# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

## VI GRAPE Webinar
## "Digital Genres and Multimodal English Language Learning"
## 21-22 Nov 2024

## ⇤ Thursday 21st ⇥

**Bill Cope** (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*)*

### A Multimodal Grammar of Generative AI: Implications for Language Learning

This presentation will analyze the scope of Artificial Intelligence (AI) from the perspective of a multimodal grammar. Its focal point is Generative AI, a technology that puts so-called Large Language Models to work. The first part of the paper analyzes Generative AI, based as it is on the statistical probability of one token (a word or part of a word) following another. While acknowledging gains arising from the brute statistical power of Generative AI, in its second part the paper goes on to map what is lost in its statistical and text-bound approaches to multimodal meaning-making. Our measure of these gains and losses is guided by the concept of grammar, defined here as a theory of the elemental patterns of meaning in the world—not just written text and speech, but also image, space, object, body, and sound. Ironically, a good deal of what is lost by Generative AI is computable. The third and final part of the paper briefly discusses educational applications of Generative AI. Given both its power and intrinsic limitations, we have been

experimenting with the application of Generative AI in educational settings and the ways it might be put to pedagogical use. How does a grammatical analysis help us to identify the scope of worthwhile application? Finally, if more of human experience is computable than can be captured in text-bound AI, how might it be possible at the level of code to create a synthesis in which grammatical and multimodal approaches complement Generative AI?

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**Elisabetta Adami** (University of Leeds, UK)

**Translocal trajectories and strategies of social media video content creators:
An integrated time-space-interaction analysis**

Elisabetta Adami, University of Leeds, UK

The paper introduces an analytical framework to identify the trajectories of development in the semiotic practices of social media content creators, and applies it to the productions of an Italy-based food content creator originally from Morocco, who gained megainfluencer status on TikTok and Instagram. The framework employs the social semiotic concept of provenance as an analytical tool to derive cultural dimensions in the meaning potential of semiotic resources. It allows for a holistic multimodal analysis of content creators' production through time and across the spaces of their online presence. It structures the analysis along different semiotivc layers, across three dimensions, integrated by contextualisation data along multiples axes. The semiotic layers involve the resources of food itself, those orchestrated in the embodied and disembodied performance, the video-specific visual and auditory resources, and those used in the paratext. The layers are considered along three intertwined dimensions of analysis of the creators' production, i.e., through time, across different social media spaces, and in the interactions by/with followers. These are cross-checked through contextualisation data on the platforms' affordances, on genre-, domain- and space-specific established practices, on institutional media representations of the creator, and on broader social dynamics, semiotic regimes

and ethnoracial linguistic ideologies. The case study applies the framework to account for the complexities of changes and variations of the content creator's translocal identity performances. The analysis identifies different phases in the creator's trajectories, in an arch of development from experimentation through to professionalisation up to institutionalisation of his practices, through distinctive strategies in the combined use of the three layers of semiotic resources. The development of these through time, across spaces and in relation to followers' prompts reveals the creator's changing interests in terms of identity performances and translocal audience reaches. The conclusions point to the usefulness of a social semiotic framework that includes a languaging perspective to observe transnational phenomena, and of such a time-space-interaction analysis to trace the complex dynamics of influence between practices from below and institutional ones, and between agency in sign-making choices and semiotic regimes and ideologies.

*Elisabetta Adami, PhD, is Associate Professor in Multimodal Communication at the University of Leeds, UK. Her research specialises in social semiotic multimodal analysis with a current focus on issues of culture, interculturality and translation. She has published on sign-making practices in place (on urban visual landscapes and superdiversity), in digital environments (on intercultural digital literacies, aesthetics, interactivity and social media practices), and in face-to-face interaction (in intercultural contexts and deaf-hearing interactions). She is a founding editor of the journal Multimodality & Society (SAGE), after serving as editor of Visual Communication (SAGE), leads Multimodality@Leeds, and co-organises the Multimodality Talks Series.*

