Multimodal Resources to Enrich Meaning Construction by EFL Teacher

Eka Apriani
Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Curup
eka.apriani@iaincurup.ac.id
Umu Arifatul Azizah
Universitas Sebelas Maret
workazizah@gmail.com
Ruly Morgana
Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Curup
rulymorgana@gmail.com
Syafryadin
University of Bengkulu
syafryadin@unib.ac.id

Corresponding email: eka.apriani@iaincurup.ac.id

Abstract

This study aimed at exploring qualitatively the types and the applicative principles of multimodal resources which were utilized in teaching English. Eight Indonesian English teachers having varied teaching experiences were engaged as the participants in this study. They were selected purposively in accordance with several considerations. Those were that they owned sufficient teaching experiences, and currently were graduate English students. This condition could guarantee that they owned adequate practice and familiarity to the issues, knowledge, and technical terms related to multimodality and multimodal resources so that they managed to provide the expected data. The information regarding the types of multimodal resources was obtained from questionnaire, and that about the applicative principles was explored through interview. This study found 12 types of multimodal resources utilized by the participants in that they ranged into: speech, body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, facial expression, music, writing, layout, graphics, pictures or photographs, animations or moving images, and videos. In addition this study also provided in details the data concerning with the applicative principles of multimodal resources. This study was essential because it could be one of required references for Indonesian English teachers to develop the meaningfulness of English instructions.

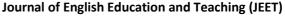**Keywords:** multimodal resources, applicative principles, English teaching

Introduction

Something novel has been proven and witnessed about todays' generation in that nowadays' students, started from they are young to their current ages, have been dealing with multimodality in their days. They are even called digital natives by virtue of their closeness to multimodal resources such as PlayStation, computer, and mobile phones (Kress et al, 2001). This has been the nature of their generation. Those resources become social semiotic resources or modes for their communication either. Since those modes are parts of their needs, automatically if grounded into the context of learning at school for example learning English, the teacher is also required to fulfill these needs with teaching them through multimodal pedagogy and certainly using multimodal resources for meaning construction (Kress et al., 2001; Jewitt et al., 2001; Hampel, 2006; and Salmon, 2011, Suherdi, 2015).

Fundamentally, while teaching English as a second or foreign language in the class, the communication which is maintained between the teacher and students and among students uses not only linguistics resources but also non-linguistics resources. The huge role played by semiotic resources other than linguistics ones makes the nature of communication is always multimodal (Kress, 2001). The term multimodal in this sense portrays the situation where there are encountered the use of several modes such as speech, body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, facial expression, music, soundtrack, writing, layout, graphics, tables, pictures or images, photographs, 3D objects, animations or moving images, videos, etc., in that the use of those modes is combined, purposively undertaken at once, and functional for making meaning (Eksi & Yakisik, 2015). The meanings in this sense are sensitized and enriched so that some discourses needed to be conveyed within English classroom interaction are delivered appropriately. The utilization of multimodal sources facilitates the teacher to provide English materials and helps students receive the sense of the materials to achieve lesson plan purposes (Apriani, et.al, 2020). In linguistics perspective, those resources are called social semiotic resources, and pedagogically they are occasionally uttered as multimodal resources.

In the context of teaching English in Indonesia, students have also been

following the stream of ICT environment, one which is entirely multimodal. They have been dealing with digital equipment in their days, one of them such as cellphones which have become a part of their life to fulfill their needs like entertainment and social networking. However, they are still reluctant to apply those resources for learning objectives. Furthermore, the proximity of ICT use to students also generates them to ultimately deal with both positive and negative consequences of ICT. The positive consequence is ICT can improve students' achievement (Apriani & Hidayah, 2019; and also develop their character (Apriani, 2016; Apriani,et.al, 2019). The Negative consequence is ICT gives students chance to access forbidden link (Apriani, 2015). Therefore, this situation needs to be controlled appropriately by creating English education which has the senses of developing students' good character, leading education based on cultural context, optimizing English mastery, integrating ICT into English pedagogy, developing the success of communication, and prioritizing the real use of English as the basis of assessment (Suherdi, 2015).

