MULTIMODALITY AND ELT

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1. Introduction

The concept of what it means to be literate has drastically changed over the last few decades. Since literacy is a compilation of societal and communicative practices, it is presumed that literacy will change and be reconceptualized as technology develops and cultures evolve (National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2019). In ELT related practices and beyond, more than ever before, students are encountering daily a wide variety of texts in which images and other design features are central (Jewitt, 2009; Serafini, 2015).

This new concept of literacy provides a working ground in which traditional forms of constructing reality, communicative practices and learning are replaced by multisensory means of achieving the same goals.

In fact, from birth and in different periods of lifetime, the input from which we construct reality is multisensory and a complex array of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings.

Because language is both something in the world and the primary means of understanding the world, any theory of multimodality might help to explain how languages are acquired by nontraditional means (Dressman & Sadler, 2020).

1.1. Multimodality

The term 'multimodal' is often used as an adjective to describe a particular type of text. In these instances, the term refers to texts that utilise a variety of modes to communicate or represent concepts and information. Therefore, a multimodal text is a complex, multimodal entity that occurs in both print and digital environments, utilising a variety of cultural and semiotic resources to articulate, render, represent, and communicate an array of concepts and information (Serafini, 2014).

Language is widely taken to be the most significant mode of communication especially in contexts of learning and teaching. Multimodality, however, works on the assumption that representation and communication always draw on a multiplicity of modes (pathways to gather information and make meaning), all of which have the potential to contribute to the meaning-making processes. The basic assumption governing multimodality is that meanings are made, distributed, received, interpreted and remade in interpretation through many representational and communicative modes - not just through language - whether as speech or as writing.

The multimodal perspective, in contexts of learning and teaching, provides tools for analysing and describing the full repertoire of meaning-making resources and materials which people, who are involved in education, use to communicate and represent and how these are organized to make meaning (Baykal, 2019).

In their work, Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (1996), Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen stress that "the visual component of a text is an independently organised

and structured message, connected to the written component, but not necessarily dependent on it" (1996, p. 18).

It is not just the incorporation of visual images into written texts that is the focus of much of today's research into visual literacies. What is of interest is how visual images work alongside written language and design elements, and how readers make sense across the various components and features of these texts. Design elements, visual images, and written language work in diffrent ways to convey meaning and communicate information.

Multimodal research has shown the significance of the role of the image and its relationship with writing for the construction of knowledge in textbooks and other learning resources (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Moss, 2003). This research has highlighted the implications of multimodal design for how students navigate digital and print materials through the creation of reading pathways that rely on pictures, colour and other graphical elements, and layout (Jewitt, 2011).

What needs to be discussed at this point is how and why multimodality works, or how the combination of multiple modes of communication contributes to learning; for the specific aim of this study, to language-learning outcomes that are more powerful than learning through any single model. A model that would embody all these would focus on describing how different modes and their different sensory inputs, mainly visual and auditory but potentially also tactile, olfactory, gustatory, and kinesthetic, produce meaning, individually and in combination (Dressman & Sadler, 2020).

Because multimodality's dynamics are difficult to explain, perhaps the best approach to studying multimodality from the perspective of its implications for language learning would be to focus on the observable outcomes of multimodal interactions.

From this perspective, some researchers and theorists characterize multimodality as an enabling condition, in which the combination of meaning from two or more modes combines to have a demonstrable learning outcome. For these researchers, multimodality itself is not under investigation as much as certain combinations of modes-print text and audiobooks; videos with subtitles in L1 or L2; video games with written or spoken chat and their learning outcomes in comparison to unimodal or other combinations. Multimodality in these studies is an enabling feature, something that adds motivational and cognitive power to learners' acquisition of a second language (Dressman & Sadler, 2020)

2. Multimodal Pedagogies: From Students' Perspective

'Multimodality' is defined as using different modes, i.e. textual, aural, linguistic, spatial, and visual, for communication and meaning-making (Kress, 2003). Multimodal pedagogy refers to curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices which focus on mode as a defining feature of communication in learning environments (Stein & Newfield, 2006). It allows students to represent their learning in multiple modes (Choi & Yi, 2015; Jewitt & Kress, 2003). In L2 contexts, with the development of technological tools students are increasingly producing multimodal texts; combining texts, images, audios, and videos in digital forms, such as blogs, digital stories, and mini-documentaries (Hafner & Miller, 2011; Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016). This new situation aligns with the reconceptualization of literacy and the new notion of

'multiliteracies' that refers to the ability to succesfully engage with texts integrating different semiotic resources (The New London Group, 1996). Multiliteracy is often seen to be used interchangeably with 'multimodality' (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016).

A multimodal literacy pedagogy has shown to incorporate multiple meaning-making modes, apart from traditional unimodal forms of reading and writing (Ajayi, 2008; Hull & Nelson, 2005).

