

Multimodality

– An EFL textbook comparison using multimodal discourse analysis.

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Abstract

This essay aims to compare two EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks by using a multimodal discourse analysis in order to find out how EFL textbooks have changed in design and visually. In this essay the textual content is treated as one of several pillars making up design, this essay is interested in the visual changes. This analysis is done using two EFL textbooks with twenty years in between them, both are used in the same school by different teachers. A study like this is going to be published later this year but that study includes three subjects (English being one of them) and starts with textbooks from the 1930s up until now. In this essay, one chapter of each textbook will be looked at in a closer analysis to represent each textbook; every page is analyzed without reading the text until last. The conclusion of this essay is that the written communication still seem to be the most credible of the different communicative ways of making meaning, however, it no longer the only credible way of making meaning.

Keywords: Multimodality, discourse analysis, EFL textbooks, teaching resources,

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1 Introduction

Public schools in Sweden are institutions where different types of knowledge are introduced, developed, and distributed to the younger generations. In many cases, teaching and the sharing of knowledge are accomplished with the help and guidance of textbooks, and this is particularly true in second and foreign language teaching.¹ Textbooks used in Swedish public schools were previously subject to quality control by the Swedish Board of Education (Läromedelsnämnden); however, as of 1991, there is no central quality control to oversee the standard of textbooks used in the Swedish schools. Teachers themselves are responsible for textbook selection as well as implementation. While this state of affairs seems both obvious and sound, theoretically, a teacher could use the same textbook from the day she starts working to the day she retires, so long as the pupils reach the goals and learning outcomes outlined in the subject curriculum. There are, then, no restrictions on textbook choice or guidelines for updating materials in the Swedish Board of Education's regulations.

This lack of quality control is not a good thing. Textbooks throughout the Swedish school system are fairly outdated as it is, and measures should be taken to change this situation, not encourage it. Textbook producers report that sales are down 22% over the last ten years, a contributing factor being that the amount of money schools set aside for this purpose has decreased as well.² Obviously, the inherently static state of textbooks cannot reflect the constant developments of the inherently dynamic world they often aspire to represent. Even a history book would ideally consider past historical events from the most current perspective possible. Furthermore, there are countless other aspects to consider with regards to the choice of textbook, for example, the structure of the book, the use of pictures or other visual aids, reflection of pedagogical developments.

¹ *Läromedlens roll i undervisningen: Grundskollärarens val, användning och bedömning av läromedel i bild, engelska och samhällsvetenskap*. Rapport 284. Skolverket. 2006, s 13.

² <http://svenskalaromedel.se/om-laeromedel-/foersaeljningsstatistik.aspx>

A situation where teaching materials are not renewed at regular intervals could very well mean that pupils are missing out on new developments, both pedagogically and with regards to the textual content. If efforts are made to make teaching materials current and interesting to pupils, that very effort is lost if the textbooks used are out of date.

Multimodality concerns the representative and interactive meaning of the use of images and colors, as well as the structural meaning of how the texts and images are framed and placed. Multimodality refers to the multiple modes employed for communicating information, which is why every visual element that conveys information needs to be included when analyzing a textbook. A multimodal approach to textbook analysis can indicate how teaching and assessing knowledge have changed over time with regards to the integration of multimodal techniques.

1.1 Thesis

A cursory comparison of EFL textbooks used in Swedish public schools reveals some obvious, visual differences. In this essay, I aim to investigate such differences by considering the following questions:

- In what way(s) have EFL textbooks changed visually over a 20-year period?
- What can a multimodal analysis reveal about a textbook's didactic agenda?
- How does (multi)modality contribute to textbook-driven language teaching and learning?

The two textbooks considered in this study are both currently used in Swedish public school teaching of English as a foreign language. Both texts target pupils in the 9th grade or students at a similar proficiency level. *Team Nine* was published in 1987 while *What's up?* was published 20 years later, in 2007. The older text, *Team Nine*, was based on the old curriculum of Lgr 80³ when the pedagogical focus was on written English. *What's up*, on the other

³ Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet Lpo 94 (Curriculum of the Swedish elementary schools from 1980).

hand, reflects the current curriculum of Lpo 94⁴, where the focus has shifted to spoken English.⁵

Due to the limited scope of this essay, only these two textbooks will be considered. Due to their widespread use, however, each of the selected textbooks is proposed as a representative example of EFL textbooks for its time of publication. The focus of interest for this essay is the visual differences between the texts in their presentations of textual content. The textual content of the two books is thus only interesting in how it functions together with other visual elements, contributing to the total unity of the page. As for understanding what text is, Halliday offers the following explanation:

A text, then, is both an object in its own right (it may be a highly valued object, for example something that is recognized as a great poem) and an instance – an instance of social meaning in a particular context of situation.⁶

In this essay, textual content is seen as one out of several visual objects which collaborate in making meaning. The text, however, includes a linguistic communicative component in addition to a visual component.

1.2 Research review

Multimodality has been considered in a number of different analyses of textbooks. Some have focused on the designer's use and the changing contexts of images (Unsworth 2001), while other analyses have focused on the effects of images on students' memories (Pena & Quilez 2001) or the categorization of images compared to other forms of media (Pozzer & Roth). An approach for multimodal analysis has been developed for literacy (Kress, 2003), scientific texts (Lemke, 1998), educational research (Jewitt, 2006),

⁴ Skolöverstyrelsen (1980). *Läroplan för grundskolan (Lgr 80)*, (Curriculum of the Swedish elementary schools from 1994).

⁵ Lpo 94 and Lgr 80

⁶ Halliday, M.A.K and Hasan, Ruqaiya, *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. 1985, p 11.

and grammars (O'Halloran, 2005), each of which has helped create the platform for what is called multimodal discourse analysis (MDA).⁷ Observations of actual classroom teaching using multimodality (Kress et al. 2001) as a tool to process the material have been conducted with the objective of identifying the different modes of communication used. Science subjects are over-represented by far in multimodal discourse analysis studies. However, Gunther Kress and Jeff Bezemer are currently conducting a research project to investigate how learning resources used in science, mathematics and English courses at secondary school have changed since the 1930s. The aim of their project is presented as follows:

What exactly is the relation between the semiotic designs of multimodal learning resources and their potentials for learning? We aim to show what changes in principles of designs of texts there have been and how the designers of learning resources – visual artists, editors, writers – have used and now use writing, image, layout, and other semiotic resources to create potentials for learning. By potentials for learning we mean the ensemble of semiotic features of a text or of an environment – objects, texts, people – that provides the ground for learning and in that way may shape what learning is and how it may take place. It includes the epistemological as well as the pedagogical significance of representational practice.⁸
Kress & Bezemer, 2011.

