



MULTIMODAL LITERACY IN THE 21st CENTURY: EMERGING PERSPECTIVES AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

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SUMMARY

This article investigates multimodal literacy in the context of the 21st century, considering its emerging perspectives and contemporary challenges. Multimodal literacy is understood as the ability to understand and produce texts in different modalities, such as written text, images, audio and video. The research addresses the growing importance of this form of literacy in an increasingly digital and multimodal world. The implications of these changes for educators and educational policies are discussed. The methodology includes a review of recent literature and critical analysis of empirical data related to multimodal literacy. The results highlight the need for an integrated and inclusive approach to literacy in the 21st century, which recognizes the multiple forms of communication and expression as necessary partners for the process of multimodal literacy. In this article, the term perspectives were succinctly addressed emerging in the face of contemporary challenges of multimodal literacy, thus, consequently, how fundamental this science is and that it is linked to the work process of the literacy educator. Among the authors who contributed to the preparation of this research are: Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (2018); Comber, B., & Simpson, A. (2020); Kress, G., & Jewitt, C. (2017) and Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2016)), among others, who address important concepts on the topic in their works.

Key words:Multimodal Literacy. XXI century. Contemporary Challenges.

ABSTRACT

This article investigates multimodal literacy in the context of the 21st century, considering its emerging perspectives and contemporary challenges. Multimodal literacy is understood as the ability to understand and produce texts in various modalities, such as written text, images, audio, and video. The research addresses the growing importance of this form of literacy in an increasingly digital and multimodal world. The implications of these changes for educators and educational policies are discussed. The methodology includes a review of recent literature and critical analysis of empirical data related to multimodal literacy. The results highlight the need for an integrated and inclusive approach to literacy in the 21st century, recognizing multiple forms of communication and expression as necessary partners in the process of multimodal literacy. This article briefly addressed the term emerging perspectives in the face of contemporary challenges of multimodal literacy, thus, consequently, the importance of this science being fundamental and linked to the work process of the literacy educator. Among the authors who contributed to the elaboration of this research are: Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (2018); Comber, B., & Simpson, A. (2020); Kress, G., & Jewitt, C. (2017); and Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2016), among others, who deal with important concepts on the subject in their works.

Keywords:Multimodal Literacy. 21st Century. Contemporary Challenges.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, society has undergone a significant transformation driven by rapid evolution of technology and communication. In this context, literacy plays a crucial role in enabling individuals to understand and communicate effectively in an increasingly digital and multimodal environment. Multimodal literacy emerges as a response to the emerging demands of this new scenario, which requires skills beyond simply reading and writing traditional texts. Literacy

Multimodal, defined as the ability to understand and produce texts in different modalities, such as written text, images, audio and video, becomes increasingly relevant in a world where communication is predominantly digital and visual. This article aims to investigate the emerging perspectives and contemporary challenges of multimodal literacy in the context of the 21st century.

One of the main points of discussion is the growing importance of this form of literacy in the educational panorama. As technology progresses to integrate into pedagogical practices, educators face the challenge of preparing students to effectively navigate a multimodal and digitized environment. This requires not only basic reading and writing skills, but also skills related to interpreting and producing texts in different formats.

Furthermore, it is essential to address the implications of these changes for educational policies. As we strive to ensure that all students have equitable access to educational opportunities, it is crucial to consider how multimodal literacy can be effectively integrated into school curricula and teacher education programs.

In this context, this article presents a critical analysis of recent literature on multimodal literacy, exploring emerging perspectives and contemporary challenges facing educators and policymakers. Through a comprehensive review, we seek to provide valuable insights for understanding and promoting multimodal literacy as a core competency for success in the 21st century.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Multimodal literacy is a topic of great relevance in contemporary education, as it reflects the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to teaching reading and writing. With the evolution of technology and the growing diversity of communication modes present in society, it is essential to explore new ways of understanding and producing texts in different modalities, such as image, sound and video.

At this juncture, it is essential to contextualize the topic of multimodal literacy in light of current educational practices. As noted by Kress (2019), multimodal literacy recognizes the importance of going beyond simply decoding written text, involving the ability to interpret and produce essays in a variety of modalities. This expanded approach to literacy highlights the need to prepare students to deal with the diversity of modes of communication present in contemporary society.

