From the Editor

MULTIMODAL MEANS OF INSTRUCTION: BROADENING ACADEMIC LITERACIES AND PRACTICES

Departing from the concept of multimodality as "a field of application rather than a theory" (Bezemer and Jewitt 2010: 180), the current volume aims at presenting multimodal practices in different learning environments. Multimodal means of instruction can overtly change communication landscapes in terms of spaces and texts. In this volume, new academic identities are revised departing from multimodal texts (visual texts, written texts that use images, written texts that discuss visuals, etc.) which combine with the primary aim of generating meaning.

This issue intends to delve into the definition of Multimodality in order to promote multimodal learning environments by revisiting theories and practices of multimodal education. The volume includes valuable contributions to Multimodality in education trying to ease the differences between conventional teaching practices and the fast constant changes of the modern society (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001). The volume works as an updated reference for multimodality in different spaces, varied modes and diverse texts within disciplinary variations for pedagogical practices.

The volume is divided into two main sections, a wider section with four full papers and a following section with a book review. In the opening article of this volume **Stefania Consonni** analyses PowerPoint (PPT) as a leading genre in academic discourse, focussing on the implementation of student motivation boosting strategies. She explores how PPT can be used to motivate teachers and students from two perspectives, ideational and interactional, using multimodal and critical discourse analysis approaches.

1

In the next contribution, **Larissa D'Angelo** discusses the effectiveness of the pre-formatted construction of discourse through PowerPoint presentations by observing the abuse of bullet point presentations, the limited format and size of slides that support minimum content and the ever-present risk of overwhelming viewers with too much text or data. She concludes that multimodal PowerPoint artefacts simply enrich and accompany what the presenter has to say, and recommends presenters to regain confidence in their oratorial skill instead of allowing the slides dominate their presentations.

In the next article, **Ruth Breeze** brings us closer to multimodality in Fine Arts. She focuses on the genre of single image account (SIA) (Swales 2016) for didactic purposes by examining pedagogical resources on the National Gallery's website. She argues that SIAs are combined with suggestions to enhance primary school pupils' learning through creative activities across a variety of modes. She eventually proposes guidelines for writing SIAs for educational purposes in other contexts.

In the final contribution to this issue, **Tamara Hernández** analyses feedback on written production and how the use of new technologies in the classroom such as Grammar Checker can aid both, the teacher in the correction process and the students in their language development. After comparing feedback provided by the teacher and feedback provided by the software Grammar Checker to a group of English as foreign language students, she concludes that Grammar Checker can be a potential tool for self-correction and that feedback may facilitate students' language development.

In the book review that follows, **Lucía Bellés-Calvera** revises the publication *Multimodality in Higher Education*, by Archer and Breuer (2016). The volume deals with multimodal writing practices and pedagogies in tertiary education. The work approaches forms of academic writing that have been catalogued as academic genres, therefore known by an academic discourse community that has previous knowledge on the genre and its conventions. The volume is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the dissemination of multimodal knowledge in Higher Education.

I would like to close this Editorial by especially thanking my colleague and co-editor of this volume Carmen Sancho Guinda. Likewise, I am grateful to all the scholars that have collaborated in the peer-review process of the articles that make up this volume.

Begoña Bellés-Fortuño
Editor
Universitat Jaume I, Spain

References

Bezemer, J. and Jewitt, C. 2010. "Multimodal Analysis: Key Issues". In Litosseliti, L. (Ed.), *Research Methods in Linguistics*. London: Continuum, 180-197.

Kress. G. and Van Leeuwen, T. 2001. *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication*. London: Arnold.

Swales, J. 2016. "Configuring image and context: writing 'about' pictures". *English for Specific Purposes,* 41, 22-35.