Teaching material has been chosen from the 1930s, the 1980s, and the 2000s, consisting of textbooks for each time period. For the 2000-2010 period, both textbooks and online learning resources were included in the study. One of the more obvious observations is the development of less written material in newer books, which instead feature more imagery, corresponding to a different communicative function in contemporary material. In online teaching material, speech and moving images are new modes for what used to be visually static learning materials.

The Kress-Bezemer project is still in progress and has not published any findings as yet. While there are similarities between this project and the study presented in this essay, the aims are significantly different. Kress and

⁷ O'Halloran, K. L. – Multimodal Discourse Analysis. In K. Hyland and B. Paltridge (eds) *Companion to Discourse*. London and New York: Continuum. (in press 2011).

⁸ Kress, G & Bezemer, J, *Writing in multimodal texts: a social semiotic account of designs for learning*. *Written Communication*, volume 25, number 2, April 2008, p 166-195.

Bezemer are interested in identifying how multimodal practices have changed in respect to potentials for learning. In this essay, I am interested in determining what a multimodal discourse analysis can reveal about textbook development and implications for teachers and learners of junior high school EFL.

2 Theory

The theoretical basis for this essay begins with Ferdinand De Saussure (1986) and his theories of semiotics. Further work by M.A.K. Halliday (1986) led to the creation of social semiotics, which then evolved into multimodality, stemming primarily from the work of Gunther Kress and Theodore van Leeuwen (1996, 2001).

Table 1 illustrates the development of multimodality as a progression of semiotic and social semiotic theory.

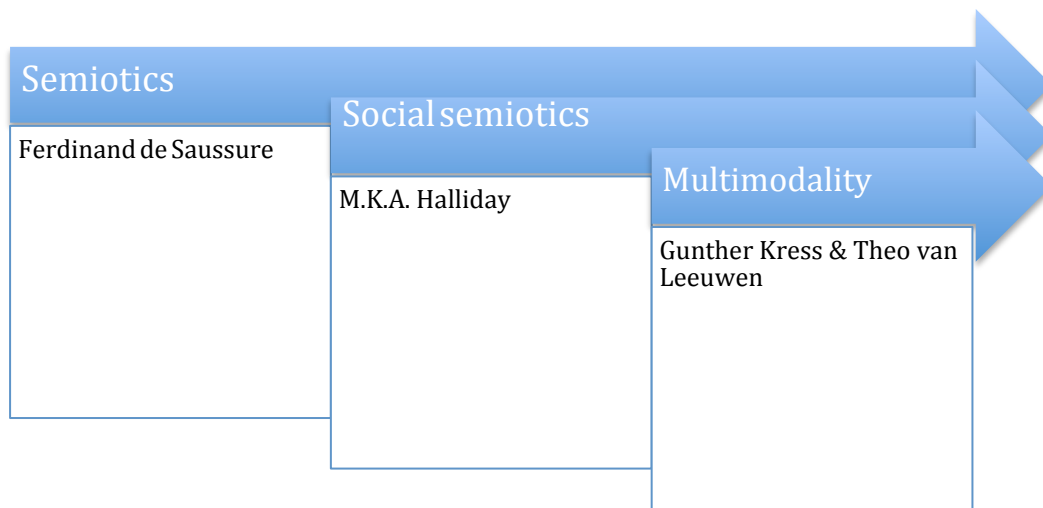


Table 1. The origins of multimodality

All three areas are described in the sections below in order to establish more fully the nature and origins of multimodality. Semiotics and social semiotics are only summarily reviewed, while multimodality is awarded a

more in-depth presentation, including a survey of important terms and concepts from this field.

2.1 Semiotics

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure developed semiotics with the intention of creating a science for studying signs. This was done by dividing the means of interpreting signs into two categories, the signification and the signal⁹, which today are more commonly referred to as the signified and the signifier, respectively. The signified stands for the psychological mental picture of the spoken sound (the signifier) of a word. If, for example, somebody utters the word *airplane*, an interpretation takes place to associate the spoken sound, the signifier, into the mental picture of an airplane, the signified. The mental picture and the sound that triggers it together form a sign that is interpreted differently depending on whose mind it is triggered within. The example *airplane* can be changed into any language, and it would still trigger the same mental process of the signified.¹⁰ The signifier and the signified together form a linguistic sign. The linguistic sign is arbitrary and at the same time the organizing principle of the entire field of linguistics.¹¹ The use of the word sign instead of the word symbol as the designator of what is signified and signifier is not left to chance or convenience, “for it is characteristic of symbols that they are never entirely arbitrary”.¹² It is the signified that is arbitrary; the signifier is part of a linguistic community and is not subject to an individual alteration of meaning.¹³ This latter proposal has been challenged by others and is one of the main deviations in theory that characterize social semiotics.

2.2 Social semiotics

⁹ de Saussure, Ferdinand, *Course in general linguistics*, 1986, p 66.

¹⁰ de Saussure, 1986, p 67

¹¹ de Saussure, 1986, p 68

¹² de Saussure, 1986, p 68

¹³ de Saussure, 1986, p 69

If semiotics is the study of signs, social semiotics is the study of meaning, or the study of sign systems. In social semiotics, Saussure's arbitrariness of the relation between signifier and signified is replaced by *motivation*. A motivated sign is the result of the sign maker's use of semiotic resources and their affordances to make meaning.¹⁴ Where semiotics is fully intended to study language, social semiotics embraces other ways of making meaning while admitting to language being the most important way of meaning making.¹⁵

But there are many other modes of meaning, in any culture, which are outside the realm of language. These include both art forms such as painting, sculpture, music, the dance, and so forth, and other modes of cultural behavior that are not classified under the heading of forms of art, such as modes of exchange, modes of dress, structures of the family, and so forth. These are all bearers of meaning in the culture. Indeed, we can define a culture as a set of semiotic systems, a set of systems of meaning, all of which interrelate.¹⁶ Halliday and Hasan, 1986.

The concept of the linguistic sign from de Saussure's semiotics is reconsidered into something much broader in social semiotics. Each sign has a relation to another sign, creating systems of meaning, and rendering language just one of a number of meaning making systems. Together these systems make up what is called human culture. The term social in relation to semiotics is meant to refer to culture as a system of meanings. The word social by itself stands for a relationship between social structure and language.¹⁷ In semiotics, it is the grammar which is the pillar of structural order, such as that of the linguistic sign. In social semiotics, however, grammar is not used to construct sentences in a correct way, but rather as a tool for meaning making.¹⁸ A child, for example, who tries to express an opinion about something, will do so to the best of its ability without fully knowing all the structural rules of language. The meaning of that possibly

¹⁴ Kress, G, *Multimodality, a social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Routledge, New York and London, 2010.