In addition, to simply comprehend the above needs, to capably thrive in building character (Kendiani, 2020), cultural context, English mastery, ICT based pedagogy, and successfully real use of communication, English teaching and learning process in Indonesia should be assisted by multimodal resources. These resources could powerfully sensitize meaning construction as required above (Kiernan, J. E. 2015).

By virtue of the condition and needs based on EFL teaching in Indonesia and the potential use of multimodal resources for mainly enriching meaningfulness of English pedagogy, this study is undertaken to probe into various types of multimodal resources utilized by Indonesian English teachers, and the applicative principles of using those resources in English classroom. This study is considered essential since it reveals some implications toward English teaching and learning andragogy approach (Manangsa, 2020) in Indonesia regarding how varied and applicative multimodal resources are as utilized by the teachers. This study is also crucial to be one of the resources for Indonesian English teachers to understand more about various types and the applicative principles of multimodal resources for teaching English.

Research Methodology

In this study, the data were qualitatively gained through questionnaire and interview to Indonesian English teachers who owned varied experiences. The participants in this study, the English teachers, were purposively selected in accordance with the criterion that they had been familiar with the technical terms and contents related to the issues of multimodality, multimodal resources, and social semiotic resources since they were graduate students and had been dealing with these terms adequately. Eight English teachers were given the questionnaire which investigated various types of multimodal resources used in teaching English, and they were subsequently interviewed with using semi-structured interview to probe into the applicative principles of multimodal resources in teaching English. Their familiarity to this study issue was essential to be the indicator of selecting the participants of this study in order that they managed to furnish conceivable data of this study. The obtained data of this study were then analyzed by using Miles and Huberman's (1994) model that ranged into three major steps including data reduction, data displays, and drawing or verifying conclusion.

Findings and Discussion,

Findings

The types of multimodal resources used by eight participants in this study were identified from the questionnaire data. These data could be seen in the following table.

TABLE 1
Multimodal Resources Used by Each
Participant

Participants	Types of multimodal resources which are used
Participant 1	Speech, body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, facial expression, music, writing, layout, graphics, pictures or photographs, animations or moving images, and videos
Participant 2	Speech, body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, facial expression, music, writing, layout, graphics, pictures or photographs, animations or moving images, and videos

Participant 3	Body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, facial expression, music, pictures or photographs, and videos
Participant 4	Body language or gesture, facial expression, and layout
Participant 5	Body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, music, and pictures or Photographs.
Participant 6	Body language or gesture, and pictures or photographs
Participant 7	Body language or gesture, auditory elements, verbal expression, music, graphics, pictures or photographs, animations or moving images, and videos
Participant 8	Body language or gesture, and verbal expression

From the above table, it can be grouped some multimodal resources utilized by the participants while teaching English as tabulated below:

TABLE II
Types of Multimodal Resources

No	Types of multimodal resources used by the participants	Number of participants who use multimodal resources
1	Speech	2 Participants
2	Body language or gesture	8 Participants
3	Auditory elements	5 Participants
4	Verbal expression	6 Participants
5	Facial expression	4 Participants
6	Music	5 Participants
7	Writing	2 Participants
8	Layout	3 Participants
9	Graphics	3 Participants
10	Picture, images, or photographs	6 Participants
11	Animations or moving images	3 Participants
12	Videos	5 Participants

These 12 types of multimodal resources were also in line with some instances of resources portrayed by Kress et al (2005); Anstey & Bull (2006); Kress (2010); Eksi & Yakisik (2015).

Discussions

The information regarding the applicative principles of using multimodal resources was obtained from conducting interview to the participants. The participants portrayed various applicative principles of utilizing multimodal resources while teaching English in the classroom.

(1)Speech

Using speech as a multimodal resource could be applied by expressing intentions indirectly: *"I like to speak indirectly to express some certain intentions to trigger my students' interest and curiosity to guess or predict what I mean. I believe this way can habituate them to catch the discourse of spoken utterances (Participant 1)"*. While giving linguistics input, conveying speech under inductive approach also became the other way to make the teacher's speech as a multimodal resource since this way contained meaning making cue which challenged students to interpret the given speech: *"Usually through giving questions, for example the 'adjective' material, I deliver questions by using "how". So, first students understand the function of adjective without that they should know the term "adjective" in prior (Participant 2)"*. This result is in line with Syafryadin (2017) who said that speech is useful in teaching because with speech, lecturer or teacher can deliver their materials.

