

THE USE OF POSTER-MAKING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: ENGAGING NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN VISUAL LEARNING

¹*Diyah Ayu Rizqiani, ²RoZIAH, ¹Andi Idayani, ¹Missi Triastuti

¹English Language Education Program, Universitas Islam Riau, Jl. Kaharuddin Nasution No. 113, Simpang Tiga, Kota Pekanbaru, Riau, Indonesia

²Indonesian Language Education and Literature, Universitas Islam Riau, Jl. Kaharuddin Nasution No. 113, Simpang Tiga, Kota Pekanbaru, Riau, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author Email: diyah@edu.uir.ac.id

Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: May 2025 Revised: August 2025 Accepted: September 2025 Published: October 2025	<i>This research investigates the use of poster making to teach social justice issues to undergraduate students of Law and Criminology at a private Islamic university situated in Pekanbaru, Indonesia. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the study focused on 54 students and their creation of posters on human trafficking, corruption, and cyber crimes. Data were gathered through a peer-assessment rubric with five major indicators: poster appeal, graphic support, slogan, delivery, and time management. Findings revealed that students's scores for time management ($M = 4.06$) were the highest and for slogan writing ($M = 3.69$) were the lowest, suggesting that students were more proficient in collaboration than in persuasive expression. Poster qualitative analysis highlighted the students' perception of injustice and their call to action through the use of symbolic and powerful imagery of chains, blindfolds, cuts of striking women in red, and simplistic, yet evocative, text. These elements illustrated a heightened sense of awareness, ethical reasoning, and empathy. The results highlight the feasibility of incorporating poster making as a form of instructional practice in social justice pedagogy in law and criminology alongside other non-humanities programs within Islamic universities in Indonesia.</i>
Keywords Poster-making activities; Social justice education; Visual learning; Teaching English;	
How to cite: Rizqiani, D.A., Roziah, R., Idayani, A., & Triastuti, M. (2025). The Use of Poster-Making for Social Justice: Engaging Non-English Department Students in Visual Learning. <i>JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching</i> , 13(4), 1942-1954. Doi: https://doi.org/10.33394/joltt.v13i4.15486	

INTRODUCTION

There has been a notable focus on incorporating social justice education within the post-secondary education system in the recent past. Equity, inclusion, and human rights, all subsumed under 'social justice' are increasingly recognized as values essential for the formation of responsible citizens in learners (Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017). Yet, in numerous pedagogical university contexts—especially for non-English based disciplines—there is an emphasis on content mastery at the expense of critical social awareness. The lack of integration of civic responsibility into curricula alongside the disconnect with civic responsibility underscore the need for new teaching methodologies that infuse social justice into instruction in innovative, stimulating, and straightforward ways. Recent investigations confirm that the integration of civic reflection and interdisciplinary ethical engagement into the curriculum, as well as project-based learning, can effectively address the aforementioned issue. To illustrate, as noted in the study conducted by Tan and Guo (2021), the inclusion of multimodal pedagogical activities in the curriculum of higher education level classrooms, enhanced students' capacity in bridging disciplinary knowledge with civic and ethical concerns. In a similar vein, Chik and Ho (2022) showed how learners in project-based classrooms were able, through the use of visual literacy, to express a greater degree of empathy toward complex social issues through their multimodal representations.

While the value of social justice education in Indonesia is slowly being appreciated, its integration into higher education remains patchy and ambiguous. Although *Kampus Merdeka* and character education posit value-based and civic-oriented learning at the forefront of national initiatives, their execution within fields outside the social sciences and humanities tends to be superficial and scattered. Social justice and social issues such as inequality, discrimination, and human rights violations are rarely offered as problems for students to analyze critically, as most colleges place a primary focus on technical skills and theoretical knowledge. Little is known on how engineering, economics, or the natural sciences interdisciplinary social justice can be applied to these non-educational fields. This ignorance is due to the research focus on local Indonesian social justice education on teacher training, civic education, and Islamic education (Rahmawati, Y., & Koul, 2016). This context is also infrequently explored within the domain of instructional design that employ student-centered approaches such as project-based learning, visual literacy, or multimodality. Addressing these gaps constitutes an important challenge aimed at developing comprehensive frameworks to enable students from different fields of study to address social justice issues reflexively and meaningfully. The need for study changes has been spread worldwide; for instance, Rowsell and Wohlwend (2020) study demonstrated how working with multimodal texts enabled learners to negotiate social identities and values including social inclusion and inclusionary critical reflection. In the same way, Kuby, Spector, and Thiel (2021) discussed how students' use of digital multimodal literacies prompts them to examine issues of equity and justice deeply, while Vetter, Anderson, and Meacham (2022) reported that arts-based civic advocacy, including poster projects, encourages cross-disciplinary civic engagement. These studies support the main contribution of this study: the integration of poster-making as visual pedagogy for social justice in the non-humanities disciplines.