¹⁵ Halliday & Hasan, 1986, p 4.

¹⁶ Halliday & Hasan, 1986, p 4.

¹⁷ Halliday & Hasan, 1986, p 4

¹⁸ van Leeuwen, Theodore, *Introducing social semiotics*. 2005, p 3-5.

incorrect sentence will more often than not be interpreted correctly by the receiver. This is possible because of the context and the different ways that signs can be understood. If someone points towards the sun and says, “warm”, the actual word is wrong but the meaning is not.¹⁹ In social semiotics, the process of meaning making is successful when the receiver understands the intention of the communicated meaning; in semiotics, focus is on the language itself, making this example a non-successful attempt at proper communication.

2.3 Multimodality

Social semiotics has offered many new ideas on how to look at visual representation, some of which have been adapted into what is now called multimodality. Kress and Ogborn offer the following summary:

The project of multimodality is an attempt to make the point overtly and decisively that an interest in representational modes other than speech or writing is essential and not merely incidentally interesting; that it is central to actual forms of communication everywhere, and not simply a kind of tangential or marginal concern which could be taken up or not, but which leaves language at the center of communication. The proposal rests on the hypothesis that all [practices] are always multimodal, and that a theory has to be developed in which that fact is central, and a methodology produced for forms of description in which all modes are described and describable together. From an occasional interest in other semiotic modes this project moves to a norm where all texts are seen as multimodal and are described in that way. Language is likely to be a part of these semiotic objects – though it might not – and often it might not be the dominant or most significant mode.²⁰ Kress and Ogborn, 1998.

This means that within the field of multimodality all modes of communication counts as important for meaning making, and language is not always the most important one. The gradual shift towards the stronger meaning of images in communicating language in writing has taken place at

¹⁹ van Leeuwen, 2005, p 49-50.

²⁰ Kress, Gunther. and Ogborn, Jon. 1998.

an increased pace over the last forty or so years.²¹ Multimodality suggests that everything we do when communicating, employs some semiotic or another. When reading a text, we take in everything on the page - colors, images, structure, layout, font etc. – even though the printed language is the foregrounded object. The multimodal interpretation of spoken or written language focuses on considering all information that is being communicated, not just what the actual words mean. The relationship between the different semiotics and what they mean together when used in communication is of major interest in the multimodal field.

2.4 Keywords

In the context of a textbook, editors, writers, teachers, and visual artists are all sign makers. They collaborate to make and distribute meaning through the representation of learning resources (textbooks).²²

In order to make the present analysis easier to follow, a set of keywords is briefly presented in the following sections.

2.4.1 Mode

A mode is a semiotic resource for meaning making – moving or static images, gestures, layout, music, writing, and speech are all examples of different modes. Meaning is made by employing various modes of communication; modes are rarely employed in isolation but instead are normally exploited simultaneously. For example: speech + gestures + facial expression + stance, writing + graphical resources. Both clothing and food could be used to make meaning but they are not considered modes because their primary function is not to be used to communicate or make meaning.²³ Speech, writing and visual imagery are the three main outlets of communication historically; the

²¹ Kress, Gunther – Multimodality: Challenges to thinking about language. *TESOL QUARTERLY*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Summer 2000), pp 337-340.

²² Kress & Bezemer, 2008, p 170.

²³ Kress, 2010, p 87-88.

other modes have been thought of as more supporting in nature. In this essay, modes normally connected to speech (gestures, vocal pitch, stance, eye contact etc.) will be ignored due to this essay's focus on modes connected to writing and images.

Every mode has various modal resources. Writing and speech, for example, have grammatical, lexical and syntactic resources, while images instead include size, color, shape, positioning etc. All modes can be applied in various ways depending on the sign maker's intention for making meaning, this is possible due to each mode's affordances – potentials and constraints for making meaning.²⁴ Bezemer and Kress offer this example:

For the "ordinary" user of the mode of writing, *font* is part of that mode. For a typesetter or graphic designer, the meaning potentials – the affordances – of font are such that it can be used as mode; that is, meaning can be made through the affordances of font. What counts as mode depends on sign makers acting within the needs and understanding of a particular community and its more or less conventionalized practices.²⁵
Kress and Bezemer, 2008.

The knowledge of how a mode's affordances can be utilized for the sign maker's purpose is of particular benefit when trying to create a fluidity across modes in order to reach the dynamic properties of multimodal texts.²⁶ The principles that determine what accounts as a mode are adopted by Michael Halliday's theory of communication. The theory of communication consists of the ideational function (to represent meaning about the social relations of those engaged in communication), the interpersonal function (the capacity to form complex semiotic entities (texts) and the textual function (complete message-entities which cohere internally and with their environment).²⁷ If a communicative channel meets the functional requirements of this theory, then it is a mode.²⁸ Some modes are only modes

²⁴ Kress & Bezemer, 2008, p 171 – 172.

²⁵ Kress & Bezemer, 2008, p 172.

²⁶ Wyatt-Smith, C & Kimber, K – Working Multimodally: Challenges for assessment. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, december, 2009, Vol 8, no 3.

²⁷ Kress, 2010, p 87.

²⁸ Kress, 2010, p 87-88.

to certain meaning makers. Font type for example, is definitely a mode to a graphic designer because it fulfills all three requirements of communication, but to a student, font type is probably not recognized as a mode.

2.4.2 Frame

Every form of semiotic entity requires a frame, which is conceptually similar to genre. Framing is the application of modal affordances. From a textbook context, frames define textual content in terms of activity, modes, media and social relations within a text. Different textbook frames may be: *example, exercise, summary, question box, vocabulary, or demonstration*. These are foregrounded via font type, physical dimension, and various other graphical resources.

The design of frames and site of display are not normally anything a layman notices unless they fail, something that tends to happen when there is a change of medium (one announcement using two posters for example).²⁹

2.4.3 Design

Design is the "melting pot" where rhetorical purposes and the sign maker's interests/intentions get shaped by modes, media, frame and sites of display in order to create coherence.³⁰ Design is the process of using the semantic resources available to give shape to the intentions and purposes of the sign maker.³¹ In all situations where multiple modes come together and form modal ensembles, the arrangements and selections of semiotic resources are

²⁹ Kress & Bezemer, 2008, p 173.

³⁰ Kress & Bezemer, 2008, p 174.