This pedagogical approach has shown to be especially effective for English language learners. Students in today's ELA (English Language Arts) classrooms are exposed to a wide variety of meaning-making modes and combination of these modes (Kalantzis et al., 2016).

For example students constantly see page layouts with written text and images on their devices, often while hearing music and other sound effects. They see billboards with phrases and pictures; they attend shows with music, body language, and images or they participate in interactive conversations using a variety of modes.

Thus, students are allowed multiple points of access to multimodal texts when students become both viewers and readers to the content of these texts. Analyzing and creating multimodal texts also allows ELLs of all levels to express themselves in unique ways by using multiple semiotic resources to create multidimensional meanings (Pacheco & Smith, 2015). Through multimodal projects, students are able to express themselves more than they would be able to with unimodal written texts (Zapata, 2014).

Multimodal literacy practices are also pointed out to improve literacy skills, enhance learning motivation and autonomy (Li, 2020). Students welcome multimodal pedagogy and agree that use of modalites (e.g. videos and audios) facilitates their learning of course content (Li, 2020; Peng, 2019).

Some of the studies to exemplify how multimodality influences literacy development/language education are Kenner (2004), Kress (2003), Kress et.al (2004), Adoniou (2013), Early and Marshall (2008), Potts and Moran (2013), Sofkova Hashemi (2017). These studies have shown that both learners of L1 and L2 are supported in their literacy development by a multimodal framework. Smith (2014)'s review on L2 education and multimodal approach to teaching in L2 was beneficial to student learning in a number of areas, including academic writing. Research on L1 supports the benefits of multimodality for developing writing and reading both in early L1 education (Mackenzie & Veresov, 2013; Sofkova Hashemi, 2017) and throughout the school years (Oldham, 2005; Pantaleo, 2012; Svardemo Aberg & Akerteldt, 2017).

The benefits of multimodal pedagogies in enriching classroom teaching and learning are documented in the following studies. In Asia, Ganapathy and Seetharam(2016) reported that the use of multimodal texts made English language lessons more interesting and enhanced students' level of engagement, understanding, and retention of the knowledge taught. Similarly in Singaporean secondary school, Anderson et al. (2017) argued that engaging in multimodal text composition allowed low-progress students to develop higher-order critical and analytical skills, which the usual classroom literacy practices and activites did not offer. Their findings are consistent with Ajayi's (2008) earlier observations on the benefits of using

multimodal composing activities among high school ESL students who come from socieconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Jiang and Gao (2020) also observed that the inclusion of multimodal digital composition tasks contributed to the development of digital empathy amongst Chinese EFL learners, and helped to increase their motivation and confidence in expressing themselves in English. Likewise, Chen (2021) reported that the teacher's multimodal pedagogies in designing opportunities for students' multimodal composing were well-received by the students, who appreciated the range of meaning-making options.

Stein (2004) demonstrates how English language learners from certain communities in South Africa value oral, performative, and gestural forms of communication above print-based texts. Stein reports that through writing, verbal modes, role-play, and photography, the students not only use visual representations to provide details that are absent in the written mode but also examine their social realities, convey different social identities and experience their worlds in new ways because of classroom social practices centered on the use of multimodal resources.

3. Multimodal Pedagogies: From Teachers' Perspective

With the influence of multi-semiotic digital input in learners' life (Street, Pahl, & Roswell, 2009), multimodal pedagogy is capturing researchers' and instructors' growing attention. Multimodal pedagogy is informed by the theoretical construct of multimodality (Kress, 2003).

Multiliteracies is often seen to be used interchangeably with "multimodality" (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016). The relationship between the two terms was clarified by Rowsell and Walsh (2011): "Multimodality comes first in that it informs how we make meaning, and multiliteracies, as a possible pedagogy, give us tools for doing so" (p. 56). A concept associated with multiliteracies is "multimodal literacy", which is defined as the ability to construct meanings through "reading, viewing, understanding, responding to and producing and interacting with multimedia and digital texts" (Walsh, 2010, p. 213).

The term 'multimodal pedagogies' describes the ways in which the teacher can design learning experiences that facilitate students' development of multimodal literacy in the classroom (Kress & Selander, 2012). Multimodal pedagogies involve teachers making decisions about which modes of representation to use for particular curricular content, and how these are to be arranged and sequenced. It also involves designing opportunities for students to create multimodal compositions.

