



INTEGRATING TECH TOOLS AND DIGITAL MULTIMODAL COMPOSITION FOR ESL LEARNERS.

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Abstract: This article is meant to provide an understanding of multimodal composition and to suggest ways to carry out digital multimodality along with concrete ideas for carrying out tasks and assignments with ESL students by integrating Tech tools. Integrating Tech Tools and digital multimodality are discussed in this article.

Key words: digital literacy, multimodal, essay, academic, composition, media literacy, technology tools.

Digital literacies are ways of reading and writing carried out through digital devices and on the Internet. They are also called twenty-first-century literacies, new literacies, and new media literacies. The online learning environment provides multiple ways to make learning interesting through media and technology tools to engage students (Coombs 2010; National Center on Accessible Educational Materials 2022c). Technology-based activities materials include:

Using websites

- Internet-based project work – especially web quests
- offline email keypal projects using the teacher's email account
- A class blog with learners preparing their contributions on paper and the teacher typing them into the computer
- using online reference tools such as concordances on paper
- electronically produced materials printed out for learners

There are presented the latest versions of digital apps for teaching and learning:

Google Classroom / Canvas / Schoology: Assign work, post class announcements, collect student work, and post grades.

Kahoot!: Quiz students on recently learned material.

Quizlet: Make interactive flashcards.

Flipgrid: Share videos on various topics.

Google Docs: Give learners a platform for written collaboration.

Socrative: Provide students a platform for teamwork, collaboration, and instant feedback.

YouTube: Access and post educational videos.

Zoom: Video-conference with your learners.

Jamboard: Collaborate on a shared whiteboard space.

Nearpod: Create polls and quizzes, solicit responses to open-ended questions, and access pre-created lessons.

Padlet: Communicate via an online digital bulletin board for purposes such as group discussions, collaborative brainstorming, and problem-solving activities.

Using range of ICT tools can give learners' exposure to and practice in all of the four main language skills- speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Researching tools that would support students' reading, there are a number of apps and websites. For example, Jamboard is a free app that is part of the Google suite of apps. Jamboard bolsters reading skills by allowing students to share authentic thoughts in written form. This tool can also be used for sorting, matching, and cloze activities, and in other creative ways to manipulate written text and images.

A fun activity using Kahoot, in this app, the teacher or students create multiple-choice questions based on the topic of the lesson or unit. The questions and answer choices flash onto the screen, and students must propose an answer, listen to their classmates' ideas, and then vote for the answer they collectively choose. ESL students can play this game individually or in teams. Creating Kahoot games can solidify students' content knowledge and provide practice for developing their reading and listening skills. Furthermore, the game-like format of this activity allows ESL students to focus on demonstrating their academic knowledge in a safe and engaging environment.

Learning materials and technologies designed to provide access to learning for all learners. There are some benefits using technology in the classroom. The technology in the classroom often had a game-like aspect, which made learning enjoyable. Open-ended activities and the engaging interface of the apps invited students to be creative in their language use. The tools also provided a number of opportunities to make academic gains, as they enabled students to apply their learning in novel ways. Online tools offer educative activities that can strengthen ELs' language skills in all areas of communication. It is important that teachers select apps that spark students' interest and are purposeful to the learning goals of each lesson.

There are numerous components of digital literacy skills; one important aspect is the ability to create digital multimodal compositions. A multimodal composition might, in fact, have only two modes. For example, a blog with a visual is multimodal; a podcast with sounds is multimodal; a poster with words and pictures is multimodal; and a research paper with graphs is multimodal.

Academic writing can be realized through traditional print text as well as digital text, which may or may not be multimodal, just as nonacademic writing can be carried out through traditional, print-based text or digitally, and may or may not be multimodal. For instance, a student writes an essay on a piece of paper for a school assignment. This essay has only print text (whether it is handwritten or typed). We would consider this a traditional, print-based text. Now, imagine that this student adds a picture to this text. The text is now multimodal. If the student were to take the same essay and produce and distribute it digitally (with the picture), it would then be a multimodal. It is the type of text, the purpose for which it is written, and the language that is used that make a text academic or nonacademic. The number of modes and whether the text was produced digitally do not have any bearing on whether a text is academic or nonacademic. In brief, a multimodal can be academic or nonacademic.

Multimodal allows for a wide degree of creativity because it provides writers with a variety of tools and ways of expression as well as many opportunities for experimentation and innovation (Alexander, Powell, and Green 2011/2012; Brooke 2014; Hafner 2015; Hafner and Ho 2020; Lee 2016; Sheppard 2009).

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