³¹ Jewitt, Carey (2008). Multimodality and literacy in school classrooms. *Review of Research in Education*, 32, 241-267.

the process of design.³² Kress sums up the importance of design in social semiotics as such:

In convergence of social conditions, changing semiotic means and affordances in production and dissemination come together to make *design* the usual, normal, taken-for-granted, the necessary and essential semiotic disposition and practice.³³

3 Methodology

The reason for choosing multimodality over other forms of analysis is that it is the only methodology that can account for the research questions of this essay. Textual analysis is, obviously, limited to text. Sometimes images are considered, but only as a supplementary resource, not as an equally important part of the communicated meaning making.

Discourse analysis would have been viable, but only in collaboration with a second image-oriented form of analysis, making this option much more complicated. Multimodality is, as mentioned earlier, an offspring of discourse analysis and visual analysis, combining the two and intertwining the communicated modes into a fuller account of communication. Multimodality provides both the theoretical basis and the method of analysis for this essay.

The textbooks used in this essay were chosen because they met the variables that were important to this essay:

- Each is in use today
- Each publication period corresponds to one of the last two curriculums
- The texts were published more than 15 years apart

The two textbooks have been analyzed in their entirety, but in this essay only the two first chapters are presented in full, as they suffice to represent the structural design. The grammar section and the glossary are presented

³² Kress, 2010, p 28.

³³ Kress, 2010, p 135.

more briefly due to their relative consistency. Outside of the two chapters presented in full, texts deviating from the general structure of the respective textbooks are of interest and are included in the analysis. Finally, the covers are considered in a separate section of the analysis.

The overall design and images were reviewed before a reading of the textual content in order to interpret the visual impressions with as little background knowledge as possible. After having interpreted the page visually, the text was read and an analysis made of whether the text and design collaborate to make meaning or not. Every aspect of the page was viewed as significant, e.g., the role of color, image shape and placement, font size, textual effects, visual patterns, etc.

The textbooks are analyzed separately before a comparison is discussed and summarized in the final section of the essay.

4 Analysis

The dispositional structure of the analysis will consist of a general presentation of each textbook, and an analysis on a chapter-by-chapter basis, until a pedagogical structure is made clear, after which each chapter will be presented more briefly. Team 9 will be the first book analyzed for the sole reason of it being the older of the two textbooks.

4.1 Team 9ine

Team 9ine consists of six text-based chapters (94 pages), one image-glossary (9 pages), a grammar section (40 pages) and a glossary based on the book's content (26 pages).

The first five of the six text-based chapters each contain four texts divided into A, B, C and D, based on a slightly advancing level of difficulty where A is the easiest level. The glossary for the A, B and C texts is found at the end of

the book; the glossary for the D-texts is included at the bottom of the page of the text.

Every chapter has a theme, and each text of every chapter has a specific glossary and grammar section, for example, in Chapter Four, the glossary for the text called *His life was his message*, is made up of words used in politics while the grammar treats irregular verbs. In every A-text the grammar is of a repetitive nature; this is grammar the pupil should know from the 8th grade, while the B and C-texts present grammar the pupils are not expected to know yet. The D-texts are more difficult and include bits and pieces from all texts presented earlier in the chapter. Chapters two, three, four and five contain an extra text, outside of the A, B, C, D-system, a text that fits into the chapter's theme.

The theme of chapter six is *For your reading pleasure* and the entire chapter consists of extracts from novels written by authors from all over the English speaking world. This chapter is meant for pupils who master a fairly advanced level of English. Every text has its glossary at the bottom of the page, just like the D-texts.

The image-glossary totals nine pages and consist of eight different themes ranging from insects to shops. The grammar section is in a mini format: everything is explained very briefly and to the point, suggesting it be used as a compliment to a real grammar book. The glossary at the end of the book is divided into two parts, the first one is sorted by text (1C, 4A, 5B etc.) and the second one is sorted in alphabetical order.

The closer analysis of this textbook will be done chapter-by-chapter, section-by-section in order to give a clear methodological view on this process. However, not everything will be presented in detail in this essay because by the second chapter, a clear structure is evident, from which the next three chapters do not deviate. For chapters three, four and five, the only text presented will be the one outside of the A, B, C and D-structure.

4.1.1 Cover

The front cover is pink with an image in the center that looks like a sew-on badge, similar to those awarded by youth activity clubs, such as the scouts. The badge has the name of the book, Team 9ine, in green font over a white background. At the back side of the book, there is a list containing all material connected with this textbook; tapes, workbooks, teaching material etc.



Image 1. Front cover of Team 9ine.

The title of the book refers to being part of a team of ninth-graders, and in order to join those ranks, the pupil needs to complete this book, a symbol not only for the ninth grade but also for the entire junior high school period. The graphical resources (color, font, size, bolding) are used to make the title of the book look like a badge of accomplishment.

The inside of the cover-page has a map where all the countries that have English as their first or second language are high-lighted in blue while the rest of the world is grey-brown. Each blue country is named in black letters while the rest of the world is nameless. At the back-end of the book another map is shown using the same style. This map shows the British Isles with Great Britain in blue color with the bigger cities named in black letters. Ireland is grey-brown with only Dublin and Limerick named. It is easy to understand why only the English-speaking countries are presented with a blue color and their names on the world map, as this depiction helps to show how widespread the English language has become, considering that it came from the British Isles from the beginning. It is more difficult to understand

the map of the British Isles where Ireland is instead colored in the same way as non-English speaking countries.

4.1.2 Chapter one – Theme: Decisive moments

Chapter one consists of four texts and one short extract from a newspaper concerning decisive moments in one way or another. The first text is called *The choice (1A)*. It is made up of black text on a white background, something which reoccurs in every text connected to the A, B, C, D-structure. The same font type, size and bold aspect are used in every text. The story is spread over two pages, with the second page almost entirely taken up by a large drawing. The image describes a girl carrying a tape-recorder and a camera. She has her eyes closed, the drawing shows the girl shaded so she looks like two persons. After reading the text it is fair to assume that this drawing has been made especially for this text. In the text the girl gets ready to travel in time and brings a camera and a tape-recorder with her. Towards the end of the story, the girl admits to not remembering anything from her time-travel, something that the closed eyes may be representing. Her double-image is probably meant to show her leaving and coming back within one second of our time.

The second text is *The end of the beginning (1B)*. It spans over three pages with the middle page being a full-page picture of a violin in black and white, with parts of a musical notebook seen in the background. The text is about a girl who plays the violin but breaks both her arms in a car accident. With regard to the theme of this chapter, a picture of a crashed car may have been more appropriate, but would of course have spoiled the story.

The Titanic (1C) is the third and last text of what is considered to be part of the mandatory content of each chapter. This text is about two fictional sisters aboard the Titanic and their fate; the spread is over four pages. The first page sports an authentic black and white photograph of a newspaper boy holding a poster that says: *Titanic disaster, great loss of life*. There are numerous men reading newspapers all around him, but not one single woman. The second page shows another authentic picture of Titanic leaving the Southampton harbor with assistance from two towing boats. Both of these pictures add to

the true-story-authenticity of the text even though the characters driving the story forward are fictional. The last two pages are text only.

