



GÖTEBORGS
UNIVERSITET

Teacher Practices of Multimodality in Swedish EFL Classrooms

A Quantitative Survey Study

Filip Karlsson
Läraprogrammet



Degree essay: 15 hp
Course: LGEN2A
Level: Advanced level
Term/year: VT 2021
Supervisor: Chloe Avril
Examiner: Zlatan Filipovic

Keywords: [Multimodality](#), [modes](#), [English as a foreign language](#), [teacher practices](#)

Abstract

Multimodality is a concept that has been long associated with the rise of new technologies in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. As the landscape of EFL classrooms changes, so does the demands of teachers. This quantitative survey study set out to investigate English teachers in Sweden's own self-reported use of multimodality in their English classrooms, asking about their usage of modes and the combinations thereof. To do this, the study made use of a questionnaire to survey 17 English teachers in the Swedish upper secondary school. The results indicated that the most frequently reported modes among the teachers was text and body language. In addition, the study found that the surveyed teachers' choice for combining these modes was to either make one mode support the other, or to make teaching engaging and interesting for the student. Accordingly, it was found that the teachers still largely rely on text as a mode in their EFL teaching. The results of the study also indicated that while Swedish EFL teachers are aware of their use of body language as a mode, they are not fully aware of its affordances. The study suggested teachers are allowed the opportunities to better understand the role multimodality plays in their English classrooms. Finally, the study also addressed a number of limitations and pedagogical implications.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Multimodality	1
1.2 Aims and Research Questions	3
2 Literature review.....	3
2.1 The pedagogical benefits of multimodality	4
2.2 Multimodality and language expression	6
2.3 The role of multimodality in classroom interaction	7
2.4 Multimodal practices among EFL teachers	8
3 Method	9
3.1 Background to the questionnaire	10
3.2 Content of the questionnaire	11
3.3 Modes	12
3.4 Participants	12
3.5 Data Collection and analysis	13
4 Results	13
4.1 Respondent's frequency of each mode	14
4.1.1 Text.....	14
4.1.2 Image	15
4.1.3 Sound	16
4.1.4 Body language	17
4.1.5 Summary of results.....	18
4.2 The respondent's combination of modes	19
4.2.1 The combination of modes	19

4.3	Aim of combining modes	21
4.4	Ease of use among the respondents	22
4.5	Respondent's perceptions of their use of multimodality	25
5	Discussion.....	26
5.1	Respondent's use of modes in EFL	26
5.2	Respondent's reasons for combining modes	27
5.3	Limitations and areas for future research	30
5.4	Pedagogical implications	31
6	Conclusion.....	32
7	Reference list.....	34
8	Appendix A. The Questionnaire	

1 Introduction

The move from a more traditional to more digitalized educational landscape has been none the more apparent than in this last year. With the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of distance teaching, new school forms has had to be implemented as teaching could no longer take place exclusively in the classroom. As a result of this, in a 2020 report by the National Agency of Education (Skolverket 2020), it is claimed that the shift to long-distance teaching has indicated that the digitalization of schools will increase at a steady pace.

Along with the rise of digital technology in schools the debate has followed of the importance of multimodality (Hasset and Curwood 2009, Sankey et.al. 2010, Camiciottoli 2018) as a teaching practice in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Multimodality as a concept has also been discussed by the Swedish National Agency of education, most recently in a 2017 report that argued for the potential of multimodal teaching in student language learning and meaning-making (Skolverket 2017).

1.1 Multimodality

Multimodality as a concept grounds itself in the idea of meaning-making through semiotic resources. The modes in multimodality are the many ways in which humans express themselves – from sound, gestures, and body language, to lines and dots on a map or notes on a music sheet. (Kress and Selander 2010). Kress (2010) draws on the idea of a road sign in a busy intersection to explain modes and how they combine and interact: the sign utilizes writing, image, and color. As Kress explains it;

Each mode does a specific thing: image *shows* what takes too long to *read*, and writing *names* what would be difficult to *show*. Colour is used to *highlight* specific aspects of the overall message. Without that division of semiotic labour, the sign, quite simply, would not work. Writing *names* and image *shows*, while colour *frames* and *highlights*; each to maximum effect and benefit. (Kress 2010, p.1).

Multimodality in education developed out of a idea of social semiotics (Kress 2010, p. 313). Semiotics is the idea that anything can be sign as long as one derives meaning from it. The concept of semiotics is most widely associated with Sussure (1959) and Pierce (1977), who together further developed the theory of signs, suggesting the relationship between signs and the fact that people use semiotic resources to communicate with each other.

Kress further developed this idea into a way for educational researchers to think about how content is mediated to students and opened up to the idea that when a meaning-maker composes a sign, that meaning-making is driven by the interests and motivations of the signmaker. As he puts it, “If the signmaker draws four circles to represent a car, then that is how the sign-maker sees the text and, by extension, this text is a window into their subjectivities” (Kress 2010, p. 315). This was further developed by the New London Group (1994) idea of multiliteracies acknowledging texts and other print as the dominant mode. Building on Kress’ ideas, they came to push for an expansion of the concept of “literacy”, where multiple textual modes beyond print play a part and allow for a wider audience of participants to take part. Accordingly, Stein (1998) also argued that modes such as gesture and drawings can help easier convey meaning where traditional modes fail to do so. Multimodality continues to be a prominent method for understanding and expanding language researcher’s definition of literacies. Future work on multimodality is suggested to be continuing to evaluate the affordances of modes and the complexities therein (Roswell and Collier 2017)

Several language researchers have also noted the importance of multimodality in Swedish education contexts. Danielsson (2013) claims that multimodality has received a wider recognition due to the influx of computers and information technology among Swedish students, in combination with an expanded view of body language as a complement to the textual mode. Danielsson further claims that there is a need for a wider range of multimodal knowledge among Swedish teachers. There are several reasons for this; one is to develop multifaceted knowledge of writing skills among students. Another is to develop knowledge of possibilities and challenges in multimodal text. Furthermore, Danielsson claims, teachers need to develop a proper knowledge of multimodality in order to properly evaluate the multimodal nature of texts students create.

Selander notes three reasons for the relevance of multimodality in Swedish EFL contexts: one, that the traditional understanding of knowledge is text-based, and with the influx of image-based mediums as part of our modern context, we have started moving toward an idea of knowledge that can no longer be based in strictly verbal representations. Two is that different kinds of knowledge that had earlier been barred from academia have started to make their entrance as technology progresses. For example, a surgical student may make use of computer simulations to practice their technical skills. Third, Selander explains, is that consumers of information (such as students) communicate in online-based communities involving their special interests through mediums of text, image, and music. In

other words, this widespread communication allows for new dimensions regarding the modes in which we communicate. Selander argues these as the reason that multimodality is making a larger impact in Swedish EFL classrooms.

As can be seen, multimodality in the context of EFL has been a long-discussed topic, with many researchers arguing for an expanded view of literacy within an ever-changing classroom landscape. As this landscape changes even further, the role of teacher's perception and practice of multimodality becomes even more important. As such, this study is rooted in the question of Swedish EFL teacher's perceptions of multimodality and their practices.

1.2 Aims and Research Questions

As said above, this study is grounded in the context of Swedish teachers' changing circumstances in the Swedish EFL classroom. Digital technologies are making even more of a prominent impact in Swedish educational life. So does multimodality as a concept within local and international research. This study sets out to investigate what can be inferred about Swedish EFL teachers' application and usage of multimodality. In addition, it also aims to elucidate the reasons behind these choices of modes. As such, the research questions are formed as follows:

1. *What self-reported modes and combinations of modes appear most frequently among Swedish EFL teachers?*
2. *What reasons do EFL teachers give for using certain modes and combinations of modes in their teaching?*

The aim of this study is to elicit new knowledge about multimodal perceptions and practices among Swedish EFL teachers. Below will follow a look into the current state of Multimodality research in English language studies.

2 Literature review

The span of research into multimodality in EFL language research is wide and touches on several aspects of multimodal designs and ideas. First, this section will cover research into the benefits in EFL pedagogy.

2.1 The pedagogical benefits of multimodality

To start off, multimodality has been analyzed extensively in accordance with the pedagogical benefits it affords. Among other things, multimodality has been claimed to aid listening comprehension (Ruan 2015), vocabulary acquisition (Cárcamo et. al et al 2016), and language learning comprehension (Pachero 2018).

Ruan (2015) examined the role of multimodality in EFL listening comprehension. The participants were sophomores of non-English majors from Hubei Engineering university. The study consisted of an introduction of a multimodal based autonomous listening model, together with a questionnaire concerning students' attitudes toward the model and a pre-test and post-test concerning listening proficiency. The students were divided into two groups, with one experiment group being introduced to the multimodal autonomous listening course, while the control group engaged in traditional teaching. The researcher found that in addition to the students adopting a positive attitude toward the introduction of videos into the classroom, the introduction of the multimodal listening model also yielded other positive results. For starters, the students could more effectively plan, manage and organize their learning, and also learned to supervise and regulate each other in order to greatly improve the efficiency of their listening. Finally, in comparing the results of the experiment group to the control group, Ruan (2015) found that the mean score of the experiment group's final listening test score was significantly higher than that of the control group, suggesting a multimodal-based autonomous teaching exercise can effectively improve learner's listening level.

Cárcamo, Cartes, Velasquez, and Larenas (2016) investigated whether multimodality improves vocabulary acquisition among Chilean EFL students. Using four groups of students from two semi-public schools, they underwent an action research procedure that also employed a pre-test and post-test to test vocabulary knowledge. Concluding that the most common method of teaching English used by the teachers was grammatical instruction, the action research procedure itself asked teachers to instead teach the acquisition of vocabulary using multimodality exposure in their lessons. The lessons were planned on a task-based approach with the researchers selecting 30 words that belonged to the national English language curriculum for each student group. After a finished task-based process consisting of a pre-task, a task, and a post-task, they analyzed the student's vocabulary performance. Comparing the post-test with the pre-test, the study found that the use of multimodality in

vocabulary acquisition “significantly benefits the student in the process of learning new vocabulary”.

