

Recovering multilingual children's literacy loss through multimodal literacy practices in a pull-out program

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ABSTRACT

The global COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted various aspects of human life, including hindering language and literacy skills development in multilingual students. This study aims to explore multimodal literacy practices among multilingual primary school students in an English pull-out program. Data sources encompassed students' artifacts, photos, videos, field notes, and semi-structured interviews, collected from July to December 2021 following the Indonesian government's reversal of its school closure policy. The research reveals that the pandemic has impeded language and literacy skills development, particularly in writing skills, as students heavily rely on screen typing with auto-correction assistance. Consequently, students' proficiency in constructing grammatically correct English phrases has diminished, impeding effective communication in English in the multilingual school community context. In response to this literacy issue, a joint cooperation school has implemented diverse multimodal literacy practices in its English pull-out program to mitigate language and literacy setbacks. Multimodal composition emerges as a potent tool for language learning, encompassing reading, writing, and speaking skills. Notably, multimodal composition facilitates multilingual children in connecting with their home language and cultures within the target language, aiding in the recovery of writing and pronunciation skills. This study contributes valuable insights for designing English pull-out programs tailored to multilingual students in joint-cooperation schools, addressing language and literacy delays induced by the pandemic.

Keywords: Literacy loss; multilingual students; multimodal literacy practices; pull-out program; school closure policy

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INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to reveal multilingual children's multimodal literacy practices in an English pull-out program to recover literacy loss at Jewel Intercultural School. The global COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred in early 2020, has created chaos and disruptions in all aspects of human life, including English language teaching (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Zamborova, 2021). The sudden closure of schools and the transition to emergency remote learning have resulted in declining students' language and literacy skills, particularly among multilingual children in a joint-cooperation school

context, which was formerly known as an international school. The decline in literacy abilities can lead to a lack of interest in learning the English language, which may negatively affect academic performance. The unprecedented pandemic has also hindered the development of language and literacy skills, as noted in studies of young children's morphological awareness (Coskun & Kara, 2022), reading performance (Ludewig et al., 2022), and student achievement (Cachón-Zagalaz et al., 2020).

In the case of Jewel intercultural school (pseudonyms) in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia, a joint-cooperation school, a multilingual primary

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school, encountered various challenges during the lockdown. Typically, joint cooperation schools are organized through collaboration between international education programs and formal education in Indonesia. The school uses a combination of national and international curriculums. Jewel Intercultural School is specifically highlighted for its unique circumstances during the lockdown, where challenges in online teaching, parental collaboration, and students' geographical dispersion exemplify the broader issues faced by multilingual students in such educational settings.

Observation revealed a phenomenon of teacher-dominated online learning via Zoom, where students appeared passive, and their English language and literacy were not regularly assessed. To complicate the matters, parents were also working from home, collaborating with them to supervise students' language learning progress proved challenging. In this context, the school's demography includes 60% Indonesian, 10% Chinese, 8% Indian, 5% Japanese, 7% Korean, 4% Middle Eastern, and 6% US. In daily life, they use their home language to communicate with their family and use English to communicate with their peers and teachers in the school community. As a result of not residing in Indonesia, several students frequently missed online classes to travel back to their home countries, which have a significant time zone difference compared to Indonesia. Amid this emergency, parental involvement became pivotal in facilitating home-based learning (Vian et al., 2022). Some parents increased their engagement in home language learning and literacy practices compared to pre-pandemic times, such as reading picture books (Damayanti et al., 2021) to young learners before bedtime. In addition, the teacher did not provide proper online English language teaching instruction for multilingual students, particularly in writing and reading, due to time constraints. The teacher gives students English textbooks to read. When the teacher explains the learning materials, very often technical glitches stop online teaching, and the teacher switches only to assigning students to read books and letting them read by themselves, leading to a change in young children's language learning experience (Bulgarelli et al., 2023). Thus, the school closure has prevented multilingual children from having social interaction with their peers, which is essential for language acquisition and literacy skill development (Perez-Brummer et al., 2022).