**Jarret Geenen** (Radbound Universiteit, The Netherlands)
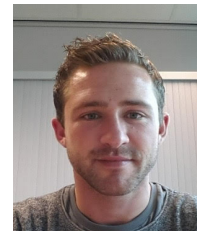
**Genre in a changing technological ecology: a mediated way forward**

It has been 40 years since Miller's (1984) seminal article helped define genre as something more than simply a collection of textual patterns or rhetorical moves and instead, as a form of social action. This understanding of genre has, and continues to inform empirical work in education (Artemeva, 2008; Freedman, Adams & Smart, 1994; Fogarty-Bourget, 2019), economics (Smart 1994), medicine (Schryer & Spoel, 2005) and beyond. While Miller's conceptualization of genre has proven its utility across decades, the very thing that it originally sought to define has been dramatically changing in front of our very eyes. Defining *text* in 2024 is dramatically more challenging than 40 years ago. This raises a number of significant questions concerning materiality, languaging, social action and agency to which I would like to turn to in this talk.

While the socio-technical ecology of our world is in constant flux and the concept of 'text' continually evolving, the core of Miller's (1984) definition is just as relevant today. However, the fruitful mobilization of the concept may require putting the *social actor* back into the *social action*. While mediums, modes, methods and materialities may continue to change and evolve, a mediated approach to social action and an

analytical occupation with the irresolvable tension between social actor and mediational means can help us to better understand the social and distributed nature of agency. Evolving textual characteristics may require a careful reconsideration of the applicability of the concept of genre and to this end, I propose conceiving of genre as *systems of mediated action* where the concept itself is ambivalent to materiality, medium and modality. To exemplify the potential utility of the concept, I consider two dramatically different systems of mediated action: one producing a more canonical although digital 'text' and one producing things with less sustainable materiality . Genres as systems of mediated action flexibly conceived, allow us consider digital and multimodal texts alongside technologically-mediated and embodied action with conceptual congruence. Finally, I consider the broad and significant ramifications of such a reconceptualization for teaching, learning, language competency and languaging more generally.

*Jarret Geenen is Assistant Professor at Radbound Universiteit, The Netherlands. His primary interests are the pragmatics of social interaction, non-verbal communication and multimodal interaction. More specifically, his work aims to better understand the role of cultural tools in social interaction in an effort to determine how material and technological mediation affect social communicative processes, collaboration and goal-oriented multiparty activity. While prioritizing naturaly occurring social interactive data and employing integrative multimodal analytical frameworks, overarching empirical goals are to better understanding multimodal ensembles in communicative action. Taking communicative action as analytically primary he explores cross-modal relationships and the pragmatic consequences of these relationships. Better understanding the interrelationships between communicative modes in both production and interpretation of communicative action is paramount to fully understand processes like L1 pragmatic development, multi-party collaboration and technologically mediated forms of social interaction.*

# Pilar Mur Dueñas (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain)

**From the analysis of multimodal digital genres to the development of English learners' multiliteracies**

The digital age has revolutionised how specialised knowledge is produced, shared and consumed, transforming the communication practices of scientists and scholars. These are expected to reach broad dissemination of their expert knowledge for which they turn to varied digital platforms and social media. Embracing these digital practices requires these professionals not only to employ English language conventions, but also to make an adept use of semiotic modes (visual, aural, spatial, beside the verbal one) and of digital affordances (hypertextuality, hypermediality, or interactivity) so that the digital texts and genres created are effective, redressing knowledge asymmetries with non-experts and engaging diversified audiences.

As professional practices become more complex and digitally reliant, novices' training should

encompass not only English language skills and disciplinary literacies, but also the development of their multiliteracies. A great deal of research has now been undertaken on the linguistic, pragmatic and multimodal analysis of digital texts and genres, unveiling how specialised knowledge and information is unravelled and recontextualised. Such results need to be transferred into training, creating designs for English learners which promote future professionals' successful communication in different contexts and media.