Pachero (2018) explored the role of multimodality in language learning comprehension. In a study was conducted with 40 participants from a private language school in Spain, all in the B2 level, the researcher set out to investigate if EFL students’ audio-visual comprehension improves when there is a greater number of orchestrated modes. Conducting a multimodal analysis of two so-called vodcasts and the multimodal ensembles found therein, the researcher then asked the students to watch the vodcasts while completing a comprehension test. The statistical analysis of the study showed that the greater the number of modes represented in the vodcasts, the better was the student’s audiovisual comprehension. In addition to arguing for the positive benefits of multimodal digital tools in foreign language comprehension, the researcher argues further that teachers should not only be concerned with only the written and spoken language in materials but also with body language and non-verbal ones.

Studies have also investigated the role multimodality plays in feedback in writing instruction (Özkul and Ortactepe 2017, Zhang 2018), specifically in video feedback as an alternative to written feedback. In a study by Özkul and Ortactepe (2017), the participants, two classes consisting of 47 EFL learners, were divided into two groups; one control group and one experiment group. While both groups were provided with feedback according to the standard policy of feedback provision in the school, the experiment group was provided with feedback in the form of video. The study took place in three steps: feedback provision, analysis of the data from the learner’s drafts, and the administering of a questionnaire of student’s perceptions at the end of the study. The study found that teacher feedback delivered through video was more effective than written feedback. The study argued that due to the multimodal nature of the video feedback, it appealed to a wider range of learning styles, and took into consideration more intelligences than just the linguistic one.

Another study by Zhang (2018) aimed to investigate students’ perceptions of receiving multimodal feedback. In an 8-week case study with six English major students of engineering, they were given EFL feedback on writing through screencast, a digital video recording of the instructor giving the feedback. They were also asked to keep a diary on their experiences, with the purpose of capturing the participants’ feelings and thoughts about how they would make use of multimodal feedback. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants to elicit more information about their use of the feedback. The study found that, in line with Özkul and Ortactepe (2018), students held positive attitudes toward the

screencast feedback and preferred it to traditional methods of feedback. In addition, the author suggested that the video feedback allowed the student a more comprehensive view of their work. Audiovisual feedback, the authors' state, has an advantage over written feedback in conveying messages in a less overwhelming way that in turn provides students with more affective support.

2.2 Multimodality and language expression

Multimodality as a meaning-making resource has been long researched in conjunction with its pedagogical affordances.

A study by Nelson and Johnson (2014) investigated how multimodality can aid students' ability to "speak for themselves" in foreign language education. The participants were undergraduate students from a small university in Japan, meeting twice weekly for a so-called The Multimedia "Me" course, where students participated in activities that allowed them to reflect on how meanings were made in multimodal texts. They were given random English vocabulary words, chosen from a selection of envy, excitement, joy, and fear. They were asked to express the meaning of these words through the creation of a collage. Nelson and Johnson found that through "structuring the affordances of the classroom experience to better help learners build these semiotic connections between personal, indexical, symbolic and cultural meanings, as expressed in and between different modes and media, we offer opportunities for an increased awareness of the embodied and unexpressed knowledge that is an important and often overlooked aspect of language discovery, comprehension" (Nelson and Johnson 2011, p 59). In other words, by allowing students to employ different non-traditional modes as semiotic resources, the students could express linguistic knowledge that would otherwise be unexpressed. They note that EFL teachers need awareness of multimodal language expressions.

A 2019 study by Peng analyzed multimodal classroom pedagogies in relation to student's WTC (willingness to communicate). The study also aimed to discover how students perceive multimodal pedagogies in EFL classrooms. Investigating a large number of participants across six regions of China through the use of a questionnaire, they found out that among other things, students were more positive to audio-visual mediums such as films and tv series than the teacher's PowerPoint slides, which the researchers posited had to do with the layout and textual density of the power points; i.e., the students took better to modes that were not entirely text-based. The authors note that based on these results, creating a classroom

environment that can incorporate more of the audio and visual modes can help create “a rich linguistic context”.

A 2021 study by Lee, Lo, and Chin aimed to examine if a multimodal literacy practice benefited learners in aspects such as reading development, critical thinking, creativity, and autonomous learning. The researchers examined English language development in terms of word-level, sentential complexity, and lexical density in conjunction with a joint project involving multimodal literacies. The study involved 38 English majors with a high-intermediate English proficiency level in Taiwan. Through the implementation of a multimodal literacy practice, they found that students were empowered and developed more complex language knowledge and fluency in the process. The authors suggest that multimodal writing and reading practices allow the students much richer language development.

2.3 The role of multimodality in classroom interaction

Multimodality has also been analyzed concerning classroom interaction. Among other things, it notes the importance of the use of gesture and space in the classroom.

Stone (2012) examined so-called task-based interactions between students in the classroom using multimodal interaction analysis. Multimodal task-based interaction analysis attempts to “describe how interactions are co-constructed by participants through an interplay of modes” (Stone 2012, p. 313). Based on this theory, Stone set about investigating freshman English students at a private university in Japan, with 25 students in three different EFL classes – reading, writing, and general communication. In the task, students were asked to transcribe and analyze video recordings of themselves doing small-group presentations. Set in two phases, the first phase of the study involved describing the social make-up of the classroom. The second phase involved a tool called the “Relationship circle”, designed to collect the student perspectives on the social relationships in the class. Once this data was collected, the author video recorded and analyzed the participants performing tasks and producing multimodal transcripts of the video recordings. Through multimodal discourse analysis, Stone concluded that non-verbal modes of communication are just important as a spoken language in the construction of tasks. Stone also noted that students’ interpersonal relationships affect task performance.

Park (2017) investigated how students interact multimodally in the classroom. In it, Park analyzed how embodied behaviors are used by students as a resource in relation to CIC (Classroom Interactive Competence). Park found out that students employ multimodal

resources during their task performance. Specifically, Park pointed out how students created a space for meaning-making through employing gestures such as finger-pointing in combination with speech. Additional resources used by the students were gazes, head-nodding, and classroom artifacts; all of these were used as semiotic resources in classroom interaction. Park calls for teachers to be aware of how to pick up on use multimodal resources in the classroom, in order to make students' learning more engaging and interactive.

2.4 Multimodal practices among EFL teachers

Finally, studies have also touched upon how multimodal practices among EFL teachers, either in the multimodal processes teachers perform or different forms of multimodal teaching practices.

A 2017 study by Mohammadi, Elahi Shirvan, and Akbari (2017) investigated multimodality practice in the development of classroom activities among student teachers. The participants, student teachers at a university in Iran, were video recorded while being asked to develop a pedagogical activity. Accordingly, they found that the student teachers applied and combined different modes in various ways; they used digital tools such as laptops and cell phones, and they used language and bodily gestures to convey meaning in the creation process. Mohammadi notes that it is important to take into consideration how well teaching students take advantage of multimodality in planning their teaching activities.

Cocchetta (2018) investigated how multimodality was integrated into a university syllabus for studies in English. The project was created for the second-year English Language course at the Ca' Foscari University in Venice. The aim of the language course was for students to understand, analyze and produce multimodal texts in English for specific communicative contexts. The course consisted of a 30h module on multimodal discourse analysis and a 180h course on developing communicative language skills. In the study in question, Cocchetta presents two classroom applications of the course. In the first activity, students were given a Lego Instruction Manual and were asked to analyze the multimodal aspects of the manual, such as its use of language, its visuals, and its affordances. In the second activity, the students were introduced to multimodal transcriptions (i.e. an analytical tool used for describing the semiotic resources of a multimodal text). Like in the previous activity, the students were given a series of questions to reflect on the multimodal nature of the text. These were two examples of how multimodality can be integrated into a syllabus.

Morell (2018) explored the choices of modes and combinations thereof among EMI's (i.e. English-medium instructors, language instructors with English as their primary medium of communication). Morell aimed to investigate the multimodal ensembles and patterns of English-medium instructors when setting up a pair work activity. The study took place in a 20h EMI workshop at a large Spanish public university. The participants, academic staff of various disciplines with at least a B2 level of English, engaged in a peer-led mini-lesson based on a concept in their field of expertise. The author found that the orchestration of modes among the instructors varied depending on pedagogical functions initiated. In this orchestration, the most used multimodal pattern was the simultaneous use of gaze, gesture and speech.

Jakobseen and Tonessen (2018) conducted an ethnographic case study of different multimodal practices in a classroom in Norway. The researchers investigated a four-week teaching sequence and the modes involved in the teachers' literacy events and how multimodality presented itself in the students' meaning-making. They found that the teacher's school practice is still rooted in teaching traditions revolving around curricula and plans. In addition, while multimodal texts are getting a more prominent role, they are still seen as support in favor of the more traditional roles.

A 2020 study by Eisenlauer (2020) also investigated the meaning-making aspects of multimodality. The study consisted of seven teacher education students majoring in English at the University of Klagenfurt and investigated how multimodal meaning-making practices were implemented in a classroom project on the teaching and learning of lexical chunks. Through integrating multimodal meaning-making with computational literacies, the student teachers managed to filter and identify specific video sequences that were suitable for the teaching and learning of English idioms and phrases.

3 Method

This study has been conducted by way of a survey employing the use of a questionnaire. The choice of a questionnaire was selected as it was deemed the most efficient and suitable way of answering the research questions.

As Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010, p. 5) explain, questionnaires can yield three types of data, factual, behavioral, and attitudinal. This study will focus only on the behavioral and attitudinal data yielded. Behavioral data, to start with, asks questions about the respondent's habits, actions, and so forth. It is this type of data that is most important in answering the first

research question “What modes and combination of modes appear most frequently among Swedish EFL teachers?”. Indeed, as Dörnyei and Taguchi write, the most well-known question of this type in second language studies is items that ask about the frequency of the use of a particular strategy or habit. (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2018, p. 5).

The second type of data that can be elicited by using a questionnaire is attitudinal questions – that is, questions about attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values. As Dörnyei and Taguchi write, this is a broad category that is not always defined very clearly, but in answering the second research question “*What reasons do EFL teachers give for using certain modes and combination of modes in their teaching?*”, the questionnaire is asking the participants for their own self-elicited opinions on what may cause them to use a certain mode.

