DIGITAL MULTIMODAL COMPOSING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: APPROACHES, BENEFITS, AND CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

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Abstract. The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly transformed communication practices and created new opportunities for language education. In this context, Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) has emerged as an innovative pedagogical approach that enables learners to construct meaning by integrating written language with visual, auditory, gestural, and spatial modes of communication. This article explores the concept, educational significance, and practical applications of Digital Multimodal Composing in English Language Teaching (ELT). Particular attention is given to three major types of DMC activities: poster and brochure creation, storyboard development, and digital video production. The article examines how these activities can contribute to the development of learners' linguistic competence, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and multiliteracy skills. Furthermore, it discusses practical considerations associated with classroom implementation, including time management, digital literacy, copyright protection, and assessment criteria. A four-stage instructional framework comprising pre-design, design, sharing, and reflection is also presented to support the effective integration of DMC into language teaching practices. The discussion suggests that digital multimodal activities can create more engaging, interactive, and learner-centred learning environments while preparing students for the communicative demands of contemporary digital society.

Keywords: Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC), English Language Teaching (ELT), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), multiliteracy skills, digital literacy, learner autonomy, language learning, digital storytelling, multimodal communication, technology-enhanced language learning.

Introduction. The development of digital technologies has significantly transformed communication and created new opportunities for English Language Teaching (ELT). In modern society, effective communication requires not only reading and writing skills but also the ability to understand and produce digital content using different modes of communication. In this context, Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) has emerged as an innovative approach that combines written language with visual, auditory, gestural, and spatial elements. As discussed by Kessler and Marino (2022), DMC encourages learners to express ideas creatively through digital texts and multimedia projects. This article explores the role of DMC in English language classrooms, focusing on practical activities such as poster and brochure creation, storyboard development, and digital video production. It also considers the benefits and challenges of integrating these activities into language teaching.

In their article Digital Multimodal Composing in English Language Teaching, Matt Kessler and Francesca Marino (2022) introduce the concept of DMC and explore its potential applications in English language classrooms. Digital Multimodal Composing refers to the process of creating digital texts by combining written language with various other modes of communication, including visual, auditory, gestural, and spatial elements. Unlike traditional writing activities, which mainly focus on linguistic expression, DMC encourages learners to communicate meaning through multiple forms of representation. Examples of DMC-based activities include blogs, portfolios, posters, brochures, presentations, storyboards, websites, and video projects. The growing importance of DMC in English language teaching is closely connected to the development of learners' multiliteracy skills. In modern society, effective communication requires more than

the ability to read and write traditional texts. Students also need to understand, interpret, and produce digital content using different modes of communication. Research discussed by Kessler and Marino demonstrates that DMC can contribute positively to second language acquisition (SLA), particularly by improving learners' writing abilities, creativity, critical thinking, and engagement. For instance, Tanrikulu (2020) investigated students' experiences with digital storytelling and found that learners considered the activity beneficial for developing their writing skills. Students also demonstrated positive attitudes towards the composing process, suggesting that digital tasks can make language learning more engaging and meaningful.

The authors identify three major types of DMC activities that English language teachers can incorporate into their classrooms: poster and brochure tasks, storyboard activities, and digital video projects. Each activity provides learners with opportunities to develop language skills while using different digital resources.

The first type involves creating posters and brochures. These activities usually require students to prepare promotional texts based on a particular topic or communicative purpose. For example, learners may design an advertisement for a product, promote a tourist destination, or raise awareness about an environmental issue. Such tasks allow students to practise specific grammatical structures, expand their vocabulary, and develop their ability to communicate information effectively. Although posters and brochures can be created using traditional classroom materials such as markers and poster boards, digital platforms offer additional opportunities for creativity and presentation. One example is Canva, an accessible graphic design platform that enables students to produce visually attractive posters, brochures, and other digital materials.

The second type of DMC activity is storyboard creation. Storyboards involve arranging a sequence of images and accompanying information to communicate a particular story, event, or idea. They are closely related to picture-

description activities but provide learners with greater opportunities to organize information and develop narratives. Through this activity, students can practise sequencing events, using descriptive vocabulary, developing grammatical accuracy, and expressing ideas logically. Milanote is one of the digital platforms that can support storyboard creation and encourage learners to produce original and creative work.

The third type involves digital video projects, which have become increasingly popular in contemporary ELT pedagogy. These projects require students to combine written texts, images, music, video recordings, and spoken language to produce meaningful digital content. For example, students can create short documentaries, educational videos, interviews, or presentations on specific topics. Digital video projects provide opportunities to develop speaking, writing, listening, and collaborative skills. However, compared with posters and storyboards, they are generally more time-consuming and require more advanced technical knowledge, particularly when learners need to edit audio and video materials. Despite their educational benefits, implementing DMC activities may present several challenges for teachers and learners. One important consideration is the amount of time required to complete each task. Teachers should carefully select activities according to their lesson objectives, students' language proficiency, and available classroom resources. While poster and brochure activities and storyboard creation may require relatively little time, digital video projects often involve several stages of preparation, recording, editing, and presentation. Nevertheless, platforms such as Canva and Milanote provide instructional resources that can help students become familiar with the necessary tools, even when they have limited technical experience.

Another significant concern is copyright protection. When students create digital projects, they may use photographs, music, videos, or other materials obtained from online sources. Therefore, teachers should explain the importance of respecting copyright regulations and using digital resources appropriately. Hafner

(2015) highlights the potential copyright issues associated with sharing students' work on public platforms such as YouTube. To avoid these problems, teachers can establish clear guidelines and use private online spaces where students' projects can be shared exclusively with their classmates and instructors. Assessment is another essential aspect of implementing Digital Multimodal Composing in language education. According to Hafner and Ho (2020), teachers should evaluate students' digital compositions according to several criteria, including creativity and originality, organization, language accuracy, interaction between different modes, and genre conventions. In other words, assessment should not focus exclusively on grammatical correctness or vocabulary use. It should also consider how effectively learners combine visual, auditory, and linguistic elements to communicate their intended messages.

To facilitate the successful implementation of DMC activities, teachers can guide students through a four-stage process consisting of pre-design, design, sharing, and reflection. During the pre-design stage, teachers introduce the task, explain its objectives, and identify the modes of communication that students should incorporate into their projects. In the design stage, learners develop their compositions using appropriate digital tools and resources. The sharing stage provides opportunities for students to present their work, receive feedback, and interact with their peers. Finally, the reflection stage encourages learners to evaluate their own performance and identify areas for improvement. Assessment at this stage may be teacher-led, peer-based, or a combination of both approaches.

Overall, Digital Multimodal Composing represents a valuable development in English language teaching because it connects traditional language learning with the demands of contemporary digital communication. By incorporating posters, brochures, storyboards, and video projects into classroom practice, teachers can create more interactive, creative, and learner-centred learning environments. These activities not only support the development of linguistic competence but also promote learner autonomy, collaboration, critical thinking, and multiliteracy skills.

In conclusion, Kessler and Marino (2022) emphasize the importance of integrating digital multimodal practices into English language education. As communication continues to become increasingly digital, ELT practitioners need to explore innovative ways of incorporating different modes of expression into their teaching. Although DMC implementation may involve challenges related to time management, technical skills, copyright, and assessment, its potential educational benefits make it a valuable addition to the modern language classroom. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to experiment with these activities and adapt them to their learners' needs, interests, and educational objectives.

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