A multimodal literacy pedagogy gives teachers the resources to recognize the value and capitalize on students' cultural and linguistic resources through instruction that incorporates multiple meaning-making modes, apart from traditional unimodal forms of reading and writing (Ajayi, 2008; Hull & Nelson, 2005). In order to support the development of literate ELLs in today's world, educators must expand the literacy practices that they use in the classroom to include multimodal texts (Serafini, 2015). Teachers must learn how to use and teach students how to use a wide range of modes to articulate, represent, and interpret texts (Serafini, 2014). Because of the importance of utilizing multimodal literacies with ELLs in current educational settings, the focus is on an instructional approach in language teaching classrooms.

As Veliz and Hossein (2020) reminded us, it becomes almost inevitable to integrate digital multimodal tools into language instruction in order to enhance students' language learning experiences. Thus, the need for teacher education programs to prepare pre-service teachers to bridge the gap between the traditional literacy and multiliteracies will be continuously intensified in the years to come (Rowsell et al., 2008).

Although multimodal literacy has been increasingly practiced in language classrooms, research on integrating multimodal practices into the teacher education curriculum is still in its infancy. Miller's study (2007) is one of the earlier works that initially drew our attention to multimodal literacy practice in a teacher education class in the USA through digital video composing tasks.

Additionally, previous studies (e.g., Ajayi, 2010; Coyle et al., 2010; Farias & Veliz, 2019; Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016) reported that many teachers still feel unprepared for multimodal pedagogy, as they lack relevant skills to deliver multimodal practices in their classes. For instance, in the questionnaire survey with teacher candidates conducted by Ajayi (2010) in the USA, many participants disagreed that they had learned and practiced strategies to teach multiliteracies in their teacher training courses. This perception was echoed by the pre-service teachers in Chile, reported in Farias and Veliz (2019). In Farias and Veliz's (2019) study, participants acknowledged the use of multimodal texts in their teacher training courses, but pointed out the lack of a systematic pedagogical preparation for pre-service teachers to implement multimodal pedagogy later in their teaching practice.

However, Bulut et. al. (2015) developed a 'Multimodal Literacy Scale' to investigate multimodal literacy skills of prospective teachers of English language to find out about the changes in the understanding of literacy skills in this communication and technology age in Turkish context. Ekşi and Yakışık's study (2015) tries to define prospective language teachers' multimodal literacy levels in a state university via the Multimodal Literacy Scale developed by Bulut et al. (2015). The results indicate that pre-service English language teachers have high levels of multimodal literacy skills. The study by Ulu et al. (2017) reveals that there is a positive and mid-level relationship between the multimodal literacy and pre-service teachers' perceptions about their self-efficacy in critical reading. The confronting results might be due to the differences in the formation and design of curriculum objectives of respective countries.

Still, it seems very important to incorporate multimodal pedagogy into TESOL teacher education so as to prepare pre-/in-service teachers for the digital trend in language teaching. Specifically, teacher educators are encouraged to update the TESOL curriculum by including multimodal practices to expose pre-/in-service teachers to emerging knowledge of multimodal literacies. However, the investigation of multimodal pedagogy in TESOL teacher education is rather scarce (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016). Yi and Choi (2016) directed teacher educators' attention to the importance of knowing pre-/in-service teachers' views of multimodal practices so as to better integrate multimodal tasks into existing curricula.

McVee et al. (2008) continued to implement multimodal pedagogy in a graduate course of new literacies and technologies in the USA, with the aim to inform teacher educators to train pre-/in-service teachers to integrate technology into their teaching along with the digital trend.

Through completing three digital projects (i.e., poetry interpretation via PowerPoint, inquiry based WebQuest via Dreamweaver, and a digital story via iMovie), students were provided valuable opportunities to create multimodal texts electronically and reflect on the use of digital technologies in literacy instruction. The results showed that the pre-service teachers learned multimodal design of texts and comprehended the transitional stances of literacy/technology integration, namely the dynamic and interwoven relationship between technology and literacy (Bruce, 1997).

Differently, in Hundley and Holbrook's (2013) study, the pre-service teachers preferred print-based literacies, and voiced the challenges as they composed digital multimodal texts in a writing methods course. The perceived challenges included struggling with new composition structures, thinking with image, and using technology. Hundley and Holbrook (2013) called for more opportunities for pre-service teachers to experiment with multimodal literacy in their coursework so that they can be "enthusiastically attuned to a digital era" (p. 508).

Emphasizing the pedagogical perceptions of the issue, Rowsell et al. (2008) reported on a longitudinal study of literacy teacher preparation in Canada via interviews with pre-service teachers and new teachers. Their study revealed perceived benefits of multiliteracies pedagogy, including helping the implementation of constructivist pedagogy, connecting to students' lives, and fostering class community. Participants also reported challenges in implementing multiliteracies pedagogy, such as lack of clarity about the nature and purpose of multiliteracies pedagogy and inadequate range of literacy forms (e.g., less attention to non-fiction literacy and computer literacy). Veliz and Hossein (2020) recently examined Australian English as an Additional Language (ELA) teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of their teacher training programs in preparing them for multimodal pedagogy via semistructured interviews. Teacher participants shared challenges of implementing an integrated approach to teaching meaning-making through multiple semiotic modes. It is pivotal to educate learners with the knowledge and skills of how multimodal texts are constructed and to develop effective pedagogical strategies to integrate multimodal literacy (Ajayi, 2010; Farias & Veliz, 2019).

