share interpretations, negotiate ideas with peers, and connect learning tasks with issues relevant to their own environment. The integration of videos, posters, and social media content created a learning environment closer to students' everyday communication practices, allowing critical literacy to emerge through discussion, reflection, and creative expression rather than through abstract explanation alone.

Equally important, the introduction of AI-supported tools functioned as a scaffold that helped students refine visual designs without replacing their decision-making processes. The transition from manually drafted posters to digitally enhanced multimodal products illustrated how technology can extend students' creative agency when guided through structured mentoring. From a practical perspective, the program demonstrates that multimodal pedagogy, when combined with contextual facilitation and school-university collaboration, can foster participation, confidence, and early interpretive awareness in local EFL classrooms. Sustaining this approach will require continued professional dialogue with teachers and the integration of student-generated multimodal materials into future lessons, ensuring that critical literacy practices remain grounded in classroom realities while responding to the evolving forms of communication students encounter beyond school. From a scholarly perspective, this report offers a contribution at the intersection of three areas: EFL pedagogy in eastern Indonesian contexts, multimodal literacy implementation at the secondary school level, and guided AI integration as a scaffold for creative language learning. It does not make claims of causal effectiveness; rather, it documents a replicable model of community-engaged literacy practice that can serve as a starting point for more systematic investigations of multimodal and AI-supported learning in comparable educational settings. The program demonstrates that PKM scholarship, when grounded in contextual responsiveness and theoretically informed facilitation, can generate pedagogically meaningful outcomes that extend the reach of university-school collaboration beyond the boundaries of a single activity cycle.

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