Examining multimodal literacies within the context of an English pull-out program for multilingual children in Indonesia is crucial for navigating the distinct challenges stemming from the school closure policy. Multimodal literacies extending beyond conventional written language encompass an array of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication – visual, auditory, spatial,

gestural, and tactile (Kress, 2010; Wenter, 2022; Wohlwend, 2021). We aim to provide specific and useful knowledge in language learning and literacy education. This knowledge can assist educators in crafting inclusive strategies aimed at recuperating literacy losses and empowering students within the unique context of a primary joint-cooperation school setting. This approach not only recognizes the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students but also strives to cultivate a more effective, equitable English pull-out program, contributing to the broader discourse on education resilience and adaptability.

In addressing the literacy issue, our research will extensively explore literacy loss among multilingual children and how multimodal literacy practices within English pull-out programs are designed to aid students in recovering language and literacy lost during the school closure. To date, research in language and literacy skills development has predominantly focused on monolingual and bilingual students, leaving a gap in understanding multimodal literacy practice among multilingual children in joint-cooperation school settings. Few studies have investigated the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on language and literacy skills in monolingual (Sun et al., 2022), bilingual (Sheng et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2021), and multilingual students (Gitschthaler et al., 2022; Piller et al., 2022; Sengupta). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is a notable gap in the literature about exploring multimodal literacy practices among multilingual children in English pull-out programs within the specific context of a joint-cooperation primary school setting. This investigation fills this void by examining multimodal literacy practices in English programs during the post-pandemic disruption.

The urgency for English literacy programs to support students' language is evident. To contribute to the ongoing discussion, our study presents the results of an investigation into the multimodal literacy practices of two focal multilingual children. The primary objective is to identify the range of multimodal literacy practices employed by children, aiding in the recovery of literacy skills lost. The study is designed to address two key research questions: 1) what language and literacy skills among multilingual students are lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic disruption? 2) How can multimodal literacy practices be implemented to recover literacy loss among multilingual children in a joint-cooperation school context?

METHOD

Design

Utilizing a case study design, this research aims to investigate multimodal literacy practices of two focal multilingual children. This study adopts a case

study approach which aligns with Yin's (2018) definition of this research method, emphasizing the incorporation of diverse data types from various sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of real-world situations. By employing this approach, researchers can analyse and interpret complex social phenomena while maintaining a holistic perspective (Grauer, 2012).

The study unfolds in two distinct phases. First, by capturing the language and literacy loss among multilingual children and, subsequently, by examining the implementation of multimodal literacy practices in the English pull-out program. The observations extend throughout the entire language learning and literacy program, enabling a thorough exploration of the identified problem of literacy loss.

Research context and participants

The study took place at Jewel intercultural school in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. Before the publication of Permendikbud No. 31 of 2014, the joint cooperation school was called an international school. The school adopted a dual curriculum approach namely Cambridge international and national emancipated curriculum to provide students with an international education standard and foster national pride. At this school, English is the medium of instruction in delivering learning subject materials, excluding Indonesian, civics, and Javanese subjects. In this school context, teachers will use English to deliver the materials in core subjects such as mathematics, science, social studies, and global perspective.

The participants consist of two focal multilingual grade IV students, Sakura and Ping (pseudonyms), both hailing from middle- to high-income families and possessing a nearly multilingual (See participant profile in Table 1). Sakura is Indonesian, and Ping is Chinese. The English proficiency level of the students was low

(A1), as indicated by the literacy assessment results. They did not show confidence in speaking and writing English. They kept their home language in daily conversation, particularly with friends from the same country. They rely on the AI tool and Google Translate whenever they want to read, write, and speak in English. Recognizing the need for English literacy improvement, the students willingly agreed to participate in the English program. The school board and principal approved the research study, granting permission for its execution.