This text is followed by a one-page extract from a newspaper with two illustrated pictures of how it might have looked when Titanic was sinking. The text accompanying these two images are full of known facts. One image shows the actual ship sinking, and the other shows some first class passengers getting into a lifeboat. The two images fit very well with the textual content, as opposed to the authentic photographs selected for the earlier text.

The extra credit text *The new deal (1D)* spreads over four pages with only one picture taking up half a page, a black and white photograph of one of the streets in Las Vegas (not the Strip). The picture shows a lot of lights from various establishments on a one-way street where all the cars are shown from behind. The picture does not collaborate with the text in any other way than suggesting where the story takes place, something that is mentioned in the first sentence. At the bottom of every page a glossary with words from the text is shown.

4.1.3 Chapter two – Theme: The superstitious and the unknown

The first text is *They'll never find you now (2A)*. It takes up two pages with a very large image (drawing) who takes up most of the first page between the headline and the first paragraph. The image shows a man sitting in a chair drinking gin with a rifle by his side, and an old woman standing by a cupboard full of bottles looking at the man. Between them there is a black cat also looking at the man. The image works well together with the text in assisting the storyline. It turns out that the woman was a witch and the man was an evil bank robber.

Text number two, *The unicorn in the garden (2B)*, takes up two pages with a small image (drawing) of a unicorn in a garden, just like the title of the text. The image takes the top fourth of the second page. It is black and white like all images except for the front page so far. The image does not support the

story in other ways than stating the obvious; it is giving form to the nouns from the title.

The third text, *The fly (2C)*, is yet another two-page story. It has one picture taking up slightly less than half of the second page. It is a massive partly snow-covered mountain in the picture, clouds cover the middle like a waistline. Some trees are shown in the foreground down in the right hand corner. The picture has nothing to do with the text; it is not even the proper environment of the story.

Ahead of the 2D text, a poem by Edward Lowbury is presented on one page with an image taking almost half that page. The illustration shows a frightened person looking at a hooded person from a point of view where the observer of the image cannot see more than the back of the head of the hooded person. The illustration implies that the poem is going to have a sly turn of some sort. It is almost like a warning to the reader to be alert or the message will be lost. The poem and the image support each other really well.



Image two. The illustration to the poem Prince Kano.

This chapter ends with the text *The face on the wall (2D)*, a three page story with an image taking up a third of the second page. At the bottom of every page is a glossary. The image (drawing) shows a first-person view of a wall at the bottom end of a bed, ones own legs can be seen as well. On the wall the paint has started to crumble, creating a shape that looks like a face looking sideways to the right. This image fits very well with the text; the face on the wall is central to the entire storyline.

4.2 What's Up?

This book consists of eight chapters (119 pages), two special projects (4 pages), grammar section (34 pages) and a glossary (17 pages), 176 pages in total. All eight chapters have a theme and a short introduction of that theme; the first two pages of each chapter are used for this purpose. The introduction is a listening exercise. A presentation will be told using an audio CD, and helpful images, a vocabulary and a line of true/false questions will help support the pupils. Every chapter has three texts advancing in difficulty from A (easiest), to C (hardest); there is at least one supplementary text in each chapter, sometimes two. Chapters four (literature), seven (additional texts for the A, B, C chapters) and eight (history of the English language) are different from chapters one, two, three, five and six; they are not made up of A, B, C-texts.

Two ideas for larger projects are offered, the first one after chapter two and the second one after chapter five, probably with the intention of having one project for each semester. The grammar section is referred to in the table of contents; every A and B-text has a suggested section of grammar to work with, the C texts and the supplementary texts do not. The glossary is sorted into sections, making it easy to find words for a specific text but hard to find a specific word in general.

4.2.1 Cover

On the cover of this book is an image of five happy pupils of various ethnicities; they seem to be travelling forward, towards the beholder of the picture. The effect is made to look like when you snap a picture of moving lights with a camera at night.

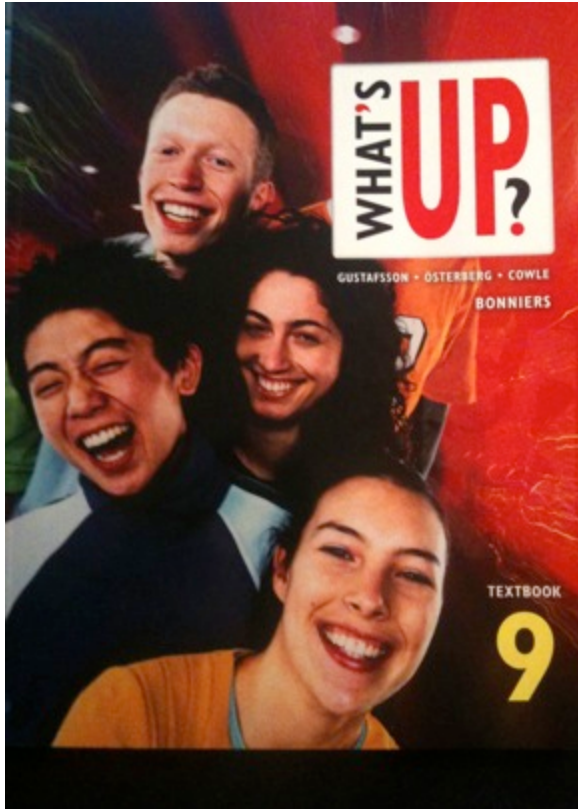


Image 4. The cover of What's Up?

The design of this cover is interesting, what is the reason for covering the only black pupil in the picture with a big white box with the name of the book? Not only does it imply that black pupils are not along for this journey, it also implies that either black pupils find this book boring (hence the need to cover the face) or that black pupils say "What's Up?" all the time.

Through the use of colors and the feeling of movement, the impression is that this book is as fun as it is to go out at night. The backside of the cover has a third of the space used up with a continuation of the pink/red neon light from the right side of the front cover. The rest is a background of concrete grey with an explanation of this book's merits and all of the additional material that belongs to it.

The inside of the front cover has a map of the British isles on it. Great Britain is shown in color with a lot of the bigger cities marked, Ireland is in white and grey with only the three biggest cities shown. At the other end of the book, the inside of the cover shows a map of the United States of America in full color with one or more cities in every state. However, Canada and Mexico are both in white with grey, Canada has some cities placed, Mexico has none.

The table of contents takes up three pages and are all designed in the same way, a light blue frame around the entire page, with a middle part where the text is printed is white.

