

# Multilingualism from Manuscript to 3D

Intersections of Modalities from  
Medieval to Modern Times

Edited by Matylda Włodarczyk,  
Jukka Tyrkkö and Elżbieta Adamczyk

First published 2023

ISBN: 9780367763596 (hbk)

ISBN: 9780367763626 (pbk)

ISBN: 9781003166634 (ebk)

## 1 Intersections of Modalities from Medieval to Modern Times

*Matylda Włodarczyk, Jukka Tyrkkö and  
Elżbieta Adamczyk*

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

DOI: 10.4324/9781003166634-1



**Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group  
NEW YORK AND LONDON

# 1 Intersections of Modalities from Medieval to Modern Times

*Matylda Włodarczyk, Jukka Tyrkkö and  
Elżbieta Adamczyk*

## 1.1 Introduction

In recent years, both multilingualism and multimodality have become vibrant and urgent fields of linguistic investigation. However, while the phenomena occur extensively in both modern and historical contexts, and frequently in the same texts, there is a significant lack of scholarship that would address the many links between them. Multimodal contextualisation cues evoking communication beyond a given text or utterance are tightly fused with language-based processes of meaning-making. In historical texts and contemporary social media communication alike, pre-attentive engagement techniques (Bateman 2008; see also Peikola and Varila, Chapter 5, this volume) are implemented by content producers and guide processing. Orthographic aesthetics encodes social evaluations and commentary of (linguistic) otherness in the 19th century (Tyrkkö and Legutko, Chapter 7, this volume), while visual diamorphs, brevigraphs and non-alphabetic symbols embody the prestige of a medieval deluxe manuscript (Rogos-Hebda, Chapter 2, this volume). The voices of others, discourse and writing representation, and perspective shifts in general frequently receive graphic and typographic marking in mono- and multilingual texts alike (e.g. Claridge 2020; Grund and Walker 2020). Indeed, bilingualism is as purposeful and commercially devised a tool as the graphics and photos placed in blogs and vlogs by micro-influencers (Limatius, Chapter 9, this volume). It is thus important to redress the interfaces of multilingualism and multimodality by paying attention to features such as graphics, layout, boundary marking or typography as essential and inseparable from the verbal content.

Although recent technological advances have perhaps intensified integration of the multimodal and the multilingual, the dynamic relationship between the two pre-exists modern digital media. In order to understand the interplay between the two phenomena, in-depth scholarly exploration is needed in order to discover the dynamics and trends that have endured and developed over centuries, as well as those that were specific to particular circumstances. The premise of this volume is that the interfaces between multiple codes and modes (i.e. multilingualism and

multimodality) need to be explained by adopting a systematic approach that takes a long historical view of and a rigorously theoretical, but evidence-based, perspective to the phenomena.

This volume contributes to currently ongoing efforts to find semiotic frameworks that afford more attention to complex literacy practices and multimodal contextualisation cues (e.g. Sebba 2012: 2; cf. Barret et al. 2016; Peikola et al. 2021) as important windows into the interaction of two or more linguistic codes. While not detaching multilingual writing from its social, pragmatic and individual dimensions, such approaches no longer privilege decontextualised linguistic data as central, but rather posit the need to pay equal attention to the different modes through which multilingual texts communicate. Earlier studies employing notions of transmodality and translingualism (e.g. Pennycook 2004) in reference to the broader semiotic theories, such as the multimodality proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2001) or geosemiotics (Scollon and Scollon 2003), have in recent years paved the way for new understandings of multilingualism as “a complex of specific semiotic resources” (Blommaert 2010: 102). First and foremost, these frameworks respond to the challenges of technologisation and globalisation of communication observed over the last three decades, particularly in the digital sphere (Leppänen et al. 2017), and we will argue that the same frameworks afford important insights into earlier time periods as well. Still, the interfaces between multilingual practices (Pahta et al. 2017), visual pragmatics (Carrol et al. 2013; Peikola et al. 2017) and other modality features remain woefully under-theorised (e.g. Kopaczyk 2017). The chapters brought together in the volume use data from a broad array of contexts, periods and genres, posing the following general questions: What kinds of interfaces between mode(s) and code(s) can research identify? What are the extralinguistic modes evoked by specific (groups of) features? To what extent do these organise the text? Does the principle of resource integration, i.e. the view that modes are holistic units (Norris 2004; cf. multimodal ensembles in Kress 2010) apply to text-based multilingual communication? What can we gain by appreciating that the interfaces between code(s) and mode(s) are meaningful (semiotically charged)? Providing tentative answers to these questions constitutes the contribution of studies conducted primarily within the frameworks of linguistics to the field of multimodality studies. By exploring the interface of multiple codes and modes, the chapters we have collected afford new insights that cannot be gained from studying multilingualism or multimodality alone.