The current study investigated multilingual children's multimodal literacies in pull-out programs as academic interventions designed for students who experience literacy decline. In this program, students temporarily withdraw from regular classrooms to receive specialized instruction or support in English subjects. In this study, the objectives of this English pull-out program are to: a) recover students' language and literacy skills lost during the COVID-19 pandemic disruption; and b) provide multilingual students with English language skills and personalized learning attention, contributing to their academic growth. The pull-out program was conducted for one semester, twice a week, with 45-minute session for each meeting.

Purposive sampling was adopted to select students with characteristics pertinent to the research questions and design. There are three essential requirements for participants in this study. First, the participants should be multilingual students. In this study, Sakura speaks languages other than her first language, Japanese, and additional languages, such as English, Indonesian, and Javanese. Ping speaks the first language, Chinese, and additional languages, such as English, Indonesian, and Javanese. Second, participants must be between 6 and 12 years old. These criteria would ensure that the participants possess the required information for the study. Third, participants have never participated in an English literacy program.

Table 1
Participants' profile

Name & Gender	Nationality	Age (years)	Mother tongue	English level during the research	Linguistic characteristic	Additional language	No of years in Indonesia
Sakura (Girl)	Indonesian	9 years 5 months	Indonesian	A1	Multilingual	Japanese English Javanese	3 years
Ping (Boy)	Chinese	9 years and 8 months	Chinese	B1	Multilingual	English Indonesian Korean Javanese	2 years

Instruments

We used multiple data sources to collect the research data: student artifacts, photos, videos, field notes, and semi-structured interviews. We collected data from July 2021 to June 2022, shortly after the Indonesian government reversed its school closure

policy and began progressively reopening schools. Overall, data was collected over 12 months. However, we presented half of the data. We observed and wrote field notes during the language learning and literacy practices.

Table 2
Research instrument and amount of data

Instruments	Focus	Amount of data
Semi-structured interview	To document students' language and literacy loss Multimodal literacy practices during the pull-out program	10 minutes/ meeting
Students' artifact	To document students' artifacts: book reports, comics, multimodal composition	32 artifacts
Field note	To capture students' language learning and literacy practices	32 field notes
Video recording	To capture students' language learning and literacy practices	32 videos (each video consists of 20 minutes)

Procedures

In this study, comprehensive data was gathered through various methods to ensure a nuanced understanding of language and literacy practices. First, observation notes were meticulously documented during each literacy program session. Second, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were conducted individually with each participant. Third, students' artifacts were systematically analysed to discern the selection of multimodal resources for conveying meaning. The data analysis commenced promptly upon data collection. Daily collection of students and concurrent recording of observation in field notes were undertaken. Thirty-two video language learning and literacy practices were documented, forming the basis for classifying and identifying literacy practices that transpired for a term. In essence, the study utilized observation notes, semi-structured interviews, and artifacts as the primary instruments for data collection. These instruments were chosen to provide a holistic perspective on multimodal literacy practices, ensuring a thorough examination of the participant's experiences with the English literacy program.

Data analysis

There are four main stages in analysing the data. First, we conducted a preliminary data analysis to transcribe the video and interview that recorded every meeting. We transcribed the video and interview for qualitative analysis. We analysed the field notes to understand multimodal literacy practices during the English pull-out program. We interviewed the students after they finished the language learning program to get valid data. Second, we investigated children's language and literacy loss. Third, we analysed multimodal literacy practices and modes used to compose a multimodal composition. Finally, we summarized all the data and presented our findings to the literacy team and the two focal multilingual children, who concurred with our interpretations.

FINDINGS

As we proceed to the discussion phase, the focal point centered on scrutinizing the multifaceted realm of multimodal literacy practices among

multilingual primary school students. The investigation aligns with the overarching aim of our study, elucidating the manner in which these practices contribute to the recuperation of literacy loss in multilingual children amidst the disruption wrought by the global pandemic. Interrogating these intricate complexities establishes a scholarly framework for comprehending the transformative potential inherent in multimodality, shedding light on its role in fostering resilience and reconstituting language and literacy proficiency. The ensuing discussion will systematically unpack the implications, challenges, and achievements entwined with this recovery process, thereby affording nuanced insights into the academic discourse surrounding the post-pandemic disruption.