Some Indonesian students seem to struggle with expressing intricate ideas in a second or foreign language, primarily because of their differing levels of schooling (Arifin, Z., & Muslim, 2021). In such cases, visual communication is far more interdisciplinary and empowering. Furthermore, the performative batik traditions, street art, and civic murals that critique society while simultaneously constructing local identity are all emblematic of the arts-based approach to poster-making (Nugroho, K., Carden, F., & Antlöv, 2018). Unlike in non-humanistic disciplines which regard the application of knowledge as secondary—theoretical knowledge is prioritized, and reflection is seldom used—there is promise in project-based creativity. This shows how important it is to examine the impact of visually driven pedagogy on social awareness and the development of social awareness within the curriculum considering the diversity of disciplines.

Besides being an artistic endeavor, making posters is an activity that improves visual literacy, as well as serves as an instructional technique integrating lessons with societal issues in order to transcend traditional education which is centered on content. Posters have the capacity to portray different social issues. By using posters, pupils express their understanding whilst developing respectful and critical thought skills (Rowsell, Morrell, and Alvermann, 2020; Mills and Unsworth, 2018). In Indonesia, educational policies such as *Kampus Merdeka* allow the blending of disciplines for social problem solving at the classroom and community levels, therefore making poster creation an activity that the Indonesian education system promotes through Pancasila education which focuses on social justice, democracy, and humanity (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020). In light of this evidence, this study combines international and local evidence by applying poster making as a pedagogy to increase visual social justice awareness to students in non-humanities disciplines.

As teachers strive to develop learners who are socially and critically engaged on a global level, the integration of social justice education is beginning to receive attention. Educationalists from various fields have researched the application of teaching strategies

toward the promotion of equity and diversity within different areas of education. The body of literature on social justice education has mainly concentrated on teacher education (Cochran-Smith, M., Ell, F., Ludlow, L., Grudnoff, L., & Aitken, 2016), language teaching (Hawkins, 2011), or arts education (Leavy, 2015). From the Indonesian perspective, there is also a growing interest in social justice issues, especially within the educational sciences. Researches have analyzed how pre-service teachers implement critical pedagogy alongside Islamic foundations toward justice-oriented teaching (Rahmawati, Y., & Koul, 2016), how civic education nurtures the awareness of democratic values alongside the existence of social injustice in university education (Nugraha, D., Ruswandi, U., & Erihadiana, 2020), and the contribution of Islamic education to multiculturalism and tolerance (Suyanto, 2019). These researches demonstrate the importance of social justice issues in Indonesian higher education, particularly in moral and civic education. This study aims to fill the gap concerning the lack of evidence pertaining to justice-oriented learning in the fields of law and criminology and other non-humanist disciplines and the role that poster-making as a multimodal activity could play in the learning.

Even with an increasing appreciation of social justice education, there is implementation gap at the intersection of non-education and non-humanities disciplines. In the Indonesian setting, both social justice education context and its practice poses challenges when attempting to incorporate it meaningfully into the higher education curriculum. From a theoretical standpoint, there is a gap in formulating an all-encompassing and context-sensitive interdisciplinary pedagogy framework that incorporates social justice. The majority of frameworks available are based on Western paradigms which does not consider the Indonesian complex socio-cultural realities and educational aims grounded on *Pancasila* values (Suyanto, 2019). Moreover, the narrow understanding of social justice within the formal educational setting which revolves around equality or citizenship leads to ignoring more active concepts, cultural pluralism, or the intersectionality of social issues. In terms of practical challenges, they appear to be more pronounced. A variety of higher education institutions appear to capture summative examinations, inflexible curricula, and discipline-oriented knowledge compartments alongside value-oriented transformational learning devoid of holistic approach. Critical pedagogy, creative methodologies, and multimodal approaches are not taught to non-humanities faculty members, which makes it challenging to civic or ethically engage students (Arifin and Muslim, 2021; Nugraha, Ruswandi, and Erihadiana, 2020). Furthermore, lacking institutional support alongside insensitivity to inequity, discrimination, or political critique suffocates social engagement in teaching. All these issues, both supportive and inhibiting, highlight the need for culturally relevant, cross-disciplinary, and flexible educational frameworks that address the students' realities in Indonesia.

Involving students from Legal Studies and Department of Criminology is particularly important for this study because their social justice related sub-fields are multidisciplinary. They usually have well developed reasoning concerning sociopolitical interests, and methodical solutions to issues. As prospective lawyers, attorneys, or other policy administrators, they encounter multifaceted moral and legal issues in legalistic terms. Criminology students, in contrast, focus on crime phenomena, criminal activities, policing, and the wider society of offenders. This leaves them with an understanding of many kinds of fields—sociology, psychology, law, and public policy. Like most policies in law, education, and welfare, criminology encourages questioning social inequalities, asymmetric power relations, and the working of the criminal justice system (Griffiths and Troshynski, 2019). Despite the differences in systems, all these students possess common attributes—problem-solving skills, independent thinking, and a proactive approach to justice, equity, and human rights. But educational settings tend to focus, often exclusively, on the cognitive and technical skills as well as the nurturing of higher-order thinking, with far less emphasis, if any, on

affective facets like empathy, ethical consideration, or personal engagement with social justice issues (Cummings, Park, and Bauer Schaper, 2011; Bell, 2016). As a result, these learners might respond positively to teaching strategies like poster-making on topics they are examining, where they can be invited to depict and actively participate in the issues on a personal and creative level.