(2)Body Language or Gesture

Body language or gesture could be used as to sensitize and give additional clear meaning towards the utterances that the teacher delivered: *"I use body language while teaching. For example, I touch my ear when I say (listen) and something like that (Participant 1)"; "I often do wave hand while saying no (Participant 4)"; "It is a teaching aid that is naturally relevant to the words that I said (Participant 2; Participant 5)"*. In addition, as the sense of multimodal resource, body language or gesture could also be used independently without following the spoken utterances. Through this way, the meaning was totally made by the movement of gesture: *"I use my head to node or shake to express yes or no" (Participant 8); "I use eye contact to make sure they understand the materials (Participant 7)"*.

Another technical function of body language as a multimodal resource could be purposively applied for defining contexts, utterances, or words because a mere explanation could not always reach the intended meaning upon things being introduced. Body movement or gesture naturally displayed the actual form of action which was meaningful and easily comprehended: *"As I am defining contextual meaning of an English vocabulary to my students, I use*

physical movement and gestures to specify the meaning (Participant 6)"; "This way facilitates me in the conveyance of information and helps students catch the sense quickly (Participant 3)". This result study is almost the same as Syafryadin (2017 & 2020) and Syafryadin, et al. (2019) who found that body language or gesture is important in speaking and it can be beneficial for the language teachers in teaching English.

(3) Auditory Element

Auditory element could be utilized as primary input or source for a particular lesson such as listening: *"It is used depending on the skill that I teach, usually I use auditory element in teaching listening skill in language laboratory equipped by a computer and English native speakers' recorded sounds (participant 2)"; "I use English audio containing English native speakers' sounds as a source of information getting students to answer several questions in listening section (Participant 5)".* In addition, it could be brought to the class for exemplifying students towards the authentic English input such as pronunciation: *"I use English audio to make students deal with and comprehend the lesson more easily, e.g., pronunciation (Participant 1)".*

In another condition, the utilization of auditory element was carried out as a learning media which was functionally and purposively entertaining but helpful to provide some linguistics input to students such as songs; *"I use English songs while teaching students English vocabularies (Participant 3)".* In conveying and organizing learning activities, to make the process of learning interesting, auditory element could also be a source to design creative learning activities which lead students to deal with natural and authentic English environment and to cope with reasoning skill while communicating with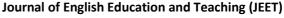 using English: *"I like to use English recording to serve students with an illustration in that this spoken illustration provides a challenging case which needs to be solved by students in a group discussion (Participant 7)".*

(4) Verbal Expression

The use of verbal expression as a multimodal resource could be implemented by differing stress, pitch, or intonation while the teacher was speaking to emphasize a particular intention: *"Usually I increase the volume of my voice when I am expressing something to be emphasized. It can be like when I am emphasizing a contrary idea from the previous idea when I am explaining something to students. For example, I say 'this information is important, buuuuuut we need to be selective to take such this information into discussion'. I stress the word 'but' to make more meaning saying that the contrary idea that I said is more important to be paid attention to. (Participant 2)"; "When I am asking a yes/no question to my students, I increase the pitch of my voice in the end to inform students that I need a clear but short answer (Participant 3)";" While describing a particular condition of a certain thing or phenomena, I also often differ my intonation (Participant 5)"; "For certain Words which are important I usually put different stress or tones (Participant 7; Participant 8)".*

Another use of verbal expression could be indicated while making meaning after another mode to emphasize more the sense or discourse of the previous mode: *"For example, when I say 10 more minutes, I will point out to the clock and speak louder (Participant 1)"*. The volume or pitch such in this example was made louder to provide more sensitive discourse meaning of the previous mode, body language, pointing out to the clock. This finding is supported by Syafryadin, et al. (2020) who stated that verbal expression can deliver the meaning to the other audiences in speaking.

