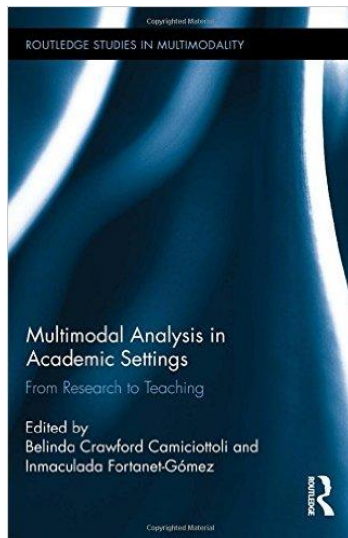# BOOK REVIEW

MULTIMODALITY AND ORAL GENRES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli and Immaculada Fortanet-Gómez (Eds.).
MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS: FROM RESEARCH TO TEACHING (2015), New York and London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 251 pp., ISBN 978-1-138-82710-3 (HBK).

In the past 20 years or so, researchers in applied linguistics, discourse studies, and other related disciplines have begun to recognize that any discourse includes multiple semiotic resources and, thus, is multimodal; therefore, the study of communication cannot be limited to the study of linguistic features alone. In other words, any discourse is understood as an embodied multimodal phenomenon and needs to be studied and taught as such. However, multimodality still represents a relatively new area of research. Considered from this perspective, the twelfth volume in *Routledge Studies in Multimodality*, Crawford Camiciottoli and Fortanet-Gómez's edited collection on multimodal analysis in academic settings, is a timely addition to international multimodal genre research. Even though the editors do not make an overt statement about their contribution to genre studies, every chapter in the collection explicitly focuses on an academic genre. Thus, the collection not only continues the tradition of publications dedicated to various aspects of multimodality, both within and outside the Routledge series, but also makes an original contribution to multimodality research and genre studies by specifically addressing the multimodal nature of oral academic discourse genres in the contexts of higher education. Throughout the volume, the editors and contributors consistently stress particular relevance of the volume to the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) research and pedagogy, especially to the English for

Academic Purposes (EAP) and language classroom, and to the training of novice researchers and academics, including master's and doctoral students.

In the introductory chapter, Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli and Immaculada Fortanet-Gómez observe that the volume looks closely at multimodality as an object of analysis and as an integral part of genres that can be taught to students. At the same time, even though quite a few chapters in the volume report on research that relies on multimodal annotation software, the editors do not explicitly state that the study of multimodal phenomena must draw on "multimodality as a tool for [...] research" (Maiorani & Christie, 2014: 2), and thus, in addition to an object and teachable resource, multimodality should also be treated as a research tool. Further, the editors define multimodality as "an approach used to understand the contribution of various semiotic resources [...] in studies of communication" (p. 1) and continue by saying that the majority of multimodality studies rely on "three approaches" that somewhat overlap. That is, in a sense, the editors locate these three approaches within the overarching multimodality "approach". The three approaches include social semiotic multimodality and multimodal discourse analysis, both based on Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, and multimodal interactional analysis that combines interactional sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, and multimodal semiotics.

The volume is equally divided into two parts, with five chapters in each part. The parts of the book, however, are not organized according to the multimodality approaches used by chapter authors. Rather, the editors have grouped chapters according to the objects of study: part one is dedicated to the study of multimodality in such oral academic research genres as plenary addresses and conference presentations (CPs), and part two focuses on classroom applications of multimodality.

The first two chapters in part one present analyses of the genre of the plenary address given at academic conferences. Chapter one, "Disagreements in plenary addresses as multimodal action" by Zhang, is an outstanding study of multimodal disagreement strategies used by two internationally renowned scholars in their plenary presentations. In particular, the methods developed by the author are clearly presented and make a significant contribution to multimodal research. The author uses ELAN (EUDICO-European Distributed Corpora-Linguistic Annotator) computer-assisted multimodal annotation software and advises researchers that they need to develop their own coding scheme to represent the features of their object of study. The chapter demonstrates that disagreements as multimodal actions are integral to the professional genre of the plenary address. The author discusses implications of the study for the EAP classroom and suggests that students need to be made aware that disagreements may play a constructive role in public discourses. In the following chapter, Ruiz-Madrid and Fortanet-Gómez report on a preliminary study of the same genre, in which they consider and compare digressions (asides) in two plenary addresses, one in Spanish and the other, in English. The authors conduct detailed linguistic and multimodal analyses of asides and present a step-by-step analytic procedure that can be adopted for research purposes by the future readers of the volume. The study is valuable not only for multimodal researchers but also for the

development of training courses for novice researchers and academics, as well as for the EAP classroom.

