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MULTIMODALITY IN ELT

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR TODAY'S GENERATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Traditionally, students in the ELT classroom have been taught the four skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. However, we need to keep pace with the world in which our students live: a world full of images and sound, blended with text – a multimodal world. We must reconsider what contemporary 'communication' means and teach students to communicate in a realistic way with the world around them. Students need to learn how to 'read' multimodal texts (viewing) and convey meaning themselves through multimodal texts (representing). This new literacy is vital if students are to learn English in a way that is relevant to the way they live and how they interact with others.

The first part of this paper looks at what is meant by multimodality and multimodal literacy, and then discusses the important concepts of viewing and representing and how these can be incorporated into classroom practice. Then the paper considers the implications of multimodal literacy on how and what we teach, and what this means in turn for course materials. Finally, if multimodal literacy is to be fully recognized and implemented, then it needs to be reflected in assessment criteria, so that students are being assessed on material that is relevant to their lives, now and in the future.

The key messages in this paper are:

- In today's world, communication includes more than just speaking and writing. Now learners need to build in visual, aural, and spatial dimensions to communication too.
- The traditional four key skills of reading, listening, writing, and speaking are no longer sufficient. We must expand the key skills to include viewing and creating multimodal texts as well.
- Using videos and images in class isn't an optional fun activity anymore. It is essential to use multimodal texts for analysis, debate, and discussion.
- In order to communicate effectively in today's world, whether at school, in further education, or at work, students need to be proficient in multimodal literacy.

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INTRODUCTION

English language programmes generally see 'communication' as using written and spoken language. However, in the current communication environment, written and spoken texts are being replaced as the principal mode of communication by a combination of text and still and moving images that we view on screens.

In a YouTube video, communication is achieved through a combination of things. These include moving images, spoken language, music, and written text in the form of captions, subtitles, and comments. It is clear that in the 21st century, literacy is more than language, and communication is more than writing and speech. As communication in today's society is increasingly multimodal (consisting of any combination of audio, images, video, and text), people's understanding of literacy as well as literacy practices need to adjust accordingly. In response to the changes in contemporary communication, education systems around the world are changing their literacy curricula to integrate the skills of viewing (the process of comprehending and responding to multimodal texts) and representing (the process of communicating information and ideas through the creation of multimodal texts) alongside listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills.

This paper discusses multimodality (the combination of multiple modes of communication, such as sight, sound, print, images, video, and music that produce meaning in a text) and multimodal literacy, and presents principles and practical ideas to help teachers effectively integrate multimodal literacy into their teaching practice. It argues that effective contemporary communication requires young people to be able to comprehend, respond to, and compose meaning through multimodal texts in diverse forms, and that the development of multimodal literacy prepares our learners for effective communication in their private, social, academic, and work lives.

In Section 1, the different modes of communication are explored, along with multimodality. Multimodal literacy is also examined, and why it is important in language education.

Section 2 discusses how teachers can integrate the skill of viewing into their teaching practice. It offers advice on how to help learners understand the viewing process in the classroom, and how to develop learners' out-of-class viewing.

Section 3 considers how teachers can integrate the skill of representing into their teaching practice, and offers guidance on how to do this in the classroom. It presents a 10-step model for digital storytelling to help teachers and learners understand the representing process.

In Section 4, the implications of multimodal literacy on how people teach are explored. It presents models for the learning processes in multimodal literacy learning and the features of multimodal literacy learning experiences, which will help teachers when they design multimodal learning experiences for their learners.

In Section 5, the implications of multimodal literacy on what is taught are explored. It offers an inclusive model for film and video analysis. It also makes recommendations to ensure an emphasis on strengthening active and critical viewing, and effective and creative representing.

Section 6 looks at the implications of multimodal literacy for course materials, curricula, and professional development. A number of recommendations are presented to ensure that there is a greater presence of multimodal texts in course materials: for example, that the curriculum reflects the contemporary communication environment, and that teachers have a broad range of approaches in creating multimodal learning experiences.

Finally, Section 7 examines the implications of multimodal literacy for assessment. Ways are suggested for how multimodal literacy learning can be assessed appropriately.

Appendices are provided with some useful multimodal terms, teaching frameworks for developing viewing skills, and a rubric for assessing viewing. Key terms in **bold** are explained in the Glossary.

The paper concludes by reaffirming the view that, although the main focus as English language teachers should be on language, learners also need help in developing their multimodal communicative competence, which will prepare them to be effective communicators in private, social, academic, and work contexts.

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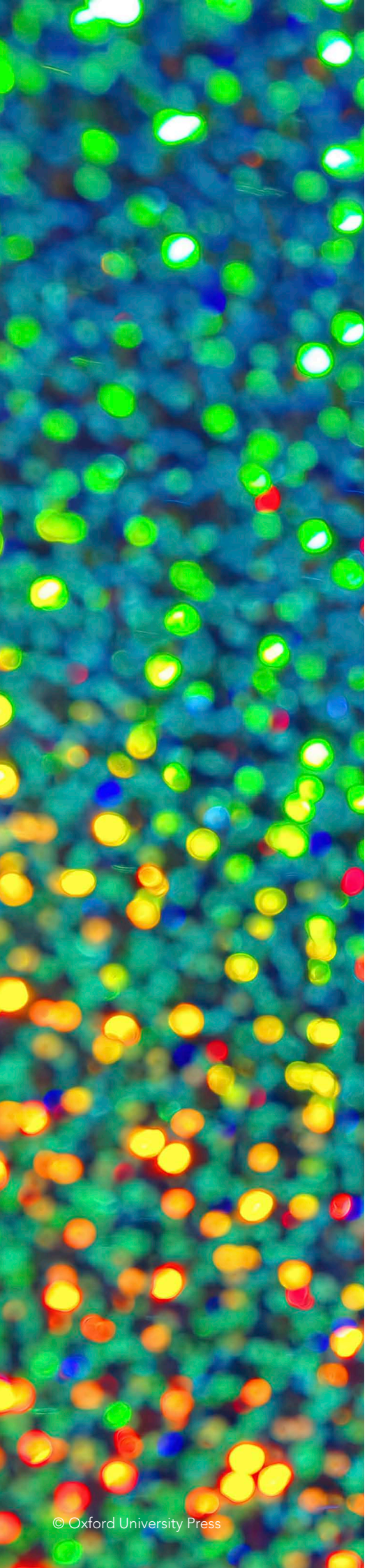

01

MULTIMODALITY AND MULTIMODAL LITERACY

Multimodality is gaining ground as a focus in language education because contemporary communication is increasingly multimodal in nature. This section begins by setting out the changing nature of communication and literacy in the **digital age**.[1] It then describes what a mode of communication is, examines the different modes, and explores the concepts of multimodality and multimodal literacy and their relevance to English language teaching. Finally, it considers the concept of multimodal **communicative competence**, and how the use of **multimodal** texts in the ELT classroom is a fundamental element of **inclusive** teaching practices.

WHAT IS THE TRADITIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF LITERACY? WHY AND HOW IS THIS CHANGING?

The current relevance of multimodality is linked to the changing nature of communication and literacy in the digital age. Traditionally, literacy has been understood as learning to read and write **alphabetic** text. In the ELT classroom, speaking is equally important. In the traditional understanding of literacy, communication is writing and speech, and alphabetic literacy is the dominant form of **meaning-making**. However, in contemporary society, communication is increasingly digital and multimodal.[2] The changing nature of communication is illustrated in Figure 1.

The majority of texts our learners encounter (for example, YouTube videos, memes, social media posts, and infographics) are no longer words on a page – they are digital and multimodal. Digital technology allows us to create texts and make meaning in a variety of ways and to share meaning easily. In a digital environment, the complexity of multimodal texts increases greatly, and this obviously impacts on the nature of communication and literacy. It is vital to acknowledge that contemporary communication is much more than writing and speech, and that literacy is much more than language.[3] We can no longer

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Figure 1. The changing nature of communication

think of literacy as just a linguistic accomplishment.[4] To master today's textual world, we need much more than the ability to read and write words and sentences. Writing and speech are only two of the many modes used in communication.

> In the current communication environment, written and spoken texts are being replaced as the principal mode of communication by a combination of text and still and moving images that we view on screens.
>
> KIERAN DONAGHY

WHAT IS A MODE? WHAT IS A MULTIMODAL TEXT?

A mode is a means of communicating. Each mode serves different purposes and works in different ways. It is important to be aware of the different modes people use when communicating in order to fully understand the meanings that are being conveyed.[5]

There are five modes of communication: linguistic, visual, aural, gestural, and spatial, as illustrated in Figure 2.[6] These are explained in more detail below.

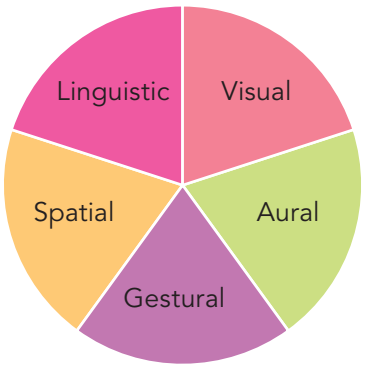

Figure 2. The five modes of communication

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Linguistic mode

The linguistic mode focuses on the meaning of written or spoken language in communication. This includes choice of words, the organisation of words into sentences and paragraphs, vocabulary, grammar, and structure.

Visual mode

The visual mode focuses on the meaning of what can be seen by the viewer. This includes images, symbols, signs, and videos. It also includes aspects of visual design such as colour, physical layout (the way the parts of something are arranged), and font type (the style and design of letters) and size.

Aural mode

The aural mode focuses on the meaning of what can be heard by the listener. This includes voice, sound effects, background noise, music, and silence. This meaning can be realized through volume, tone, pitch (how high or low a sound is), speed, and rhythm.

Gestural mode

The gestural mode focuses on the meaning of communication through movement. This includes expressions on the face, hand gestures, body language, and interaction between people.

Spatial mode

The spatial mode focuses on the meaning of communication through physical layout. This includes position, spacing, the distance between elements in a text, and space between people/objects. Writers use the spatial mode of communication in the physical layout and organisation of a text. For example, a bi-fold pamphlet (text printed on paper and folded twice), presents information spatially on four panels.

When a text contains more than one of these modes it is considered to be *multimodal*. Multimodal texts can be both paper-based or digital in nature. Paper-based multimodal texts include picture books, text books, graphic novels, comics, and posters. Here, meaning is conveyed to the reader through varying combinations of linguistic (written language), visual (still image) and spatial modes. Digital multimodal texts, such as videos, vlogs, slide presentations, video games, and web pages, convey meaning in different ways: through combinations of linguistic (written and spoken language), visual (still and moving image), aural, gestural, and spatial modes. Table 1 shows the mode/s present in a number of different texts.