(5)Facial Expressions

The teacher used certain mimic while listening to students' opinions in learning activity: *"I will focus on the student who gives opinion in learning. For example, look into her/his eyes or nod my head (Participant 1)"*. Facial expression, such as raising eyebrows, could also be used when asking for more detail information as a response to the previous one which was not clear: *"Raising eyebrows (Participant 4)"*. The other use of facial expression as a multimodal resource could also be done when giving feedback to appreciate students' opinion as to build a positive reinforcement which was motivating for them to be active in the learning process: *"I keep smiling to build positive rapport and to appreciate*

students' opinions. (Participant 2)"; Some nodding and smiles can be a good reinforcement while receiving students' opinions (Participant 3)".
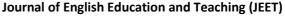
(6) Music

For meaning construction, music was used to build meaningful nature of English classroom or learning process. It was because that the enjoyable nature of English classroom can trigger students' motivation to learn and can lead students to be engaged in English learning activities happily. Music played its role in this sense. A good selection of certain music as a multimodal resource potentially attracted students' interest in the learning process: *"Usually I use it in brainstorming activity, music can be from YouTube since at that time our laboratory had internet connection (Participant 2)"; "I usually give music in ice breaking activities when teaching (Participant 1)"; "I play some music before providing learning activities to trigger positive psychological condition students have for learning (Participant 7)".* Music could also creatively be taken and used as primary source of learning such as when teaching students English vocabularies and listening: *" I often use music and songs to teach English vocabularies (Participant 3)"; " I also use music as one of the sources of English listening material (Participant 5)".*

(7) Writing

Using writing as a multimodal resource could be applied by pasting some writing work done by students or found from other resources such as internet, newspapers, and magazines to create the nature of English classroom: *"I use articles found on the internet as additional reading materials that I paste on the wall (Participant 2)".* In addition, organizing students' writing work as the source of conducting peer's assessment was also a kind of way in utilizing writing as a multimodal resource: *"The students can be managed to preview their friends' writing work and give some feedbacks or comments to it (Participant 1)".* Therefore, writing can be as a tool for teacher and students to express their idea and by writing, teacher can be assisted because the written text will be read by students (Rahmawati, et al, 2019: Sanjaya,2020).

(8) Layout

Using layout as a multimodal resource could be applied by arranging students' seats to have easier social interaction among the students and between teacher and students: *"I organize my students to sit in a group of four to six. Therefore, they can work in a group and easy to share with their friends. (Participant 1)"; "I arrange my students' seats in the form of U letter (Participant 2)"; "I set their seats to make a circle (Participant 4)"*.

(9) Graphics

The use of graphics could be by displaying them on the wall as the source that the teacher used to explain about a concept of something, for example, explaining a learning topic, English vocabulary, grammar, etc. This way helped students understand the given English input easily: *"I use graphics pasted on the wall to explain some particular topics (Participant 1)"; "At that time I displayed some pictures of world tourism objects on the wall and students walked around to close the wall and to remember the information on the pictures (Participant 2)"*. Graphics could also be displayed in power point slides while presenting or explaining a material: *"I use graphics by presenting them in the PPT (Participant 7)"*.

(10) Pictures or Photographs

As multimodal resources, pictures or photographs could be used as additional modes inserted in English reading texts which are functionally useful for triggering meaning construction: *"I use pictures mostly in reading texts to help students find the main ide, find explicit and implicit information, or guess difficult words they encounter in the texts (Participant 1)"*. In addition, they could also be utilized as media to help explain a particular genre while modeling the concept or discourse to students: *"I use pictures or photographs as additional materials to give information impressively for me or for students to capably remember the descriptive information on the pictures (Participant 2)"; "I ask my students to bring their childhood photographs as a resource for meaning construction while teaching descriptive text (Participant 3)"*. They could also be used as some aids to represent concepts or meanings of English vocabularies, grammar, and etc.: *"As a representation in teaching vocabulary (Participant 5)": "I provide pictures for vocabulary comprehension such as name of animal, fruit, etc. (Participant*