As for factual data, or factual questions, these can sometimes be used to find out who the respondents are, covering items such as demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and other background information relevant to the survey. The selection for this study, however, was a small population of randomly selected EFL teachers in Sweden. As such, factual data was deemed irrelevant in the study.

In addition to the above-mentioned reasons for using a questionnaire, Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) also mention a set number of benefits of using a questionnaire, relevant to the study at hand. The first is that it is efficient in terms of researcher time, effort, and financial resources. Questionnaires can be administered to a large group of people and collect information in a very short amount of time, with personal investment much less than what would have been needed for a qualitative study.

3.1 Background to the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 8 questions, concerning the use of modes, the combination of modes, and the teacher’s use of modes in the EFL classroom. It makes use of Likert scales (McKay p. 38), multi-item scales, and short-answer questions (Dörnyei and Taguchi, p. 23, 38). Questions about how often certain modes and the combination thereof were used were administered through a Likert scale of 1-4, where 1 represented “very rarely”, and 4 represented “almost every lesson”. Questions about the aim of what combining different modes would achieve were administered through a multi-item response with an option to specify. The questionnaire also included a single-item question about what mode the respondent feels is easier to work with, for them as a teacher versus what their students would

be comfortable with. The previous item was also amended with a question of why the modes are easier to use. The questionnaire ended with a yes or no-question, followed by an open-ended answer. Due to time constraints, the questionnaire was not piloted before being sent out to the participants.

The Likert scales all involve questions to do with the teachers' use of multimodality. More open-ended questions have been asked in responding to why they decide to apply multimodal practices. The short-question answers also had to do with teachers' use of multimodality, asking them what about a certain mode makes it easier to use or why they are not using multimodality as much as they would like.

3.2 Content of the questionnaire

Before the first item of the questionnaire, which can be viewed in full in Appendix A) the participants were given the following definition of multimodality:

Multimodality is the idea of multiple modes developed by humans to convey meaning: text, image, gestures, and so forth. On their own, they have different affordances and they can be combined to create meaning. One example of multimodality is text + sound + image all being used in tandem to create a movie. Other examples of multimodality are a road sign or a textbook (combining image + text), and so forth. (See Appendix A.)

This is a simplified description of the study definition of multimodality as described in 1.2. The content of the questionnaire was as follows:

In the first series of questions, the participants were asked "How often do you use these modes in your EFL teaching?", and were presented with 4 modes: text, image, sound, and body language. These modes were designed as a streamlined approach based on modes described in Kress (2010, p. 83), to clarify the definition of modes for the participants.

Then, the participants were asked "How likely are you, on average, to combine these modes in your EFL teaching", and given the alternative of text + image, image + sound, text + sound, text + body language, image + body language, sound + body language, and text + sound + image.

Next followed a series of questions about the combination of modes. The participants were asked "When you combine different modes, what is it you are after? What is the aim?" and were given a series of options on a multi-item list, with the option of selecting "other", in which case they were given the chance to specify.

Next, the respondents were asked “Is there any one mode you feel is easier to work with?”, and asked for a single-item response in two categories: “For you as a teacher” and “for students”, and again given the choice of four modes: text, image, sound and body language. Here, they were also asked to give a short-answer question as to what made these modes easier to use.

The final question was “Are you using multimodality in your teaching as much as you would like to?” with a single-item response of yes or no. Here, provided the participants answered “no”, they were also allowed to elicit a short answer.

3.3 Modes

In multimodal interaction, meaning is constructed through a coordination of modes, all not easily defined. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001), a teacher may use body language through gestures to draw attention to images on a board. In these images, there may exist language on labels in the form of text. In addition, text may also exist on the blackboard and in textbooks students are using. The teacher’s position in the classroom and how they interact with objects within the classroom also play a part. It is these various aspects of classroom interaction that can be defined as “modes”: tools such as language in the form of text and the visual in the form of images and body language. All “modes” must be taken together as an ensemble by the teacher to communicate a certain message.

However, due to the scale and time constraints of the study, multimodality as a concept had to be delimited to make it comprehensible for the participants. One part of this was providing a definition in the questionnaire, as stated above. Another part was using a restricted definition of “modes”: text, sound, image, and body language. These modes were chosen as umbrella terms for the various modalities that interplay and coordinate during classroom interaction. Therefore, it is important to note that the respondents’ use of modes cannot account for anything other than their perceptions of what a certain mode may imply.

3.4 Participants

The participants were 17 randomly selected and anonymous EFL teachers from across Sweden. They were selected through various outreach forums online, through social media, and by e-mail. All in all, 17 participants responded. As stated above, the questionnaire was introduced with an item reminding the participants about the definition of multimodality used

for this study, the aims of the study, how long the questionnaire will take, and reminding the participants that their participation is voluntary, their responses will be anonymous, and that they may at any time choose to opt-out.

Ethical considerations for the participants were considered throughout the conduct of this study. When the questionnaires were sent out, the participants were informed that their participation would be voluntary and that they would stay anonymous throughout the data collection, writing, and publishing process.

3.5 Data Collection and analysis

Collecting the survey data took about 2 weeks, after which the responses were compiled and coded in the program IBM SPSS. The data were coded according to the questionnaire collection process described in Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010, p. 84), wherein the results of the survey were transcribed into the program, and given numerical values; the Likert scales in the questionnaire asking for the frequency of modes were coded as 1 through 4. Multi-item scales were coded with each item separately, with a 1 confirming an item checked and a 2 confirming the item was not checked. For the Likert scales, the measure of central tendency (Denscombe 2014, p.253) was measured through calculating the mean of each scale, from 1 to 4, where 1 represented the lowest frequency, “Very rarely”, while 4 represented the highest, “Almost every lesson”.

A few of the items were complemented with a request for clarification with short-answer questions. These have been processed according to the two-step content analysis described in Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010, p. 99). By way of this process, the responses have been marked for key points and content elements and divided into larger categories based on these elements.

4 Results

What follows are the participants’ responses to the questionnaire, in the order they appeared, starting with the question of how often these modes were used in the respondent’s EFL teaching (4.1). Then, the responses to “How likely are you, on average, to combine these modes in your EFL teaching” will be presented (4.2). The responses to these two questions will answer the first research question *What modes and combination of modes appear most*

frequently among Swedish EFL teachers? These are then followed by the answers to “When you combine different modes, what is it you are after? What is the aim?” (4.3).

The last part of the results section is dedicated to answers to attitudinal questions such as what modes are easier to work with, and if the respondents consider their practices of multimodality in their teaching to be adequate. These will be complemented by the responses to the short-answer questions, according to the process described in 3.5. With these short-answer questions will answer the second research question *What reasons do EFL teachers give for using certain modes and combination of modes in their teaching?* As mentioned above, the first set of results concern the most frequent use of modes. These will be presented below.

4.1 Respondent’s frequency of each mode

As outlined in 3.3, the respondents were first asked “How often do you use these modes in your EFL teaching?”, the modes being *Text*, *Image*, *Sound*, and *Body Language*. For each of these modes, the participants were asked to rank on a Likert Scale (see 3.2) how often these modes were used, 1 being Very Rarely and 4 being Almost every lesson.

For the sake of clarity, in the presentation of the results, the grades on the scales have been given additional names; a 2 on the scale will be presented as “rarely”, and a 3 on the scale as “frequently”. In other words, the results will be ranked as follows: 1 means the participants claimed they performed the mode “very rarely”, 2 means they did so “rarely”, 3 means they did so “frequently” and 4 means they did it “very frequently”. To summarize, the scale measures in the following order: very rarely, rarely, frequently, and very frequently.

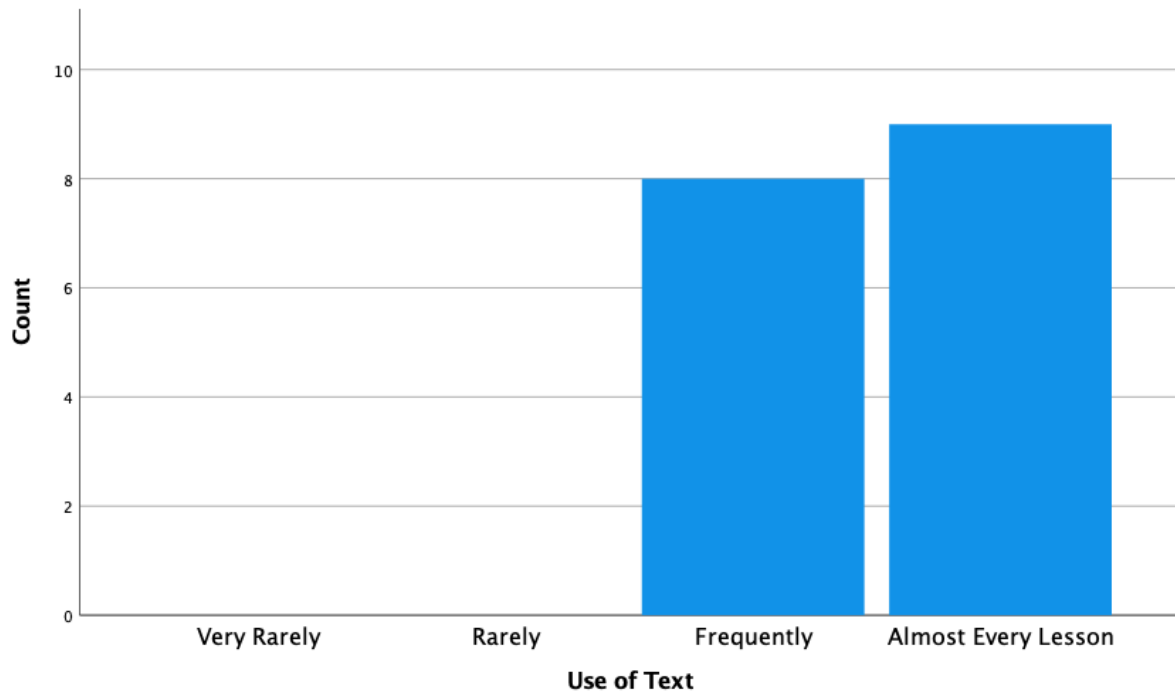
4.1.1 Text

Out of 17 respondents, 9 replied that they used the text mode almost every lesson, and 8 responded that they used it frequently. None of the respondents surveyed replied that they used it either rarely or very rarely. These results are shown in Fig. 1.