Pursuing our unifying focus, we need to reconcile an internal contradiction between the nature of the data under analysis: namely the apparently monomodal multilingual written text, which belies a much more complex semiotic sphere, and multimodality, both as a phenomenon and as a research framework. To a linguist, conventionally, a text is a domain of the word, and historical written data even more so. For a multimodal perspective, on the other hand, image, gesture, speech, even human presence

in communication are required to start with. Nevertheless, any attempt to rebalance the analytical focus of linguistic phenomena by including long-neglected aspects of multimodality must be done carefully and without losing sight of language use.

Multimodality does not necessarily need to lie beyond language, as this volume sets out to show. On the contrary, language(s) may be used as (a) powerful lense(s) through which “the multitude of ways we communicate” (*The Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis*, Jewitt 2017: blurb) may be recovered for the past and present. In this volume, multilingual practices (in the sense defined by Pahta et al. 2017) in particular are studied with a common purpose of looking *through* rather than *beyond* language to integrate the non-verbal aspects of communication into a linguist’s perspective.

### *1.1.1 Terminological Preliminaries and Limitations*

Current research tends to view multimodality “as a resource for communicative expression” (Bateman 2014: 25), while much of the research into multilingualism in the globalised world has argued that using more than one tongue involves “a complex of specific semiotic resources” (Blommaert 2010: 102). These general statements, apt and concise as they are, apparently lead in the same direction by indicating reservoirs of knowledge, skills and forms of expression that are open to selection. However, there may be different ways of interpreting the use of such reservoirs. In the past, multimodality may have lain in underlying oral practice or in the intended performative nature of the original text, which only survives today in written format. In the present, multimodal scope involves a range of visual and interactive tools of communication not only between humans, but also increasingly with the participation of artificial intelligence (AI). Likewise, multilingualism may equally be seen as a professional/social asset or as a disadvantage, while its manifestations and scope are diverse and dynamic.

In line with recent research into multimodality, we accept that it involves “activation of extra-linguistic knowledge and metaphorical associations” (Lyons 2018: 21) and consequently we opt to study it in written/text-based contexts for reasons elucidated above. In other words, multimodality does not only depend on the presence of an extralinguistic element (e.g. image) that is an integral part of a text encoded in its production, but also in the processes of its decoding, that is, multimodality is discursively evoked (Lyons 2018). Indeed, we want to make the case that processes that constitute multimodality occur parallel to the activation of cognitive capacities enabling the use of more than one language and the contextualisation of meaning-making in the relevant repositories of communal and individual experiences. Although access to the interfaces of the two “activations” will never be complete, we believe that even an atomistic approach whereby specific features of code interacting with

mode are teased out will bring us closer to understanding the complexity of the processes involved.

Below, we provide a clarification of some key notions which we consider fundamental to our interest of interfacing between the two fields, i.e. mode and code respectively, in an attempt to sketch a preliminary background for the chapters presented in the volume.

In her studies into medieval manuscript miscellanies as not only generically, but also linguistically heterogenous material (2015, 2016), Kate Maxwell levels criticism at multimodality studies: “[i]n terms of multimodality as a discipline, the basic process of identifying semiotic modes is one which leaves aside aspects of a culture which are of supreme importance for an understanding of that culture” (2015: 359). In order to overcome this limitation, i.e. to incorporate culture, or rather build a bridge that allows insights into the past in this respect, Maxwell conceptualises mode as a three-layered concentric construct. The outer layer encompasses cultural practices (e.g. reading and writing), the middle one covers semiotic resources (for medieval manuscripts (MSS), e.g. ordering and page layout), and the inner layer houses the so-called elements (Latin *pars*, e.g. scripts or punctuation). The model thus frames the notion of mode into a general context of culture. Framing, however, is only illusive here.