6)”; “Pictures are used as the clues for guessing meanings (Participant 7)”. Fun and interesting pictures can make students enjoys in learning process (Gusmuliana et.al, 2020).
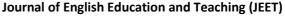
(11) Animations or Moving Images

Animations or moving images could be organized or utilized as multimodal resources with inserting them in presentation slides which were purposeful for entertaining, but meaning making, while furnishing English input through explanation toward the slides: *"I use animations in my presentation slides to amuse my students but powerfully to help sensitize the sense of English input that I provide in my explanation (Participant 1)”; “I show the short clips of cartoon (Participant 2)”; I present moving cartoons in my PPT in front of the class (Participant 7)”.*

(12) Videos

Videos as multimodal resources could be used while teaching English under the purpose of sensitizing cultural meaning construction, exemplifying authentic English pronunciation, presenting natural English use carried out by English native speakers, etc.: *"With using videos my students can learn the culture, pronunciation, and other things while they are learning English (Participant 1)”; “The videos used can be from YouTube or from the CD of textbooks. They are used usually to give examples of conversation building for speaking activities contextually, for instance conversation of people who do shopping, and to give explanation of particular topics (Participant 2)”.*

In addition, the natural English presented in English videos could also be utilized to design activities triggering direct responsive English output committed by students: *"I play some videos related to countries in the world. Then, the students can make English sentences based on those videos directly and naturally (participant 3)”.* In teaching English materials which required some memorization, videos could also be one of effective modes for facilitating students to easily memorize the materials, for example English vocabularies. They could not only remember those words through video, but also caught the discourse of those words through the gestures, expressions, movement, context, condition, and so on which were encountered in the videos: *"I used videos for*
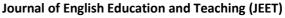
vocabulary comprehension (Participant 6; Participant 7)". Syafryadin, et al. (2020) supports this finding by saying that video can be as a tool for teacher or lecturer in teaching because video can be as model and being imitated by students.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the findings and discussions above, the researcher can summarize the conclusion. Various applicative principles of using these multimodal resources are revealed to be carried out in several ways. They are: 1) Speech can be applied to express indirectness and to do inductive approach. 2) Body language or gesture can be used to provide clearly additional meanings, convey certain intentions, and define contexts, utterances, or words. 3) Auditory elements can be used by organizing them as primary English input, sources to exemplify natural English, aids to amuse but provide potential input, and sources to design creative learning. 4) Verbal expression can be applied through differing stress, pitch, or intonation to sensitize meanings and emphasize the discourse of other modes. 5) Facial expression can be used to regard students' opinion and give feedback. 6) Music can be used to create the nature of English classroom, attract students' interest and motivation while learning, and make it the primary learning materials in listening activity. 7) Writing can be used through pasting it on the wall for creating the nature of English classroom. 8) Layout can be applied through arranging students' seats as to facilitate the ease of interaction. 9) Graphics can be utilized with displaying them to explain a concept, learning topics, English vocabularies, grammar, etc. 10) Pictures or photographs can be used as aids to construct more meanings in English texts. 11) Animations or moving images can be utilized by inserting them in presentation slides as sources for sensitizing meanings. 12) Videos can be utilized to provide English cultural sense, exemplify authentic English pronunciation and its natural use, and furnish sources for English learning activities designed to trigger students' direct response.

In accordance with the data obtained in this study, there is encountered an implication that can be comprehended about the utilization of multimodal resources for teaching English in Indonesia. It seems that the practical use of

multimodal resources by the participants, Indonesian English teachers, has been carried out based on the nature of multimodality whose resources are mainly for meaning construction. However, as world's educational stream today which incorporates online learning, multimodal resources have been made permeable into this stream. As revealed by this study, multimodal resources used by the participants in teaching English in Indonesian schools have not sufficiently incorporated the stream of online learning. On the other hand, the world sees this stream as the proof of pedagogical and technological advancement. Therefore, further studies related to multimodal resources for teaching English in Indonesia are required to be conducted especially on the issue of online learning since either Indonesian English teachers or students are in fact potential to follow the implementation of online learning.

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