Research question 1: What language and literacy skills among multilingual students are lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

The case of Sakura

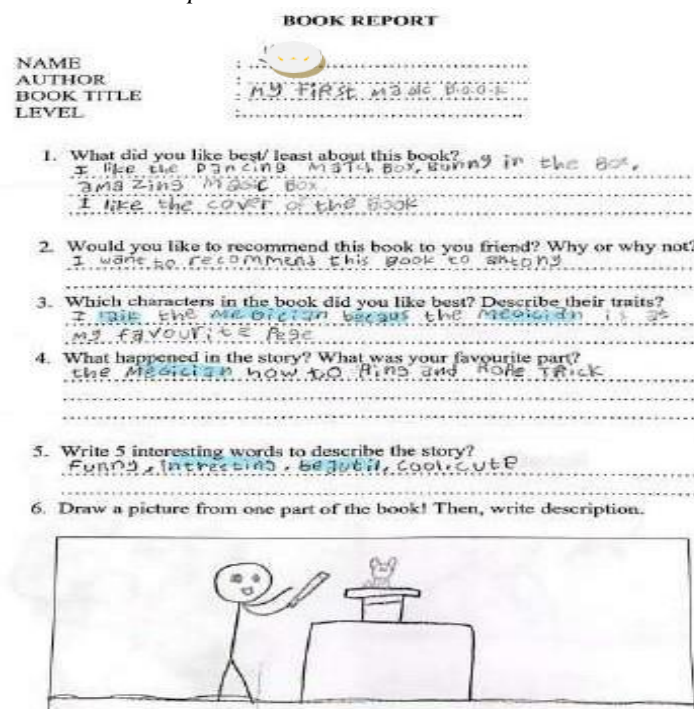
Sakura was initially a bilingual nine-year-old girl, but as she was exposed to a joint cooperation school community, she developed into a multilingual little girl. Due to the abrupt pandemic, Sakura's family relocated to Indonesia. Unfortunately, she had limited exposure to English and a lack of English conversation practices during the school lockdown as her parents speak different languages; her mother speaks Indonesian, and her father speaks Japanese. At home, she gets rapid exposure to multiple languages, Indonesian, English, Japanese, and Javanese. On a daily basis, the majority of family members spoke Indonesian. Indonesian is now the predominant language in her daily life because she spends time with her mother during online learning.

Sakura's literacy loss was discerned through a comprehensive English literacy assessment conducted in the first week of school. Indicating a decline in her literacy skills, ultimately categorizing her as a low-level A1 English. Before the school lockdown, she had good English proficiency, which showed in her assessment at the A2 level. Qualitative insight from the interview unveiled difficulties in pronouncing intricate sentences, struggles with certain English words, and a tendency to rely on gestures or memorization during language learning activities in the classroom. Despite the literacy team's frequent reminders that she must

speak in English at school, Sakura consistently spoke Indonesian and sometimes Japanese. He spoke English only with her English teachers and her peers from English-speaking countries. Further validation of literacy loss was obtained through a thorough analysis of Sakura's running record and book report, showcasing challenges in writing English sentences. The limited exposure to English, confined to online classes, played a crucial role in impeding her language and literacy skills development. Sakura's aversion to online classes, driven by the inability to interact with peers and teachers, further contributed to her literacy setbacks. The convergence of quantitative assessment, qualitative interview, and practice; language exercise illuminated the multifaced dimension of Sakura's literacy loss, guiding subsequent interventions to facilitate her language and literacy recovery.

Based on the observation and literacy assessment results, several issues with Sakura's language and literacy decline have been identified. Challenges encompass oral reading fluency, syllable fluency, and familiar word fluency. Her daily book reports reveal low proficiency in English writing, with difficulties in correctly composing some words; for instance, because into *becos*, like into *laik*, magician into *megician*. It appears that she relies on her Indonesian linguistic repertoire to compose English words. Sakura's bilingual repertoire encompasses both Indonesian and English, learned and utilized for communication. An excerpt from Sakura's book report serves as an illustrative example of how the school lockdown has contributed to a decline in her writing skills.