Despite the concentric conceptualisation, ordering is actually deceptive while the layers are not straightforwardly hierarchical or impermeable: i.e. a specific feature (e.g. word spacing, layout) may potentially be an element, a semiotic resource or a cultural practice (2015: 360). Maxwell indicates language as one such feature. Our contributors have focused primarily on the choices and boundaries between languages/codes and have attempted to recover their relationships to a/the relevant level(s) in the three-dimensional model of mode. In doing so, the chapters in the volume present a nuanced mapping of correspondences between language(s), elements, semiotic resources and cultural practices, revealing both changes as well as stable patterns over time. This is only possible through an array of texts witnessing cultural practices at different points in time, different cultural circles and representing different discourse domains. As the interface between multiple modes and codes over time is a largely unexplored field of research, the nature of the chapters included in the volume is to some extent exploratory. In the future, some of the data, periods and practices brought together here will, hopefully, give rise to more fine-tuned emphasis on those cultural practices (as constituents of mode and modality) whose meaningful interfaces with multilingualism prove most robust theoretically and methodologically.

### *1.1.2 Volume Structure*

Some of the chapters in the volume focus on texts characterised by visible non-verbal cues relevant to their multilingual nature. We propose that

in these texts semiotic resources and elements are the site of mode(s). This means that boundaries and interactions of the two or more codes materialise on the page, thus evoking extralinguistic associations through visual features and/or spatial organisation. In other texts, the mode vs code interface is external to the text as an artefact, meaning that it is not revealed on the page and extends to the processes of text transmission. Thus it lies in the social materiality of meaning-making, which in Maxwell's model (2015) may conveniently be put under the label of cultural practices.

In reflection of the two main foci of the studies, the volume has been divided into two parts: (1) Multilingualism vs semiotic resources and elements, and (2) Multilingualism vs modes as cultural practice. In Part 1, the features analysed in the context of multilingual practices include: type and size of script, ink colour, mise en page, scribal abbreviations (including non-alphabetic symbols, e.g. brevigraphs, Rogos-Hebda, Chapter 2); code boundaries manifested in layout and spacing (Seiler, Chapter 3; Włodarczyk and Adamczyk, Chapter 4), graphics and tabulations (Peikola and Varila, Chapter 5). In a theory-oriented mode, the paper closing Part 1 summarises the inventory of cues to codes and modes by proposing a hierarchical and transhistorical model that operationalises the relationship between multilingualism and multimodality (Kopaczyk, Chapter 6).

In Part 2, cultural practices entailed in multilingual texts and practices are viewed in the context of social media networking and interaction as well as in the world of product packaging. The paper by Tyrkkö and Legutko (Chapter 7) explores the social materiality of meaning-making by indicating evaluation of linguistically foreign and non-standard voices encoded in orthography and image. Othering and social commentary expressed on the pages of the 19th-century popular magazine are paralleled in present-day multimodal communication through social media and surface as identity statements in reference to gender (Radke and Versloot, Chapter 8), self-branding in influencer culture (Limatius, Chapter 9) and the ordering of languages in multilingual product packaging (Sebba, Chapter 10).

Illuminated medieval manuscripts provide fruitful ground for studying the interface of multilingualism, semiotic resources and elements as Rogos-Hebda shows in Chapter 2. In medieval times, manuscript-based textuality relied on a combination of different semiotic resources, while cognitive consumption of such artefacts was as much visual as spatial-tactile experience, not unlike the multisensory experience of present-day electronic communication. The chapter focuses on the multimodal contexts for visual code-switching in two 15th-century deluxe manuscripts of Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and investigates "visual practices" of two distinct scribal communities responsible for copies of the same Middle English text. These practices are viewed as pragmatic markers in the perspective of the pragmatics on the page (Carroll et al.

2013). Inherent multilingualism of institutions and literary endeavours fused Latin and Anglo-French with the vernacular, but in later Middle English, unlike directly after the Norman Conquest, the different codes were highlighted by means of colours.