For the text mode, a majority of respondents ranked text either as frequently or very frequently on the scale. The spread of respondents who ranked it either frequently or very frequently was almost evenly spread. None of the respondents ranked it as very rarely or rarely, meaning all of the participants surveyed consider text to be a very commonly occurring mode in their classrooms

Figure 1

How often do you use text in your EFL teaching?

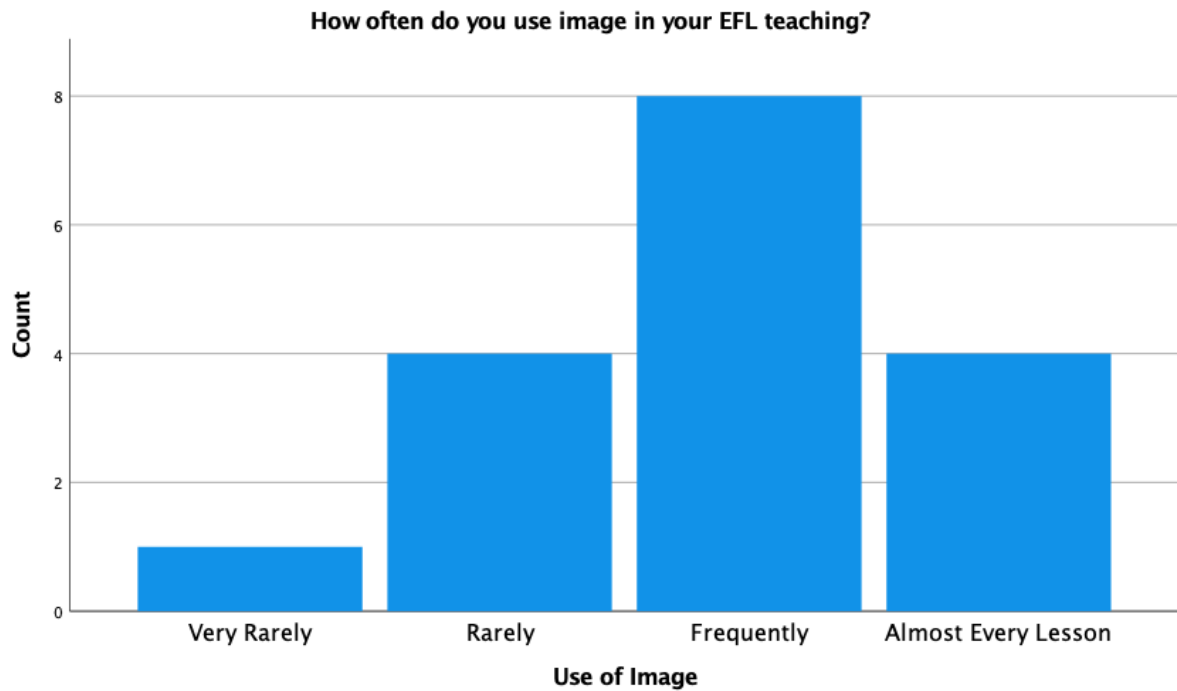


4.1.2 Image

For image, out of 17 respondents, 4 claimed that they used it almost every lesson, while 8 responded that they used it frequently. 4 respondents claimed that they used it rarely, while 1 respondent claimed that they used it very rarely. These results are shown in Fig. 2. For image, a majority of respondents ranked it as being used “frequently”. Furthermore, only one of the respondents claimed they used it “very rarely”. Interestingly, there was an even spread of respondents either responding that they used it “rarely” or claiming they used it “almost every lesson”. Image was also the mode ranked as being used rarely by the highest number of respondents.

Figure 2

How often do you use image in your EFL teaching?



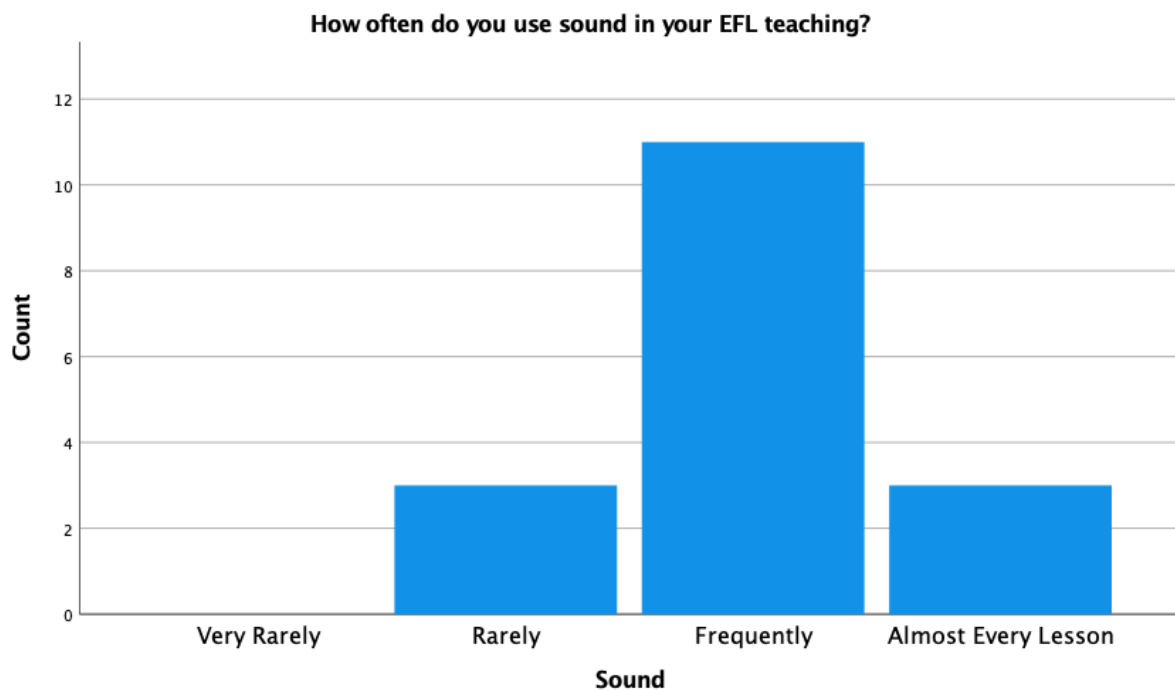
4.1.3 Sound

For sound, out of 17 respondents, 3 claimed they used it almost every lesson, while 11 claimed they used it frequently, and 3 used it rarely. None of the respondents surveyed claimed they used sound very rarely. These results are shown in Fig. 2.

Sound, as with image, had a majority of respondents ranking it as being used “frequently”. Like text, none of the respondents claimed they used it “very rarely”, but conversely, an equal spread of respondents claimed they used it “almost every lesson”. Sound also had the highest amount of participants ranking it as being used “frequently”, with 11 respondents.

Figure 3

How often do you use sound in your EFL teaching?



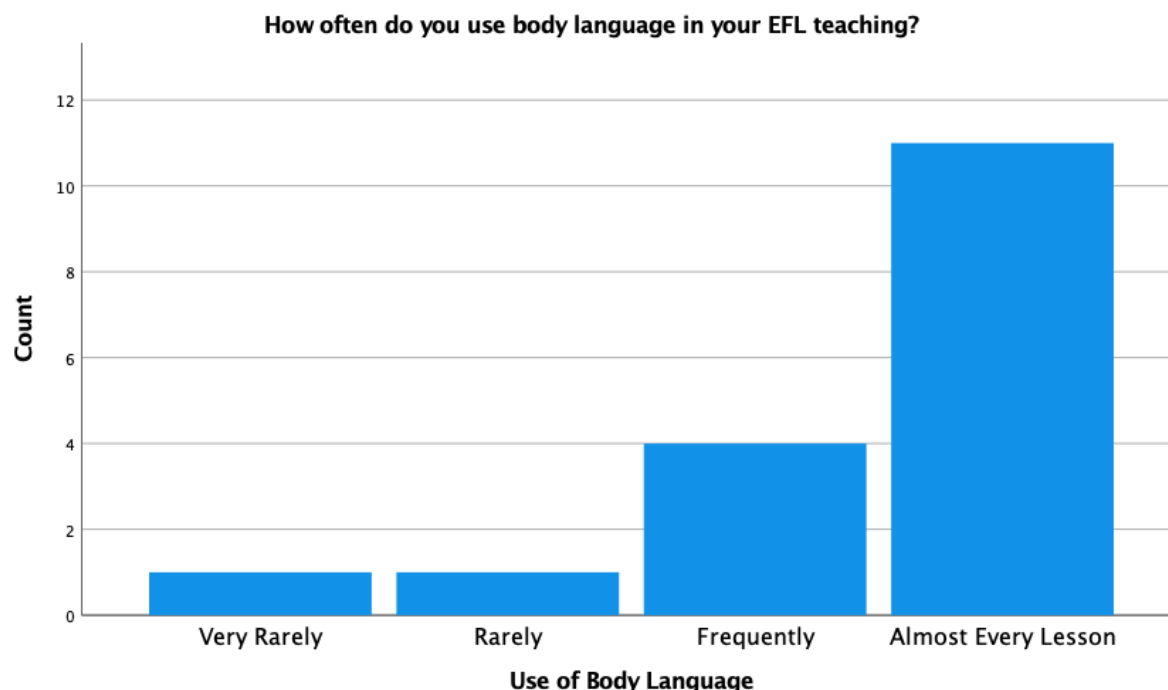
4.1.4 Body language

Out of 17 respondents, 11 claimed they used it almost every lesson, while 4 claimed they used it frequently. 1 each of the participants responded that they used it either rarely or very rarely. These results are shown in Fig. 4.