This study aims to raise awareness of social justice issues among learners in the non-English disciplines such as Law and Criminology through poster making as a teaching strategy. This aim is achieved and gauged by the five scoring indicators in the evaluation rubric: poster aesthetics, graphic illustration, catchy phrase, presentation, and time utilized. As a whole, the indicators demonstrate the impact of a comprehensive framework designed to evaluate social justice education's core components which focus on building awareness, critical inquiry, empathy, and engagement. This means the aims of the study are appropriately justified by the rubric, thereby reinforcing that the poster project is much more than a creative activity, but rather an instructional and evaluative tool designed to cultivate justice-oriented mindsets among professional educators-in-training. To guide this aim, the study addresses the following research question: How do poster-making activities influence the development of social justice awareness among undergraduate students in Law and Criminology?

RESEARCH METHOD

This section elaborates on the methodological framework developed to investigate the impact of poster-making activities on the socio-justice consciousness of university students. It divides into four sections: the research design which details the manner in which the study was undertaken; the research instruments which specify what was used to collect information; the research participants which describe the relevant characteristics of the students who involved in this study; and the data analysis procedures which explain in what manner the information that was amassed was systematically processed to produce meaningful outcomes.

Research Design

This study uses qualitative case study approach by Creswell (2015) because it helps to untangle complex social issue in real-world settings. A qualitative method was used because it helps understand how students engage in creative activities, such as poster-making to depict their understanding of social justice. The intent was not merely to document outcomes, but to also explain how students engaged in meaning-making through multimodal expression.

This study focused on two complementary types of data: (1) visual artifacts (the posters) in which students' collective interpretations of social justice themes are captured, and (2) peer assessment scores, which provided evaluative data on group performance. The visual data (posters) were analyzed using multimodal content analysis as Bezemer and Jewitt, (2018) concentrating on the integration of images, text, colors and other symbolic elements. This involved coding closed motifs, such as chains, blindfolds, and red silhouettes, assessing the alignment of slogans and visuals, and interpreting the ways in which students made semiotic choices to express empathy, injustice, or a call to action. Peer assessment data were analyzed in a descriptive manner to generate minimum, maximum, and mean scores on the five criteria: poster appeal, graphic support, slogan, presentation delivery, and time management. The research design synthesized quantitative peer evaluations with qualitative, multimodal analyses to formulate performance patterns and discerned deeper, interpretive insights concerning the students' civic and ethical engagements.

Research Participants

Research participants were 54 undergraduate students studying different disciplines at one of the private Islamic universities located in Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Indonesia. Of these participants, there were 20 students enrolled in Department of Legal Studies, while the other 34 students were pursuing Department of Criminology. These fields of study were

purposely selected since the students would be able to appreciate the aspects of justice, ethics, and civic responsibility which make such disciplines most applicable for the purpose of investigating social justice education through poster making.

There were 28 female and 26 male participants with the majority of these individuals being 19 to 22 years old and were in their second or third year of study. While many had group work experience, very few had exposure to multimodal or arts-based projects. All of these participants were enrolled in the compulsory English course offered in the 2023/2024 academic year when the poster making exercise was used as part of the course. Students were placed in smaller groups to facilitate inter-group collaboration and to foster critical discussions in addition to sharing varied thoughts across different disciplines. This engagement collaborative approach of working mirrors the real classroom scenarios that accompanied the practices at the university where students interacted in peer learning and collaborative tasks to augment active engagement and responsibility.

Instruments

The assessment rubric for this study was based on existing frameworks for project-based learning and multimodal assessment relevant to the teaching of English, the arts, and visual communication (Rowse, Morrell, and Alvermann, 2020; Mills and Unsworth, 2018). These frameworks advocate for assessment of the processes of meaning making and collaboration as well as the end product. The rubric was tailored to the aims of this study to investigate how students from non-humanities disciplines engage with the social justice issues in poster making. This enabled the addition of visual literacy and critical awareness as key evaluative elements.

The scoring guide is distinguished by five major elements: Poster Appeal, Graphic Support, Slogan, Oral Presentation, and Time Management, with each element being assigned a score on a four-point continuum (2 – 5) from Poor to Very Good. Poster Appeal relates to the understanding the audience has of aesthetics in the audience engagement. Graphic Support draws on Bezemer and Jewitt (2018) on multimodal analysis of the relevance of the images, symbols and other visuals in the advocacy message. The Slogan dimension is anchored in persuasive communication and social advocacy, focusing on the originality, conciseness, and memorability of the verbal message by means of persuasive language. Hence, the rubric responded to the need to align with the principles of communication and the textual plus visual principles of the posters.