Modes	Linguistic and visual	Visual	Linguistic, visual, and aural	Linguistic and aural	Linguistic, visual, aural, and spatial
Examples	Reading a graphic novel or an infographic	Looking at a painting or a photograph	Watching and listening to a film or video	Listening to a podcast or a radio show	Watching and listening to a short film or video, and reading subtitles and captions

Table 1. Texts and modes

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Examples of text types:

Text 1

Here is an example of a standard book in a print edition. This text relies primarily on the linguistic mode as it consists of letters and words with some illustrations. Books are often considered to be examples of monomodal texts. However, there are other communication modes at work in this example.

1 ↓ DISPLAYING VIDEO IN THE CLASSROOM

Hardware

be necessary to block out natural light and turn the classroom into a cinema. Also, it would probably be a 'short throw' projector – that is, one that can be mounted a few metres away from the screen and, therefore, doesn't shine in the user's eyes. And, of course, the projector would be silent – no distracting hums or buzzes!

FIGURE 1.1 *An ideal classroom for video projection*

The screen itself could be a standard whiteboard or an **interactive whiteboard**. Both of these would allow the teacher or students to get creative and combine projected images with handwritten text and hand-drawn objects.

IMAGE 1.1 *A whiteboard combining video and handwritten text*

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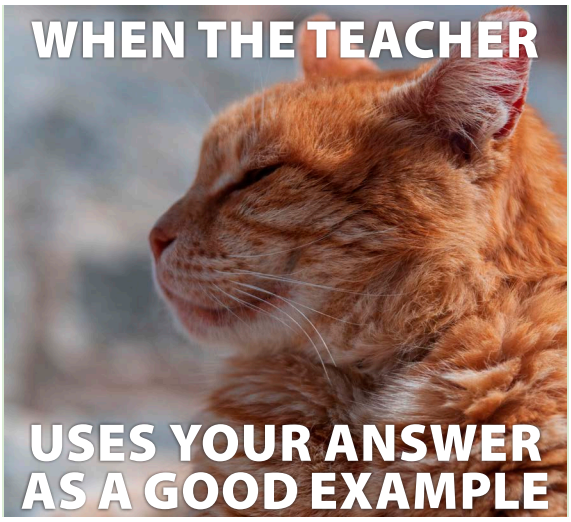
From Bringing Online Video into the Classroom, *p. 16 (OUP)*

- The linguistic mode operates in the printed written text.
- The visual mode operates in the inclusion of illustrations and photos, and in the formatting of the text (such as the use of wide margins) and in the choice of typography (such as the use of italics for labelling the diagrams and the use of bold for glossed vocabulary).
- The spatial mode can be seen in the text's layout (such as the placement of the illustration in the top half of the page which extends into the margin).

Text 2

Here is an example of a meme, which is a multimodal text as it uses a number of communication modes.



- The linguistic mode operates in the printed written text.
- The visual mode operates in the use of the photograph and in the choice of typography (such as the use of capital letters).
- The spatial mode can be seen in the text's layout with the first part at the top of the image and the final lines at the bottom.
- The gestural mode can be seen in the expression on the cat's face and the way it is looking away from us.

In this fast-changing world, it is essential for students to be able to learn about different modes of communication and produce multimodal work. They learn from one another and are able to practise modes they have maybe never tried before. It is a great opportunity to experiment.

Jackie Williams, Teacher and IELTS specialist, HONG KONG

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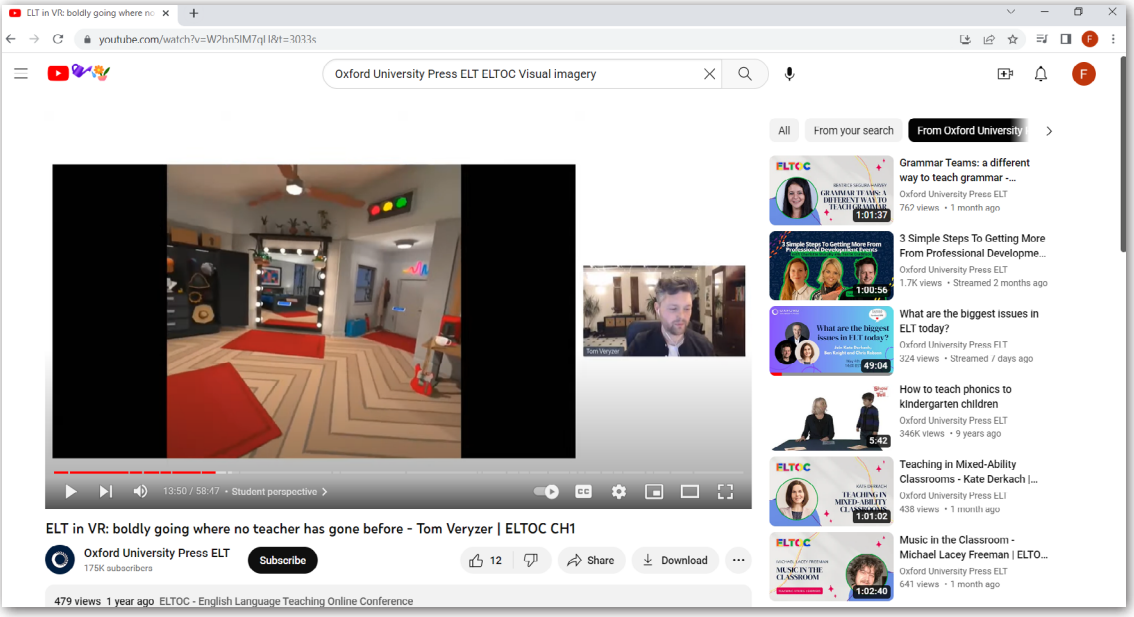
Text 3

Here is an example of a website page. There are a number of communication modes at work in this example.

- The linguistic mode operates in the printed written text.
- The visual mode operates in the use of colour, photographs, and illustrations, and in the choice of typography (such as the use of capital letters in the logo and the use of larger font size and bold font for section headings).
- The spatial mode can be seen in the text's arrangement of printed written text, and photographs and illustrations.
- The gestural mode can be seen in the main photo in the expression on the girl's face, her body language, and movement.

Text 4

Here is an example of a YouTube page. There are various communication modes at work in this example.



- The linguistic mode operates in the printed written text of the logo, video title, description, and captions.
- The visual mode operates in the use of colour, moving images in the video, still images in the suggested video thumbnails, and in the choice of typography.
- The spatial mode can be seen in the text's arrangement of the video player, and printed written text description of the video.
- The gestural mode can be seen in the expression on the presenter's face, his body language, and movement in the video.
- The aural mode operates in the voice of the presenter in the video.

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WHAT IS MULTIMODALITY?

Multimodality refers to the use of more than one mode of communication in a text to create meaning. In the 1990s, the New London Group[7], a forward-looking group of academics, had been reflecting on the social, cultural, and technological changes in the world of communication. They saw a textual phenomenon which they called *multimodality* in which two or more modes of communication interacted in the same text to create meaning. They argued convincingly against the focus only being on language in literacy and introduced to the world the term *multiliteracies*.[8] Multiliteracies (or multiple literacies) refers to the expanded notion of literacy beyond language learning. The group claimed that the traditional emphasis on 'alphabetic literacy' would need expanding to include a 'pedagogy of multiliteracies'; and this would involve learning how to interpret and create multimodal texts.[9]

> We need to help learners read and listen around the text so they see how the context impacts on what they understand.
>
> NIK PEACHEY

In contemporary communication, it is relatively rare for alphabetic text to exist by itself; novels are one example. You are much more likely to encounter multimodal texts that combine alphabetic text, images, and other modes than texts that only focus on written language. For example, if you consider YouTube, a remarkable mix of images and sound overlaid with alphabetic text can be seen. Each mode has its specific limitations and possibilities (called '**affordances**'), related to the mode's meaning-making potential. The concept of multimodality describes how each mode contributes to the overall meaning of a multimodal text. As contemporary communication is increasingly digital and multimodal, the way in which meaning is made across different modes has become increasingly important. The growing focus on multimodal texts is simply a sign of our changing communication environment.

What is multimodal literacy?

Multimodal literacy means the ability to comprehend and respond to multimodal texts and to compose multimodal texts.[10] The term *multimodal literacy* brings **viewing** and **representing** together in a single concept.[11] In response to changes in the contemporary communication environment, many education systems around the world have changed their literacy curricula to include multimodal literacy. For example, in Singapore, the 2020 language syllabus integrates the skills of viewing and representing with listening, reading, speaking, and writing so that it includes meaning-making across different modes of communication in multimodal texts.[12]

What is viewing?

Viewing refers to the active process of comprehending and responding to multimodal texts.[13] At the basic level, viewing involves learners noticing the different modes of communication used in the multimodal text and responding to it on an emotional level. At the higher level, viewing involves learners analysing and interpreting the multimodal text and responding to it critically. Viewing is linked with the receptive skills of reading and listening.

What is representing?

Representing refers to learners communicating information and ideas through the creation of multimodal texts.[14] Representing is about learners creating multimodal texts, such as the creative production of a variety of **artefacts**. Print media artefacts include posters, collages, comic strips, and storyboards. Digital composition artefacts include videos, slide presentations, infographics, and memes. Multimodal composing is central to the development of multimodal literacy, as it not only provides learners with opportunities to represent their learning, but also allows them to learn through making. The productive skills of writing and speaking are linked with representing.

From Give us the Money, *p. 5 (OUP)*

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Why is multimodal literacy important in ELT?

As contemporary communication is increasingly multimodal, the concept of communicative competence in ELT needs to be rethought. Although the main focus as English language teachers should obviously be on language, it is also necessary to help learners develop their **multimodal communicative competence**.[15] Learners need to understand how images and other modes in multimodal texts interact with spoken and written language.

- The majority of texts learners are accessing outside the classroom are multimodal and they should be given opportunities to critically view – analyse and interpret – these types of texts in the classroom.
- As most of these multimodal texts – YouTube videos, websites, blogs, social media sites – are a combination of print text, image, and other modes, learners can be helped to explore how these different modes interact to create a communicative act.[16]
- Learners should also be given opportunities to communicate information and ideas through multimodal composition. The development of multimodal literacy prepares learners to be effective communicators.

One final factor to consider is that of accessibility and inclusive teaching practices. Many learners struggle with written texts because of their additional needs in reading or writing skills, or due to sensory deficits. Teachers using multimodal texts in their classes – and encouraging their learners to create their own multimodal texts – is a fundamental part of inclusive teaching practices. Multimodality can make information more accessible by widening traditional ways of understanding, creating and sharing information, and creating new knowledge. Developing learners' multimodal literacy makes information more accessible and some tasks easier – especially for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, for example, through the use of integrated video, interactive whiteboard materials, and apps that help with vocabulary learning. Audio versions of texts allow learners to listen as they read a text, which helps them develop a sense of rhythm and intonation of the language.