Each chapter's theme is in bold blue letters, with the sub headings in bold red letters of a smaller size. After the sub heading; *Starter* of each chapter there is an image of a CD as a sign for when to use it. Each header, blue or red, are followed by a very short explanation of what it is about in black letters, the A and B-texts also has the suggested grammar directions written in blue text. There is a conscious use of color to arrange a structure, a structure that is clear for the rest of the book.

4.2.2 Chapter one – Theme: Ups and downs

The introductory part of this chapter has a picture of a roller coaster as a background over the entire two-page spread, the picture is taken from the ground looking up so the background is made up with a blue sky with a few small white clouds. The theme and name of the chapter is *Ups and Downs*, something the image enhances through the metaphor of the roller coaster.

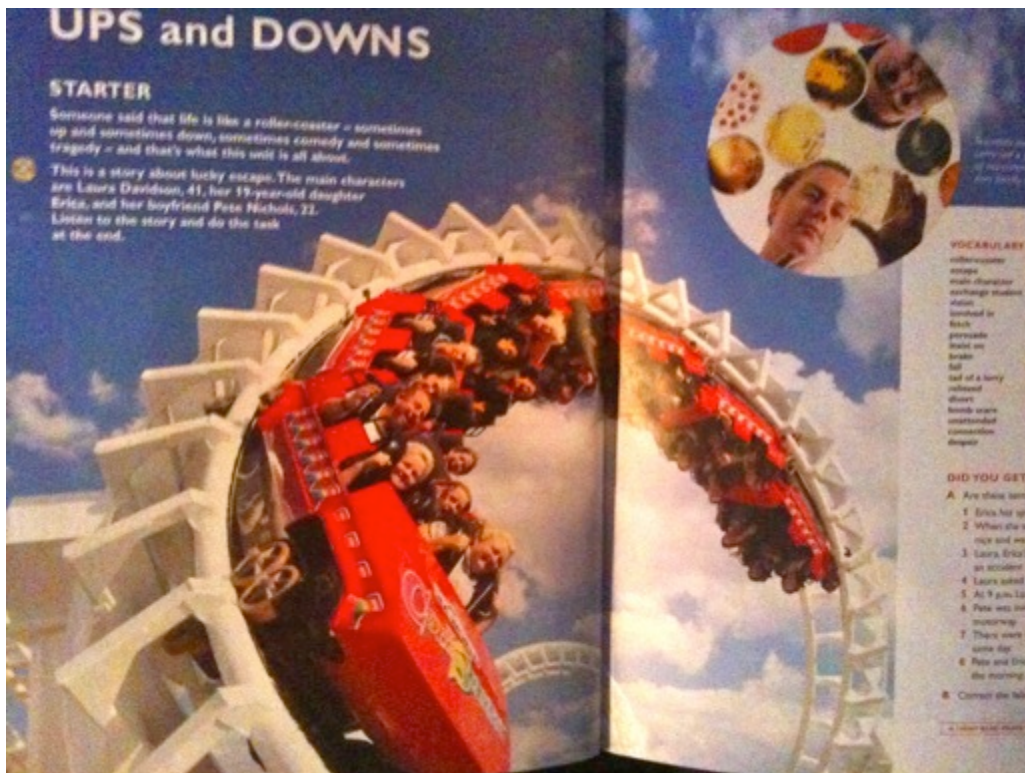


Image three. Introductory centerfold of chapter one.

In the top left corner the heading and some basic background to the chapter is written in white on the background of the blue sky. Shaped as a circle, a

second image is showing two students looking at some science samples; the image makes it look like the beholder is looking through a glass table from the ground and up, again a reference to the theme of this chapter. On the right page there is a white box covering a third of the “roller-coaster-background” image, in that white box are a small vocabulary with words used in the audio CD, the lower part of that white box has a heading in red; *Did you get it?*, followed by eight true/false statements about the story from the audio CD. At the bottom of the page is an arrow referring to chapter seven where additional texts on the same theme can be found. This section is for the pupils that need more help than the rest of the class, it offers two additional A-level texts for each chapter. The theme of the chapter get a lot of support from both pictures, both of them are upside down in regards to how they make the viewer feel.

The accident (1A) has two images over three pages; it is really the same image in two different shapes. At the top left corner is the letter A in purple, the heading of this chapter is also in purple as well as the headers in the question section on the last page. The middle of the first two pages is taken up by the first image, an unfocused picture from the inside of a car where you can see the dashboard and some yellow light through the windshield. On either side of this image is text, black letters on white background. The last page is divided into three sections; the top section is made up of fact-finding questions from the text, the middle section with discussion questions not necessarily connected to the text but to life in general, the last section is blank. Between sections one and two is the image from the first page but shaped as a circle this time, and much smaller. In both occasions the picture serve to remind the reader how it may be like to experience being drunk and driving a car, at the same time the picture assumes that the readers of the text do not have that experience.

The second text, *Life PAST and PRESENT (1B)*, has two images, one on each page of this text. The letter B (as in text number two) is in light brown and the heading of the text are in brown (Life PAST) and light brown (and PRESENT), the texts are sorted in the same way. The text with information about the past has brown capital letters for each of its six paragraphs while

the paragraphs (also six) about the present are light brown in color. The text about the past takes up the first page and has one image in black and white at the bottom left corner taking up a large part of the lower half of the page. In the picture a family can be seen playing a board game of some kind, it looks like they are in their living room. The picture is a good example of three of the strong arguments for the past; more time for each other, less stressful lifestyle and a higher level of general happiness. It is possible to include the other three paragraphs as well even if it is to stretch it; cleaner environment, lower crime rates and almost no unemployment. It is safe to assume that the parents in this picture are not unemployed, does not live in a dangerous area and they are all looking extraordinary clean. On the opposite page, the image is placed in the top right corner, it is somewhat smaller than the first image, and this one is in color. It is the same picture from the introductory section, the one with two pupils looking at science samples. The angle of this picture is from the bottom up, so the beholder can see the two pupils from under a glass table, watching the samples from underneath. It is easy to understand which sample is the focus of interest because both pupils are looking at the same one, while one of them is holding it, or perhaps putting it down on the table. At a closer look, one of the pupils turns out to be an observing science teacher, something that was not obvious to start with. This image is really only connected to one of the six paragraphs, the one about science advancements, the rest of them really cannot be connected to this picture. At the bottom is a small box with a light brown heading with a brown frame around the two questions that ask the pupil to think about things that were better in the past as well as things which are better today.