Alongside the textual and visual components, the rubric also gauged the oral presentations and the groupwork of the students through the Delivery and Time Management indicators. Delivery focused on students' comprehension and expression of the subjects involved at the poster level, particularly the performance aspect of self-advocacy, and their poster level communication, and the use of bodily actions. Time Management focused on students' organizational behavior concerning attention, and finishing the project in the designated zone, all within the zone of collaboration and group work. The rubric's use of both product- and process-oriented measurements offered a multifaceted approach in assessing how poster-making developed not only creativity, visual literacy, and complex problem solving, but at the same time, collaboration, effective communication, and civic engagement.

Data Analysis

The data analysis utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches, measuring results and then providing interpretative details. Descriptive statistics for peer assessment metrics were compiled and ranged from minimums, maximums, and averages for each of the five metrics (Poster Appeal, Graphic Support, Slogan, Delivery, and Time Management). These metrics provided for an overview of student performance, elucidating trends and strengths and weaknesses within the data.

The qualitative aspect thematically coded the visuals and text on the posters. Using outlined principles from Braun and Clarke (2019a) the first step of the analysis, segmentation, understanding posters and initial impressions of slogans, colors, and the layout were flagged. In the second phase, codes were produced that noted repeating motifs like chains, blindfolds, red silhouettes, and justice scales. In the third phase of structuring themes that spanned over codes like "oppression and human rights," "corruption and accountability," and "digital crime and surveillance" were noted. These themes were then finalized and illustrated through the use of selective poster excerpts.

In order to increase credibility, coding was done repeatedly and peer-reviewed to reduce researcher bias. Emphasis was placed on the correspondence between images and slogan writing, as this integration demonstrated students' ability to utilize multiple modes to illustrate social justice issues. The last step of the analysis was to determine the consequences of the identified themes for the participants' critical literacy and civic engagement, considering the aims of the research. The research study defended its methodological rigor by integrating descriptive statistics and organized thematic analysis, and the study poster's construction rigorously demonstrated students' involvement with social justice.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Evaluative posters were critiqued through the lens of five indicators drawn from educational evaluation, and visual literacy: appeal of the poster content, graphic aid, slogan, delivery, and time management (Rowse, Morrell, and Alvermann, 2020; Mills and Unsworth, 2018). For each poster, the review focused on the effectiveness of the students' visual and textual narrative on the selected social justice theme. The analysis focused on the students' attempts to convey the message, the messages created, the relevant and imaginative visuals, their slogans, and the organization and presentation of the work. Furthermore, Table 2 summarizes the results of the peer assessment conducted by 54 students. Each indicator was rated on a scale of 1 to 5. The table includes the minimum score, maximum score, and average score for each indicator across all student evaluations.

Table 2
Results of Peer Assessment Analysis

Indicator	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average Score
Poster Appeal	2	5	3.94
Graphic Support	3	5	3.81
Slogan	2	5	3.69
Delivery	3	5	3.75
Time Management	3	5	4.06

Table 2 shows that the students did quite well in almost all indicators, especially in Time Management (4.06), which suggests effective organization and collaboration during the project. Poster Appeal and Graphic Support also received relatively high averages, which indicates that the students were able to create meaningful and visually appealing posters that effectively represented the social justice themes they selected. With Slogan (3.69) however, there seems to be difficulty in formulating short, impactful, and grammatically correct statements. Yet, the peer assessment outcomes indicate that all students, at least to some extent, participated actively and creatively, as well as assumed responsibility with regard to the poster task, which reflects the emerging integration of critical awareness and expressive skills.

In order to examine student performance across the five indicators; Poster Appeal, Graphic Support, Slogan, Delivery, and Time Management, the data from the peer

assessments was averaged and is presented here as a pie chart. This chart gives a quick understanding of the strongest and weakest aspects of performance. The pie chart helps appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of students in communicating the social injustices using poster making by converting the quantitative data into a proportional graphic. The particular analysis for each of the constituents is provided below.

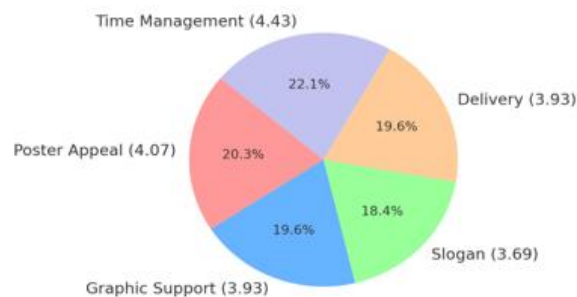


Figure 1. Results of Peer Assessment

In order to examine student performance across the five indicators; Poster Appeal, Graphic Support, Slogan, Delivery, and Time Management, the data from the peer assessments was averaged and is presented here as a pie chart. This chart gives a quick understanding of the strongest and weakest aspects of performance. The pie chart helps appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of students in communicating the social injustices using poster making by converting the quantitative data into a proportional graphic. The particular analysis for each of the constituents is provided below.