To investigate how multimodal pedagogies are practised in TESOL classroom contexts, Rance-Roney (2010) explored pre-/in-service teachers' engagements with multimodal literacy projects. The teachers made short videos addressing reading strategies and linguistic/cultural schema to serve as pre-reading activities for their ELLs. The results showed that the teachers, by orchestrating visual, audio, and linguistic modes to produce the videos, gained a deepened understanding of the content of reading materials. More recently, Yi and Angay-Crowder (2016) incorporated multimodal practices into graduate TESOL courses by implementing two multimodal projects in which 1) students represented their knowledge of Second Language Acquisition concepts multimodally and 2) students created multimodal instructional materials to teach ELL academic literacy. This study particularly addressed the challenges of implementing multimodal pedagogy in teacher education. The perceived challenges included epistemological issues regarding legitimate academic literacy, assessment of multimodal projects involving both content knowledge and design, and teachers' resistance to multimodal practices for the lack of technological skills and time constraints.

By incorporating two multimodal projects into the TESOL curriculum/assessment, this study provided opportunities for pre-/in-service teachers to practice and reflect on multimodal practices. The findings of this study echoed affordances of multimodal practices explored in language classrooms (e.g., Miller, 2010; Ryan et al., 2010; Yi & Choi, 2015). Also, the study reinforced the findings of previous studies (e.g., Miller, 2007; Rance-Roney, 2010) conducted with teacher candidates that the multimodal project led to their deepened learning of content knowledge and a collaborative learning community. Li's (2020) study also confirmed that multimodal practices can be productive ways to benefit pre-/in-service teachers enrolled in graduate programs by enabling them to enhance content learning as well as digital learning, which furthermore prepared them for implementing multimodal pedagogy in their classroom contexts.

There are also studies which report on how a multimodal approach is difficult to enact in the classroom due to issues related to school traditions, teachers' competence, the challenges of power relations in the classroom and even the students' resistance (Aagard & Silseth, 2017; Cederlund & Sofkova Hashemi, 2018; Gilje, 2010; Godhe, 2014; Olin-Scheller, 2006).

The implications of multimodal pedagogies on curricular issues are discussed in Elf et al. (2018). They state that whereas multimodality previously was connected mainly to students' receptive skills, there now appears to be a shift towards students' multimodal productions. This shift in focus in curricula, stresses the importance of formulating qualitative aspects of multimodal productions in a school setting in order for teachers to be able to assess them. In a multimodal perspective, assignments can encourage students to use multimodal meaning-making in their design process. The extent to which they do so may depend on how the assignment is expressed and prepared through teaching and how the assessment criteria are formulated and communicated. Therefore, it is important to notice the lack of adjustments concerning multimodality and digitalisation in knowledge requirements and assessment criteria. Studies show that what is recognized as learning in language education is still very much connected to verbal writing, both in teaching and assessment (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Oldham, 2005; Tønnessen, 2010). Results from studies by, among others, Aagard and Silseth (2017), Godhe (2014) and Silseth and Gilje (2017), reveal how assessment practises fail to align with teaching. While teaching practices may be multimodal, assessment practices are generally not, and assessment criteria used to evaluate verbal texts, do not adequately address the complexity of multimodal compositions (e.g., Cope et al., 2011; Godhe, 2014; Oldham, 2005)

In L2 contexts, for teachers of ELLs, research has revealed its benefits for learners, such as deepening their engagements with texts, making school learning relevant to their out-of-school interests, and giving voice to marginalized students (Ajayi, 2008; Early & Marshall, 2008; Hull & Nelson, 2005; Jacobs, 2012). However, relatively little research in second language (L2) literacy has explored the use of multimodality in the classroom among ELLs and their teachers (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011). Among a few studies that have looked into integrating multimodal practices into L2 classrooms (e.g., Ajayi, 2011; 2012; Early & Marshall, 2008), the collaborative endeavor by Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) is one of the latest reports on the use of multimodal practice in the second language classroom setting. While implementing a digital storytelling curriculum for multilingual middle school students

in a summer school, the researchers found that multimodal teaching and learning had the potential for "expanding their [multilingual adolescents'] literacy repertories and means of expression" (p. 43). Of particular importance is that by engaging in print-based and digitally based composition about a topic of interest, these adolescents "capitalized on their home/community-based languages, discourses, and knowledge" (p. 42) and redefined and recreated their realities and identities.