The C-text is named *A Genius – in spite of all (1C)*, the heading and the letter C are both in green, as are the headers for the questions. There is a small oval image of a smiling white man in his mid-twenties with sunglasses and a red turtleneck. He appears to be standing outside some kind of apartment complex but there really is not much of a background to be seen; the man is the object in focus. The part on the very left of the first page (the very right on the second page) has an image of piano keys from the top to the bottom, facing sideways. Even though piano keys are black and white it is still

possible to discern that the images are in color. After reading the text it is made clear that the person in the text is a famous piano player.

The additional element in this chapter is materialized as the lyrics of Alanis Morissette's hit song *Ironic*. It takes up one page and has a picture of Alanis on the upper right quarter of the page. The picture is in color and has Alanis playing the guitar, the picture seem to have been taken from the front of a stage. The lyric is written on the left part of the page from top to bottom, the title is blue and the actual content in black. Below the picture is a box of facts about Alanis; it has a blue frame and a white background.

4.2.3 Chapter two – Theme: Love

The introductory section for this chapter consists of no less than four images; the heading is in purple, with the text in pink or purple. The background is the same color as the background of the second pages image. There is a symbol of a CD a little below the header to the left, which means that the story is told using an audio CD, same as in the first chapter and the following chapters as well.

A little to the right of the heading for this chapter is a small rectangular picture in full color from the movie *Cleopatra*, it shows two persons about to kiss, Cleopatra and a roman general. Beneath is another small picture in color, this time from the movie *Bonnie and Clyde*, this picture is of a circular shape and is slightly larger than the earlier picture. It shows Bonnie and Clyde with guns in their hands, side by side facing the observer of the photo. The last picture on the first page is from yet another movie, this time it is from *Romeo and Juliet*, the picture is fairly large, taking up almost the entire lower half of the page. It shows Juliet with a dagger in her hand, pointed towards her own heart; Romeo is lying dead in front of her.

The last thing on this page is a white arrow directing pupils to extra reading content in chapter seven. The other page is made up of a full-page picture of the *Taj Mahal*, the sky is grey and the picture is taken from a fairly close distance, all the adjacent towers cannot be seen. On the picture in the top

right and left corner are the questions for the audio CD, to the left are the questions for checking how the pupil understood the text and on the right are a few more general questions.

The first date (2A) spans over two pages, white background and black letters except for all the headers who are in blue. The first page is full of text with a small colored circle in blue, placed in the middle to the right, with the text *We finally kissed on the bus*. The second page offers the only picture in this text; it takes two thirds of the page from the top down and it is very blurry. A couple is seen hugging each other while smiling on what appears to be a green hill of some sort. Below the picture is the last part of the text and to the right a box of ten fact-finding questions to see how the pupils understood the text.

The second text, *Real Love (2B)*, is a two-page text with one image. The header is purple and bold and animated the way some teachers would describe as doodling. The background over both pages look almost like wallpaper, it is slightly purple with hearts, stars and bubble-shaped objects in various colors. The text is written in two purple boxes, one on each page. In the middle of the first textbox is the image, a small picture of a young girl looking sideways towards something out of the picture. Below the textbox on the second page is a smaller box of questions in pink. This entire fold has a “diary” type feeling to it. The third text is called *The LADY or the TIGER?*, it takes up three white pages written in black letters, it has five images, two on each of the first two pages and one on the last one. The text takes up most of the space on all pages, the images are all fairly small, the first four are all placed in the right top and lower corners, while the last one is placed between the end of the text and the beginning of the questions, almost like a massive punctuation. All images are drawings in color, the first one is of the coliseum, and one lonely person in white can be seen in the middle of the full arena, the drawing is from above so the person in the middle is only slightly bigger than a dot. The lower corner drawing of the first page is of a tiger coming out from a door into what has to be the arena, but that can only be understood in light of the first drawing. On the second page, there is a drawing of a king and his queen holding hands, possibly in the middle of the

arena but that is hard to tell. The fourth drawing is a close-up on the lonely white person from the first picture, it is not possible to conclude that the tiger is in fact in the arena because the door from which it came can be seen in the background. The picture on the last page is a smaller version of the first picture. The questions are harder and demand more than finding a specific piece of information from the text, something that seem to be the case over the next few chapters as well, it is the questions to each text that gets harder, not the text itself.

The last part of this chapter is three pages of love poems. The first two pages look the same graphically with the page going from white on one side to being red on the other. The first two pages are concerned with Valentine's Day, they both have pictures of Valentine's cards. The first one is placed at the top of the page, followed by three different poems written in two rows, a smaller version of the Valentine's card can be seen in the lower right corner. The card is red, with a heart-shaped middle where a man and a woman are kissing each other in a sea of flowers. On the second page, the two poems are placed above the picture of the Valentine's card. The card shows a baby angel watering a bush of roses who shape a heart with two white pigeons flying to the left. The last page has a small white box of the poem in the middle of a full-page close up picture of a rose garden. The poem is *A red, red rose* by Robert Burns.

5 Summary

There is a lot that separates these two textbooks but there are also a few things that they have in common. The hierarchy of – writing > image – is still alive and well, both textbooks uses big images in the easier chapters and smaller and fewer images in the harder sections. The goal of reading is still to do it on pages without images.

5.1 Team Nine

This is a textbook with a very clear structure; the font, size and headings are the same throughout the book. Color is used in five places, two of those as a background color (grammar section and the love poems), two times as both background and colored images (Ireland and South Africa pieces) and the last time in the image-glossary. The only time color is used multimodally is in the text about Ireland, with the green background making the reader think of green hills or Leprechauns or both, they are both very connected to Ireland. The other four instances where color was used were more for structural reasons; the grammar section being yellow helps find it in the book but says nothing additional about grammar. Why the piece on South Africa was in a light blue background color is anyone's guess, the desert-red sand would have been a much better choice of color. It does not matter whether South Africa identifies with light blue if the rest of the world thinks of desert-red.

There is no design in a contemporary understanding of the word in this book, there is not much thought taken at all in regard to the placement of images on any given page. Every picture is rectangular in shape and roughly about the same size, they also tend not to fit with the text very well. The drawings on the other hand come in all shapes and sizes and always support the story. It is almost like they did not know how to resize and reshape pictures but instead asked an artist to read a text and draw something that fitted into the space that was left on the page. This is obviously not true but that is the interpreted feeling, design is not a matter of concern unless it has to do with the structure of the book. There is another pattern that becomes clear, the easier the text, the larger the image.

This goes the other way as well, the harder the text, the smaller or fewer images. In the chapter with extracts from books, there are no images at all; this more than implies that proper reading material do not include images. The learning curve goes from texts with images to texts without images. This book was written when teaching English was focused on reading and writing skills. There is nothing else but text after text in this book; all exercises are in the workbook, without it the pupil cannot do anything.