Thus, in my talk I aim to propose how to establish bridges between the results of research on scientific digital genres and practices and English learners' training, bearing in mind the need to develop their reception, production, interaction and

mediation skills as well as their linguistic, disciplinary, academic, digital, visual and multimodal multiliteracies.


*Pilar Mur-Dueñas* *is a senior lecturer in the Department of English and German Studies at the Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain). Her research focuses on the analysis of multilingual scholars' discursive practices in English. She has explored scholars' publication practices looking into academic genres from an intercultural perspective. Her more recent research focuses on the analysis of scholars' digital practices when disseminating their research. She is a member of the InterGEDI research team, who is currently working on the project "Processes of recontextualisation in the transfer of knowledge: A pragmatic, linguistic and multimodal study of digital scientific discourse for dissemination purposes (SciDis)" (PID2021-122303NB-100). She is also a member of the research group CIRES (Intercultural communication and societal challenges), financed by the Government of Aragon and the EU, and of the Research Institute of Employment, Digital Society and Sustainability (IEDIS). She is also very interested in English teacher training at all educational levels and coordinates the CLIC@unizar programme (Content Language Integrated Competences at Universidad de Zaragoza) for lectures teaching through English. Her research can be found on: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Pilar_Mur_Duenas*

# Vicent Beltrán Palanques(Universitat Jaume I, Spain)

# Julia Valeiras Jurado (Universitat Jaume I, Spain)

**Multimodality and pedagogical implications: Research by grape**

Since 2005, GRAPE has focused its research on multimodality, initially exploring multimodal discourse analysis in academic and professional settings. Over time, this focus has broadened to include a variety of discourses, such as lecturers' discourse in English-medium programmes and students' discourse in English for Specific/Academic Purposes (ESP/EAP) classrooms. More recent studies have explored the pedagogical applications of multimodality, particularly ESP and EAP contexts, highlighting the growing interest in fostering students' multimodal literacy and awareness. Additionally, the research group has developed the GRAPE-MARS software to support multimodal analysis and multimodal genre pedagogies.

**Vicent Beltrán Palanques** *is a lecturer in the Department of English at Universitat Jaume I (Castellón, Spain). His research interests include multimodal literacy, multimodal discourse analysis, English-medium education, and ESP/EAP pedagogies. His recent publications have appeared in journals such as System, JEAP, TESOL Journal, Assessing Writing and ESP Journal, and in international publishers such as Routledge and Springer.*

**Julia Valeiras Jurado** *holds a Doctor's Degree in Linguistics from Jaume I University. She is assistant professor at Universitat Jaume I. Her research interests include oral discourse and genres, persuasive language, multimodality and multimodal genre pedagogy. Her publications have appeared in Ibérica, Discourse Studies, Multimodal Communication, International Journal of English Studies and Journal of English for Academic Purposes, among others.*

# ⇇ **PhD Panel** ⇉

**Nuria Escobar Lluch** (Universitat Jaume I, Spain)

### Examining pedagogical practices: Using GRAPE MARS to unveil the multimodal nature of translanguaging

Since the irruption of EMI in HE, there has been a growing interest in translanguaging, which involves using individuals' linguistic repertoire as a pedagogical tool to scaffold content comprehension. Nevertheless, "meaning-making is never the result of language alone, but the result of the interplay between language and other meaning-making resources such as visual and gestural semiotics during communication" (He and Lin, 2020: 58). This is particularly the case of EMI lectures, where students need to understand disciplinary content in a language other than their L1. As a result, lecturers have to look for different strategies to make such specific content more accessible and comprehensible. In order to understand how disciplinary content is conveyed, this paper adopts a comprehensive approach to translanguaging from a Multimodal Discourse Analysis perspective to define the multimodal nature of an EMI lecturer's translanguaging practices. With this aim in mind, the data collected included two EMI video-recorded lectures from a Business course, which were verbatim transcribed for the purpose of the present research. Following Sahan and Rose's taxonomy (2021b) and from a mixed-based approach, we aim at analysing quantitatively and qualitatively the role of the translanguaging strategies employed by the lecturer. We then look more closely at how translanguaging practices were performed multimodally using the

GRAPE-MARS software (Ruiz-Madrid et al, 2023). Results show that translanguaging has a clear pedagogical function since the lecturer employs the L1 to check students' comprehension, explain or clarify presented content, translate technical vocabulary, provide feedback and build rapport. Moreover, depending on the functions mentioned above, the lecturer resorts to specific multimodal ensembles that contribute to the transmission of disciplinary content and the creation of a safe learning environment.