Body language is notable for having a higher majority of participants ranking it as being used “very frequently” than any other mode, meaning it is the mode most frequently used by teachers. As such, the number of participants that chose any of the other options was proportionally smaller. Only 4 of the respondents claimed they used it “frequently”, and an equal amount of participants consider it either to be present “very rarely” or “rarely”.

Figure 4

How often do you use body language in your EFL teaching?



4.1.5 Summary of results

The mean score of the modes text, image, sound body language (see table 1). This mean score was calculated as described in 4.1. The mean score of text was 3,5, while image was 2,9, sound 3,0, and body language 3,5 (rounded up).

Table 1

The mean score of each mode in the Likert scale

	Text	Image	Sound	Body Language
Mean	3,5	2,9	3,0	3,5

In sum, the mode that was most often used by teachers was body language; 11 respondents stated that they used these two modes “almost every lesson”. Interestingly, body language was also the mode that one respondent claimed to use “very rarely”. Body language was closely followed by text as the most used mode, and also has the distinction of having no respondents rank it lower than 3. Conversely, Sound was the mode most respondents ranked as a “3”, while very few respondents claimed to use it “almost every lesson”. The mean score

of the frequency of each mode, as seen in table 5, was calculated as described in 3.4. The mean score of text was 3.5, while image was 2.9, sound 3.0, and body language 3.4 (rounded up).

Table 2

Frequency and percentage count of modes used by teachers

	Text (Freq)	Text (%)	Image (Freq)	Image (%)	Sound (Freq)	Sound (%)	Body Language (Freq)	Body Language (%)
1 (Very Rarely)	0	0	1	5.9	0	0	1	5.9
2	0	0	4	23.5	3	17.6	1	5.9
3	9	47.1	8	47.1	11	64.7	4	23.5
4 (Almost Every Lesson)	7	52.9	4	23.5	3	17.6	11	64.7
Total	17	100	17	100	17	100	17	100

4.2 The respondent's combination of modes

As with the first set of questions, the respondents were asked to grade on a scale the frequency of their use of modes. Here, respondents were asked how likely they were, on average, to combine a series of modes. The same translation of the scale, ranging from “Very rarely” to “Almost every lesson”, has been translated as described in the section above. Below are the answers to the question “How likely are you, on average, to combine these modes in your EFL teaching? The answers are compiled under one subheading, in the order they were asked in the questionnaire.

4.2.1 The combination of modes

Out of 17 respondents, 7 claimed they used *Text + Image* almost every lesson, while 8 claimed they used it frequently, and 2 of the respondents claimed they used it rarely. For *Text + Sound*, 3 respondents claimed they used it almost every lesson, 9 claimed they used it

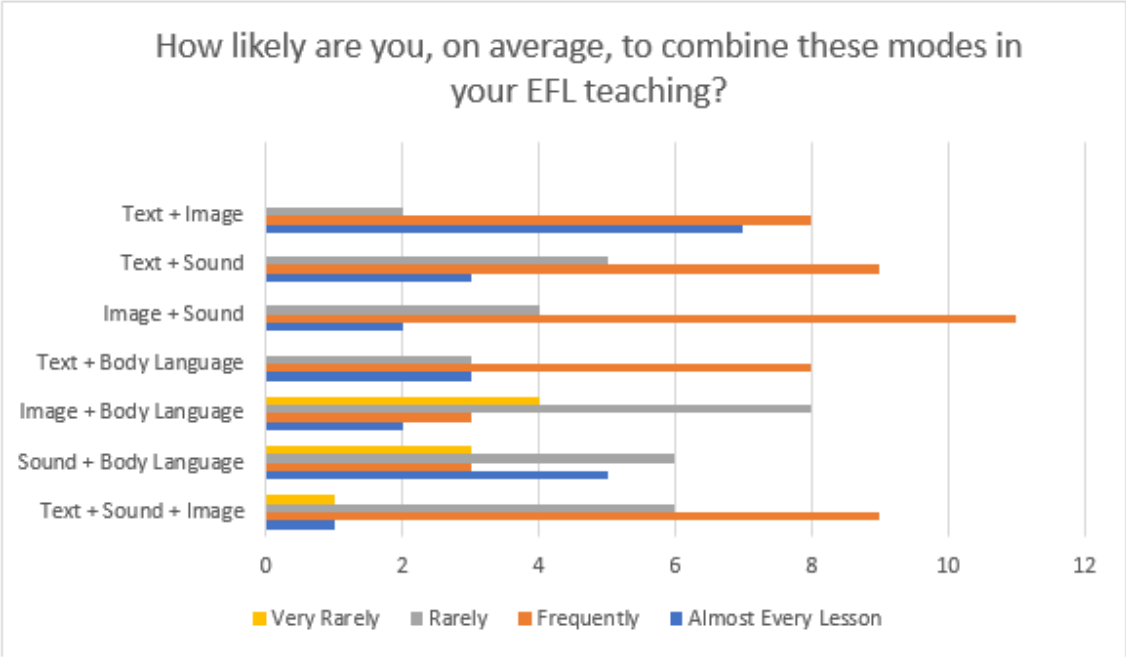
frequently, 5 respondents claimed they used it rarely, while none of the respondents claimed they used it very rarely.

Concerning *Image + Sound*, 2 respondents claimed they used it almost every lesson, 11 respondents claimed they used it frequently, while 4 respondents claimed they used it rarely. For *Image + Body Language*, 2 respondents claimed they used it almost every lesson, 3 respondents claimed they used it frequently, while 8 respondents claimed they used it rarely, and 4 respondents claimed they used it very rarely.

For *Sound + Body Language*, 5 respondents claimed they used it almost every lesson, 3 respondents claimed they used it frequently, 6 respondents claimed they used it rarely, and 3 respondents claimed they used it very rarely. Finally, for *Text + Sound + Image*, 1 respondent claimed they used it almost every lesson, 9 respondents claimed they used it frequently, 6 respondents claimed they used it rarely, and 1 respondent claimed they used it very rarely.

Figure 5

How likely are you, on average, to combine these modes in your EFL teaching?



The mean score for each combination of modes can be seen in Table 3, calculated in the same manner as described in 3.2. Here, the highest mean score is 3,3 for text + image, with the other textual combinations of modes at 2,9.

Table 3.

The mean score for each combination of modes

	Text + Image	Text + Sound	Image + Sound	Text + Body Language	Image + Body Language	Sound + Body Language	Text + Sound + Image
<u>Mean</u>	3,3	2,9	2,9	2,6	2,2	2,6	2,6

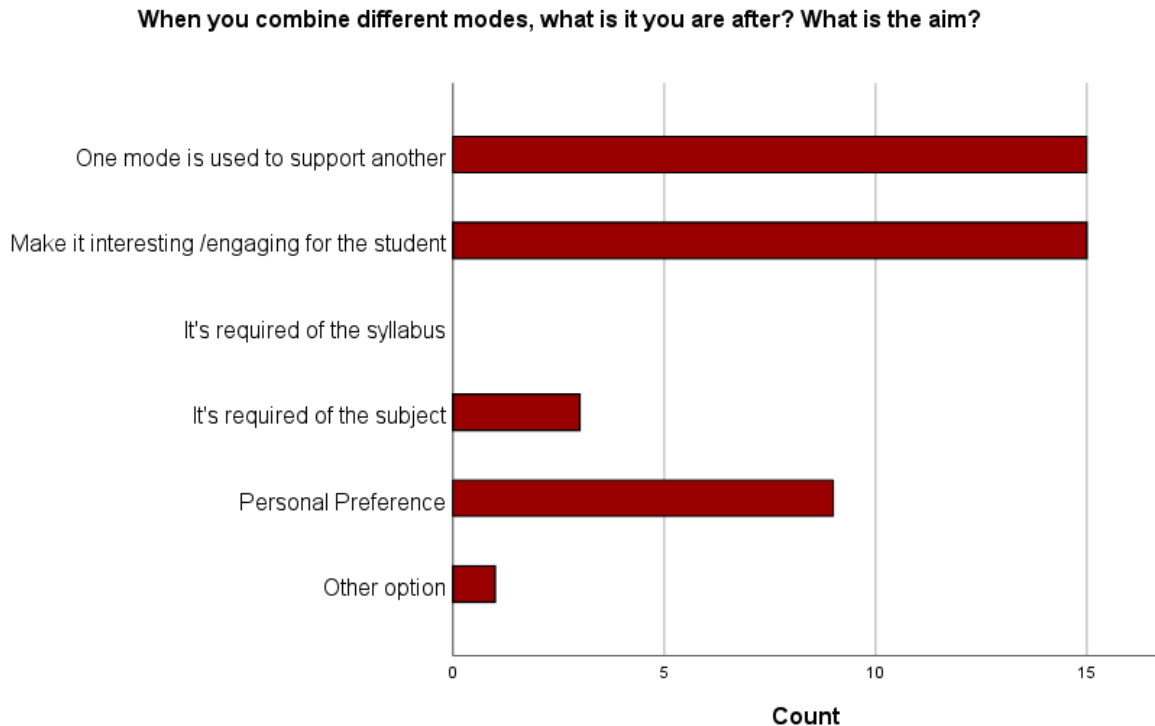
To summarize: the combination of modes most respondents claimed to use was text + image. The modes combined the least by the respondents were image + body language, followed by sound + body language. Notably, despite body language being the most used mode according to the respondents (see 4.1.4), the combination of modes together with body language had most of the respondents claiming they use them very rarely”.

4.3 Aim of combining modes

On the question of what the aims of combining certain modes were, 15 participants responded that it was due to one mode supporting the other. The same number of participants (15), although not the same participants, also responded that it was to make it interesting or engaging for the student. For 9 of the participants, it came down to personal preference. 3 of the participants claimed it was required of the subject. Only one participant chose the “other” option and specified that they combined to reach as many students as possible.

Figure 6

When you combine different modes, what are you after? What is the aim?



4.4 Ease of use among the respondents

The respondents replied that text was the mode they found most easy to work with as teachers, closely followed by image, and then sound (see Fig. 7). Only a small number of respondents claimed that the easiest mode to work with was body language. When it came to what mode they thought worked better for their students (see Fig. 8), there was an even split between text and sound, closely followed by image.