5.2 What's Up?

In this book font, size and bolding are used to emphasize different things and areas of interest, the bread text always uses the same font and most of the time the same color. The headings and preambles use various colors, sizes and even font, this is done to help organize pages, and the color of the heading and preamble decides the color of the rest of the important parts of the page. This makes it very easy to find out where the important information is located. The design of most pages makes it undesirable to change the location of the image due to how the text is placed and sectionalized. The image generally has a valid reason for being placed where it is, and trying to change it with another image makes that even more obvious. This book has credited a graphic designer and it easy to see that. The shape and placement of images is very clever and thought through most of the time, the exceptions being a few of the A, B, C-texts. However, even though images are used to add to the meaning making together with the text, especially in the introductory sections and in the A-texts, the pattern is clear, the harder the text, the smaller the images. In the chapter of extracts from real books, the images are few and far between, at least compared to the rest of the book.

This book offers questions at the end of each text; there is a workbook available for more individual work while the questions in the textbook are suited for discussions in class. At the beginning of every chapter is the introductory part that is told using an audio CD.

If a teacher were to follow this book blindly, the students would get a fair share of reading, writing, listening and speaking, all very basic cornerstones of learning a language. The two projects exercises all four of these skills together with the inclusion of the use of computers. The grammar section is remarkably clear and has a very open and airy structure, this is thanks to how the text, frames and color have been used.

6 Discussion

The format, in which these two textbooks are presented, differs quite a lot, not so much in the textual content but in regards to the visual content. Design as a tool to create pages that work multimodally is almost non-existent in Team 9ine, aside from the front-cover and the text about Ireland. The structure of the book however, is very good and easy to understand and follow, both from a pupil and teacher's perspective. The fact that it is a textbook only, without study questions or anything other than reading material, may seem quite odd with spectacles of today, but in its normal context, probably not so much. There seem to be a change in the type of topics of the texts from being more educational (Team 9ine) in nature towards having texts of a higher entertainment value (What's Up?), there is also a movement from individual work (Team 9ine) towards more group activities (What's Up?). There seem to have been a shift from a content determined organization, where images were arranged depending upon the space left from the text, to a fully designed mixture of images and text with careful consideration to layout and color.

These two books illustrate the journey from monomodal teaching to multimodal teaching, if each textbook would be followed to the letter, which is how much the textbook has changed over the last 20 years. Has the teachers changed along with it?

6.1 Teaching multimodally

It is not enough for textbooks to change over the last 20 years, the teaching has to change as well, with more than 50% of the active English teachers having been educated before the implementation of the present curriculum (Lpo 94)³⁴, the majority of today's teachers work on the basis of a pedagogy developed for mono-modal teaching.

³⁴ Skolverket (2003) Utredning av engelska. P 73

Why is it important to teach multimodally at all? In order to shape schools into a fluid part of a young persons life, the experience during this time must be adapted to what a pupil will find outside this elementary institution. As it stands pupils understand multimodal ways of communication in a basic sense before they even set foot in first grade, then they have to adapt to the importance of the written word as the number one communicative skill, something which may not be entirely true anymore.³⁵ If teachers would get more multimodal in their teaching there is a good chance that the pupils will have an easier time in school, it would be more clear WHY a pupil would need to learn this or that. It would be obvious that they learn a tool or a perspective that collaborate perfectly to the outside world, a skill they can use in everyday life, a skill that is not limited to a subject but instead a perspective to learn all subjects from.

Many schools in Sweden are trying to entice pupils to choose to go to their schools by offering a personal laptop computer. This comes with a subjective promise of “fresh” teaching and a possibility of a lot of new ways of learning, other than using textbooks. However, so far this has not been without problems. There is not much in the way of increased results or dramatically changed teaching to suggest that the schools giving out free computers is taking advantage of their promising situation.³⁶ The actual teaching, the lesson plans, the criteria, the didactics all need to change in order to take advantage of this (new) technology; it is not enough to only get the computers. Technique is all good and dandy but it is not the be-all-end-all of multimodal teaching, it is quite possible to teach multimodally with resources common to every school in Sweden. A good example would be to begin a project by reading a good old-fashioned book, talk about it and discuss what the pupils remember and how they interpret some of the important events in it. Now, rent the movie, watch it in class and discuss what the pupils remember and how they interpreted some of the more important events from it. Discuss why the director chose to exclude some parts of the

³⁵ Royce, Terry (2002). Multimodality in the TESOL Classroom: Exploring the Visual-Verbal Synergy. *TESOL QUARTERLY Vol. 36, No 2, Summer 2002, p 192.*

³⁶ Skolverket (2010). *Adaptiva och andra datorbaserade prov.* Skolverket: Stockholm, 2010, p 110-118.

book (they always do), compare what the pupils thought of as important events from the book to those of the movie. What additional information about the story is there? Elise Seip Tønnessen's research on this subject shows that pupils remember different things from books and movies. Books offer a clear idea of the story and a good sense of how the characters are as persons. A movie gives the characters feelings and a reason to remember what was said. In her research Tønnessen concludes that it is not a matter of books or movies, but rather, books AND movies.³⁷ Working multimodally is not dependent on technology; it is about giving equal amount of space and importance to both the visual and verbal/written language.

6.2 Assessing knowledge multimodally

The real challenge of working multimodally is to adapt the assessment to include the multimodal aspects of meaning making. If an assignment is asking a pupil to assemble information, put it together into a PowerPoint presentation, and present it in front of the class, it would not do to only assess what is written in the PowerPoint in order to give this pupil a fair grade. The images chosen are important, the colors, fonts and design also need to be included in the assessment, even the gestures, stance and pitch of voice used is important. Holding a speech is not the same thing as holding a PowerPoint speech, reading a book is not the same thing as reading a computer screen, but when assessing knowledge that is exactly what is happening.³⁸ It is important to include the process of learning, not just the final product and this really emphasizes the problem at hand; this is phrased better by Wyatt-Smith and Kimber (2009):

If teachers and students have a shared understanding of terminology that clearly describes the constituent parts of a multimodal text, then there could be a

³⁷ SMDI Conference at Södertörns högskola, 25th november, 2010.

³⁸ Wyatt-Smith & Kimber (2009), p 71.

foundation for shaping more focused conversations about quality in multimodal performance.³⁹

The journey from monomodal assessment towards multimodal assessment has only just started but it is a step that may very well have some unexpected collateral effects. Pupils that find it hard to adapt to the importance given to written word may have an easier time doing so if it is not the only valid means of making meaning in a school environment. There is a long way to go but the discussion is out there and new teachers are coming out to schools with new ideas and hopefully a new way of both teaching and assessing knowledge.

³⁹ Wyatt-Smith & Kimber (2009), p 86.

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