SUMMARY

The growing focus on multimodality and multimodal literacy in language education is a sign of the changing communication environment. Effective communication today requires learners to be able to comprehend, respond to, and compose multimodal texts in diverse forms. So, it is necessary to rethink what is meant by communicative competence in language education. The development of multimodal literacy, using techniques such as representing and Extensive and Narrow Viewing in the classroom, prepares learners to be effective communicators. The use of multimodal texts in the classroom makes information more accessible for all learners including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

As contemporary communication is increasingly multimodal, the concept of communicative competence in ELT needs to be rethought.

SYLVIA KARASTATHI

02

INTEGRATING VIEWING INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

In response to the changing contemporary communication environment, a number of education systems around the world have changed their literacy curricula to integrate the skill of viewing alongside listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. In this section, we explore why viewing is increasingly important in ELT and how teachers can integrate viewing into their teaching practice. It offers advice on how teachers can help learners understand the viewing process in the classroom. It also discusses how to develop learners' out-of-class viewing through the Extensive Viewing and Narrow Viewing approaches using easy access to films and TV shows on streaming platforms.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VIEWING

Students need to be able to interpret multimodal texts effectively. By helping learners do this, we are connecting their **lifeworlds** with the classroom. In addition to helping learners acquire information, viewing also helps them appreciate ideas and experiences multimodally communicated by others, and develops their own multimodal communicative competence.

A wealth of research indicates that viewing multimodal texts improves learners' reading comprehension, listening comprehension, ability to remember vocabulary, critical thinking, and motivation.[17] Learners also need to become active, effective, and critical viewers in order to be able to participate fully in society.

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HOW TO INTEGRATE VIEWING INTO TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PRACTICE

When teachers attempt to integrate viewing into their classroom practice, it is very important that this does not seem totally different to their current teaching practice, which might discourage them from trying. Teachers need to be aware that viewing is connected to what they are already doing and that they can teach it in an integrated way. So, for example, when they teach listening and reading, they can also teach viewing.

It is also essential that both teachers and learners are aware that understanding the viewing process is as important as understanding the listening process, and that the viewing process has many similarities to both of these.

To become effective, active viewers, teachers and learners could use the following procedure:[18]

1. Pre-viewing: Learners prepare to view by activating the prior knowledge they bring to the study of a topic or theme (their **schemata**), anticipating a message, predicting, speculating, asking questions, and setting a purpose for viewing.
2. During viewing: Learners view the multimodal text in order to understand the message – they do this by making connections, confirming predictions and inferences, interpreting and summarising, pausing and reviewing, and analysing and evaluating. Learners should monitor their understanding by connecting to their background knowledge, questioning, and reflecting.
3. After viewing: Learners should be given opportunities to respond personally, critically, and creatively to multimodal texts. Learners respond by reflecting, analysing, evaluating, and creating.

HOW TO DEVELOP LEARNERS' VIEWING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Digital technology has made it much easier for learners to view films and TV shows on streaming platforms such as Netflix, HBO, and Apple TV. The greater accessibility to films and TV that learners now have can be exploited to help them develop their viewing outside the classroom. Many learners are now watching huge amounts of film and TV online. One interesting and relevant development is 'binge-watching' – where people watch multiple episodes of a TV show one straight after the other, typically by means of digital streaming.

Extensive Viewing

'Extensive Viewing' is defined as a language teaching and learning approach that encourages language learners to view a large amount of easily comprehensible and enjoyable material (such as films and TV shows) presented in the target language over an extended period.[19] Research indicates there are many benefits of Extensive Viewing programmes. Learners become better at listening, learn more vocabulary, improve their speaking and pronunciation, as well as improving their overall language competence. Extensive Viewing is inspired by the philosophy, practice, and literature of **Extensive Reading**.

Two of the key principles of the Extensive Reading approach are that:

1. Learners select the study material themselves and have a wide variety of genres and topics to choose from.
2. The reading material is relatively easy for the level of the learners as too much unknown language prevents learners from reading quickly and fluently.

However, while Extensive Reading programmes and activities have an enormous base of printed material that is graded to match the level of the readers, Extensive Viewing does not benefit from a large database of graded film and TV material. Grading a film or TV text according to language difficulty is a much more difficult and expensive process than grading a print text. However, ELT publishers are increasingly using videos in their coursebooks and many of these videos are graded.

Since there is a lack of graded film and TV material, film and TV texts need to be made more accessible to learners. There are a number of ways to do this:

- By activating learners' background knowledge through pre-viewing discussion questions in the classroom.
- By giving learners a plot summary of the film or TV show; this will reduce **cognitive load** and aid comprehension when learners view the material; the summary can be read in class or at home.
- By giving learners a glossary of the most difficult words and expressions in the film or TV show. This will again reduce cognitive load and aid listening comprehension when learners view the film or show – the glossary can be read in class or at home.
- By encouraging learners to use subtitles when they view the film or TV show. Studies have shown that subtitles are associated with improvements in acquiring new vocabulary, aiding listening comprehension, and understanding grammatical structures. They have also been useful in improving learner motivation and reducing anxiety.[20] Learners at lower levels (A1 and

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A2) may benefit more from watching with subtitles in L1, while learners at higher levels (B1, B2, C1, and C2) should watch with subtitles in English.

Teachers should raise awareness of the value of an Extensive Viewing approach with their learners and the parents/carers of their younger learners to support and develop out-of-class viewing. Learners and their parents/carers should also be made aware of the many language learning benefits of increased in-class viewing.

Narrow Viewing

'Narrow Viewing' involves watching different episodes of the same TV show in chronological order. Through Narrow Viewing learners develop background knowledge of the characters and their relationships, the setting, and the storyline; this aids comprehension of subsequent episodes. Learners also develop an emotional attachment to characters they encounter in multiple episodes. Another benefit of Narrow Viewing is that the lexical load (the number of words and phrases) of different episodes of the same show is lighter than unrelated episodes of different shows. This is because each show tends to contain topic-related vocabulary that often occurs again and again. This results in a smaller number of different words used in multiple episodes of one series than in random episodes of different shows. Frequent encounters with topic-related words also have a positive effect on vocabulary learning because repetition of the same words increases the potential for learning vocabulary.[21]

To overcome the issue of not having a large database of graded TV material, we can make the texts more accessible to our learners. There are a number of ways we can do this:

- activating learners' background knowledge through pre-viewing discussion questions in the classroom;
- pre-teaching a small number of words that are very frequent in an episode or items that are essential to comprehension;
- giving learners a glossary of the most difficult words and expressions in an episode – the glossary can be read in class or at home;
- having learners watch an episode more than once as multiple viewings of the same text can improve comprehension and vocabulary learning.

Teachers should make their learners and the parents/carers of their younger learners aware of the value of a Narrow Viewing approach to support and develop their out-of-class viewing.

SUMMARY

Viewing is a vital part of the language learning process in the digital age and involves learners paying attention to, analysing, and interpreting multimodal texts and responding to them critically. When teachers integrate viewing into their classroom practice, it is important that they do not consider viewing as completely different to their current teaching practice and are aware that it is connected to what they are already doing. So, when they are teaching listening and reading, they are also teaching viewing. By raising awareness of the Extensive Viewing and Narrow Viewing approaches with their learners, teachers support and develop their students' viewing outside the classroom.

> Most texts learners access outside the classroom are multimodal texts and they should be given opportunities to critically view – analyse and interpret – these types of texts in the classroom.
>
> KIERAN DONAGHY

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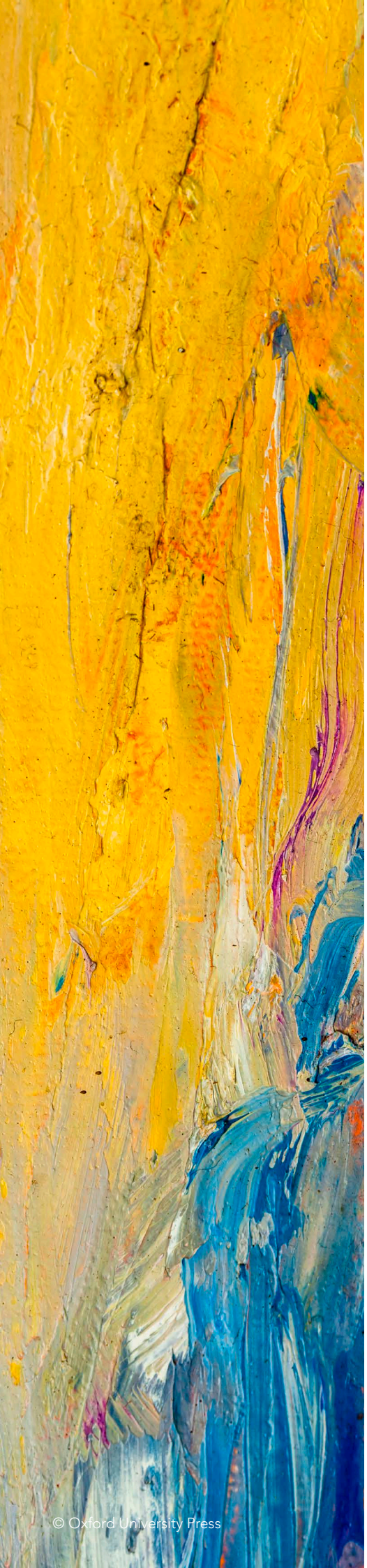

03

INTEGRATING REPRESENTING INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

'Representing' refers to learners' multimodal composition and can involve learners creating paper-based or digital multimodal texts. Learning how to compose multimodal texts is essential for the development of multimodal literacy and for developing learners' multimodal communicative competence. This section considers how teachers can integrate the skill of representing into their teaching practice. Guidance is offered on how to help learners understand the representing process in the classroom – including a simple 10-step model for digital storytelling.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTING

As we have already seen, representing refers to learners communicating information and ideas through the creation of multimodal texts. Multimodal composition can involve learners creating paper-based texts such as storyboards, comics, and posters. However, there is a special emphasis in multimodal literacy learning on using digital technology to give learners opportunities to create digital multimodal texts such as videos, fan fiction, and digital stories.

