



Introducing multimodality

Jewitt, C., J. Bezemer & K. O'Halloran.

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Introducing Multimodality is a recent publication by JEWITT, C., BEZEMER, J., and O'HALLORAN, K., published by Routledge. These renowned authors draw upon their extensive knowledge of the discipline and their previous well-known publications, such as the *Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis* (Jewitt, 2009), *Multimodality, Learning and Communication: A Social Semiotic Frame* (Bezemer & Kress, 2015) and *Multimodal Studies: Exploring Issues and Domains* (O'Halloran & Smith, 2011). These diverse scholars converge in this volume to discuss theories and methodologies relevant to multimodal research and their applicability to such a field.

The outcome is a user-friendly and readable contribution that provides a relevant and welcome introduction and overviews theories on multimodality. It draws upon two decades of research on this evolving field and focuses on three main traditions that have utilised multimodality: Systemic Functional Linguistics, Social Semiotics and Conversation Analysis. The history of each of these traditions is provided, together with a summary of key concepts and pivotal studies available.

The volume consists of seven chapters, including an introductory section, a glossary and a self-study guide. Chapter One deals with the history and critical concepts of multimodality and introduces different types of multimodal analyses. In Chapter Two, the authors discuss possible reasons for carrying out multimodal research, whereas in Chapters Three, Four and Five we see three different approaches to multimodality: Systemic Functional Linguistics; Social Semiotics and Conversational Analysis. Their respective areas of application are described and illustrated, as well as their limitations. In Chapter Six, five other approaches to multimodality are considered, which have stemmed from a combination of different research traditions and serve as an example of how research in multimodality can be conducted: Geo-Semiotics; Multimodal (Inter)actional Analysis; Multimodal Ethnography; a corpus-based approach to multimodality; and Multimodal Reception Analysis. Each approach is explained and the reasons to use these combined frameworks are argued for. Chapter Seven offers a hands-on approach on

how to design and construct a multimodal study, outlining eight key elements that researchers need to consider, i.e. choosing an approach; deciding on a research area/focus; formulating research questions; selecting an empirical focus; collecting, managing and transcribing research materials; and considering the ethical dimensions of multimodal research. The volume ends with a glossary and a self-study guide with seven comprehensive study units that address each chapter in the text.

The volume by Jewitt, Bezemer, and O'Halloran is a valuable contribution in the ever-changing field of Multimodality, because it provides a user-friendly guide to past and recent developments within the field and equips undergraduates, graduate students and novice researchers alike with an authoritative review of the different strands in multimodal theory and research. Each chapter is enriched by examples, visuals, and new directions in the field.

What is particularly useful for (under)graduate students (and for lecturers willing to use the volume as a didactic resource in class) is the self-study guide at the end, which works as a study companion to each chapter in the book. Each unit encompasses a chapter overview, with chapter topics and a summary; a set of study questions; exercises; tips and suggested resources. Also quite helpful for novice researchers is Chapter Seven, which furnishes a rationale for designing a multimodal study. The book balances a first methodological part with a more practical, hands-on approach found in its second half. Overall, this volume is highly recommended and very much appreciated because of the wise, knowledgeable and exciting input it provides for researchers and practitioners working in Multimodality, Semiotics, Applied Linguistics and related areas.

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