The analysis of the flagging of language switches is framed within Sebba's visual code-switching theory, which distinguishes between discourse-related (titles, headings, paragraphs) and visual/spatial units (frames, boxes, columns or delineated borders), among others. The former ensure structuring and cohesion, whereas the latter delineate physical space for code-switching (Sebba 2012: 106). The analysis indicates significant differences between the two MSS, but shows for both that Latin units have clear indexing, rather than just an authoritative function. In addition, they may also be seen to play social/interactional pragmatic roles compared to the English text which is more content-oriented (cf. the triad of paratext, metadiscourse and framing, Bös and Peikola 2020: 12). Moreover, in MS R.3.2, language neutral pragmatic markers, such as paraphs, are shown to control reader engagement by accompanying the shifts to Latin and thus separating the multilingual practice from the English matrix. Latin may also express authorial stance, as the abbreviations utilised in the Latin fragments provide a commentary on the relative prestige of the copy, the work and the author himself (cf. Pearsall 1989 on *auctoritas*). Paradoxically, as the chapter demonstrates, the visual-spatial form of Latin units renders them both external to the primarily English text and, through their pragmatic and discourse-organisational significance, a necessary part of it.

Chapter 3, Seiler's contribution, presents a multimodal analysis of multilingualism in an intrinsically multilingual genre, a glossary. The chapter focuses on six medieval English glossaries, dating from the late 7th to the middle of the 13th century and relies on the assumption that the layout of medieval glossaries represents an important semiotic resource employed to facilitate access, identify languages or establish a semantic-syntactic relationship between multilingual word pairs. Besides, patterns of layout organisation afford some insights into specific cultural practices and multimodal literacy. Seiler implements Sebba's (2012) framework and focuses on language-spatial, language-content relationships and language-mixing types. The language-spatial relationships are found to be typically symmetrical as their content in the different languages is equivalent or overlapping. In terms of language mixing, types form diverse patterns ranging from contrasting monolingual columns, or rows, to mixed-language text block. Interestingly, despite the considerable time span of data, languages in medieval English glossaries are clearly ordered with Latin placed in the privileged slots on the left side of the entry or on the base line. In the trilingual glossaries, however, Anglo-Norman precedes Middle English in the two herbals, but follows it in the Stowe glossary. The chapter shows that visual/spatial features of glossaries may be design universals based on pervasive cultural practices (e.g. listing,

alphabetisation, reading direction from left to right). Nevertheless, the placement of *interpretamenta* above the corresponding headword is a specifically medieval feature. This arrangement exploits a template provided by interlinear glossing as a cultural practice, which codifies the position above a word as an explanation slot.

Boundary marking, another aspect of page layout in multilingual texts and its cross-modal nature (van Leeuwen 2004: 15) are the topic of Chapter 4 which analyses (meta)linguistic and visual features (code and discourse transitions) in the late 14th- and early 15th-century land books from Greater Poland, written in Latin with a consistent vernacular component, i.e. the Old Polish witness oath. Włodarczyk and Adamczyk view layout organisation and boundary marking in terms of global (on the page level) and local (on the grapheme level) visibility and suggest that the patterns of page organisation form a continuum with respect to global visibility, ranging from visually salient types (boundaries and transitions clearly marked and page layout is transparent), to those which show no orderly organisation and no visual marking of discourse boundaries. The chapter proposes a typology of the page layout patterns with respect to integration/separateness of the discourse/code components of the record. Four major types of boundary marking that capture transparency of page layout and the fluctuating salience of the mediating items can be observed in the records. This formal variation, as the chapter shows, also involves a diachronic and diatopic dimension. Diachronically, for instance, a (significant) increase in the number of rotas representing Type 1 (salient boundary marking and transparent page layout) over four periods of time is established, while an opposite tendency for Type 3 (no clear delimitation of the individual components of the record) is also observed. These results may be viewed as growing consistency over time in terms of a preference for a transparent structure, with the Latin and Polish parts of the record visibly separated. This pattern may have served the purpose of reader guidance. In terms of multimodality, the analysis confirms earlier research showing that cues realised in different modalities tend to reinforce one another (e.g. Fenlon 2015).

Access structures encoded in multimodal features are explored in Chapter 5 based on a different contemporaneous genre: the late medieval calendars (1300–1550). They were popular Latin and/or vernacular tabularised presentations of names of saints and major festive days, but also included liturgical, astrological and medical information. Peikola and Varila view this largely unexplored material in the framework of genre studies underlining multiple literacy competencies (linguistic, numeric and symbolic) required to read the heterogenous data and to process the condensed information they recorded. A multimodal take proposed in the chapter singles out spatial features and layout as indicators of readers' engagement at the level below awareness (Bateman's 2008: 115 pre-attentive engagement). This, the authors assume, means that visual access structures played a crucial part in the consumption of these texts.