In sum, a majority of respondents claimed text was the easiest mode to work with as a teacher. For students, the respondents claimed that there was about an even split between text and sound, with a smaller number of participants claiming image is easier to work with for students.

Figure 7

Easiest modes to work with as a teacher

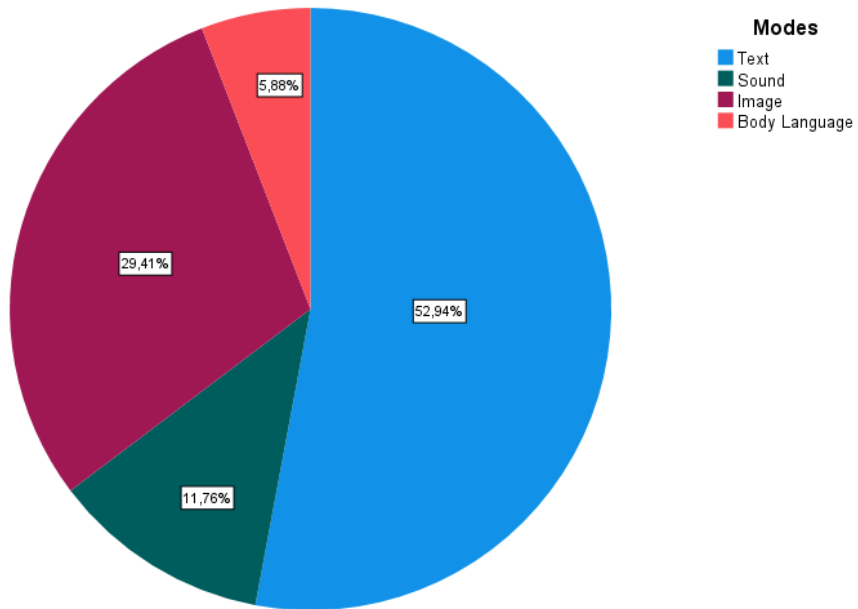
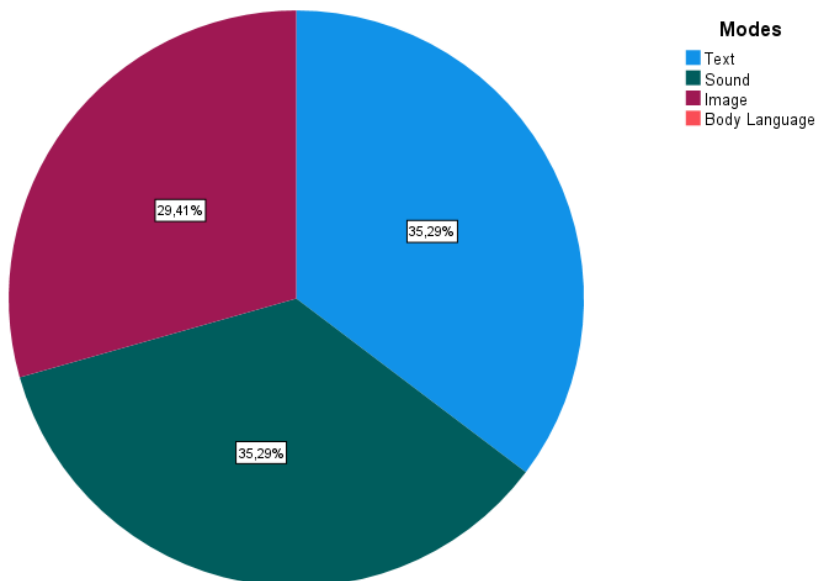


Figure 8

Easiest modes to work with for students



As a follow-up to the question of ease of use, the respondents were asked to specify what about these modes made them easier to use. Three general themes came up among the answers: *availability*, *communication*, and *affordances of the modes*.

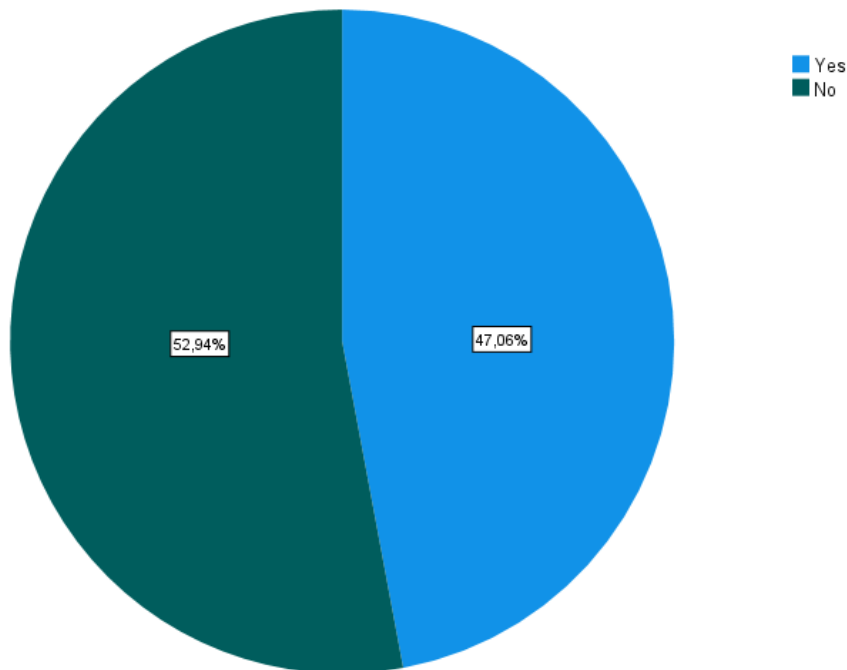
In the case of *availability*, respondents seem to be pointing to the ease of accessibility for teaching materials that display a certain mode. For example, a respondent who marked text and sound as being easiest for them to work with claimed that the availability of teaching resources is what made them choose those modes. Similarly, another set of respondents who chose text as their mode of choice also claimed that text was “easy to access”. In these cases, it seems the respondents prefer these modes because they are readily available for them in their teaching environment.

Another common theme among respondents was the role *communication* with students played in their teaching. One respondent who chose sound claimed that “Sound is very straightforward and is not affected by reading disabilities [sic] and can easily be used to communicate English as a language”. Another respondent who chose sound stated that they “speak English and expect spoken replies in English”. Conversely, a respondent who chose text claimed that there is “less room for misinterpretation” in that mode. Another respondent affirmed that they think students take easier to texts, claiming many of their students “are more comfortable with reading and writing rather than interacting verbally, mostly because they are scared of speaking English”.

Some of the respondents claimed that the modes helped engage their *students*. One respondent compared the differences in the preference of modes between teachers and students, stating that they think students appreciate images more, whereas teachers feel more comfortable using texts. Another respondent also attested to the impact images as a mode has on students, saying “a picture let’s loose [sic] your imagination” and comparing it to a text which they considered to be more static in its affordances.

4.5 Respondent's perceptions of their use of multimodality

Finally, the respondents were asked if they were making use of multimodality in their teaching as much as they would prefer. A little over half of the respondents claimed they did not use multimodality as much as they would prefer.



The respondents who answered “no” to this question were asked to specify what prevents them from using multimodality as much as they would like. From these answers, three broad themes could be found: *time*, *material*, and *education*. *Time* was by far the most common among the themes, with many respondents claiming that they did not have the time to either plan or evaluate their lessons to properly plan multimodally. For example, one respondent stated that “it takes more time planning it, time I often don’t have”. In a similar vein, a few respondents also stated that it is sometimes “hard to find the right material”. One respondent suggested the two are linked, claiming they lacked the time to find suitable material and plan their teaching. Finally, a few answers also suggested some of the respondents thought themselves lacking the education to tackle multimodality. One respondent claimed they “need more knowledge”, and stated the following:

I did an optional course in graphic novels and dramatisation during a summer to add that in my teaching. But honestly, five years at uni [sic] gave me nothing to actually use multimodality as a teacher. The system needs fixing to support the teacher-trainees to actually do what we are supposed to do

5 Discussion

This section will discuss the results based on my two research questions. To start off with, the respondent's use of modes will be discussed, and the respondent's reasons for using the modes.

5.1 Respondent's use of modes in EFL

All the respondents claimed they used text as a mode either very frequently or almost every lesson. On a scale from 1-4 (see 3.4), this resulted in a mean score of 3,5 for the text mode. From this, we can infer that text as a mode is a common presence in the respondent's EFL classrooms.

Secondly, image had a majority of respondents claiming they used it frequently but was also the mode that one respondent claimed to use very rarely. Image as a mode was claimed by as many respondents to be used almost every lesson as it was used rarely. Image also had the lowest mean score among the modes surveyed, with a mean score of 2,9.

Sound as a mode had 11 out of 17 respondents claiming they used it frequently. Conversely, 3 out of 17 respondents claimed they used sound rarely in their EFL teaching. The same number of respondents, also 3 out of 17, claimed they used it almost every lesson.

With body language, while 11 respondents claimed they used it almost every lesson. However, one of the respondents replied that they used body language rarely, and one claimed they used it rarely.

The respondents seem to be overwhelmingly familiar with text as a mode. This is also true for the respondent's combination of modes. In addition to text being the mode that most of the respondents claimed they used frequently or almost every lesson, the combination of modes text + image was also the mode combination that had the highest mean score, a score of 3,3 (see Table 3). This correlates with results from Nabhan and Hidayat (2010), who in their study found that the material in reading activities a majority of the time is printed texts and other printed material, and the supporting media the majority of the time is pictures and

images. Additionally, Jakobssen and Tonessen (2018) also mention how teachers largely see the visual as scaffolding for other verbal elements.

It is also noteworthy that among the combination of modes, text + body language was the mode that no respondent claimed to use “very rarely” (see Fig. 5). A possible reason for this could be the lecture style of classroom instruction, in which teachers and instructors use the affordances given to them by the classroom. Morell (2018) notes the multimodal ensembles that exist within the lecture style of teaching, gaze, gesture, and text on the board.