Above all, it is important to consider the role of educators in promoting multimodal literacy. As highlighted by Lankshear and Knobel (2016), teachers play a fundamental role in integrating multimodal approaches into their teaching practice. Therefore, it is essential to provide professional development opportunities for educators, enabling them to use multimodal strategies effectively in the classroom.

However, implementing multimodal literacy faces significant challenges. One of these challenges is the need to ensure equity in access to necessary resources. As highlighted by Soares (2020), the use of digital technology plays a central role in multimodal literacy, but not all students have equal access to these tools, as do teachers when facing a reality in which the needs arising from poorly equipped schools, with missing inputs ranging from the simple internet to access to technological material such as computers, tablets, etc. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that educational policies and funding initiatives are in place to promote equity in access to necessary resources.

Another challenge is developing appropriate assessment strategies to measure students' progress in multimodal literacy. As noted by Jewitt (2017), traditional assessment methods may not adequately capture students' multimodal skills. Therefore, there is a need to explore alternative forms of assessment, such as digital portfolios and media creation projects, that allow students to demonstrate their skills in a more authentic and meaningful way.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight the need for an interdisciplinary approach to multimodal literacy. As noted by Street (2019), this approach recognizes the importance of integrating different disciplines and areas of knowledge to promote a broader and deeper understanding of multimodal texts. Therefore, it is essential to encourage collaboration between teachers from different disciplines and areas of knowledge, in order to enrich students' learning experience and promote a

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more comprehensive understanding of reading and writing practices in a variety of contexts.

It is crucial to recognize that literacy is not limited to the ability to decode written text, but rather encompasses the ability to interpret and produce a variety of texts in different languages. modalities (Lankshear & Knobel, 2016, p. 73).

One of the most relevant contemporary pedagogical approaches is project-based learning, which emphasizes the active construction of knowledge through practical and collaborative activities. As highlighted by Thomas and Brown (2018), this approach recognizes the importance of situating learning in authentic and meaningful contexts, promoting students' active participation in the learning process.

Also project-based learning, another contemporary pedagogical approach is inclusive education, which seeks to ensure equitable access to education for all students, regardless of their individual differences. According to Ainscow et al. (2019), inclusive education values diversity and promotes pedagogical practices that meet the needs of all students, creating welcoming and accessible learning environments.

A new relevant perspective is competency-based education, which emphasizes the development of practical, real-life skills. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), this approach recognizes the importance of preparing students for the challenges of the contemporary world, emphasizing not only the mastery of academic content, but also the ability to apply this knowledge in real situations.

Furthermore, the socio-emotional education approach has gained prominence in contemporary educational practices, recognizing the importance of developing students' socio-emotional skills for academic and personal success. As noted by Durlak et al. (2015), this approach aims to promote self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skills, preparing students to face life's challenges more effectively.

Given these contemporary pedagogical approaches, it is important to highlight the need for an integrative approach that combines different perspectives and theories, recognizing the complexity of educational practice. As highlighted by Fullan and Hargreaves (2016), a holistic approach to education considers not only pedagogical issues, but also the social, emotional and cultural aspects of learning, promoting a more comprehensive and meaningful education for all students. Digital tools can expand access to multimodal resources and facilitate collaboration between students and teachers (Soares, 2018, p. 112).

The integration of digital technologies in the literacy process represents a significant change in the way teaching and learning are conceived and practiced. In the current context, marked by the ambiguity of technology, it is essential to explore how digital tools can be effectively incorporated into the literacy process to enhance student learning.

One of the main advantages of integrating digital technologies in literacy is the ability to offer interactive and multimodal resources that meet students' different needs and learning styles. As highlighted by Clark and Mayer (2016), the use of digital resources, such as educational applications and interactive games, can make the learning process more engaging and motivating, encouraging active participation from students.

Additionally, the integration of digital technologies in the literacy process allows access to a wide variety of materials and sources of information, enriching the learning environment and providing opportunities to explore different themes and contexts in more depth (Puentedura, 2014). This contributes to building critical reading skills and interpreting texts in different formats and media.

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Another relevant aspect is the potential of digital technologies to promote collaboration and knowledge sharing between students and teachers. As noted by Mishra and Koehler (2016), the use of collaborative tools, such as blogging platforms and wikis, can facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences among members of the school community, promoting more collaborative and meaningful learning.