Figure 1
Sakura's book report.



The challenges faced by Sakura in writing skills during the school lockdown align with findings from the existing studies that underscore the impact of remote learning on language and literacy skills development. The abrupt transition to online learning, as noted in studies by Kuhfeld (2023), Skar et al. (2023), and Sun et al. (2021), has been recognized as a potential hindrance to students' engagement in reading and writing practices. The condensed English subject sessions, lasting only 30 minutes in remote learning, echo concerns raised in research by Gitschthaler et al. (2022) and Piller et al. (2020) regarding the limited instructional time and

its implications on language acquisition. Additionally, Sakura's reliance on-screen typing with auto-correction assistance resonates with the broader discussion on the impact of technology on language learning, as discussed by Sengupta (2022).

Furthermore, the absence of constructive feedback and guidance from teachers, as highlighted in this analysis, aligns with studies emphasizing the crucial role of consistent feedback in language learning. Research by Piller et al. (2020) and Gitschthaler et al. (2022) emphasizes the significance of personalized feedback in nurturing language and literacy skills, especially in

multilingual children acquiring multiple languages. The argument put forth in this analysis about the limitations of online classes in providing face-to-face feedback and guidance is supported by broader theories emphasizing the importance of interactive learning environments for language and literacy development. In essence, Sakura's writing challenges, as analysed in this study, find resonance in the broader literature on the impact of remote learning on language skills, reinforcing the importance of considering contextual factors, instructional time, and feedback mechanisms in designing effective language education programs.

In addition, we found that school lockdown measures could negatively affect students' fluency in oral communication. Sakura's experience of difficulties aligns with Li et al.'s (2020) study, which identified challenges for multilingual students. The oral communication fluency of multilingual students has been impacted by the absence of face-to-face interactions with multilingual peers and teachers amidst the ongoing pandemic. English is used as the primary mode of communication within our school community, across various school activities. For example, recess time, informal conversation in the lunch area, assembly, potluck, and numerous other events. Consequently, using English in informal activities will facilitate proficient communication and linguistic advancement, encompassing active listening, oral expression exercises, and many more. To sum up, Sakura has lost her writing skills because she had fewer opportunities to practice writing in her notebook. She often types on the smartphone screen and spends unstructured reading with no specific goal to improve her English literacy.

The case of Ping

Ping, a nine-year-old and six-month-old boy, entered the fourth grade, performing below grade level in all subjects except physical education because he enjoys playing football. Mandarin is the predominant language because his family wanted to preserve the national identity and pride. He has been residing in Indonesia for one and a half years. However, he still struggled to comprehend Indonesia and English. Ping's experience during the lockdown, where his school transitioned to remote learning, raises considerations about the potential

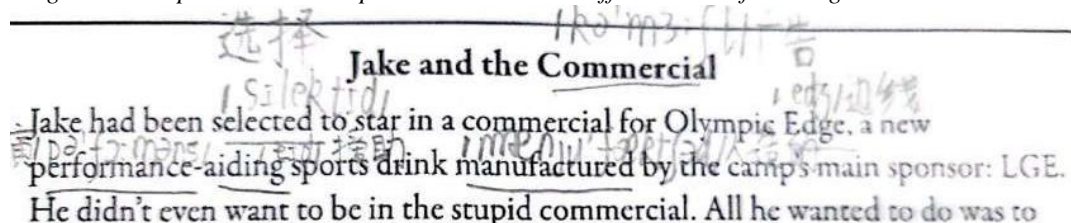
literacy loss. Despite confessing to spending a significant amount of time playing video games, Ping acknowledges the consequence of declining his language and literacy skills.

