

## Multimodal Writing: A Key for Creative Learning and Teaching

By Teri An Joy G. Magpale

A multimodal approach to writing in an ESL/EFL classroom can be a source of creativity for both teachers and students. It focuses on the combination of text, audio, and image as individual modes and how these can be creatively combined to produce meaning and encourage interaction and learning in the classroom. By integrating multimodality into teaching writing, teachers can prepare learners to effectively communicate in these contexts.

Multimodal writing uses more than one mode to achieve its intended purpose. The modes are “visual, audio, gestural, spatial, or linguistic means of creating meaning” (Selfe, 1995). Accordingly, this presentation attempts to explain the significance of multimodal writing in teaching writing in an ESL/EFL setting. It will also present samples of multimodal projects, along with assessment techniques, that teachers can use inside the classroom.

### Introduction

This presentation emphasizes that a multimodal approach can improve the learning process in an ESL/EFL writing classroom by enhancing interaction between teachers and learners, learners and input materials, and classroom communication in general. Ensuring fluid interaction and optimizing communication by appropriate selection and combination of modes by the teacher provides a framework for creative learning. Therefore, crucial to

an understanding of the multimodal approach to writing is the interaction not only between teachers and students but also with input materials, the classroom environment, and external and abstract factors such as students’ cultural background, identity, and relationships with the external world.

*(Continued on page 3.)*

### THE PRESENTER



Magpale, Teri An Joy G.

Teri An Joy G. Magpale is currently working as a professor in Wonkwang University in Iksan City, Jeollabukdo. She has presented at various international and regional research conferences. Her research interests include world Englishes, discourse analysis, and current pedagogical issues of ELT.

She finished her Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English literature with honors at the Philippine Normal University-Manila. She finished her Master of Arts in teaching English at the De La Salle University-Manila.

*(To be presented on July 14 at the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter KOTESOL meeting at Gwangju National University of Education).*

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# Novel Pair Information Gap Activities for Mixed-Level Classes

By Daniel Corks

Information gap activities come in all shapes and sizes, but I find these activities often are not especially engaging. Students may find their language skills put to the test, but not their other cognitive abilities. Those same information gap activities, if done in their first language, wouldn't be able to hold their attention. This is a principle that I try to hold myself to when designing materials: an activity should be engaging to students even if done in their first language.

Coming up with tasks that can hold a person's interest independent of language ability solves two major issues I often have in my classrooms. The first is mixed-level classes with a very wide range of abilities, and the second is very low level students that have significant trouble understanding the teacher's instructions.

For mixed-level classes, the advantage of a cognitively stimulating activity is clear. While an activity may be designed for the class's median language level, higher-level students won't be bored by the activity or mentally check out. In addition to that benefit, I find the high-level students will actually still use the upper ranges of their language ability to make sure their ideas are getting across effectively.

A cognitively stimulating activity can also benefit very low level students who have trouble following what their teacher is saying. If the core idea behind an activity is simple enough, then it can be explained for low-level learners with just a few simple words. The

students will understand the goal of the activity, but it's up to them to decide the best way to go about it, finding clever ways reach that goal despite lower language ability. These learners, rather than feeling like they're struggling to keep up with their peers in a mixed-level class, also feel a sense of accomplishment for completing the task. All learners push their language ability to its limit in order to complete the task.



In this presentation I'll explain the basic structure I use to create simple activities of this nature, and I'll demonstrate two of the more involved ones I've made. One focuses on reading and interpreting song lyrics, and the second focuses on remembering, describing, and drawing faces.

## THE PRESENTER

Daniel Corks is a graduate of Sogang University in Seoul, South Korea, with a master's degree in applied linguistics in the field of second language acquisition. He is currently an assistant professor at Woosong University in Daejeon, South Korea, and a member of the Daejeon-Chungcheong chapter of KOTESOL.

*(To be presented on July 14 at the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter KOTESOL meeting at Gwangju National University of Education.)*

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## Multimodal Writing *(continued from page 1)*

Multimodal writing encourages the students to produce works that use more than just words and letters to communicate a thought; they may include audio, video, photographs, drawings — basically, any visual element used to supplement the text in some purposeful way. When multimodal texts are viewed, analyzed, and created in the composition classroom, students and instructors are engaging in multimodal composition! Podcasts, blogs, collages, video, or audio

essays, comic strips, and storyboards all fall under the category of multimodal composition assignments.

In a broad sense, multimodal assignments can help our students develop visual and digital literacy, which is key in a world where new technologies are constantly emerging. Our students are already interacting in digital contexts that require multimodal writing. By assigning multimodal projects, we prepare our students to effectively communicate in these contexts.

## Gwangju-Jeonnam KOTESOL July Chapter Meeting

- Time: Saturday, July 14, 2018, 1:45–5:00 p.m.
- Place: Gwangju Natl. University of Ed., Teacher Training Bldg., Room 811 (1st Floor)

### ■ Schedule: Chapter Meeting, Main Session

**1:45 pm:** Sign-in and Meet-and-Greet (Admission free for newcomers. Future membership always welcomed.)

**2:00 – 2:50 pm: PRESENTATION 1**

***Multimodal Writing: A Key for Creative Learning and Teaching***

Teri An Joy G. Magpale (Wonkwang University, Iksan, Jeonbuk)

**2:50 – 3:10 pm:** Refreshment & Networking Break

**3:10 – 4:00 pm: PRESENTATION 2**

***Novel Pair Information Gap Activities for Mixed-Level Classes***

Daniel Corks (Woosong University, Daejeon)

**4:10 – 4:45 pm: SwapShop Session (Open to All)**

Everyone is encouraged to share their Teaching Discoveries and “Secrets” with the group. Share your Teaching Tips, Ideas, Classroom Activities, Games, ELT Books, or other Teaching Wisdom. (Handouts welcomed.)

**4:45 – 5:00 pm:** Announcements / Drawing for Door Prizes / Closing

After-Meeting Dinner at The First Alleyway downtown.

## Upcoming Chapter Events

**August 11, 2018. Chapter Meeting.**

*A Framework for Explaining Activities and Games to Learners with Limited English*

– Andrew Griffiths (Daejeon Education Training Institute)

**October 27, 2018. Super SwapShop and Halloween Party**

– Attendees share short teaching tips, ideas, activities, etc.

**September 8, 2018. Chapter Meeting.**

*Intercultural Communication*

– Andrea Lee

**Reflective Practice SIG**

Morning Session

***Mapping Classroom Action***

**July 14 (11:00–12:30)**

Bryan Hale Facilitating

*At Coffee Lab Mujii (near GNUE)*

## Upcoming KOTESOL Events

**October 13–14, 2018. Korea TESOL International Conference**

*Focus on Fluency*

Sookmyung Women’s University, Seoul