As far as multilingual features are concerned, like other contemporary documentary texts, calendars may have been undergoing the process of vernacularisation in the period under scrutiny and exhibit interesting multilingual patterns.

The qualitative analysis of 31 calendars in which Latin and the vernacular co-occur has been conducted on four levels of manuscript context: macro-level, calendar page (usually one month), calendar table, micro-level (core column, month of July). Three types of constraints are of relevance (Bateman 2008: 17–18), pertaining to canvas, production and consumption. The study established that on the macro-level, calendar design was determined by the nature of manuscript (religious vs astro-medical) and rendered prototypes of distinct subgenres, though hybrid material was also observed. At the micro-level, the visually salient KĹ abbreviation and the consistently Latin hexameter about the Egyptian days were typically placed in the upper region of the calendar page, which is understandable in the face of present-day-eye-tracking studies (upper left region fixation of the gaze on a page). In terms of multilingual elements, later calendars showed a more frequent occurrence of these, which the authors see as symptomatic of vernacularisation. Typically for medieval and later utilitarian texts, calendars used visual diamorphs, i.e. non-language-specific abbreviations, which may be viewed as genre markers and access structures at the same time.

Interfaces of multilingualism and multimodality remain undertheorised and this gap is addressed in Chapter 6, devoted to the structural model of multilingual practice (SMMP) proposed by Joanna Kopaczyk. This descriptive model is based on specialised multilingual historical texts and it attempts to conceptualise and operationalise the relationship between multilingualism and multimodality, in particular in terms of the visual cues vs linguistic content. Visual marking vs the lack of it at the point at which changes in linguistic resources take place (i.e. switches from one language or code to another) are the parameters of the model. A conventional structural linguistic hierarchy is extended to cover the discourse and macro-genre levels and provides the backbone of the hierarchical organisation of the model. The SMMP is a transhistorical extension of an earlier historical model proposed by Kopaczyk. The applicability of the model to multilingual contexts is illustrated with an example of a sample of Scots laws from early modern Scotland where a complex interplay between Latin, Scots and English is observed.

Apart from breaking separable languages down to their structural ingredients, the model underlines the need for asking a range of questions related to the multilingual repertoires and user choices with respect to the marking in visual modalities. The systematic approach proposed in the model involves some sensitive areas that require further elaboration: boundaries and shifts between languages and linguistic levels and the visual cues. Illustrations from historical administrative texts in Latin, English and Scots indicate the major points of complexity. Although SMMP has not so far

been applied systematically to a larger data sample, it is easy to imagine its practical implementation, in particular in the realm of corpus design. So far a consistent recognition of multilingual elements has rarely been the basis for the creation of historical or contemporary corpora. Multimodal features have been much more neglected due to the difficulty and modal heterogeneity of relevant tagging systems. Thus, the conceptualisation developed in the chapter might come in useful in tackling the challenge of creating multimodal and multilingual corpora that aim at “identifying different languages in written texts and relating the changes in the linguistic repertoire to non-linguistic meaning-making practices”.

Opening Part 2 of the volume, Chapter 7, by Tyrkkö and Legutko takes us to the Late Modern period. It was then that growing literacies, new genres and changing functions of communication in the public realm complexified interfaces between the mode and code even further. The boom of popular press transforms access structures in public and opinion-shaping texts. The culturally iconic periodical *Punch* published in London in the 19th and 20th centuries and read mostly by the growing bourgeoisie and gentry provides visual and textual data for the chapter. Non-standard and foreign voices occurring in the 550 issues of the magazine are set in the framework of orthographic aesthetics (Jaffe 2000: 509–511). The authors view such textual elements as reinforcing otherness through a disruption of the “normal meaning-making process” and reveal the social significance of orthography. This significance may be understood in terms of authorial evaluation of standard vs non-standard as previous research has shown (Casas 2009). In fact, marked representations of the voices of others have been interpreted before in terms of Goffmann’s changing hats (Goffmann 1959) as well, but Tyrkkö and Legutko provide a focused model and entrench orthographic features within a multi-code and multi-mode context. Apart from orthography and typography, the multimodal focus of the chapter lies in the interplay of text and image presented in cartoons and within cartoons (captions).