Figure 1 indicates variances in student performance and provides valuable information in terms of their communication and collaborative skills in multiple modes of communication across the five indicators—poster appeal, graphic support, the slogan, delivery, and time management. Poster appeal, for instance, had an average of 4.07, which indicates that most of the students who partook in the assessment had developed the required skills and possessed the visual literacy skills necessary for designing visually interesting posters that captured the attention of the people and communicated their ideas. Graphic support, which had an average of 3.93, suggested that students, for the most part, attached appropriate and relevant images, though the variation indicated that there was room for improvement in the alignment of the images and the messages being communicated. The slogan indicator scored the lowest average of 3.69, which indicates that the students taking part in the assessment had difficulties in coming up with messages that were short, powerful and rhetorically strong. This is an indicator that the students need more instruction in writing and engaging the audience. Students scored equally on delivery which in this case was 3.93, meaning that students had moderate skills in presenting. The majority of the students managed to communicate their ideas effectively, although a small number struggled with clarity, confidence, and articulation. Time management, on the other hand, was the weakest area with a score of 4.43, suggesting poor collaboration, planning, and meeting deadlines.

All of these facts hint that students were proficient in visuals and organization, but were lacking in verbal expression and public articulation. This sheds light on the need to combine project-based learning with critical literacy teaching to instill project-based social justice awareness in students of non-English disciplines. The provided posters designed by the students indicate that they are visually and thematically engaged with social justice issues like gratification (corruption), vandalism, human trafficking, and child exploitation on a progressive level. All the posters incorporate strong phrases and symbolic images alongside

bold colors to express a definite position against injustice. The “Refuse Gratification” poster critiques corruption and promotes justice by using stark visuals (a bribe being rejected and a silenced figure), while “Stop Vandalism” expresses societal blame and the value of public art with a distressed figure and aggressive pointing fingers. “Stop Child Labor, Save Our Children” captures the promise of red highlighting exploitation and silhouettes embodying lost potential. “Help Abolish Slavery for a Brighter Tomorrow” links modern slavery with currency to illustrate how slavery is a source of economic advancement. All of these posters, in different ways, show how students are able to capture sophisticated societal issues in sophisticated visuals, as students have demonstrated quite an advanced understanding powered by justice, empathy, and advocacy—which are fundamental parts of social justice education.

Discussion

Poster Appeal

Deriving insights from the peer evaluation, the Poster Appeal indicator yielded an average score of 3.94 with a minimum score of 2 and a maximum of 5. It seems that a good number of students were able to create posters that were not only vivid but also appealed to the emotions of the viewers. As Mills and Unsworth (2018) elaborates, portraying meaning visually demands rigorous attention to some design elements like composition, contrast, color, and balance, which constitute beauty and engagement at the same time. The groups that scored 5 on this indicator mastered resourcefulness with the adequate balance between these elements at poster design, which means striking posters that applied figurative language literally captivating to viewers’ attention in an overwhelming way in consonance to the social justice theme presented. It is reasonable to presume that these posters utilized striking photographs alongside text in vivid colors that were placed artistically, allowing for considerable emphasis and synergistic integration.

On the other hand, the lowest score of 2 suggests that at least one of the groups did not succeed in making an attractive or engaging poster. This could suggest problematic design elements such as an overcrowded layout, lack of clear focal points, poor image-text integration, or numerous other deficiencies. In reference to Bezemer and Jewitt (2018) multimodal discourse theory, the lack of coherent visual composition or failure to aid meaningful expression is bound to weaken the communicative value of multimodal constructs such as posters. For students in Legal Studies and Criminology Department, whose programs often emphasize analytical and technical skills, these weaknesses highlight the unfamiliarity with visual literacy as a communicative tool. The difference in these scores sheds light on the need to address, alongside the technical elements of design, the critical role visuals play in social advocacy. According to Giroux (2020) arguments on social justice education, advocacy posters are meant to serve as tools that encourage awareness and reflection, and those devoid of aesthetic appeal fail to elicit deeper contemplation regarding the issue. Conversely, posters that were highly appealing demonstrated the capacity of visual pedagogy to foster social justice awareness in non-humanities fields, directly responding to this study’s research question.