As stated above, the respondents reported that the other most common mode aside from text in use was body language, with a mean score of 3,5. (see Table 1). However, in conjunction with this, the modes claimed to be combined with body language have a lower mean score, with Image + Body Language being the lowest with a mean score of 2,2. In addition, only 5.9 % of the respondents claim that body language is the mode they are most comfortable with, and none of the respondents claimed that they think body language is easier to use for students. One conclusion that can be drawn from this is that while teachers are aware of their use of body language in the classroom, they are unfamiliar with the affordances of body language as a mode that plays a significant part in classroom interaction. The results of this study then align with Park when he mentions that not every teacher is able to “spot the moment” (Park 2017, p. 135). Teachers who fail to pick up on multimodal clues in the EFL classroom can hinder the learner from the opportunity to shape their contribution there. Therefore, Park argues, teachers need training in classroom observation, and in turn learn to better develop an understanding of how multimodality acts in the classroom. However, this does not imply that teachers do not use body language in the classroom, but simply that they are uncertain of what forms their use of body language in the classroom take.

Finally, over a majority of the respondents claimed that they are not using multimodality “as much as they would like”. Because of the nature of multimodal teaching practices, and the complexity involved in implementing them (Camiciottoli 2018), EFL teachers may be deterred from properly engaging with multimodal literacy teaching. To better understand teacher’s difficulties with implementing multimodal teaching practices, an analysis of their answers follows below.

5.2 Respondent’s reasons for combining modes

To begin with, many of the participants claimed they combined modes in order to make “one mode support the other”. As Jakobsson and Tonessen (2018) note, when teachers combine

modes, it is usually about increasing the aesthetic engagement of the students instead of understanding the diversity of modes present in multimodal meaning-making. The study cannot confirm if this is the case; however, a majority of the teachers surveyed claimed that they combined modes to make modes *interesting and engaging for the student*. This correlates with what previous authors have had to say on the topic. Nelson and Johnson (2014), for example, state that by allowing students to build semiotic connections “between personal, indexical, symbolic and cultural meanings” (p. 59) through the expression in and between different modes, we allow the learners the possibility to discover awareness of embodied and unexpressed knowledge, something the authors claim is an important and overlooked aspect of language comprehension and use. Indeed, the respondents of this study seem to echo this sentiment in at least some regard: a number of respondents indicate that they understand certain modes to do a better job of expressing certain affordances to the students, such as the respondent who claims that a picture “let’s loose the imagination” (4.4). This also correlates with studies by Jiang (2017), who claim multimodal teaching methods allow students a sense of autonomy, competence, and purpose.

Several of the respondents also argue for the affordances of sound as a means of communication, pointing to the importance of reaching out to their students. Some of the answers given by the participants possibly suggest that they value sound as a mode on its own terms, such as the respondent who stated that they speak in English, and the students reply back in English (4.5). Stone (2012) argues that language is “the most significant” (p. 314) mode of communication. However, as Morello notes, students’ language comprehension “does not only depend on their spoken and written competence of English”, but also on the language instructor’s “use of space, gaze and gestures” (Morello 2018, p. 78). Keeping this in mind, it is interesting to note that none of the teachers considered body language as an easy mode for the students to use (see Fig. 7). Taken together, this could possibly imply that the teachers have a limited understanding of their student’ means of communication in the classroom.

When asked about what the benefit of combining modes is, none of the respondents claimed that it is required by the syllabus, while 3 respondents chose that it is “required of the subject”. Since it is not possible to ask the respondents to expand on this topic, we cannot make any assumptions as to what parts of the subject they consider encourage multimodal teaching. One possible explanation is that they interpret the course goals in English for Upper Secondary School in Sweden as being part of the subject of English.

Formulations such as “[s]tudents should be given the opportunity to interact in speech and writing, and to produce spoken language and texts of different kinds, both in their own and together with others, using different aids and media” exists in the current syllabus for English in Sweden (Skolverket 2012, p. 1). This could be one possible way the respondents interpreted the question. In terms of multimodal pedagogy, Cocceta (2018) demonstrated how multimodality could be successfully integrated into the syllabus of English language teaching.

When answering why the respondents found certain modes easier, three themes could be elucidated; availability, student communication, and student engagement. Concerning the availability of multimodal resources when developing classroom material and lesson planning, Mohammadi (2017) notes that teachers should be aware that material development has a multimodal nature, and suggests that a teaching activity for teaching students of EFL could be to assess how well they take advantage of multimodal semiotic resources in their lesson planning. Perhaps increased awareness of how teachers employ semiotic resources could aid teachers in engaging with their planning multimodally. Most of the respondents who chose communication associated student-teacher interaction with sound. However, as Park (2017) notes, there is more to communication than just language and sound. Considering the impact that nonverbal channels have, they argue, it is “critical” that all instructors are aware of student’s nonverbal cues. However, a few respondents pointed to the affordances a mode can have in helping engage with their students. From this, it can be inferred at least some of the teachers understand the importance of multimodal interaction with regards to student’s language learning.

In addition, three themes were also elucidated when respondents answered what prevented them from being “more multimodal”: time, resources, and education. Özkul and Ortactepe (2017, p. 874) identified that teachers in their study were unwilling to try new multimodal methods due to time constraints. Selander and Kress (2010, p. 35) comment on the idea of *tempo*. Tempo is how much time is allocated toward a certain learning activity. Time, they argue, is often crucial in deciding how involved a certain learning task can be in the educational context. Here, it can be argued that other perspectives on teaching hinder the desire of the teachers to be “more multimodal” in the lesson planning. Indeed, as Kress and Selander (2010) argue, what and how many subjects the syllabus can include is often an issue in questions of tempo. Taken together with what is written above, it can be argued that the curriculum, together with the current Swedish education system, simply does not allow teachers to make full use of multimodality in their classroom and lesson planning.

As for teacher training into multimodality, this correlates with results by Nabhan and Hidayat (2018) and Jakobsson and Tønnessen (2018), who argue that English teaching and learning is still dominated by a traditional conception of literacy and a “four skills” approach to EFL teaching (Nabhan and Hidayat, p. 198), and like here, fails to adapt to the present, globalized and technologically integrated world. Jakobsson and Tønnessen (2018) argue that, without the training of teachers to pay attention to modes beyond text, much potential for learning is lost.

5.3 Limitations and areas for future research

The current study brings with it several limitations. The generalizability of the study must be addressed, as a study with a sample size of 17 randomly selected participants is very small. In addition, as the experiences of the respondents were self-reported, no definitive conclusions can be drawn about the actual practice of multimodality. As stated in 1.3, each individual mode cannot be separated from their use in multimodal ensembles. Furthermore, no specific definitions were given to the respondents for the individual modes. Therefore, the only thing this study can claim to answer is the teachers’ self-reported multimodal practices according to simplified definitions. The generalizability of the study is, thus, limited but can still be used to give a general idea of Swedish EFL teachers’ perceptions of multimodality.

Here should also be mentioned the wide span of multimodality as a discipline. This study investigated general multimodality practices analysing self-reported multimodal usage among EFL teachers. Here, studies into specific multimodal literacy practices and their affordances can also be made, or specific investigation of multimodal meaning-making.

This was a quantitative study that aimed to investigate the causes of the use of multimodality within the Swedish EFL classroom. A qualitative study could further investigate the attitudes and opinions of Swedish EFL teachers with regards to multimodality. Furthermore, since a number of case studies have been conducted internationally on the subject of multimodal instruction, one could possibly be conducted within the Swedish EFL context. Because of the changes in the Swedish EFL curriculum, it would also prove fruitful to understand how it affects Swedish EFL teacher’s multimodal literacies. As research has shown, multimodality has been proven to be an effective tool for the development of multiple literacy skills (Ruan 2015) (Cárcamo et. al et al 2016) (Pachero 2018).

However, multimodal literacy practices have also shown to take effort to implement (Camiciotto 2018). Here, a case study implementing multimodal literacy practices could show

both the benefits of multimodal teaching and investigate how Swedish EFL teachers interpret their affordances.

5.4 Pedagogical implications

Nearly half of the respondents in this study claimed that they were not as multimodal as they would like to be. Several studies have pointed to the positive effects of multimodality on EFL instruction (Ruan 2018, Cárcamo et. al 2016, Pachero 2018). Regardless, many of the teachers surveyed still claimed they largely preferred text as a mode over other modes. It is worth keeping in mind that “text” in this study is narrowly defined. From a multimodal perspective, a “text” is a collection of modes that the meaning maker constructs to impart meaning (Jewitt et. al. 2016). However, the teachers surveyed approached text as a simple and unproblematic tool of meaning-making. As stated previously, this implies that they are still largely bound to the traditional views of EFL literacy, something that is increasingly becoming an issue in a more technologically advanced and globalized world. In contrast with this, “body language” was the mode most of the teachers claimed they used most frequently, implying that the teachers surveyed at least show some understanding of how their own multimodal cues work in the classroom. Taken together with the fact that none of the teachers surveyed claimed “body language” was an easy mode to understand for students, this has wider implications about how teachers consider their use of modes associated with body language in the EFL classroom.

As was noted above, the National Agency of Education has previously called for teachers to expand their understanding of multimodality to better adapt to newer ideas of digital literacy. With the shift to distance teaching, new technologies are becoming an increasingly more prominent part of teaching resources for future EFL teachers. However, as the study indicated, the EFL teachers surveyed in this study still largely kept to traditional understandings of literacies and preferred text as a mode. In addition, while they claimed to understand the importance of body language in their interaction, it was implied that they did not share an understanding of how these modes affect classroom teaching. Teaching the importance of Multimodal literacies and multimodal interaction to teachers, to give them a better understanding of an expanded view of language teaching is something many authors (Hasset and Curwood 2009, Sankey et.al. 2010, Camiciottoli and Campoy-Cubillo 2018) have argued. This study calls attention to a similar urgency among Swedish EFL teachers.