*Nuria Escobar Lluch is a PhD student and lecturer at Universitat Jaume I. Her research interests include Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Content and Language Integrated Learning, and English as a Medium of Instruction, among others. She is also a member of the Group for Research on Academic and Professional English (GRAPE), which focuses on the use of English in academic and professional contexts and Multimodal Discourse Analysis.*

## Alejandro Mena Alba (Universitat Jaume I, Spain)

## Multimodal and digital literacy teaching through innovative cybergenres: Instagram *reels* as a pedagogical asset

The multimodal nature of digital communication has challenged teachers' procedures for introducing multimodal literacy in the school curriculum (Lim, 2018). One of the most recurrent teaching resources for promoting multimodal literacy in education are dissemination videos, especially within ESP instructive contexts (Hafner, 2018). Indeed, the engaging effect based on multimodal ensembles of short-length videos such as YouTube shorts makes them an effective pedagogical artefact (Serrano-Hernández, 2024). However, engaging with the dynamic, interactive and multimodal affordances of digital genres can be demanding, especially for those pre-tertiary students who lack the necessary skills to be considered multimodally literate in the digital age (Lim, 2023; Sindoni et al., 2021). The present study aims to explore the multimodal nature of Instagram *reels* by looking at the role of engagement strategies and modal density, as well as their pedagogical potential for multimodal literacy teaching in pre-tertiary education. With this aim in mind, a total of 15 Instagram *reels* by popular Instagrammers in the field of 'Cooking' were collected. This dataset was analysed using the AI-based-GRAPE-MARS software (Ruiz-Madrid et al., 2023), and Valeiras-Jurado and Bernad-Mechó's (2022) taxonomy of multimodal engagement strategies. Special attention was paid to the nature of the multimodal ensembles and how they are constructed through filmic and embodied modes, to facilitate content delivery and engagement. Results show that multimodal ensembles are fundamental to reinforce the pragmatic effect of engagement strategies in *reels*. These findings also pave the way for pedagogical implications in the language classroom in pre-tertiary instructional contexts.

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# Elena Serrano Hernández  (Universitat Jaume I, Spain)

## Multimodal genre pedagogy through Instagram *reels*: Fostering multimodal and digital literacy in the classroom

Technology has resulted in the inherent presence of multimodality in pre-tertiary educational materials and communicative contexts, which has evidenced the need for enhancing multimodal literacy policies among teachers and students (Mena-Alba, 2024; Lim, 2018). Videos are a type of material that encourages digital competence through multimodal awareness in education (Hafner, 2018). Particularly, the engaging nature rooted in specific semiotic mode combinations in short-length videos such as Instagram *reels* may constitute a promising didactic tool (Serrano-Hernández, 2024). Nevertheless, the multimodal nature of Instagram *reels* as an engaging novel genre has not yet received much examination. Therefore, this study aims to unveil Instagram reels' engagement strategies and modal density and their didactic potential as promoters of multimodal literacy in EFL classrooms. To achieve this, a multimodal genre analysis has been carried out by studying a set of 15 highly-viewed Instagram *reels* related to the topic of "Travels". Using the software GRAPE-MARS (Ruiz-Madrid et al., 2023), Valeiras-Jurado and Bernad-Mechó's (2022) taxonomy was taken into account to explore engagement strategies as they are integrated into embodied and filmic modes in digital videos. The results of this study showed that engagement strategies are reinforced by Instagram *reels*' highly multimodally dense nature. Pedagogical reflections are also derived from results concerning the potential of Instagram *reels* as materials for multimodal literacy awareness in language learning classrooms.

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