The composition of culturally authentic (or 'real') multimodal artefacts helps to connect learners' lifeworlds with the classroom as learners are often already creating these types of texts in their daily lives. Research indicates that representing improves learners' creativity, critical thinking, motivation, empathy (the ability to imagine what others are feeling), language skills, and confidence in expressing themselves in English.[22]

Representing is becoming increasingly important in ELT and teachers need to be able to incorporate it into their classroom practice. Coursebooks now often include tasks that ask learners to create multimodal texts such as posters, memes, and videos. There is also a move toward a greater use of multimodal text creation in language assessment.

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HOW TO INTEGRATE REPRESENTING INTO TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Before teachers are able to integrate representing into their classroom practice, they need to become familiar with the type of print-based multimodal texts and digital multimodal texts that work best with their learners (e.g. print-based texts such as posters or comics – or digital texts such as videos, slide presentations, or memes). Teachers need to understand that when they teach writing, they can also teach representing, since the two processes are similar. To illustrate the similarities between the two, 'digital storytelling' will now be explored, as a common form of multimodal composition.

Digital storytelling is the concept of using digital media (photos, audio, video, animation, etc.) to create a story which can be fiction or non-fiction.[23] Digital storytelling can be seen as a use of technology with the purpose of enhancing learners' digital and multimodal literacy skills. It is a pedagogical approach that acts as a bridge between the traditional literacies of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and 21st century digital and multimodal skills.

Here is a 10-step digital storytelling process in which many similarities to the traditional writing process can be observed.[25]

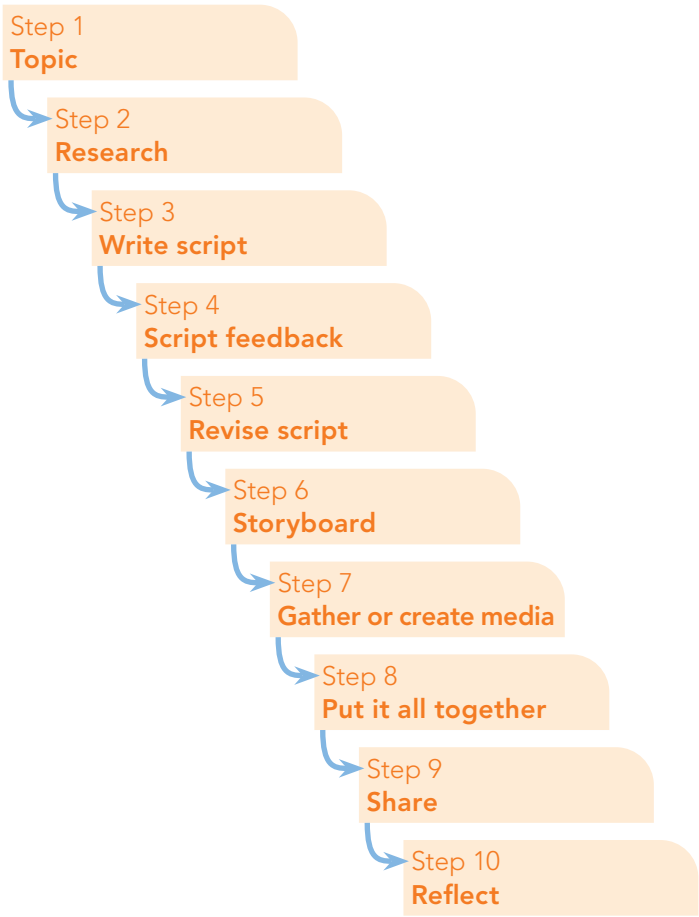

Figure 3. Digital storytelling process

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Step 1. Come up with a topic or an idea

Learners need to come up with a topic or an idea for their story. Once learners have their topic or idea, they need to make it concrete by writing a proposal, writing a paragraph, drawing a mind-map, or using another pre-writing tool.

Step 2. Research to learn about the topic

Whether writing a fiction or non-fiction digital story, learners need to research, explore, and learn about the topic or idea in order to create a base of information on which the story will be built.

Step 3. Write a script

The two pre-writing stages help learners prepare for writing the script. Here learners have to make sure that the purpose of the story is clearly expressed and includes an identifiable point of view. Learners decide on the linguistic content of their story.

Step 4. Receive feedback on the script

Learners share their script with classmates and ask them for feedback on what they think might make their story clearer or more useful.

Step 5. Revise the script

Learners use the feedback they receive to improve the next version of their script.

Step 6. Create a storyboard

The storyboard is a written and graphical overview of all of the elements learners plan to include in the digital story. Creating a storyboard guides learners' decision-making about the images, video, and audio they wish to include in their story.

Step 7. Gather and create images, audio, and video

Using their storyboard as a guide, learners gather or create the images, video, and audio. They should look for copyright-free material that is available for anyone to use or has a Creative Commons licence. Learners should use this stage to record themselves reading their scripts.

Step 8. Put it all together

Learners put all the elements of their story – images, video, and audio – together. They may also add captions or subtitles at this stage.

Step 9. Share with others

Learners share their digital story online, for example, by uploading it to the school's Learning Management System (LMS). Knowing that other people may see their work may increase learners' motivation.

Step 10. Reflect on the experience and give feedback

Learners reflect on their own work and give constructive feedback to their classmates.

As can be seen from the 10-step digital storytelling model, this representing process shares many of the features of the writing process.

SUMMARY

Representing isn't an unfamiliar process in the ELT classroom – teachers use it regularly when they teach reading or writing in the traditional way. For this reason, it's important to feel confident about using representing to help learners develop their multimodal communicative competence in the classroom. It is also useful to draw upon learners' real-world multimodal literacy. This can be done through projects such as the simple and highly practical 10-step digital storytelling model. The composition of culturally authentic multimodal texts helps to connect learners' lifeworlds with the classroom.

Using a multimodal teaching approach has made my lessons more engaging and learner-centred.

Anastasia Katsouda, Retired teacher, GREECE

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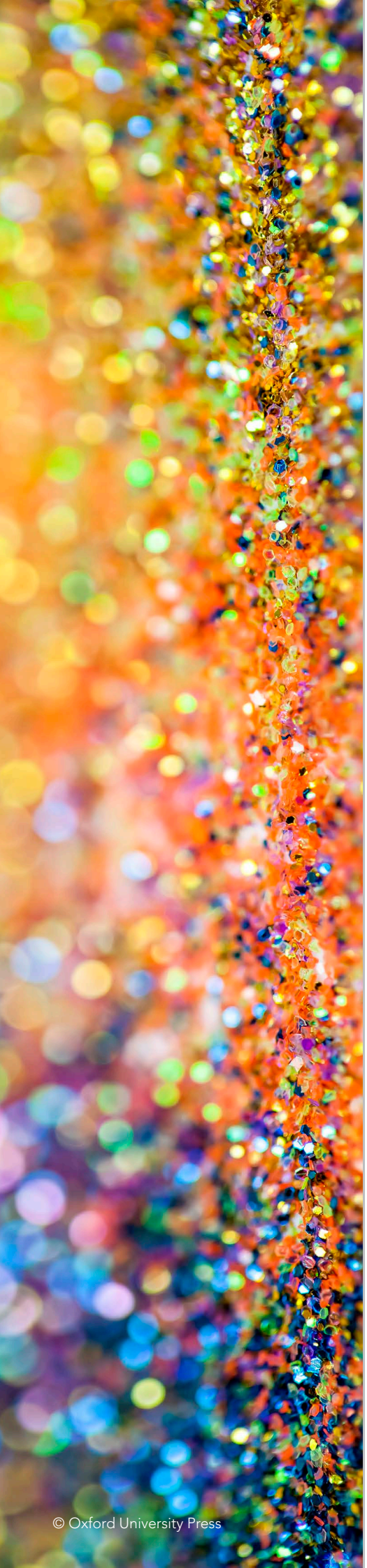

04

THE IMPLICATIONS OF MULTIMODAL LITERACY ON THE *WAY* WE TEACH

The key implication of multimodal literacy on teaching style is that teachers need to consciously design multimodal learning experiences to develop their learners' multimodal communicative competence. This involves selecting appropriate multimodal texts to use with their learners and deciding they are going to exploit these texts in the classroom. In this section, a model for the four learning processes in multimodal literacy learning is explored, followed by a model for the six features of multimodal literacy learning experiences – both of which should support teachers in this goal.

A FRAMEWORK FOR MULTIMODAL LEARNING PROCESSES

In order to be able to design effective multimodal learning experiences, teachers need to be aware of the learning processes for multimodal literacy which will help develop their learners' viewing as well as to support their representing. Victor Lim and Lynda Tan-Chia propose four learning processes that teachers should consider: encountering, exploring, evaluating, and expressing.[25]

Figure 4 illustrates the four learning processes and these are considered in more detail on the next page. [26]

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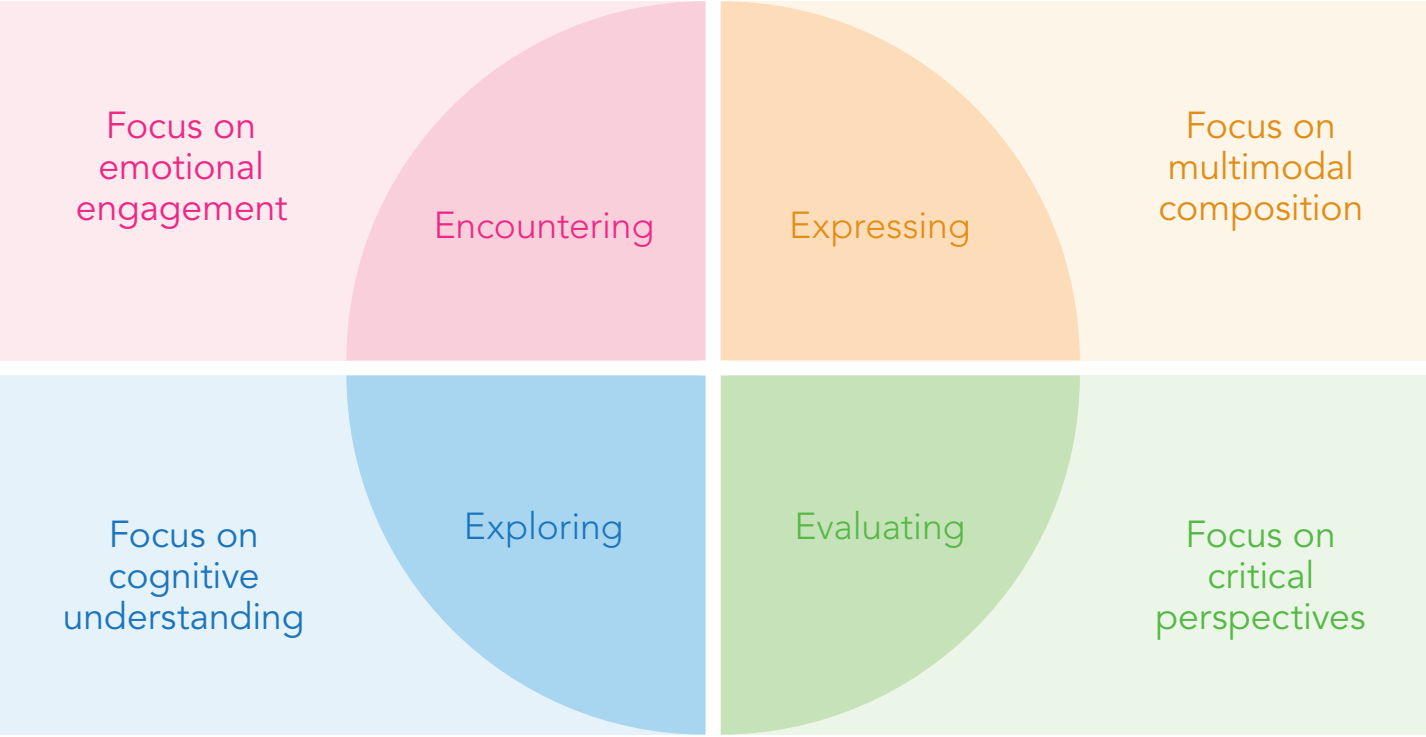