Another important study to note here is Rance-Roney's (2010) research that explored pre-service and in-service teachers' engagements with multimodal literacy projects, named digital jump-start (DJ), in a teacher education program. The teachers in the study made a 3- to 6-minute video that was intended for prereading activities, addressing vocabulary, syntax, reading strategies, and cultural and linguistic schema. They used multimodality as an effective instructional scaffold for enhancing ELLs' academic reading and language acquisition. Both of these studies could be of significant value for classroom teachers who serve a growing population of linguistically and culturally diverse students. They reveal specific ways to employ digital and multimodal practices to support ELLs' identity, language, literacy, and content area learning. Nevertheless, we could benefit from more studies that examine teachers' actual experiences of employing multiple modes to teach ELLs in the classroom context.

In support of the findings of above mentioned studies, in Choi and Yi's study (2015) it was found that the benefits of multimodality for ELLs are also applicable to all the students and they strongly believed that every teacher must employ various modes to ensure academic success of all students. They found that multimodal teaching brings content knowledge to life and makes it more real for learners. They also considered the strengths of multimodality as highlighting more students' otherwise overlooked and underexplored abilities, interests, and personalities, all of which have a significant impact on learning in school. They concluded that multimodal teaching reaches more students due to the broad spectrum of ability levels, talents, and interests.

They also found that allowing ELLs to express visually what they were learning proved to be a powerful teaching practice. They believed that visual representation plays a prominent role in aiding ELLs' understanding of linguistic text. Teacher's use of multimodality in instructing ELLs suggests that multimodality promotes ELLs' cognitive as well as affective engagements with content knowledge. This mode of instruction can ultimately enhance ELLs' sense of accomplishment and self-esteem. The teachers, who took part in this study, viewed multimodal practices and pedagogy as having a lasting impact on their positive academic experience. The teachers also identified various issues around technology and lack of support from administration as challenges for integrating multimodality into the classroom setting.

The value of multimodality for teaching and learning has not been widely accepted by classroom teachers both because of the long-standing view of literacy and language as exclusively linguistically based (Hundley & Holbrook, 2013) and because of an increased emphasis on standardized tests that are administered primarily through print media in U.S. schools despite the Common Core State Standards recognizing the importance of multimodal texts (Jacobs, 2012; Siegel, 2012). For instance, Hagood et al. (2008) found from their

longitudinal study that teachers in two low-performing middle schools, while holding a traditional view of literacy (i.e., print-based reading and writing), often used new literacy strategies (including multimodal activities) in their content area classes, but they were rather limited to being used for activating students' "schema" or "culminating activities for units of study" (p. 37). Furthermore, although some teachers were enthused about integrating multimodality into their practice, they viewed this approach as impractical to prepare students for standardized tests. In another study, Miller (2007) found that many pre-service and in-service English language arts teachers initially saw print-based text as the only legitimate form of school literacy. Yet, when they engaged in composing digital videos, they began to see digital video production as a similar composing activity to writing traditional, print-based text because of the similar literacy process required, and consequently they expanded their notions of school literacy "from only reading and writing print to also composing visual and auditory 'texts'" (p. 70). Here, findings from both Hagood et al.'s (2008) and Miller's (2007) studies provide a significant implication for teacher educators, suggesting that they need to play a key role in helping teachers be prepared to use newer kinds of "embodied multimodal literacy practices and professionalizing tools" (Miller, 2007, p. 78) so as to serve students better.

However, due to the pressure of and customary nature of standardized literacy and assessment practices in education sysytems, there may be hinderances during the implementation of multimodal pedagogies. Heydon (2013) found that standardized literacy assessment practices greatly limited the curriculum time and focus for teachers to engage in multimodal pedagogies in the Canadian province of Ontario. Their instructional practices were often influenced by the pressures to teach the 'must-dos' – narrowly focused on the language skills which were assessed in standardized tests (Heydon, 2013). A similar tension between new multimodal pedagogies and old language-dominant assessment practices has also been reported in Singapore. Tan et al., (2010) documented a case study of how they progressively transformed the pedagogical practices of a Singaporean high school English language teacher, where the 'reading and designing of multimodal texts' became central, and students were introduced to other semiotic modes besides language. Despite this, the teacher conceded that when confronted with the more pressing need of preparing her students for the all-important year-end examinations, multimodal literacy was "good to have' but 'not one of [the] top priorities' in her teaching" (Tan et al., 2010, p. 14).