Graphic Support

In the peer assessment, the average score for the illustration used in the poster was 3.81, with 3 as the lowest mark and 5 as the highest. As presumed, students integrated visual elements into their posters in a manner that conveyed the social justice issue adequately. As noted by Mills and Unsworth (2018) and Bezemer and Jewitt (2018), images, symbols, icons or even their placement contribute greatly to meaning making within a multi modeled text. The participants with the highest score, which is 5 out of 5, most likely designed more advanced visuals that did not only match the theme but also enhanced it through metaphor,

contrast, or vivid imagery. Take for instance chains, broken scales, or shadowed figures; such images are not mere embellishments, but instead serve as semiotic signifiers of oppression, exploitation, and injustice. The creativity of these students illustrates that they understand how graphic support functions as a powerful communicative tool in social justice materials.

However, the lowest score of 3 suggests that some posters incorporated visuals that were perhaps too simplistic or lacking in metaphorical richness. This suggests that some respondents might have considered images as peripheral rather than central to constructing meaning. In multimodal social semiotics, as Kress and van Leeuwen put it, images are not merely adornments; they are semiotic signs that influence the interpretation of the audience. From the perspective of social justice education as articulated by Bell in 2016, the use of imagery that is powerful and contextually relevant is critical in developing empathy and acute consciousness. Take, for instance, a poster on human trafficking: If it is devoid of visuals that capture the gravitas of the subject, it loses much of its educational value. So, the range of scores suggests a need to better support students in understanding the need to be critical and reflexive about how visual elements can be crafted to capture images of injustice that are persuasive both on a cognitive and affective level.

The findings here correspond directly with the research problem: Legal Studies and Criminology students engage with legal texts and theories, but seldom encounter multimodal or visual approaches. Their performance on Graphic Support in particular reflects both the potential and the shortcomings of the introduction of visual pedagogy in such areas. The high-scoring posters also illustrate the ways in which poster-making can cultivate empathy, symbolic awareness and ethical reasoning, thus replying to the research question on how such activities cultivate the awareness of social justice within the non-humanities disciplines.

Slogan

Given the results from the peer assessment, it was noted that Slogan indicator's mean score was 3.69, with a lowest score of 2 and a highest score of 5, indicating remarkable difference in mastery on this particular area as students possess varying skills in crafting messages. As we have learned earlier, slogans play a central role in poster design because they serve as its core essence, encapsulating the entire narrative—its theme, sentiments, and what needs to be contemplated or done. According to Mills and Unsworth (2018), posters as a kind of multimodal texts reflect the combination of words and images and the verbal part has to do more than just give a figurative slogan, it has to ensure that the slogan enhances the image. Slogans that were rated highly captured the essence of extreme catastrophic issues with powerful phrases that were difficult to forget; such as human trafficking or corruption with slogans like “People Are Not for Sale” or “Refuse Gratification”. The evidence provided for these claims came from the emotional impact and clarity with which students were able to articulate powerful rhetorical statements demonstrating problem solving and critical reasoning. The results from these performances underscore the ability of poster making to raise social justice awareness in areas that do not usually emphasize advocacy and civic engagement, which in turn relates the findings to the overarching gap in the research problem outlined in this study.

In contrast, the minimum score of 2 implies that some students struggle with producing precise, cutting, and highly effective slogans. Softer strains of reasoning such as grammar errors, overly elegant skeleton descriptions, and ellipsis words may have thwarted the argument, thereby diminishing the poster's educational and persuasive value even further. From a critical perspective (Luke, 2018), language employed in social justice texts must be accurate and purposeful in dismantling dominant narratives in order to advocate for change. The lack of solid phrases indicates a lack of deeper understanding of the subject or lack of command of language required to persuade. Considering that learners in Law and Criminology are supposed to exhibit well developed skills in ethical reasoning, this

observation underscores the need to incorporate attention to language and advocacy writing in multimodal projects. This is indicative of the underlying research problem: the students attending this training have mastered technical and legal discourse but do not have adequate opportunities to practice persuasive multimodal communication. Poster-making shows much more than just a linguistic deficiency; it illustrates the pedagogical need to extend innovation in non-humanities fields to bridge a certain gap.

Delivery

As per the peer assessment, the Delivery indicator has an average score of 3.75 with a minimum score of 3 and maximum of 5. This means that students, for the most part, did fairly well in presenting their posters which means some students were highly clear, confident, and critically engaged during their explanations. Delivery, along with other components, is very important in poster-based pedagogy because it is part of the thinking process of a student when he/she tries to justify verbally or through words why the design choices were made, the social relevance of the issue and what was their stand concerning the issue. Giroux (2020) in his theory of Dialogic Learning explains that being able to speak on matters of concern, unpacking them while reflecting and discussing them constructively is a demonstration of *crítico sensibilidade* (critical consciousness). Some of the students who got full marks likely presented their ideas very emotionally, smoothly, and logically which means they not only grasped the understanding but were able to assimilate it and share it as an advocacy. The performance has demonstrated the extent to which poster-making allowed students (Bezemer, and Jewitt, 2018) particularly those from Law and Criminology where social justice discourse is rarely practiced in dialogic forms, to voice ethical issues and construct arguments, and in so doing, respond to the research problem.