Figure 4. Learning processes in multimodal literacy

Encountering

The learning process of encountering focuses on emotional engagement. The teacher engages learners through learning experiences that engage the emotions. They do this by valuing and appreciating learners' lifeworlds. One way for teachers to do this and to create a direct encounter with multimodal texts is to ask learners to bring artefacts from their daily lives into the classroom. They then use these as resources for discussion. During the learners' encounter with a multimodal text, they are encouraged to describe it, share their emotional response, and reflect on their emotional engagement. Here are some questions learners could consider while encountering a short film:

- What is happening in the film?
- What is your immediate reaction to it?
- How does it make you feel? Why?
- Which memories or experiences does it stir in you?

Exploring

In the exploring stage there is a focus on cognitive understanding. While exploring, learners develop their knowledge, skills, and awareness in working with multimodal texts. The teacher guides the learners in identifying and offering evidence to support their response to the multimodal text. The learning process of exploring can be realized both through **explicit teaching** as well as through **inductive learning**, where learners explore the meanings in the multimodal text amongst themselves before the teacher summarizes their understandings. Here are some questions learners could consider while exploring a short film:

- What happens in the beginning, middle, and at the end of the story?
- Which character interests you the most? Why?
- What clues are there to tell us whether the film is set now or in the past?
- Which characters speak and which don't? What do the speaking characters sound like?

Evaluating

The next stage is evaluating; this is mainly defined by critical perspectives. Learners move from just describing and interpreting a multimodal text to developing critical perspectives on it. During this stage, learners are encouraged to adopt a critical approach in their analysis of the multimodal text and to question the messages represented in it. The learning process of evaluating can be done through individual or joint **construction of meaning** – by students working on their own or in groups, with or without the teacher. Here are some questions learners could consider while evaluating a short film:

- What values or opinions are being suggested by the creator of the film?
- How would you summarize its message?
- Who do you think the intended audience is? Why?
- Who would you recommend it to? Why?

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Expressing

The final learning process is expressing, which focuses on multimodal composition. Beyond responding to, interpreting, and evaluating multimodal texts, learners are given opportunities to be engaged in meaning-making through multimodal composition. The learning process of expressing gives learners the power to be active makers of meaning through doing this. It can be done individually, or in groups where learners engage in collaborative meaning-making and negotiation of meanings with one another. Here are some multimodal composition tasks learners could be asked to do during the expressing process – after responding to, interpreting, and evaluating a short film:

- Write a multimodal review. Include:
  - a summary of the film's plot
  - screenshots and descriptions of the main characters
  - screenshots and descriptions of the main settings
  - the performances of the main actors
  - the film's message.
- Write a multimodal analysis of a key scene. Include:
  - a screenshot of the key scene
  - a link to a video of the key scene
  - an analysis of the key scene.
- Make a short video (3–4 minutes) of yourself giving a review. Include:
  - a summary of the film's plot
  - a description of the main characters
  - the performances of the main actors
  - the film's message.

Through these processes, teachers are able to design more well-rounded multimodal learning experiences. These reflect the importance not only of thinking but also of feeling and doing in learning.

A multimodal approach creates a more genuine and authentic environment.

Maite Santacreu Massó, Teacher, SPAIN

FEATURES OF MULTIMODAL LITERACY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

When designing multimodal learning experiences, in addition to the four learning processes that have just been explored, there are also a number of other features that teachers should incorporate.

Figure 5 illustrates the features of multimodal literacy learning experiences.[27]

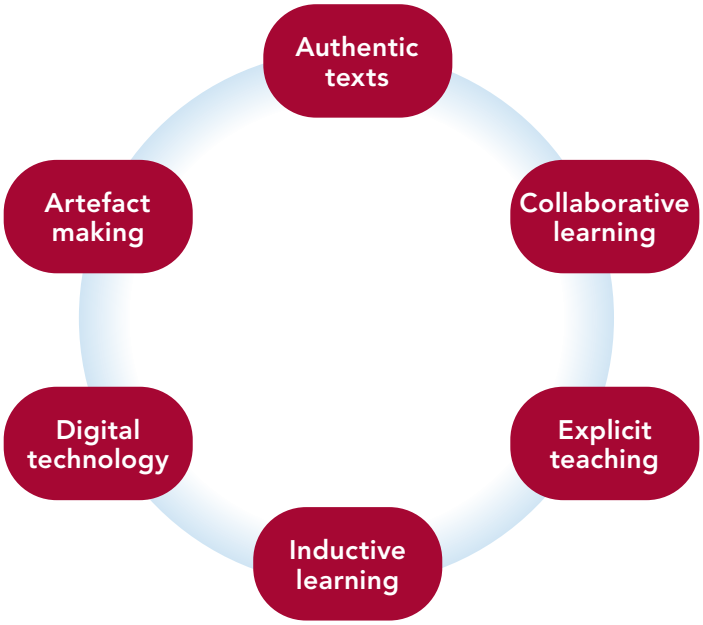

Figure 5. Pedagogical features of multimodal literacy learning experience (Lim, 2018)

Authentic texts

The texts learners encounter in their **lifeworlds** should be used in multimodal learning. Using culturally authentic texts that are meaningful and relatable to the learners helps to connect learners' out-of-school-literacy practices with the literacies they learn in school.

Collaborative learning

Knowledge is constructed socially in the classroom when learners work with one another.[28] Learners from different backgrounds and experiences bring multiple perspectives into the classroom that are productive for multimodal literacy learning.

Explicit teaching

There are occasions when **collaborative learning** works well with explicit teaching. The teacher explicitly teaches the knowledge and skills of viewing and representing rather than assuming that they are intuitive to learners. The teacher models features of viewing and representing with multimodal texts.

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Inductive learning

Learners explore the meanings in the multimodal text amongst themselves before the teacher summarizes what they have understood. The use of an inductive approach can create greater engagement and ownership in learners as they work on a task to understand for themselves.[29]

Digital technology

Digital technology offers new ways for teachers to create learning experiences for multimodal literacy. It can bring new pedagogical possibilities into the classroom and expose learners to a range of viewing and representing practices that did not exist in the traditional classroom.

Artefact making

Learners engage in collaborative multimodal meaning-making through the creation of **knowledge artefacts**. Multimodal composition is central to developing multimodal literacy learning and multimodal communicative competence, as it gives learners opportunities to represent their learning and knowledge.[30]

> There are huge advantages to teaching multimodality in the ELT classroom – like helping students to understand the world and the way they interact within it at a deeper level.
>
> NIK PEACHEY

SUMMARY

In order to design effective multimodal learning experiences, teachers need to be aware of the four learning processes for multimodal literacy – Encountering, Exploring, Evaluating, and Expressing – which will help develop their learners' viewing as well as to support their representing. These four learning processes involve learners responding to, interpreting, and evaluating multimodal texts as well as creating their own multimodal texts. When designing these multimodal learning experiences, in addition to the four learning processes, teachers should also attempt to incorporate other key features in class, such as the use of authentic texts, digital technology, artefact making, and collaborative and inductive learning.

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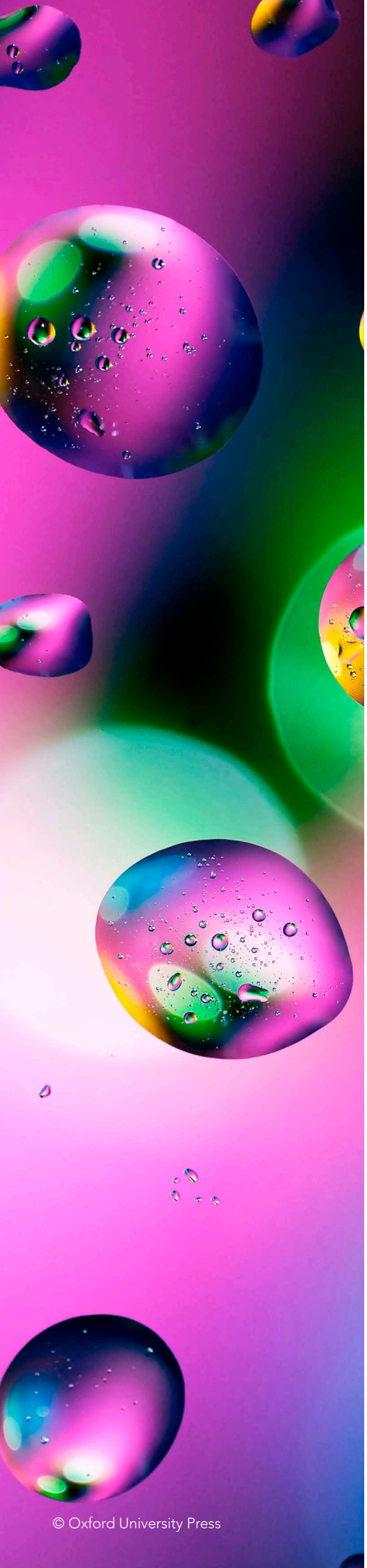

05

THE IMPLICATIONS OF MULTIMODAL LITERACY ON *WHAT* WE TEACH

The integration of viewing and representing into the ELT curriculum has a clear impact on *what* teachers teach. In this section, the implications of this are explored and an inclusive model for film and video analysis is suggested. A number of recommendations are also made to ensure an emphasis on strengthening active and critical viewing, and effective and creative representing in what is taught. In addition, three viewing frameworks from general education are introduced, which can easily be adapted for the ELT classroom, as well as some useful terminology to use when discussing different genres of multimodal texts.