2.1. Materials Serving Multimodal Pedagogies

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) defined multimodal texts as "any text whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic code" (p. 183). The shift in the definition of texts implies a need for change in ways English language teachers negotiate textbooks – from reading and writing print-bound materials – to developing skills and knowledge to teach how meanings are designed into textbooks through multimodal resources. In this way, English language teachers can connect textbooks to multiple identities and cultural forms of communication in order to "engage with, and gain access to, student agency, cultural memory, and home and school learning, within local contexts" (Jewitt, 2008b, p. 50).

In response to Gardner's (1991) groundbreaking theory of multiple intelligences, English language teachers have grappled with how to integrate different learning modalities into classrooms, particularly, the visual intelligence, to appeal to students' learning styles. Gardner (1991) argues that "students possess different kinds of minds and therefore learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways" (p. 11). Also, advancements in multimedia technology have created possibilities for integrating different modes into textbooks. Emphasizing the integration of images, words, colors and audio for communication, Kress (2000b) contended it "is now impossible to make sense of texts, even of their linguistic parts alone, without having a clear idea of what these other features might be contributing to meaning of a text" (p. 337). Concerned with how to support students' learning and make materials appealing, publishers are integrating diverse modes into textbooks. Designs of multiple modes into texts suggest a change in social and pedagogical relations between producers of textbooks and learners. This shift signifies horizontal, more open and more participatory relations in knowledge production among textbook producers, teachers, and students (Bezemer & Kress, 2010). Because of the multimodal nature of English language learning (ELL) textbooks, students enjoy establishing reading paths according to their interests, backgrounds, and needs. Indeed, visual representations have become a pervasive and visible feature of ELL textbooks around the world. In many ELL textbooks, producers integrate language and multimodal resources (e.g., image, color, layout, typography, and font) to communicate messages.

The multimodal resources of ELL textbooks suggest that teachers and students need new kinds of textual understanding: how multimodal resources of text-books are a crucial aspect of knowledge construction in classrooms. Such new understandings can help teachers make connection between their students' social and economic change, the material conditions of learners' lives, ELL textbooks, and pedagogy (Hull & Schultz, 2001). Equally importantly, multimodal textbooks brought by multimedia technologies have given rise to new textual experiences, social practices, and accompany literacies that potentially expand opportunities for ELL (Kern, 2006).

While visual messages are integral to texts, "they are still often ignored or treated superficially in the classroom" (Hobbs & Frost, 2003, p. 330). In many classrooms today, "the visual and multimodal survive at the margins of the curriculum" (Jewitt, 2008b, p. 15). The disconnection between highly visual and multimodal textbooks and teachers' practices is hardly surprising. Multimodal texts afford English learners the opportunity to draw on different modes and gain access to a wider range of semiotic possibilities for meaning making. The multi-layered and multifaceted nature of multimodal textbooks requires learners to engage in multimodal thinking and cognitive flexibility that are crucially important for language learning in multilingual contexts. Walker et al. (2010) argued that multimodal texts facilitate "a different, expanded form of classroom discourse that spans intertextuality and critical connections" (p. ix) that were usually not made available in traditional print-based materials. In addition, images in textbooks offer English language learners the possibility of multidirectional entry points into textual analyses and interpretations. Students can start interpretations of texts from captions, images, colors, layouts, or words. Because multimodality involves understanding how students interpret, understand and produce texts,

the role of teachers is to teach English language learners the "interpretation of the diverse combinatory ways of representing meaning that new technology tools are making possible" (Kern, 2008, p. 7).

Using a multimodal pedagogy, English language teachers have a greater chance of preparing their students to read textbooks from different identities based on ethnicity, race, gender or class, and redesign texts in ways that transform knowledge (Behrman, 2006; Walker & Bean, 2005). There is a need for teachers who understand that multimodal resources are central to ELL textbook design and students' learning in the contemporary times. Such teachers will screen textbooks for cultural representation, relevance and accuracy. More importantly, teachers also have to theorize on how textbook multimodal resources structure knowledge for students' learning in ELL classrooms.

Teachers need to teach students how textbooks' structures and visual resources interact and integrate to convey biases and prejudices and how such features can be interpreted within particular socio-cultural contexts and through specific social practices.

Multimodal representations in textbooks make new demands on teachers in "relations to both how knowledge is represented and communicated and how those representations circulate and mobilized across time and space" (Jewitt, 2008a, p. 256). More importantly, multimodal composition changes the shapes of knowledge in textbooks as diverse modes – images, words, color, captions, font, gaze, closeness, and directionality of gaze – interact and design meaning in textbooks. Besides, there are studies mentioning the positive perceptions of students' for the visuals present in their coursebooks (Şimşek & Dündar, 2016). Hence, helping English language learners understand the combinative potential of multimodal resources and the "relations of meaning that bind semiotic modes together" (Nelson, 2006, p. 57) is crucially important. Teachers can help English language learners understand the complex ways by which meanings are designed into textbooks and how to interpret such materials. The modal diversity in textbooks can serve to "increase the possibility of emergent knowledge, which may in turn positively affect intellectual and affective development" (Nelson, 2006, p. 70) of English language learners.