On the flip side, a score of 3 indicates that some students may have had difficulty with delivery due to factors such as lack of preparation, absence of linguistic self-assurance, or inability to elaborate around some key notions adequately. With respect to constructivist learning theory, particularly Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), students attain higher-order thinking skills when they are provided some support to perform communicative activities. Within the scope of this project, the oral presentation enables students to further their learning by interacting with peers, receiving responses, and explaining the essence of their visuals. A score of 3 means that there was a reasonable allowance for some degree of constructive criticism which caused an absence of thoroughness or persuasive elements that deeply connect with the audience. In intrinsic education, where social justice and participation are put into consideration, and voice along with agency is fundamental, students expressing personally held views in full clarity needs to be promoted intentionally—this goes beyond communication into their empowerment and civic participation advocacy. Simultaneously, this display of disinterest portrays the research issue from a different perspective. Non-English Department students appear to lack confidence in dialogic communication and civic engagement, despite their mastery of well-structured academic discourse. The poster's creation thus highlights both their shortcomings and the potential self-defeating impact of becoming socially responsive and justice-oriented through education.

Time Management

Like it was previously mentioned in the results for peer assessment, the indicator of Time Management had the highest value of mean score of 4.06 with the lowest and highest score being 3 and 5, correspondingly. This value signifies that most student groups demonstrated a considerable level of competence in terms of scheduling, coordinating, and finishing their poster projects in a timely manner. This incorporates important components of 21st century learning competencies, especially with respect to collaboration, initiative,

productivity as stated in the P21 Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2019). The groups that scored a perfect 5 must have demonstrated flawless punctuality, timeliness, swift division of roles, strategic goal setting, and effective problem-solving skills which are necessary in both academic settings and the workplace. Performance of these groups illustrates that students were not performing just a given task but instead engaged in project management, which represents effective project-based learning (Larmer, Mergendoller, and Boss, 2015). This is especially important in light of the problem in research: although programs in Legal Studies and Criminology have a hitherto undue focus on the theory and the techniques, they deny students the opportunity to practice civic engagement and advocacy. Poster making is one such activity that incorporates social responsibility to be done while working with people of diverse and differing values or opinions and, therefore, strong time management and group coordination skills are needed.

On the contrary, the reason why some groups scored the lowest 3 points might be due to problems like vague group coordination, vague deadlines, or near-sudden changes to the assignment. These difficulties are typical in group work during collaborative projects, particularly when students are still learning how to manage their own learning. Lee, E., & Hannafin (2016) state that time management is one of the most important facets of independent study and that it is highly connected with a learner's ability to Supervising Activities involves regularly checking if milestones have been reached as well as evaluating if the activities align with the predetermined objectives and make changes when necessary. Even though a 3 indicates reasonable performance, it reveals that additional help with communication within teams, project organization, and reflection-based time management may bolster students' enduring learning behaviors. In the same respect, the mixed results illuminate the research problem from a different perspective. Students are capable of technical coordination, but they require more managed opportunities in project management civic advocacy, and social justice education. Making posters created more opportunities to apply the integration of these skills in areas of the curriculum where they are usually neglected.

CONCLUSION

The present study showed that poster-making can effectively teach social justice issues to Legal Studies and Criminology students, who do not belong to the English Department. Students demonstrated engagement with sophisticated societal problems, which they were able to articulate along with their understanding in a visual format. These assessments included five indicators—appeal and graphic support of the poster, slogan, as well as delivery and time management—allowing evaluation of creativity together with the student's cognitive conflict, ethics, and cooperation development.

Time management reflected the highest average score in the indicators which demonstrates students' commitment, discipline, and sense of responsibility toward the project. Poster appeal and graphic support received high ratings which showed students' ability to use visuals to express social issues' urgency and emotional appeal. There was also variation in the positive feedback for the slogan and delivery indicators which suggests more support is needed in persuasive writing and confident verbal presentation. In general, while creating posters, students displayed gaps of not only critical thinking and creativity, but also empathy, ethical consideration, and civic engagement which are crucial for social justice education. The research highlights the startling lack of multiform, project-based instructional methods for fostering deeper learning in students of all disciplines when teaching advanced courses.

Despite these useful results, this study highlights several limitations. First, it is a case study within a single Islamic university, with students from only two programs, thus limiting the applicability of the results to other fields or institutions. Second, the reliance on peer review and poster artifacts, while useful, could be supplemented in the future with interviews, reflective journals, or other means of longitudinal tracking to gain a more sophisticated

understanding of students' civic consciousness. Finally, the findings may be limited in their applicability to other contexts due to cultural and institutional factors related to the Indonesian higher education system.