TEXT-BASED TEACHING

As learners are encountering huge quantities of multimodal texts (and as there are many benefits to using multimodal texts in class which connect with learners' lifeworlds) it makes sense to focus on **text-based teaching**.[31] When we adopt a text-based approach it's important to remember that many of the tasks and activities that are used with traditional reading and listening texts can be used with multimodal texts too.

To illustrate how strategies can be developed to tackle multimodal texts in the classroom and to explore the connection between multimodal texts and print texts, the 'Tell me' approach[32] will be set out; this has traditionally been used with print texts but can be adapted for use with films and videos. The approach involves learners thinking about films and videos, sharing their ideas with a group, and listening and responding to what others think.

The 'Tell me' approach:

- Gives a starting point for thinking, talking about, and responding to film and video texts;
- requires learners to express their own ideas as well as listen to and consider the thoughts of others;
- extends the language learning to talk about film and video texts;
- allows learners to compare film and video texts, express opinions, and discuss information that assists their understanding of a film or video text.

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The 'Tell me' approach is designed around a series of questions learners discuss after viewing a film or video text.

Basic questions

- Was there anything you liked about the film/video? If so, what?
- What caught your attention?
- Was there anything you disliked? If so, what?
- Was there anything that puzzled or surprised you? If so, what?
- Was there anything you had never seen before in a film/video? If so, what?
- Were there any patterns or connections you noticed in the film/video?

General questions

- Have you seen any films/videos like this before? How were they similar? How were they different?
- Having talked about the film/video, have you changed your mind about anything? Did you see anything new? Were you surprised by anything? If so, what?
- Would you like to know more about the film/video and how it was made? If so, what?

Descriptive terms

Teachers also need to become familiar with the sets of terms used for describing particular modes (for example written language, photography, film, or painting) and develop a more extensive knowledge base from which to expand their multimodal teaching. This will then enable them to help their learners understand, evaluate, and create multimodal texts.

Appendix 1 outlines some useful terms to use when discussing multimodality.

Viewing frameworks

Even when the curriculum explicitly expresses multimodal literacy learning outcomes, many teachers may need some support with using multimodal texts effectively in class. To help them do this, a number of viewing frameworks from general education could be adapted to the ELT classroom – for example, the following frameworks from media literacy, film literacy, and visible thinking routines training:

Appendix 2 presents the Centre for Media Literacy's 'Media literacy: five key questions' framework for use with all multimodal texts.[33]

Appendix 3 presents Into Film's: '3Ss and 3Cs framework' for use with short films and videos, and feature-length films.[34]

Appendix 4 presents the visible thinking routine: 'Step inside: perceive, know about, care about' for use with paintings, photographs, short films and video, and feature-length films.[35]

STRENGTHENING ACTIVE AND CRITICAL VIEWING

In addition to the text-based teaching approach and the use of viewing frameworks, the following things should be done to ensure an emphasis on strengthening active and critical viewing, and effective and creative representing in what is taught:

- a greater focus on using images and videos as a springboard for analysis, evaluation, debate, and discussion;
- a greater focus on using images, videos, and other multimodal texts as enablers of language;
- a greater focus on using videos and other multimodal texts as models for learners to create their own multimodal texts.

SUMMARY

In order to help language teachers use multimodal texts more effectively in their classrooms, it is recommended that they explore a number of tried-and-tested viewing frameworks from general education that can be easily adapted to the ELT classroom. It is important to remember that many of the tasks and activities that are used with print and listening texts can also be used here. Teachers can help their learners to comprehend, evaluate, and create multimodal texts by becoming familiar themselves with the sets of terms used for describing particular modes; and by developing a more extensive knowledge base from which to expand their multimodal teaching.

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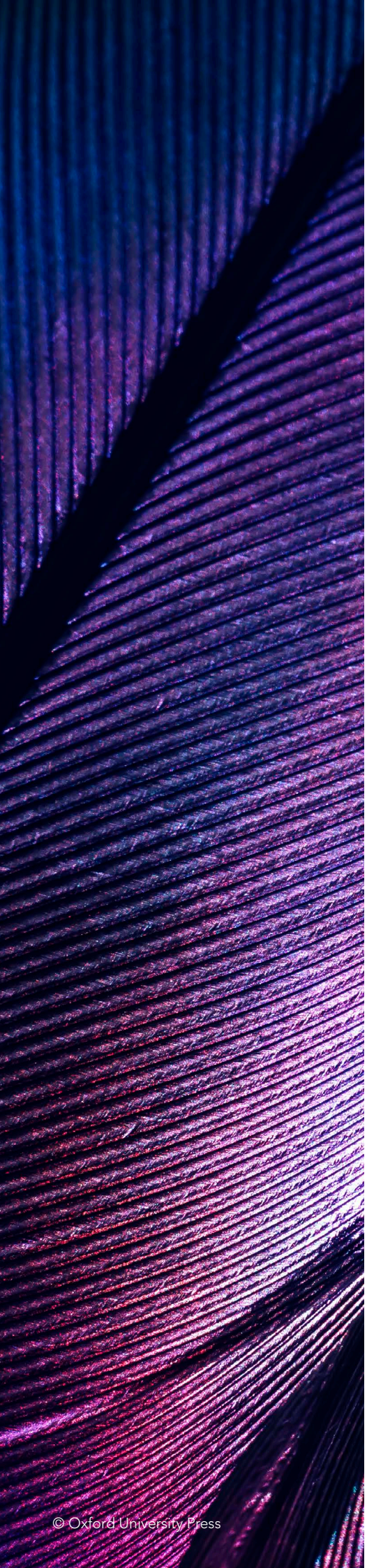

06

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSE MATERIALS, CURRICULA, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section we look at the implications of multimodal literacy for course materials, curricula, and **professional development**. Some teachers already use different modes as an everyday part of their current teaching – for example, the use of flashcards, audio, video, and other forms of multimedia – while others do not. A number of recommendations are made in this section to ensure that:

- the curriculum reflects the current communication environment;
- teachers are conscious of and understand the concepts of multimodality and multimodal literacy;
- there is a greater presence of multimodal texts in course materials and these are used critically and creatively.

> Communication continues to become more diverse in the range of genres and mixtures of media that are available. We need to reflect this in the way we develop our students' understanding and how we help their ability to express themselves.
>
> NIK PEACHEY

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COURSE MATERIALS

In the contemporary communication environment multimodal texts are an indispensable part of learners' lives outside the classroom. However, monomodal texts are often still predominant in ELT materials in some contexts around the world.[36] Although there has been a recent trend towards a greater presence of images and videos in coursebooks, there is an obvious need to increase the presence of multimodal texts in ELT materials and in the ELT classroom. The following steps can be taken in coursebook design to develop learners' linguistic skills as well as their multimodal communicative competence:

- More use of videos, especially videos which are similar to those learners are encountering in their lifeworlds such as vlogs, tutorials, listicles, explainer videos, reaction videos, etc.
- More videos with captions and subtitles, and rich visual support which aid comprehension.
- Less use of photo library images as support and decoration; it is more challenging for teachers to use them as a starting point for analysis, evaluation, and debate as they tend to look artificial (often too 'perfect') and unlike the images learners encounter in their everyday lives.
- Less use of '**talking head**' style video content; this often lacks the rich visual support of other genres of videos; it can also lead to them being under-exploited (for example, only used for listening comprehension tasks such as multiple-choice questions) and with a corresponding lack of focus on the non-verbal information in the video.
- Fewer purely language-based comprehension tasks for videos and a greater emphasis on tasks that focus on how information is communicated non-verbally in the video.
- A greater focus on using images and videos as a starting point for 1) analysis, evaluation, debate, and discussion, and 2) learners to create their own multimodal texts.
- More tasks that give learners opportunities to create their own multimodal texts.
- A greater focus on using silent and semi-silent short films and videos especially at lower levels that reduce the cognitive load when learners view them.

CURRICULA

It is vital to recognize in the curricula that literacy in today's digital age and communication environment is more than just language competence and that it also involves viewing and representing with multimodal texts. A number of things need to be done to ensure that curricula reflect the contemporary communication environment and help learners develop their multimodal communicative competence:

- The integration of multimodal literacy requires policies and policy documents, such as curricula, that explicitly adopt multimodal literacy as part of their goals.
- The curricula need to explicitly use multimodal learning outcomes. Viewing and representing need to be specific learning outcomes in the curriculum.
- Viewing and representing need to be integrated with other areas of language learning (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Viewing and representing should not be taught in isolation.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Many teachers are already doing excellent work with images and multimodal texts in their classrooms. However, this work is often intuitive and they tend to have a limited range of approaches for exploiting visual and multimodal texts. Teachers generally lack training and knowledge in visual literacy and multimodality literacy. Unless teachers receive specific training in visual literacy, multimodal literacy, and media production, it will be very difficult for them to meet the needs of their learners, who need to communicate effectively in a world where communication is increasingly visual and multimodal in nature.

For these reasons, there is an urgent need for wide-ranging initiatives to support teachers through professional development. Initiatives could include a focus on visual literacy, multimodal literacy, media production on pre-service courses, and regular in-service workshops and courses on visual literacy and multimodal literacy. This type of training would give teachers the skills and knowledge to design effective multimodal learning experiences – as well as the ability to explain to learners what these concepts are to ensure they can understand, analyse, and create their own multimodal texts. Teachers' professional development could also be supported within **communities of practice** as they experiment with ways to create effective multimodal learning experiences.

Using different modes can lead to increased engagement and appeal to different individual strengths. It can also encourage students to step out of their comfort zone and try a new format for presenting work.

David Dodgson, EAL coordinator, UNITED KINGDOM

SUMMARY

The integration of multimodal literacy into English language teaching will have important implications on materials, curricula, and professional development.

1. There is a need for a greater presence of images, videos, and other multimodal texts in ELT coursebooks and a greater focus on using them as a starting point for analysis, evaluation, debate, and discussion.
2. The ELT curriculum needs to reflect the fact that literacy in the contemporary communication environment is more than just language competence and that it also involves viewing and representing with multimodal texts.
3. There needs to be a focus on visual literacy, multimodal literacy, and media production on both pre-service and in-service teaching training courses so that teachers are able to confidently incorporate multimodal literacy into their classes.

Unless teachers receive specific training in visual literacy, multimodal literacy, and media production, it will be very difficult for them to meet the needs of their learners.

SYLVIA KARASTATHI

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07

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Assessment requirements assert a powerful influence on both teaching and learning practices. It is important that assessment requirements take into account the multimodal nature of contemporary communication. In this section, the implications for assessment are examined along with suggestions for assessing multimodal literacy learning appropriately.