Ping's decline in language and literacy was detected by the literacy team through English assessment, which categorized him as a level A2. Before online learning, he demonstrated a respectable English proficiency, as indicated by his B1 English level. Ping's difficulties in attaining speaking skills are consistent with results from prior research that emphasize the influence of remote learning on the development of language skills as noted in studies by Chadd et al. (2021), Charney et al. (2021), and Feijoo et al. (2023). The limited opportunities for speech and language practices with peers and teachers contributed to this literacy decline. Instead of verbal communication, Ping resorts to non-verbal mode, utilizing body language and facial expressions due to a restricted vocabulary, speaking fluency, and pronunciation skills. His reliance on smartphones and artificial technology (BI) underscores a shift in language learning. While he actively writes and highlights new English vocabulary, the reliance on digital tools for language comprehension suggests potential challenges in traditional language learning.

In Figure 2, we can see that Ping found it difficult to pronounce some English words and did not understand the meaning. Therefore, he writes in his notebook in Mandarin to make it easy to remember. However, he set a target to read a book for one hour daily. He repeatedly reread and wrote the books despite their challenging vocabulary. For example 已选择 Yǐ xuǎnzé / selected;/ 商业的 Shāngyè de /commercial;/ 性能 Xìngnéng / performance/ 制造的 Zhìzào de /manufacture/. Knowing Ping's problem, the literacy team purposefully helped Ping understand the English text and provided an example of vocabulary by inviting them to write together on the whiteboard. The teacher also uses an online dictionary to give an example of pronunciation. With the help of audio from the computer, he could better pronounce the words. The teacher quickly asked Ping to write the difficult words and pronounce them, as she wanted to provide opportunities for practicing pronunciation and taking the lead in their writing process.

Figure 2

Ping writes the phonetic transcription and translates difficult words from English to Mandarin



Ping's poor reading skills made it hard for him to understand what he was reading, not just in learning materials in English but also in all subjects. Ping could not understand the online class instructions and learning materials. Very often, it causes misunderstanding. As shown in Figure 3, Ping's vocabulary and pronunciation of English are limited. Therefore, he struggled to write and translate the meaning of difficult words into Mandarin. In addition, he could not pronounce the hard words, so he had to write a phonetic transcription to make it easier to memorize. To help him learn English, he always brings his smartphone with him everywhere. He often uses his smartphone to utilize artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital applications to support him in language learning. The literacy team noted that Ping's communicative competence declined, and he needed more practice in English. In the interview, he said that he found it difficult to speak in English because of a lack of English practice and exposure. He also said that all his family members spoke Mandarin at home, so he did not have a partner to speak in English.

Research question 2: How can multimodal literacy practices be implemented to recover language and literacy loss among multilingual children?

Recovering literacy loss of Sakura through multimodal composition

The literacy team implemented a multimodal composition to address Sakura's literacy loss and decline in writing skills. By implementing this project, she could share and characterize herself in English through personal experience. Multimodal composition adhered to a multiliteracy pedagogical approach (Nevo, 2023). With the help of two literacy specialists, Sakura logged in to her reading account in the ICT room. It seems that Sakura loves reading digital texts through an iPad to make brainstorming. Sakura selected her favourite reading materials. Sakura has a level C Lexile reading level. The first multimodal composition project was entitled Urban Farming. Sakura was told to recall her memory when she visited a local farm during the last field trip. The first step involved Sakura brainstorming the idea through reading related to the topic. During this time, Sakura read and learned about farming and events related to field trips. Sakura started brainstorming the idea. After brainstorming, Sakura selected the topic she would write about and depict in her multimodal composition.

Sakura decided she would focus on urban farming field trips. The literacy team gave her instructions on how to start to write and visualize their stories in the form of a photograph. In the multimodal composition project, Sakura wanted to write and share her story when she visited a local farm. She composed a story about her experiences.