Code switching was a common feature of *Punch* for the better part of its history, i.e. from 1840 to 1920, though the repertoire of distinct languages was rather limited. French segments tended to be marked typographically with some consistency, Latin was much less frequent and typical for academic contexts. As for switches into dialect, their aim was reader entertainment rather than derision of the presented speakers. Typographic highlighting and orthographic norm-deviating spellings achieved a range of social and presentational goals, primarily that of witty commentary mixed with the need for maintaining hierarchies and norms.

Chapter 8 by Radke and Versloot reaches for a framework of referential modality which enables comparing and contrasting different modalities of distant and direct communication in terms of the performance of gender and identity. The German-Namibian diaspora in Germany provides a well-specified context for the study of multilingual and multimodal practices in computer-mediated communication (CMC) and FTF

communication. Cultural contextualisation of the data follows criticism of traditional multimodality studies which tend to overlook this issue (Maxwell 2015: 359). Data has been divided into mixed (CMC and FTF) and single mode samples (CMC). Using the framework of referential modality and methods of discourse analysis, Radke and Versloot observe and quantify some differences in the performance of gender in terms of the use of English-derived and Afrikaans-derived keywords divided into function and content words and the occurrence of multilingual brocatives. Referential modality is understood as “the use of one or more claims referring to a mode different from the mode in which the claims occur”, i.e. in particular direct and indirect quotes, and it shows that mixed mode environments are more conducive to the fostering and strengthening of social bonds among members.

Some approaches to code-switching indicate a connection between the use of non-standard language, frequency of language and gender showing that men rather than women switch languages more often because of their general orientation towards covert prestige. The results of the analysis of communication within a German-Namibian diaspora contradict this connection as they show that women tend to use more non-German lexical items than men. Second, a discursive analysis reveals that informal language features, such as the use of brocatives, characterises male communication patterns and indexes in-group cohesion and camaraderie. Digital gender roles are thus visible both in the use of multilingual items (more common in women) and informal multilingual features such as brocatives (more frequently used by men). Digital gender roles, as the chapter shows, cannot be viewed as established, but are clearly performed and shaped differently by single- and mixed-mode environments, while the framework of referential modality enables incorporating the multilingual nature of communication in the context of this specific diaspora.

Digital gender roles are also clearly present in influencer culture, a prominent aspect of social media, which is the theme of Hanna Limatius’s Chapter 9. Here, the focus falls on a gender profiled web community of fashion and beauty microcelebrities and their “followers”. This qualitative study focuses on interfaces of visual and linguistic representations viewed as discursive, aesthetic and social resources in samples of blogs and vlogs (YouTube videos and Instagram posts). Influencer culture is primarily a commercial phenomenon and the study opens a line of research that foregrounds the benefits that both multimodal and multilingual practices may have for influencers. The major assumptions behind the study are that multimodality enriches interaction with cues not present in text-based online communication, while multilingualism is mostly a means of identification and self-expression on social media. If combined, the two might be fostering authenticity, which may be one factor behind the commercial success even of microcelebrities.

The analysis focuses on aesthetic and social aspects of blogs, the mutual influence between visual and verbal content, and interactive features, i.e.

commenting, sharing and embedding (of YouTube content, for instance). On the one hand, blogs emerge as being conceptualised in terms of a brand or product (branding and tagging), while at the same time providing space for conversation and exchange and community-building. Visual resources employed by microcelebrities (props, colours and framing) are consistent with both concepts behind individual blogs and intended audience. In addition, results of the analysis supported by metatextual comments show that the multilingual practices of Finnish influencers on YouTube, i.e. switches to English, may be spontaneous rather than a strategy of reaching an international audience. On Instagram, however, Limatius notices purposeful bilingualism, with Finnish translations of English captions, which implies that the audiences on the platforms are not the same and that influencers consult statistical data, e.g. location of their viewers (engaged audience) and adjust their practices accordingly.