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If one of the curriculum aims is the development of multimodal literacy, this should be reflected in the assessment process. However, teachers are often uncertain how to do this because current assessment practices do not acknowledge multimodality in their frameworks.[37] Here are some suggestions for assessing multimodal literacy learning[38]:

- When multimodal literacy is included in the curriculum in the form of viewing and representing with multimodal texts, the assessment should consider the emphasis given to it in the curriculum.
- Assessment should take into account the multimodal nature of contemporary communication.
- Communicative modes should be assessed beyond the linguistic mode (print text and speech), which is currently the main communicative mode included in assessment criteria in language education.
- Tasks that are multimodally designed deserve to have the full multimodal text assessed, not only the linguistic part – for example, in video, where information is conveyed through communicative modes beyond speech, and different modes interact and convey meaning.
- Despite the fact that multimodal text production constitutes a significant and growing part of learning activities, teachers' assessment of learners' texts still focuses almost exclusively on written work. Teachers need to adjust their assessment practices to accommodate their learners' written text production; they also need to assess the other communicative modes learners have used in their text creation.
- In reading examinations learners could be asked to read paper-based multimodal texts such as posters, restaurant menus, and illustrated instructions or online digital multimodal texts such as emails, blog articles, and social media posts. It is important that the examination designer or the teacher reproduces the original multimodal layout (typeface, images, colours, etc.) of the text used in the examination.
- In writing examinations learners could be asked to create a print multimodal text such as a leaflet, brochure, poster, or a multimodal text for a digital environment such as a blog, website, or social media site.
- A set of rubrics with band descriptors and examples should be written and used to illustrate viewing and representing task requirements and expectations.[39] Appendix 5 contains a rubric for viewing.[40]
- Given the powerful influence that assessment requirements assert on teaching and learning practices, strengthening the relationship between curriculum and assessment goals is essential. This will signal to teachers, learners, and their parents/carers the value of multimodal literacy learning as vital preparation for their social, academic, and professional futures.

SUMMARY

The integration of viewing and representing into English language teaching has significant implications for assessment. There is a need to develop assessment frameworks to assess communicative modes beyond the linguistic mode which is currently the only communicative mode taken into account in assessment criteria. A stronger connection between curriculum and assessment goals is essential to ensure that students, teachers, and other stake holders recognize the importance of multimodal literacy.

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CONCLUSIONS

Effective communication today requires young people to be able to comprehend, respond to, and compose multimodal texts in diverse forms. As contemporary communication is increasingly multimodal, it is important to rethink what is meant by communicative competence in ELT. Although the main focus of English language teachers should still be on spoken and written language, learners also need help in developing their multimodal communicative competence. This can be achieved, for example, by giving them opportunities to read and compose their own multimodal texts. It is vital to recognize in the curriculum that literacy in today's digital age is much more than just language competence and that it also involves viewing and representing with multimodal texts.

Viewing involves learners paying attention to, understanding, analysing, and interpreting multimodal texts and responding to them critically. Learners need help in understanding how images and other modes in multimodal texts interact with spoken and written language to create a communicative act. By helping learners interact with the type of texts they engage with in their everyday lives, their lifeworlds are being connected with the classroom.

Representing involves learners communicating information and ideas through the creation of multimodal texts. It is integral to the development of multimodal literacy, as it not only provides learners with opportunities to represent their learning, but also allows them to learn through making. The composition of culturally authentic multimodal artefacts helps to connect learners' lifeworlds with the classroom. While viewing and representing are different skills (receptive as opposed to productive), they are very closely linked.

Multimodality is gaining ground as a focus in language education because multimodal texts will continue to dominate our communication environment far into the future. This increased awareness of multimodality in language education is reflected by the fact that publishers are incorporating more multimodal texts in their coursebooks – and that there is a clear trend toward using these texts more critically and creatively. However, there is still a clear need to increase the presence of multimodal texts even more in ELT materials.

Undoubtedly, in the near future, many more education systems around the world will reform their language curricula to include multimodal literacy, and viewing and representing will become part of English language curricula. Language teachers need to be able to help learners become more active and critical viewers, as well as more effective and creative composers of multimodal texts. To achieve this there needs to be specific multimodality literacy training on pre-service and in-service training courses.

KEY MESSAGES

- In today's world, communication includes more than just speaking and writing. Now learners need to build in visual, aural, and spatial dimensions to communication too.
- The traditional four key skills of reading, listening, writing, and speaking are no longer sufficient. We must expand the key skills to include viewing and creating multimodal texts as well.
- Using videos and images in class isn't an optional fun activity anymore. It is essential to use multimodal texts for analysis, debate, and discussion.
- In order to communicate effectively in today's world, whether at school, in further education, or at work, students need to be proficient in multimodal literacy.

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APPENDIX 1: BASIC MULTIMODAL TERMS

When analysing multimodal texts, it is important to use precise language. This table includes some of the basic language of multimodality divided up by the categories of modes used in the description of composition, design, visual art, film, and video. This list of terms can provide more thorough ways of discussing and describing multimodal texts.

	Linguistic	Visual	Aural	Gestural	Spatial
Composition terms	• word choice • delivery of written text (tone) • sentence and paragraph organisation • coherence of ideas	• colour • layout • style • size • perspective	• music • sound effects • ambient (background) noise/sounds/silence • emphasis or accent in spoken voice • volume of sound	• face expressions • hand gestures • body language • interactions between people	• arrangement • organisation of objects • proximity (distance) between people and objects
Basic design terms	• headline or header • body text • legibility	• colour (primary, secondary, or tertiary) • saturation (strength of colour) • contrast • repetition or rhythm line (in terms of line quality)			• emphasis or hierarchy of objects or people • layout • alignment (positioning) • proximity • negative/white space
Basic visual art terms		• colour (harmonious, monochromatic (only one colour), warm, cool) • shape • framing • texture • contrast • contour versus flat		• line (in terms of compositional direction) • repetition or rhythm	• composition (balanced, symmetrical, asymmetrical) • perspective (creating an effect of distance) • size or scale
Basic film/ video terms	• dialogue • narration • captions • subtitles • superimposed text (text placed over something else)	• scene • camera angle • shots • lighting • setting • focus • props (small objects used in a film) • costumes	• dialogue • voiceover • music • sound effects • harmonious (pleasing to hear) • discordant (unpleasing to hear)	• movement/editing (continuous or discontinuous)	

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APPENDIX 2:
FIVE KEY QUESTIONS OF MEDIA LITERACY

Learners should be encouraged to ask themselves these five questions every time they encounter a multimodal text such as a meme, a social media post, an infographic, a viral video, a vlog, etc. in order to be able to evaluate and analyse media.

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently to me?
4. What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or left out of, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

Follow-up questions

1. What kind of text is it? What are the various elements that make up the whole text? What clues are there as to who created the text?
2. What do you notice about the way the message is constructed in the text? What do you notice about the use of colours, shapes, sounds, silence, words, fonts, props, sets, clothing, movement, lighting? Where is the camera? What is the viewpoint? How is the story told visually? What are people doing? Are there any symbols? Are there any visual metaphors (an imaginative comparison of two things)? What's the emotional appeal? What persuasive devices are used?
3. Have you ever experienced anything like this in your life? How close is this portrayal to your experience? How did the text make you feel and why? How might the text make your friends feel? How might the text make your parent/carer feel? How might the text make a person of another gender feel?
4. What type of person is the reader/viewer invited to identify with? What ideas or values are being "sold" to us in this text? What political or economic ideas are communicated in the text? What judgments or statements are made about how we treat other people? What is the overall worldview of the message? What ideas or perspectives are left out? Is the information balanced with different views or does it present only one side?
5. Is the purpose of the text to gain profit? Is the purpose of the text to gain power? Is the purpose of the text to influence people?

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APPENDIX 3: THE 3Cs AND 3Ss

The 3Cs (Colour, Character, Camera) and the 3Ss, (Story, Setting, Sound) viewing framework is used to help learners discuss and analyse all the elements of a film text.

Process

- Give pairs or small groups of learners a copy of the 3Cs and 3Ss Question Card. Assign one of the Cs (Colour, Character, Camera) or Ss (Story, Setting, Sound) to focus on.
- Learners watch the short film/video/trailer (a series of short scenes from a film) and assigned C or S.
- In pairs or small groups, learners discuss the questions for their assigned C or S.
- Get feedback from the whole class on the questions for their assigned C or S.
- Assign another C or S and repeat the process.

Colours

- What colours do you see?
- How do the colours make you feel?
- When do the colours change and why?
- What do the colours tell you about the time of day that the story took place?
- Why do you think certain colours are used?
- What colours would you have chosen?
- Do the colours change when the story is in a different setting?
- Are any colours associated with particular characters?
- How important do you think the colours are in the film?
- What would the film have been like in black and white or in just one colour?
- What mood do you think the colours create?

Character

- Is there a main character?
- Is there more than one main character?
- Is the story really about this character or about someone else?
- Who is telling the story?
- What do the main characters look like?
- What might the way they look like tell us about them as a character?
- How do they speak and what do they say?
- How do they behave?
- How do they behave towards other characters?
- Do any of the characters have particular music or sounds?
- Which character interests you the most?
- Is there anyone else you would like to see in the story? How would the story be different?

Camera

- What shots have been used? Can you name them?
- When do you see a long shot or a close-up shot?
- What are the different shots used for?
- Through whose eyes do we see the story?
- When do we see different characters' point of view?
- When does the camera move and when does it stay still?
- How does the camera help to tell the story?
- What do the first shots tell us about the story, the setting, etc.?
- Why do certain shots follow each other, e.g. a long shot followed by a close-up?
- How can you tell what the characters are thinking or how they are feeling through what the camera does?
- How quickly do the shots change? Does this change in different parts of the story?

Story

- What happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story?
- What are the most important things (events) that happen in the story?
- How would the story change if events happened in a different order?
- How do we know where the story takes place?
- Who or what is the story about? How can we tell?
- How long does the story take in 'real' time?
- What do you think happened before the story began?
- What might happen next, after the end of the story?
- How does this story remind you of other stories?
- How would you like the story to continue?

Setting

- Where does the action take place?
- Why is the story set in a particular place?
- When and how does the setting change?
- How does the setting affect the characters and the way they behave?
- When the story began, where did you think we were?
- How could you tell where the story was taking place?
- Could the same story have happened in a different place?
- How do you think the story would have changed if it had happened in a different place or setting?
- Can you tell when the story is taking place?
- What clues might there be to tell us whether the story is set now or in the past?