Chapters three, four and five are dedicated to the study of the conference presentation genre. In chapter three, "Identifying adverbs in academic spoken discourse: A contrastive study between English and Spanish", Ruiz-Garrido presents a contrastive multimodal analysis of four CPs in two languages, two in English and two in Spanish, and specifically focuses on the linguistic and nonlinguistic resources that conference presenters use to reinforce their statements (intensifiers). The findings of the study suggest that similar adverbs are used for intensifying purposes in both English and Spanish CPs and that paralinguistic and kinesics resources play an important role in supporting the intensifying expressions. In the following contribution, Diani further discusses the CP genre, claiming that even though multimodal studies of CPs in scientific disciplines abound, there are still only a few that look at "soft" disciplines. Diani focuses on the use of PowerPoint slides by 56 conference presenters at three international applied linguistics conferences and observes that the slides combine different semiotic modes, and, thus, are themselves multimodal. In addition, a comparison of PowerPoint slides with the genre of the research article as discussed by Swales (1990) is drawn. In the last chapter in section one, Valeiras Jurado presents a multimodal genre analysis of two video-recorded academic CPs. The genre analysis is coupled with ethnographic speaker interviews. The study indicates the importance of understanding modes that are used in presentations to achieve particular effects, such as persuasion. The author discusses implications that similar studies may have for novice researchers and academics.

The second section focuses on multimodality in classroom instruction. It starts with a conceptual chapter by Räisänen, "There is more to multimodality than discourse features and nonverbal behaviors!", which draws on sociocultural theories of action in its discussion of engagement as a key aspect of the academic CP genre. Räisänen considers the effects of "external" modalities, such as "spatial arrangements, traditional conference props and time of day, to name a few" (p. 134) on "the interaction between human and nonhuman entities" (p. 135) during conference presentations. Her chapter is a call for action: she urges researchers to focus on social, including embodied, practices, in which CPs are located, and on constraints and affordances of the physical spaces, in which CPs occur. Räisänen suggests that such research may then inform pedagogical interventions developed to better prepare novice researchers for academic conferences.

In the following chapter, Crawford Camiciottoli explores the linguistic and nonverbal resources used in lectures in humanities. In particular, she focuses on the multimodal meaning construction in explanations presented in five lectures selected from among Yale University OpenCourse website lectures. The annotating software package ELAN is used in this study to look at co-occurring linguistic and embodied (e.g. gaze, gesture) modes. The study has important methodological and pedagogical implications. In the next contribution, Palmer-Silveira discusses an

analysis of three video-recorded student business presentations, "with particular references to nonverbal elements" (p. 174). The students speak English as an additional language and deliver the presentations as a requirement of a compulsory course on persuasive language and business presentation offered at the master's level. The observations made in the study can be used for student awareness raising and lead to significant improvements in the development of student presentation skills. In the following chapter, which is dedicated to listening assessment, Campoy-Cubillo and Querol-Julián observe that research on listening has so far neglected the multimodal aspect of human interactions. The authors focus on listening assessment in the context of second and foreign language classrooms and propose a theoretical framework that may lead to the development of the assessment of multimodal listening tasks. And finally, in the last chapter of the volume, "Teaching learners how to use pragmatic routines through audiovisual material", Bruti looks at the benefits of using film clips for teaching pragmatics of conversational routines in the context of the foreign language classroom. In addition, she presents multimodal transcriptions of two film clips and explains how such transcriptions may facilitate teaching linguistic, cultural, and meaning-making conversational strategies. It is important to note that reference lists included in each chapter provide valuable information on both foundational and current publications and serve as an additional rich resource for multimodality researchers, teachers, and students.

All in all, *Multimodal analysis in academic settings: From research to teaching* makes a significant contribution to the rapidly developing area of multimodal genre studies by showcasing cutting-edge research on oral academic genres, including both professional research genres and classroom genres. The organization of the volume provides readers with the opportunity to either read the chapters in sequence or pick and choose most relevant sections because, while the chapters are logically connected to each other, the connection is sufficiently loose for each contribution to stand on its own. The volume is equally valuable for multimodality researchers, genre scholars, ESP and EAP teachers, and students. It may be used as a research resource, teacher manual for classroom activities, and a text for a course on oral academic communication.

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