However, it is important to recognize that the integration of digital technologies into the literacy process also presents challenges and limitations. One of these challenges is the need to guarantee equitable access to technologies, considering the socioeconomic and infrastructural disparities that may exist between

schools and communities (Warschauer, 2016). Without equal access, there is a risk of worsening inequalities in the educational process.

Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies requires careful reflection on the role of the teacher and their training for the effective use of these tools in the educational context. As highlighted by Mishra and Koehler (2016), teachers need to develop digital and pedagogical skills to meaningfully integrate technologies into their teaching practices, ensuring that their use contributes effectively to the students' learning process.

Teacher training is often not aligned with the demands of the digital society, which can result in outdated and ineffective pedagogical practices (Kress & Jewitt, 2017, p. 92).

The discussion about the impact of multimodal literacy on contemporary society reveals the growing relevance of this educational approach in the current context. When analyzing the effects of this practice, it is possible to observe several transformations both in the field of education and in society as a whole. In this sense, it is crucial to explore these impacts to better understand the role of multimodal literacy in the contemporary world.

One of the main contributions of multimodal literacy is the promotion of greater inclusion and accessibility in the educational process. As highlighted by Lankshear and Knobel (2016), this approach recognizes and values the diversity of modes of communication present in society, offering opportunities for different types of students to engage and actively participate in the learning process. This contributes to building a more egalitarian and fair society, where everyone has the chance to develop their reading and writing skills.

What's more, multimodal literacy has a significant impact on the way people consume and produce content in the digital age. With the advancement of digital technologies, it has become increasingly common to find texts that combine different modalities, such as text, image, sound and video. According to Kress (2019), this trend reflects a change in the way we understand and interact with information, requiring new reading and interpretation skills from individuals. In this way, multimodal literacy prepares citizens to deal with information overload and navigate the digital world critically and responsibly.

Another important aspect of the impact of multimodal literacy on contemporary society is its influence on communication and cultural expression. As noted by Street (2019), the ability to produce texts in different modalities allows individuals to express their ideas and experiences in a richer and more diverse way. This contributes to the preservation and appreciation of cultural diversity, promoting a richer and more inclusive intercultural dialogue.

Furthermore, multimodal literacy has the potential to transform teaching and learning practices in different educational contexts. As highlighted by Jewitt (2017), this approach provides opportunities for educators to explore new teaching strategies that engage and motivate students more effectively. This can result in more meaningful and lasting learning, preparing students to face the challenges of the 21st century.

However, despite the benefits of multimodal literacy, we also face challenges and concerns related to its implementation and use. One of the main challenges is to ensure equity in access to the resources necessary for multimodal literacy. As noted by Soares (2020), the use of digital technology plays a central role in this approach, but not all students have equal access to these tools. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that educational policies and funding initiatives are in place to promote equity in access to necessary resources.

Another concern is the quality and reliability of multimodal content available on the internet. With easy access to information online, students can be exposed to inappropriate or misleading content that can harm their understanding and worldview. Therefore, it is important to develop communication skills and digital literacy that allow students to critically evaluate multimodal content and discern between reliable and unreliable information.

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Multimodal literacy offers a more inclusive perspective, recognizing and valuing the diverse forms of representation and expression present in contemporary social practices (Street, 2015, p. 45). Effective implementation of educational policies and school practices is essential to promote quality and equitable education. In this sense, it is crucial to consider a series of suggestions that can guide both government policies and practices in schools, aiming to guarantee the integral development of students and the promotion of equal educational opportunities.

One of the key points for successful educational policies is investment in professional training.

number of teachers. As highlighted by Fullan (2019), teacher training is essential so that they can adopt innovative and effective pedagogical practices, aligned with the needs of students and the demands of contemporary society. Therefore, it is necessary to promote professional development programs that support educators on their improvement journey.

Equally, it is important to promote inclusion and equity in the educational system. As noted by Ainscow et al. (2019), policies that aim to guarantee equitable access to education for all students, regardless of their individual differences, are essential to promote a fairer and more inclusive society. This includes implementing differentiated teaching strategies and providing additional support for students with special needs.