At the time of writing, both national syllabus and subject plans in Swedish schools are due for a revision due to an increased focus on an expansion on digital literacy. What could be considered an implication for the way multimodality is applied in the Swedish EFL classroom is the way in which educators claim that it is limited in its use: either through time constraints, a lack of resources, or means of convenience. It was discussed above how tempo is an aspect of multimodal teaching and planning; the fact that teachers and teaching students feel they are not afforded enough time and resources for multimodal teaching in EFL, while still sustaining a traditional outlook on text as a mode, has consequences for the role of multimodality in Swedish EFL teaching. Revisions of the Swedish curriculum are currently in development in the time of writing this study (April-May 2021), to be put into action. According to the Swedish National Agency for Education, the new curriculum aims to reduce the parts of the content deemed “too involved” with relation to time spent teaching. It remains to be seen if this new curriculum will aid teachers in their multimodal skills or become another hindrance in multimodal EFL teaching.

6 Conclusion

This study had the aim of investigating what self-reported modes were the most frequently occurring among Swedish EFL teachers. This was done due to the interest in the impact of multimodality in Swedish EFL contexts in conjunction with the adoption of new technological developments in the EFL classroom. As such, two research questions were formed: What self-reported modes and combination of modes appear most frequently among Swedish EFL teachers? and What reasons do EFL teachers give for using certain modes and a combination of modes in their teaching? To answer these questions, a quantitative survey study was conducted. Below are the results it yielded.

In answering the first research question, the study found that the frequency of text as a mode scored highly among the teachers surveyed, with a mean score of 3,5. This implies that the classrooms of the EFL teachers surveyed are largely dominated by text-based materials. In addition, it was found that text + image scored the highest frequency as a combination of modes. This indicated that the teachers surveyed shared a view of the visual as a complement to the verbal.

It also found that the frequency of body language scored equally as high, also with a mean score of 3,5. However, when surveying the modes combined, mode combinations with body language ranked slightly lower. In addition, only 5.9% claimed they found body

language to be the easiest mode to use. It was concluded that while the respondents surveyed are aware of their use of body language in the classroom, the results indicate that they are not properly aware of its affordances.

In answering the second research question, the study found that one of the most common reasons teachers give for combining modes is that one mode supports the other. However, it was also noted that it is uncertain if the teachers understand the full potential of meaning-making associated with multimodal teaching. The other reason for combining modes was to make it interesting and engaging for the student. This was found to be in line with contemporary research that argues multimodal pedagogies work to make students' language learning engaging and open up new avenues for student's self-empowerment.

Finally, considering the teacher's self-reported answers that they either lacked time, resources, or education to properly engage with multimodality in their classrooms, it was suggested that teachers should be given the opportunity to be helped to better understand the role multimodality plays in their classrooms, and it questioned what role the new Swedish syllabus plays in shaping teacher's future conceptions of multimodality.

7 Reference list

- Bezemer, J. & Jewitt, C. (2010). *Multimodal analysis: Key issues*. Research Methods in Linguistics.
- Camiciottoli, B., & Campoy-Cubillo, M. (2018). Introduction: The nexus of multimodality, multimodal literacy, and English language teaching in research and practice in higher education settings. *System*, 77, 1.
- Cárcamo, M. & Cartes, R. & Velásquez, N. & Diaz Larenas, C. (2016). THE IMPACT OF MULTIMODAL INSTRUCTION ON THE ACQUISITION OF VOCABULARY. *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada*. 55. 129-154. 10.1590/010318134842170942.
- Cazden, Courtney. (1996). A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures. *Harvard Educational Review*.
- Cocetta, F. (2018). Developing university students' multimodal communicative competence: Field research into multimodal text studies in English. *System*. 77.10.1016/j.system.2018.01.004.
- Danielsson, K., (2013). Multimodalt meningsskapande i klassrummet. I C. Hedman & Å. Wedin (Red.), *Flerspråkighet, Litteracitet och Multimodalitet* (s. 169-171). Lund, Swede, Studentlitteratur.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects*. (5th ed.) Maidenhead, England: McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. & Taguchi, T. (2010). *Questionnaires in second language research: construction, administration, and processing*. (2. ed.) New York, N.Y: Routledge.
- Eisenlauer, V. (2020) The EFL-YouTube remix: Empowering multimodal and computational literacies for EFL purposes, *Journal of Visual Literacy*, 39:3-4, 149-166, DOI:10.1080/1051144X.2020.1826220
- Hassett, D & Curwood, J. (2009). Theories and Practices of Multimodal Education: The Instructional Dynamics of Picture Books and Primary Classrooms. *The Reading Teacher International Reading Association*.
- Jakobsen, I. K., and Tønnessen, E. S. (2018). A Design-Oriented Analysis of Multimodality in English as a Foreign Language. *Designs for Learning*, 10(1), 40–52, DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.16993/dfl.89>
- Kress, G.R., (2010). *Multimodality: a social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London, England: Routledge.

- Kress, G.R. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: the modes and media of contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.
- Lee, S-Y., Gloria L. Y-H, & Chin, T-C. (2021) Practicing multiliteracies to enhance EFL learners' meaning making process and language development: a multimodal Problem-based approach, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 34:1-2, 66-91, DOI:10.1080/09588221.2019.1614959
- McKay, S. (2006). *Researching second language classrooms*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Mohammadi, Javad E., Shirvan, Majid E. & Akbari, O. (2018). Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Teaching Students Developing Classroom Materials. *Teaching in Higher Education*. 24. 10.1080/13562517.2018.1527763.
- Morell, T. (2018). *Multimodal competence and effective interactive lecturing*. *System*, 77, 70-79.
- Nelson, Mark E. & Johnson, Neil H. (2014) The shape of joy, the colour of fear: multimodal abduction in the foreign language classroom, *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 9:1, 45-62, DOI:[10.1080/1554480X.2014.877556](https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2014.877556)
- Norte Fernández-Pacheco, N. (2018). The Impact of Multimodal Ensembles on Audio-Visual Comprehension: Implementing Vodcasts in EFL Contexts. *Multimodal Communication*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.1515/mc-2018-0002>
- Özkul, S, Ortaçtepe, D. The use of video feedback in teaching process-approach EFL writing. *TESOL Journal*. 2017; 8: 862– 877. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.362>
- Park, J. (2017). Multimodality as an Interactional Resource for Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC). *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*. 3. 121-138. 10.32601/ejal.460977.
- Peirce, C. S. (1977). Semiotics and signification. In C. S. Hardwick (Ed.), *Semiotics and signification. The correspondence between Charles S. Peirce and Lady Victoria Welby*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Peng, J-E. (2019). The roles of multimodal pedagogic effects and classroom environment in willingness to communicate in English. *System*. 82. 10.1016/j.system.2019.04.006.
- Ruan, X. (2015). The Role of Multimodal in Chinese EFL Students' Autonomous Listening Comprehension & Multiliteracies. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5, 549-554.

- Sankey, M. & Gardiner, M. (2010). Engaging students through multimodal learning environments: The journey continues. *ASCILITE 2010 - The Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education*.
- Saussure, F. (1959). *Course in general linguistics*. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Selander, S. & Kress, G.R. (2010). *Design för lärande: ett multimodalt perspektiv*. Stockholm: Norstedt.
- Skolverket (2020). Covid-19-pandemins påverkan på skolväsendet. Retrieved from : <https://www.skolverket.se/publikationsserier/regeringsuppdrag/2020/covid-19-pandemins-paverkan-pa-skolvasendet-delredovisning-1>
- Skolverket. (2011) Syllabus for the English Subject in upper secondary school. Retrieved from: <https://www.skolverket.se/download/18.4fc05a3f164131a74181056/1535372297288/English-swedish-school.pdf>
- Stone P. (2012) Learners Performing Tasks in a Japanese EFL Classroom: A Multimodal and Interpersonal Approach to Analysis. *RELC Journal*. 2012;43(3):313-330.
doi:[10.1177/0033688212463287](https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688212463287)
- Systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis of teaching students developing classroom
- Zhang, Y. (2018). Analysis of Using Multimodal Feedback in Writing Instruction from EFL Learners' Perspective. *English Language and Literature Studies*.

8 Appendix A. The Questionnaire

Avsnitt 1 av 2

EFL teaching and multimodality

Hello! My name is Filip Karlsson, and I'm a student at Gothenburg university investigating the use of multimodality in EFL as part of my final degree project.

Multimodality is the idea of multiple modes developed by humans to convey meaning: text, image, gestures and so forth. On their own, they have different affordances and they can be combined to create meaning. One example of multimodality is text + sound + image all being used in tandem to create a movie. Other examples of multimodality is a road sign or a textbook (combining image + text), and so forth.

In this study, I aim to investigate how teachers apply multimodality in their EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching, and their reasons for doing so.

The questionnaire will take around 5-10 minutes. Participation is voluntary. Your responses will be anonymous, and your data will only be used in this study and nowhere else. You may at any time choose to opt out.

I understand all of the above and I consent to being a participant in this study.

Yes

No

Avsnitt 2 av 2

Multimodality is the idea of multiple modes developed by humans to convey meaning: text, image, gestures and so forth. On their own, they have different affordances and they can be combined to create meaning. One example of multimodality is text + sound + image all being used in tandem to create a movie. Other examples of multimodality is a road sign or a textbook (combining image + text), and so forth.

In the following series of questions, you will be asked how you apply multimodality in your EFL teaching, and why.

How often do you use these modes in your EFL teaching?

Text

Very rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Image

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Sound

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Body Language

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

How likely are you, on average, to combine these modes in your EFL teaching?

Text + Image

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Image + Sound

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Text + Sound

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Text + Body Language

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Text + Body Language

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Sound + Body Language

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

Text + Sound + Image

Very Rarely 1 2 3 4 Almost Every Lesson

When you combine different modes, what is it you are after? What is the aim?

X One mode is used to support another

X Make it interesting / engaging for the student

X It's required of the syllabus

X It's required of the subject

X Personal Preference

Other

If you selected “other” above, please specify here:

...

Is there any one mode you feel is easier to work with?

For you as a teacher

Text

Image

Sound

Body Language

For students

Text

Image

Sound

Body language

Regarding the last 2 questions: what about these modes make them easier to use, either for you as a teacher or your students?

...

As you using multimodality in your teaching as much as you would like to?

Yes

No

If you answered no to the previous question: what prevents you from using multimodality as much as you would like to?

...