To teach multimodal textbooks is to "learn how to be critical of its messages, and . . . how to use it critically" (Lemke, 2005, p. 5). Such critical textual analyses of images by teachers are vitally important for preparing students to engage in heteroglossic interpretation that "focuses on how English learners and their communities influence and are influenced by social, political, and cultural discourses and practices in historically specific times and locations" (Gutíerrez, 2008, p. 150).

The teachers could ask: What is the message of the pictures? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your position. Why is the message presented to readers this way? Whose social-political interest is the message designed to serve? Multimodal textbooks have an inherent critical potential to the extent that teachers learn to teach English language learners how to "deconstruct the viewpoint of the text, and the text to subvert the naturalness of the image" (Lemke, 2005, p. 4). Teachers may need to ask crucial questions about ELL instruction: what new multimodal resources are made available in textbooks for meaning? What are the possibilities and constraints of visual and non-linguistic resources of textbooks? How can

teachers exploit the potential of multimodal textbooks for teaching? Furthermore, there may be a need for additional 'training' for some ELL teachers on how to make better use of the affordances of multimodal textbooks. Such training will prepare teachers to teach how multimodal resources inform textbook production and the specific skills, knowledge and dispositions they need to teach students for analysis, interpretation, and critique. Furthermore, school districts need to give teachers a more prominent role in selecting and adopting textbooks for students. To play this role effectively, teachers may need 'training' on how to engage in nuanced interpretations of textbooks. This is because textbooks are a patchwork of ideologies, interests and marketing strategies. ELL teachers may need additional training on how to ask questions such as: which publishing house produces them? What are its views on how best to educate ESL students? How does it intend multimodal textbooks to be used? Such training will help ELL teachers to identify multimodal texts that they consider appropriate for their students, including CD-ROMs or other multimedia technologies. For example, CD-ROMs with images to provide extra-linguistic clues to support the language being taught will potentially facilitate students' learning. Such materials also need to be interactive, e.g., use slower speech, repetition and allow students to ask for clarification. In addition, CD-ROMs should be interesting and relevant to students' lives. Furthermore, CD-ROMs should be recorded in different accents as a way to provide students the most important skill to negotiate the different dialects and accents.

4. An Overall Evaluation of Multimodal Pedagogies and Practices in ELT

Critical theorists posit that SLA theory–practice dynamics should pay close attention to the interconnection and interaction among politics, power, language, and pedagogical practices. In particular, Norton (2000) suggests the need for researchers and teachers to understand the impact of prevailing social structures in contexts of learning English as a second language (ESL). In essence, for critical theorists, some of the fundamental questions become: How do language learners become conscious of themselves and the social possibilities available to them? How do ESL pedagogical practices connect language learning and use to issues of power, equity, and social justice? How can ESL pedagogy be deployed in ways that stimulate students to use their life situations, perspectives, and experiences to construct their own identities/subjectivities? How do the changes in social and material affordances of the 21st century open up possibilities for students to remake texts by asserting their own identities through multimodal engagement? With this construct, ESL pedagogy becomes a site of struggle over what to teach and how to teach. This is why critical theorists are faced with the task of designing pedagogical practices that encourage ESL students to challenge linguistic rules of use that limit learners' possibilities for full and equitable social and cultural participation (Norton, 2000; The New London Group, 1996).

The pioneering research of Knobel and Lankshear (2007), The New London Group (1996), and Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) in "new literacies" strongly suggests that the pedagogy of multiliteracies/multimodality can be used as a tool to facilitate transformative goals in meaning-making classrooms for English language learners.

From the perspective of language learning, meaning making can be defined as a process by which learners gain critical consciousness of the interpretation of events in their lives in

relation to the world around them. In this way, the meaning that individual learners arrive at after reading a story or watching a video is mediated by their social, cultural, and historical experiences. Thus the term meaning has two constitutive elements—reflection and action (Freire, 2000). The learner, after reflection, chooses the meaning that represents his or her perspective out of the possibilities afforded by the society.