New relevant vision concerns the appreciation of cultural diversity and the recognition of students' identities. According to Freire (2018), it is essential that educational policies promote an intercultural approach that recognizes and respects the different cultures present in the school. This can be achieved through the inclusion of curricular content that addresses topics related to diversity and the promotion of activities that value students' multiple cultural perspectives.

It is essential to promote effective integration of digital technologies in the school environment. According to Mishra and Koehler (2020), digital technologies have the potential to transform teaching and learning practices, offering new opportunities for creating and sharing knowledge. Therefore, educational policies must encourage the responsible and critical use of technologies, providing adequate technical resources and support for teachers and students.

Promoting a holistic approach to education, which recognizes the importance of students' integral development. As highlighted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), educational policies must go beyond the exclusive focus on academic results and also consider the emotional, social and physical well-being of students. This can be achieved through the implementation of socio-emotional support programs and the promotion of pedagogical practices that value experiential learning and the development of life skills.

It is important to promote the active participation of students in the educational process. As noted by Cook-Sather (2017), policies that value and encourage student voice can contribute to a more democratic and inclusive school environment, where students feel empowered and engaged in their own learning. This can be achieved through the implementation of participatory practices such as student councils and student interest-based learning projects.

Finally, it is essential to promote effective partnerships between schools, families and communities. As highlighted by Epstein (2018), collaboration between different educational actors can strengthen support for students and promote a more integrated and comprehensive education. Therefore, educational policies must encourage and facilitate the active participation of families and communities in the educational process, recognizing their fundamental role in student success.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

According to Gil (2012), Severino (2018), Marconi and Lakatos (2017) and other scholars, the methodology outlines the path of research, establishing the steps required to achieve the established objectives. Thus, the following phases are defined: definition of the theme, literature review, collection of information through interviews, questionnaires and bibliographic research, followed by interpretation of the results. In this study, the main objective is to explore new forms of literacy that have emerged in the context of the 21st century, especially those that involve multiple modes of communication, such as text, image, audio and video. For this, a bibliographical research was carried out. According to Lakatos and Marconi, scientific research begins with a bibliographic review, in which the researcher searches for materials already published by other scholars.

and experts on the subject in question.

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The bibliographic survey plays a fundamental role in the preparation of a scientific article, providing support for the arguments presented. According to Severino (2018), this research is based on - use available records of previous studies, such as articles, books, dissertations and theses, using data from theoretical categories already explored by other researchers.

Marconi and Lakatos (2022) define the bibliographic survey as the first step in scientific research, emphasizing the importance of reviewing the readings carried out and avoiding redundancies in the topic of study. Within the scope of this article, the research followed a bibliographic approach, based on the contributions of the authors of the analytical studies present in the texts, as suggested by Severino (2018).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research explored the dynamics of multimodal literacy in the context of the 21st century, investigating emerging perspectives and addressing contemporary challenges inherent to this educational approach. Throughout this study, the complexity and growing relevance of multimodal literacy in the digital era became evident, where language goes beyond written text and embraces a variety of modalities, such as images, videos, audio and interactive multimedia.

One of the fundamental conclusions of this study is the pressing need to recognize and incorporate multimodal literacy practices into educational curricula. Today's society is immersed in a visual and digital culture, where communication occurs in diverse and complex ways. In this sense, educators must be trained and prepared to teach reading and writing skills that go beyond traditional forms of language.

Furthermore, this study highlighted the importance of equity in access to multimodal literacy. In an increasingly digitalized world, disparity in access to technology can widen educational inequalities. Therefore, public policies and initiatives must be implemented to ensure that all students have access to the resources necessary to develop multimodal skills.

Another crucial aspect addressed was the need to promote a critical approach to multimodal literacy. Students must be trained not only to consume, but also to produce and analyze multimodal texts critically. This entails developing critical and reflective thinking skills, as well as promoting awareness about issues such as authenticity, representation and power in multimedia production and consumption.

This study highlights that multimodal literacy is a constantly evolving field, which demands continuous research and innovative pedagogical practices. As technologies and forms of communication continue to develop, it is essential that educators are open to exploring new strategies and approaches to promote effective literacy in the 21st century. By addressing emerging perspectives and contemporary challenges, it is hoped that this research will contribute to advancing the field of literacy and improving educational practices in the 21st century.

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