

## Research-Based Publication: Fenkata Immuzikata



### Overview

The research-based publication, *Fenkata Immuzikata*, represents a significant contribution to the field of multimodal discourse analysis. This event is grounded in the innovative pedagogical framework which characterises the outcomes of the *Multimodality in Practice* research project launched by the author himself in 2012. This initiative involved primary and secondary school students in the adaptation based on their original and creative interpretations of Trevor Zahra's 1980s traditional text, *Il-Ktieb tal-fenek l-aħmar* (The Book of the Red Rabbit). The main aim of the project is to obtain insights through which as educators we can explore how contemporary learners perceive and relate to classic literature.

### Theoretical Framework

This research is rooted in multimodal discourse analysis. This predominantly focuses on the interplay of various communicative modes beyond traditional text. The latter include body language, gaze, gestures, and movement (Jewitt, 2008). Such an approach aligns with the work of prominent scholars in the field, particularly with the ideas of Kress (2010), who directs researchers to acknowledge the importance of recognizing and analyzing the so-called 'overlooked modes' in educational contexts.

## Research aims

The research project (and publication) pursued the following research aims:

1. Working with primary and secondary school students to evaluate and give feedback about a traditional story book written in the 80s;
2. Giving students voice to critically share insights and proposals about modes they would add to make a traditional book more to their liking;
3. Formulating a set of pedagogical suggestions for teaching reading.

## Outcomes Achieved

The outcome of this project reached its culmination in a two-hour theatrical production involving twelve well-known Maltese singers, three actors, and 120 students from two Maltese schools, effectively raising over €10,000 for Dar Tal-Providenza, a charitable institution supporting individuals with disabilities in Malta. The theatrical production was held at the Catholic Institute in Floriana (Malta).

Furthermore another outcome achieved was the following peer-reviewed scholarly publication and conference presentation:

*Cremona, G. (2024, November). Enhancing language learners' reading skills through multimodal evaluations of traditional reading books. Insights from a Maltese research venture. Innovation in Language Learning - 17th Edition International Conference, Florence. 1-7.*

The **research questions pursued** in this publication are:

1. How do language students and their teachers react when asked to read a traditional reading book?
2. Based on the outcomes of the first research question, which suggestions do students themselves formulate through which traditional books might be transformed into an effective student-friendly reading pedagogical aid?

Additional outcomes included:

- A DVD of the performance (found in link on UM Repository OAR)
- Pedagogical materials designed to enhance reading skills in language lessons

This collaborative endeavour served as an intersection of research and community engagement as well as a contribution of valuable insights into multimodal literacy education. This initiative also served to initiate a deeper understanding of the evolving relationship between students and literature.

## References

- Jewitt, C. (2008). *Multimodality and Literacy in School Classrooms*. *Review of Research in Education*, 32(1), 24-36.
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- O'Halloran, K. L. (2010). *Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Systemic Functional Perspectives*. Continuum.
- Walsh, M. (2010). *Multimodal Literacy: The Role of the Teacher*. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 54(3), 257-267.
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2012). *Learning by Design: A Guide to 21st Century Learning*. Cambridge University Press.