Sounds

- How many different sounds do you hear? What are they?
- Is there music in the film?
- How does the music make you feel?
- When do you hear the music or sounds change?
- What is happening on screen when the sounds or music change?
- If you listen to the sounds without the pictures, can you tell what is happening on the screen?
- Are there any moments of silence?
- Do any of the characters speak? What do they sound like? If you added your own voiceover to the film, who would speak and what would they say?
- Can you hear any sound effects?
- Do you think any sounds have been made louder than they would be in real life? What are they? Why do you think they are louder in the film?

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APPENDIX 4:
STEP INSIDE: PERCEIVE, KNOW ABOUT, CARE ABOUT

This routine asks learners to step inside the role of a character from a painting or photograph they are looking at, or a film or video they have watched. Learners then speak or write from that chosen point of view saying what he or she perceives, knows about, and cares about.

Purpose of this routine

This routine aims to develop learners' visual literacy, critical thinking, and empathy (ability to understand another person's feelings, etc.) by stepping inside the character from a painting, photograph, film, or video.

Step 1. Show learners a painting, a photograph, a film, or a video.

Step 2. Ask learners to imagine they are a character from the source material. From this perspective, ask them to reflect on three core questions:
- What can the person *perceive*?
- What might the person *know about* or *believe*?
- What might the person *care about*?

Step 3. Learners can work individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can first take notes of their responses before sharing them.

Step 4. Learners share their thinking and ideas with the rest of the class.

Tips for using this routine

- The teacher might invite learners to look at the source material, and ask them to generate a list of the various perspectives or points of view expressed in the painting, photograph, film, or video.
- Learners then choose a particular point of view to express or talk from, saying what they perceive, know about, and care about.
- Sometimes learners might state their perspective before talking. Other times they may not, and then the class could guess from which perspective they are speaking.
- Encourage learners to 'step inside' the character they have chosen and talk about what they are experiencing.
- Learners can quickly create a brief spoken or written monologue, taking on this point of view, or they can work in pairs asking questions that help their partner stay in character and draw out his or her point of view.
- *Perceive* here can be replaced by see, observe or understand.

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APPENDIX 5: ANALYTIC RUBRIC FOR VIEWING

This rubric can be used by teachers after learners have viewed a paper-based multimodal text such as a poster, brochure, comic, picture book, or graphic novel, or a digital multimodal text such as a meme, an animation, a short film or video, a digital story, or book trailer, to assess their multimodal competence.

	Level 6	Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Criterion 1: **Viewing skills and strategies**	Demonstrates a strong understanding of and the effective use of a broad range of appropriate strategies required to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.	Demonstrates a good understanding of a range of strategies and consistently uses most of the strategies needed to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.	Demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of strategies and uses relatively easily the important strategies needed to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.	Demonstrates a general knowledge of strategies and uses to varying degrees (some well and others less well) the strategies needed to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.	Demonstrates limited knowledge of strategies and uses only a few of the strategies needed to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.	Demonstrates little or no knowledge of strategies and makes little or no use of the strategies needed to construct meaning before, during, and after the viewing process.
Criterion 2: **Comprehension**	Identifies the overall message, key ideas, and their supporting details, and can explain the relationship between the explicit (obvious) and implicit (suggested) messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.	Identifies the overall message, key ideas and their supporting details, and can explain the explicit and implicit messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.	Identifies most of the key ideas and their supporting details, and can identify explicit and some of the implicit messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.	Identifies some of the key explicit ideas and some of the key supporting details but has difficulty identifying the implicit messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.	Identifies a few of the explicit main ideas and a few supporting details but cannot identify the implicit messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.	Identifies neither the explicit nor implicit messages in visual, multimedia, oral, and printed texts.
Criterion 3: **Response/ Explanation**	Explains in a thorough and insightful way how ideas are organized and how key conventions (ways of doing something) and elements/ techniques achieve a particular effect in visual, multimedia, oral, and print texts.	Explains in a clear and thoughtful way how ideas are organized and how key conventions and elements/ techniques achieve a particular effect in visual, multimedia, oral, and print texts.	Explains in a simple and logical way how ideas are organized and how key conventions and elements/ techniques achieve particular effects in visual, multimedia, oral, and print texts.	Explains in a simple and general way how ideas are organized and identifies how only some of the conventions and elements/techniques are used for effect in visual, multimedia, oral, and print texts.	Explains in a general and limited way how ideas are organized and has limited understanding of how conventions and elements/ techniques are used for effect in visual, multimedia, oral, and print texts.	Explains with difficulty how ideas are organized and does not recognize how conventions and elements/ techniques are used for effect in visual, multimedia, oral, and print.

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GLOSSARY

affordance
A use or purpose that a thing can have.

alphabetic
Being one of the letters of the alphabet, rather than a number or other symbol.

artefact
An object that is made by a person.

cognitive load
The amount of information that working memory can hold at one time.

collaborative learning
The educational approach of using groups to enhance learning through working together.

communicative competence
A learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully.

community of practice
A group of people who work together in a specific domain, engage in common activities, and share practices.

digital age
The present time, in which many things are done by computer, and large amounts of information are available because of computer technology.

explicit teaching
An educational approach that involves the teacher directing learner attention toward specific learning in a structured environment.

Extensive Reading
The process of learners reading easier texts over an extended period of time for enjoyment and to develop general reading skills.

inclusive
Deliberately including people, things, ideas, etc. from all sections of society, points of view, etc.

knowledge artefact
An object that is made by a person that demonstrates the knowledge they have acquired.

lifeworld
All the immediate experiences, activities, and contacts that make up the world of a person.

meaning-making
The processes by which people use semiotic resources to make meaning in social settings.

multimodal
Consisting of any mixture of audio, images, video, and text.

multimodal communicative competence
A learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully through various communication modes such as the linguistic, visual, aural, and gestural modes.

multimodality
The combination of multiple communicative modes, such as sight, sound, print, images, video, music that produce meaning in a message.

professional development
An ongoing process through which teachers continually expand their professional competences.

representing
The process of communicating information and ideas through the creation of multimodal texts.

schemata
The prior knowledge a learner brings to the study of a topic or theme.

talking head
A presenter or reporter on television who addresses the camera and is viewed in close-up.

text-based teaching
An educational approach that sees communicative competence as involving the mastery of different types of texts.

Viewing
The active process of comprehending and responding to multimodal texts.

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FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

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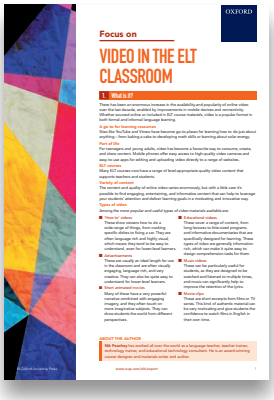
Film in Language Teaching Association
FILTA is an association of language teachers, film educators and researchers which provides a forum for the exchange of information and material related to the use of film in language teaching.
http://www.filta.org.uk/

The Image Conference
A conference which seeks to explore the possibilities which visual and multimodal texts offer both language teachers and language learners.
https://theimageconference.org/



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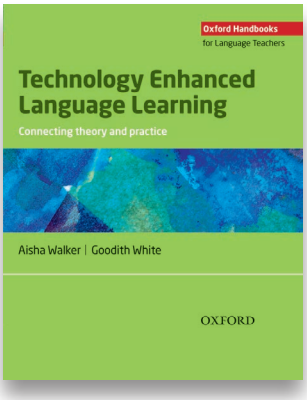

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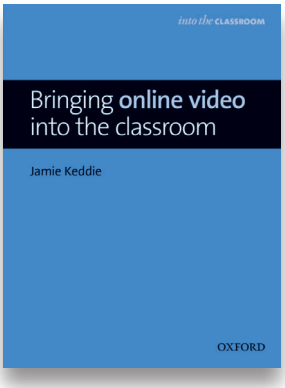

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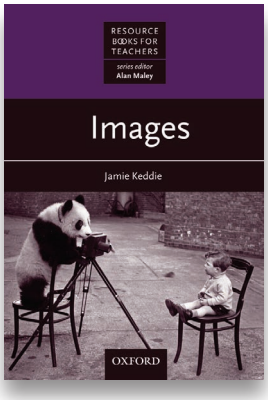

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ENDNOTES

01 MULTIMODALITY AND MULTIMODAL LITERACY

1 Gee (1996); Goldstein (2016); Kress (2003)

2 Apkon (2013)

3 Cope & Kalantzis (2000); Diamantopoulou & Ørevik (2021); Lim & Tan-Chia (2022)

4 Jewitt (2009)

5 Serafini (2013)

6 This chart of the modes is based on a diagram created by the New London Group (1996)

7 New London Group (1996)

8 Cope & Kalantzis (2009); Cope & Kalantzis (2015); Kress (2010)

9 Jewitt & Kress (2003)

10 Cope & Kalantzis (2015); Kress (2010)

11 Lim & Tan-Chia (2022) p.38

12 Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore (2020)

13 Begoray (2001); Canadian Common Curriculum Framework (1998)

14 Begoray (2001); Canadian Common Curriculum Framework (1998)

15 Karastathi (2016)

16 Mavridi & Xerri (2020)

02 INTEGRATING VIEWING INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

17 Chan & Herrero (2000); Donaghy (2015); Goldstein (2009); Keddie (2009); Sherman (2003); Stempleski & Tomalin (2001)

18 Ministry of Education, Saskatchewa (2013)

19 Webb (2015)

20 Herrero & Vanderschelden (2019)

21 Rodgers & Webb (2011)

03 INTEGRATING REPRESENTING INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

22 Donaghy (2015); Goldstein & Driver (2014); Keddie (2014); Theodosakis (2001)

23 Reinders (2011)

24 This is based loosely on Robin's (2016) digital storytelling model

04 THE IMPLICATIONS OF MULTIMODAL LITERACY ON *HOW* WE TEACH

25 Lim & Tan-Chia (2022) pp. 23–26

26 This figure is based on a diagram created by Lim & Tan-Chia (2022)

27 This is a slightly adapted version of Lim's model (2018)

28 Vygotsky (1962)

29 Haight, Herron & Cole (2008)

30 Hafner & Ho (2020)

05 THE IMPLICATIONS OF MULTIMODAL LITERACY ON *WHAT* WE TEACH

31 Feez & Joyce (1998); Mumba & Mkandawire (2019)

32 Chambers (1993)

33 Centre for Media Literacy https://www.medialit.org/

34 Into Film https://www.intofilm.org/

35 Visible Thinking http://www.pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines; Ritchhart, Church & Morrison (2011)

06 THE IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSE MATERIALS, CURRICULA, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

36 Kress (2000)

07 THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

37 Ørevik (2021)

38 Lim & Tan-Chia (2022) pp. 127–130; Unsworth, Cope & Nicholls (2019)

39 Sindoni et al. (2019)

40 Ministry of Education, Saskatchewa (2013)

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