In her story, she attached a photo from her photo gallery. She also used a picture of herself on the bus going to the local farm. She recorded her voice and inserted it into the story. In addition, she added music as a prelude to the story. She said that music would get her to engage with the story. She used the non-verbal mode in her writing, including visual, written, or oral, to understand how meaning is made using the tools or equipment associated with the particular modality (Kress, 1997). Incorporating photographs or visual elements is a crucial component of multimodal composition. Sakura found the project to be meaningful with the help of it. She said that including images enhances her writing by providing additional details and enhances her understanding when she reread her work. When the literacy team analyzed Sakura's project, they noticed that they found grammatical errors and mistakes. The literacy team gave Sakura constructive feedback regarding her grammatical mistakes.

To sum up, multilingual children like Sakura can learn faster through technology integration. She can use non-verbal modes for meaning-making (Van Leeuwen & Djonov, 2018). Digital stories based on a student's real-world experiences using the digital app did not merely support writing skills but also improved language learning engagement. We argued that language and literacy practices can help multilingual students become more engaged in learning English, make their digital communication more meaningful and multimodal, and recover their lost literacy, particularly in the post-pandemic period. This literacy practice instead incorporates literacy and language skills to create a multimodal community. In addition, this language and literacy practice gives Sakura the freedom to choose and create text based on the current students' life experiences (Taylor & Leung, 2021).

Figure 3

Sakura wrote a story based on her real-life experiences.



Recovering Ping's literacy loss

The first project for Ping was that he should find a topic about local culture. The most challenging part of this project for Ping was that they had to transfer the Mandarin linguistic repertoire to English. To do this, he searched in Google Translate and other apps to help him find the vocabulary. Very often, he searched the picture on Google and showed it to the teachers. He has vast knowledge of Chinese culture. However, his English was inadequate for expression and explanation. Consequently, to communicate with his teachers, he required visual aids in the form of images and auditory aids in the form of sounds. In response to Ping's language and literacy loss, the literacy team and Ping agreed to make a comic series. Ping loves going culinary particularly

Chinese food. When he arrived in Indonesia, he visited several famous restaurants with his family. On the first day of the pull-out program, he shared his favourite Chinese food. He said that dumplings are a popular Chinese food with small dough pieces filled with various ingredients. Through multimodal composition activity, Ping's motivation to read and write in English increased significantly because he could demonstrate his potential as a comic artist. Ping appeared enthusiastic whenever he wrote his comic. He eagerly shared his experience. No wonder he could articulate and describe Chinese food and family traditions in spoken and written. As shown in Figure 4 below, Ping showed his expertise in writing comics about Chinese food.

Figure 4
Ping's draft multimodal composition



Recovering language and literacy loss for Ping involves dynamic approaches, combining multimodal composition and technology to enhance his English learning experience. Figure 4 illustrates Ping's draft multimodal composition, showcasing a tool employed in his recovery journey. Through the creation of a digital comic, Ping engages in multifaceted activities that not only aid in the practices of reading and writing in English but also allow him to express emotions through various modes. This integration of visual elements and textual context serves as a powerful tool medium for language acquisition and self-expression. This activity lets him simultaneously practice reading and writing in English, facilitating the expression of emotions through multimodal modes to enhance his comic creation.

emphasizes the application's utility in not only displaying the meaning of difficult words but also providing phonetic transcripts, aiding him in correct English pronunciation. Despite the app's initial availability, language and literacy barriers showcase the transformative potential of technology on language recovery.

DISCUSSION

This paper presents the multilingual children's multimodal literacy practices in recovering literacy loss. The findings showed that children engaged in multiple language and literacy practices, for example, writing stories about their experiences visiting a local farm and sharing traditional food and family traditions. The use of non-verbal modes in their project makes students more engaged in language learning. From the case of the two multilingual children above, we showed that the school lockdown harms children's language and literacy skill development. Therefore, we examined language and literacy loss during the pandemic disruption. First, we observed the whole school community for one year that the vocabulary size of multilingual children declined, resulting in reduced reading comprehension due to limited personalized