Gee (2000; 2001; 2003; 2007) proposes a new view of literacy and language learning as social achievements ingrained in social practices: "Knowing about social practice always involves recognizing various distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, knowing, and using various objects and technologies that constitute the social practice" (Gee, 2003, p. 15). Gee suggests that literacy practices are essentially social activities conducted during social interactions, and that the social practices around how texts are analyzed, decoded, negotiated, and interpreted by both teachers and students help situate meanings of specific words within individuals' embodied experiences and perspectives. Gee concludes that meaning making involves "learning how to situate (build) meanings" (Gee, 2003, p. 26) in different domains, be they videogames, computers, movies, television, visual images, literature, and so on. This is particularly true in mass media and textbook designs, where meaning making increasingly relies on a variety of multimodal resources in such a way that language interfaces with visual, audio, spatial, performative, and gestural aspects (The New London Group, 1996). The social and material affordances of multimodality, such as sounds, music, images, movement, and light effects, have led to a reconfiguration of different modes and media in ways that certain information becomes more effective and efficient in the visual rather than the verbal mode (Gee, 2003, 2007; Jewitt, 2005; Kress, 2000a).

In view of the multiple, complex, and shifting demands of language learning and meaning-making skills as new media develop and infiltrate public communications, there is a need to challenge English-language pedagogy to explore how "the affordances, the materiality and the provenance of modes and signs" (Kress & Street, 2006, p. viii) relate to everyday social practices of language learners across cultures and contexts. Stein (2004), to cite one sample study, demonstrates how English language learners from certain communities in South Africa value oral, performative, and gestural forms of communication above print-based texts. Stein reports that through writing, verbal modes, role-play, and photography, the students not only use visual representations to provide details that are absent in the written mode but also examine their social realities, convey different social identities and experience their worlds in new ways because of classroom social practices centered on the use of multimodal resources.

Teachers' role in language teaching in this atmosphere of multimodal considerations is summarized in Auerbach (2000). As Auerbach sums it up: "the teacher poses problems and engages students in dialogue and critical reflection" (p. 12) as the students and teacher collaboratively construct knowledge in the classroom. Hence teachers' theory and practice should necessarily provide students with the opportunity for the exploration of their own social and cultural world. Auerbach (2000) identifies specific principles that should guide learning activities, including instructional practices that focus on learners' needs and concerns, the use of themes/activities that validate learners' experiences, the teacher's emphasis on critical understanding and exploration of alternative views, practices that

contextualize acquisition of skills and knowledge, and teaching processes that are dialogical and collaborative.

When teachers engage in critical pedagogies, not only will classroom processes be designed for the future needs of students, but the process will also see individual learners as transformers, creators, and innovators with the capability to shape the cultural, social, and political contexts of their lives. As subjects of constant social, political, cultural, and historical changes, teachers may have to learn to adjust to social changes. Part of the social change of our times involves literacy practice that enables learners to integrate multimodality, in particular visual semiotics, with meaning-making practice in the classroom. Meaning-making activities engage students in creative literacy exploration of multimodal texts such as cartoon strips, comic books, photographs, computer graphics, drawings, and so on.

As for the design of an English curriculum, we should require a paradigm shift. This includes the way pedagogy is conceptualized and designed, the incorporation of technology and possible impact on the teaching and learning. According to Kress (2000a), design should be both a premise and a practice. Here the term, 'design' refers to both a multimodal curriculum and a multimodal text. Also, as described by Walsh (2009), each lesson that is designed should demonstrate "how teachers planned units of work that drew on the potentials of multimodal texts or digital technology in innovative ways" (p.56). Stein (2004) and Zammit and Downes (2002) emphasized that teachers should combine experiential learning with various learning tools, and printed and digital texts to invoke and cradle multiliteracies. In addition, the chosen text is opened to interpretation and susceptible to being reshaped and remade (Anstey & Bull, 2010). Thus, the multimodal curriculum is not subject to predefinition and predication, instead allows for multiple interpretations and discussions. Simultaneously, it engages at a critical level that brings together differing modes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Unsworth, 2010) and enables learners to interpret systems of signs and shared meaning (O'Rourke, 2001; van Leeuwen, 1999).

Finally, it is high time that educators, researchers, and theorists develop English–language learning curricula that recognize the diverse forms, the many sites, and the multiple purposes of meaning making and communication, and present these variables in the social and cultural context of learners' lives, link them to the broader societal needs, and show them as the "effects of the agentive, creative, transformative, designing action of individuals communicating in their social lives" (Kress, 2000a, p. 142). Such theories and classroom practices should therefore seek to develop in teachers and students an analytical "metalanguage—a language for talking about language, images, texts, and meaning-making interactions" (The New London Group, 1996, p. 77). In essence, the development of the 'tool kit' should seek to advance the potential of individual learners to identify and analyze the multimodal properties of different text-types. In addition, they need to learn how to relate the common characteristics and unique features of the different semiotic modes across different textual forms and diverse social and cultural contexts where they seem to function effectively.

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To Cite this Chapter:

Baykal, N. (2021). Multimodality and ELT. In Büyükkarcı, K. & Önal, A. (Eds.), *Essentials of applied linguistics and foreign language teaching: 21st century skills and classroom applications*, 24-45. ISRES Publishing.

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