This study considered limitations identified by past research. Incorporating larger student samples drawn from diverse non-humanities disciplines in multiple universities may enhance external validity. Adopting mixed-methods frameworks integrating qualitative and quantitative social justice measurement tools may allow more nuanced analysis of certain paradigm shifts. Moreover, cross-national, or between regional, comparative research may reveal how place-specific educational policies, such as Kampus Merdeka, in conjunction with multimodal strategies, including poster-making, promote civic engagement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude to the Head of the Legal Studies Study Program, Faculty of Law, and the Department of Criminology, Faculty of Political Science, Universitas Islam Riau, Pekanbaru, for their valuable support and permission to conduct this research. Their cooperation and encouragement made it possible to engage the students meaningfully in this academic project.

REFERENCES

- Arifin, Z., & Muslim, A. B. (2021). The Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Their Ability in Writing Descriptive Text. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 9(2), 215–221. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v9i2.3606>
- Bell, L. A. (2016). Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Education. In M. Adams & L. A. Bell (Ed.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (3rd ed., pp. 3–26). Routledge.
- Bezemer, J., & Jewitt, C. (2018). *Multimodality, Learning and Communication: A Social Semiotic Frame*. Routledge.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on Reflective Thematic Analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597.
- Chik, A., & Ho, J. (2022). Visual Literacy and Empathy in Project-Based Classrooms: A Multimodal Approach. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 112.
- Cochran-Smith, M., Ell, F., Ludlow, L., Grudnoff, L., & Aitken, G. (2016). Initial Teacher Education: What does it Take to Put Equity at the Center? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 57, 67–78. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.03.006>
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Cummings, K. D., Park, Y., & Bauer Schaper, H. A. (2011). Form Effects on DIBELS Next Oral Reading Fluency Progress Monitoring Passages. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 38(2), 91–104. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1534508412447010>
- Giroux, H. A. (2020). *On Critical Pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Griffiths, E., & Troshynski, E. I. (2019). Critical Criminology and Social Justice: Exploring Intersectionality. *Critical Criminology*, 27(2), 145–162. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-019-09447-0>
- Hawkins, M. R. (2011). *Social Justice Language Teacher Education*. Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847694249>
- Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (2020). *Panduan Implementasi kebijakan Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka*. Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia.
- Kuby, C. R., Spector, K., & Thiel, J. J. (2021). Equity and Justice through Digital Multimodal Literacies: Reimagining Literacy Learning. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 64(5), 539–548.

- Larmer, J., Mergendoller, J. R., & Boss, S. (2015). *Setting the Standard for Project Based Learning: A Proven Approach to Rigorous Classroom Instruction*. ASCD.
- Leavy, P. (2015). *Method Meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Lee, E., & Hannafin, M. J. (2016). A Design Framework for Enhancing Engagement in Student-Centered Learning: Own it, Learn it, and Share it. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 64(4), 707–734. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9422-5>
- Luke, A. (2018). *Critical Literacy, Schooling, and Social Justice: The Selected Works of Allan Luke*. Routledge.
- Mills, K. A., & Unsworth, L. (2018). Multimodal literacy. In & N. S. D. Wyse, L. Suter, E. Smith (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment* (pp. 245–260). SAGE Publications.
- Nugraha, D., Ruswandi, U., & Erihadiana, M. (2020). Urgensi Pendidikan Multikultural di Indonesia. *Urnal Pendidikan PKN (Pancasila Dan Kewarganegaraan)*, 1(2), 140–149. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26418/jppkn.v1i2.40809>
- Nugroho, K., Carden, F., & Antlöv, H. (2018). *Local Knowledge Matters: Power, Context and Policymaking in Indonesia*. Policy Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv6hp39z>
- Partnership for 21st Century Learning. (2019). *Framework for 21st Century Learning Definitions*. Battelle for Kids. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519462.pdf>
- Rahmawati, Y., & Koul, R. (2016). Character Education in the Context of Teaching Islamic Values. *Journal of Social Science Education*, 15(4), 120–129. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4119/UNIBI/jsse-v15-i4-1500>
- Rowell, J., & Wohlwend, K. (2020). Multimodal Texts and Social Inclusion: Critical Reflections on Literacy and Identity. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 69(1), 392–404.
- Rowell, J., Morrell, E., & Alvermann, D. (2020). Confronting Critical Issues of Literacy and Equity in Digital Spaces. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 64(1), 11–19. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1075>
- Sensoy, Ö., & DiAngelo, R. (2017). *Is everyone really equal?: An introduction to key concepts in social justice education* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Suyanto, B. (2019). Multiculturalism in Indonesian Islamic Education. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 57(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.571.1-28>
- Tan, S., & Guo, L. (2021). (2021). Multimodal Pedagogy in Higher Education: Integrating Civic and Ethical Engagement through Visual Learning. *Journal of Multimodal Studies*, 15(3), 221–238.
- Vetter, A. M., Anderson, K. T., & Meacham, S. (2022). Arts-Based Civic Advocacy in Education: Poster Projects for Justice-Oriented Engagement. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 110.