When we discussed what he learned from this multimodal composition project, he told us he learned English through multiple modes. Ping leverages artificial intelligence (AI) and language learning applications to support his English language development. Facing challenges with unfamiliar words, Ping employs an online dictionary accessible on his mobile phone, which provides sound in both English and Mandarin, offering a comprehensive language learning experience. Ping

reading guidance from teachers and parents. In the case of Sakura, her reading and writing were dropped due to a lack of personalized feedback from teachers. She encounters challenges in comprehending English texts written at her current proficiency level. Furthermore, multilingual students in joint-cooperation school contexts may have lost their writing skills because they had less practice writing in the notebook. They often type on the screen and spend time unstructured reading on their mobile phones. Thus, they have experienced a decline in their communicative competence and speaking confidence because they have fewer opportunities for English-speaking practices in joint-cooperation schools where everyone speaks English in a school environment. Second, multilingual children experienced a decline in their writing skills because they rely on digital technology applications, for example, typing on the screen with auto-correction assistance. Therefore, they could not compose English sentences correctly. Third, they decline in their ability to communicate in English due to a lack of opportunities to practice and exposure within the school community.

The English pull-out program has introduced diverse and engaging multimodal literacy practices to mitigate language and literacy loss. Notably, digital composition is a potent language learning tool for multilingual children seeking to recover language and literacy loss. An illustrative example is Sakura, who utilized non-verbal modes, including text, images, audio, and video, to craft a compelling narrative about her experience during the field trip. In addition, multimodal composition proved effective in helping multilingual children like Ping connect with their home language and culture. In this study, Ping could construct a comic about traditional Chinese food and family traditions. It allowed Ping to construct his identity and enhance his communicative competence. The integration of multimodal composition aligns with the overarching aim of the research in implementing multimodal literacy practice to address literacy loss among two multilingual children.

Multimodal composition supported Sakura and Ping in recovering from their literacy loss. Ping's proficiency in writing skills experienced a decline as a result of his prolonged period of not engaging in any written exercises in his notebook for approximately one and a half years. He could improve his English literacy with his experience. The two multilingual children demonstrated the ability to use verbal and non-verbal modes for meaning-making to deliver their language, culture, and identity. Throughout the literacy event, Sakura and Ping demonstrated the ability to learn English faster and recover their literacy decline through multimodal literacy practices in the pull-out program. The range of multimodal non-verbal modes that she used in her multimodal composition

showed how young multilingual children are learning fast. Therefore, in Sakura's and Ping's case, it was possible to integrate a multimodal approach to language learning and literacy practices in multilingual education.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study has shown the realm of multimodal literacy practices among multilingual primary school students who experienced literacy loss due to the disruptions caused by the pandemic. Operating within the unique school context of a joint-cooperation school with an English pull-out program, our research underscores the vital role of this program in supporting struggling multilingual students and promoting multilingual education. The findings illuminate the implementation of diverse and engaging multimodal literacy practices in the English pull-out program, showcasing the potential of multimodal composition as a robust language learning tool. The integration of multimodal composition emerges as a powerful means for multilingual children to connect with their home language and cultures, aiding in the recovery of writing and pronunciation skills. While this study contributes knowledge to designing a pull-out program for multilingual students, it is essential to recognize certain limitations. The limited participants and specific characteristics of the joint-cooperation schools and the localized nature of the study may limit the generalizability of findings to other educational contexts. In addition, constraints in data collection may have influenced the depth of the investigation.

Moving forward, it is recommended to investigate the lasting impact of multimodal literacy practices in various school settings, including private and state schools. Additionally, it is important to continually improve the English pull-out program based on research findings. Furthermore, ongoing teacher professional development for teachers in multilingual school settings should be provided to effectively address the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of multilingual students. Emphasizing the importance of tailored instructional resources, this research aims to contribute not only to the recovery of language and literacy delays but also to the broader conversation on effective educational strategies in the post-pandemic disruptions. Further investigation is required to explore multimodal literacies in a multilingual educational setting and their impact on the literacy and language skills development of multilingual students. This is particularly relevant for research involving multilingual children at a joint cooperation school in Indonesia. To support multilingual children in learning English at joint-cooperation schools, more attention is needed from

the Ministry of Education and Culture by providing more teacher professional development.

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