The final chapter (Chapter 10) by Mark Sebba proposes a preliminary theoretical approach to the analysis of multilingual product packaging. Product packaging is viewed as part of the semiotic landscape and as language-defined objects. A collection of 80 items originating from 16 different countries (UK, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, USSR) is approached from two perspectives: multimodality, where texts function both as language and as images, with semiotic interactions between the two; and multidimensionality, where product packages are analysed as three-dimensional objects (in contrast with two-dimensional signage, for example). For this reason, information contained in packages needs to be spatially structured in three dimensions which may represent informational or sociolinguistic hierarchies of different languages. The analysis is based on a typology of messages drawn from Thomas (2014: 174–175) and reveals that there is a relationship between information structure and position on the packet, as well as that structure is subject to substantial variation. Moreover, Sebba concludes that design strategies tend to respond to the needs of branding and promotion of a product, just like the inclusion of a number of different languages. However, only a limited number of nationally or internationally dominant languages appear in product packaging.

The chapter fills the gap in the studies on the relationship between the design of the packaging and the languages incorporated into that design, showing a threefold conceptualisation of texts on product packaging: as language(s), practices and images.

The chapters in the volume share an interest in both multilingualism and the versatile modalities of communication in the past and now, and some also rely on the conceptualisation of “text as image” (cf. the references in Peikola and Varila, this volume). The interests and foci of the chapters embrace and extend this view by incorporating the dimension of space on different levels of language, communicative acts and artefacts (Kopaczyk; Sebba; Seiler). This framework (cf. Sebba 2012) enables the making of

meaningful connections between language in the social realm and a range of specific features in the “grey area between text and image”, further graphics (diagrams, tables, cartoons) and peritextual features (changes in typeface, use of characters drawn from foreign writing systems) (Peikola and Varila; Tyrkkö and Legutko); script, abbreviations and brevigraphs (Rogos-Hebda); metalinguistic boundary markers (Włodarczyk and Adamczyk); and layout in multilingual glossaries (Seiler). Moving even further towards the materiality of multilingual spaces, Mark Sebba investigates informational hierarchies in multilingual product packaging and views these from the perspective of language policies, underlying the attitudes and prestige of different languages. In the realm of social media, influencer culture is presented by Limatius as a multimodal and multilingual social practice, where the use of textual resources and language choices is connected to the nature of the hosting platform and its visuality, and to aspirational perceptions of self-promotion and language attitudes. In addition, chapters in this volume also reflect upon audience design and audience guidance in a variety of multilingual texts across space and time.

In general, the chapters fit the characterisation of multimodality studies provided by Bateman et al. (2017), who argue for a “multimodal approach that complements any other disciplines we may choose to link with” (2017: 24). In our case, the other disciplines constitute linguistics, discourse analysis and pragmatics and, in the contributions, the multimodal perspective clearly integrates theories and methods drawn from these fields. This is possible as the authors have interpreted extralinguistic mode(s) discursively in relation to multilingualism, on top of conventional, rhetorical or aesthetic deployment of the non-verbal. Another common thread is that the authors analyse their data without a specific hierarchy of codes in mind, which allows them to observe a spectrum of interconnections between the codes, and between the codes and modes. In addition, the chapters offer a fresh approach to the nature of the fusion of modes conventionally taken for granted in multimodality studies (i.e. resource integration in Baldry and Thibault 2006: 18; see Bateman et al. 2017: 17 for more references). Phenomena in “the grey area between text and image”, such as “half-graphic objects” or “visual diamorphs”, attest to the permeability of the verbal resources, visuality and page composition, and obtain a special status not only to an analyst, but also to the audience. In order to process these, both may take advantage of the non-immediacy of written or text-based digital communication to render heterogeneous multidimensional grammars of comprehension and meaningful interpretations.

### *1.1.3 Summary*

In this volume, we bring together research spanning different contexts of multilingual written communication from the past and the present: from historical manuscripts through to early printed texts and

from new media to artefacts of daily life. We are particularly interested in the interplay between different languages, channels and forms of communication, and in searching for patterns that would allow for some generalisations and deepened theoretical reflections on the interplay between different codes and modes that evoke non-verbal associations. We think that any generalisations and theoretical advances need to be based on an operationalisation of interconnections between the use of more than one language (i.e. how the two codes interact), the visual mode (i.e. how the modalities interconnect with individual codes and, more generally, with the strictly linguistic/written mode), as well as the cultural practices involved in social materiality and text transmission. The volume provides illustrations of the interfaces between the multilingual and the multimodal in a (medieval/historical) MS, in a Late Modern periodical or in social media content, as well as a preliminary theorisation and a toolbox needed to bring these together for comparison and contrast.

Languages studied in our volume include medieval Latin and French, Old Polish, contemporary Finnish, (Namibian) German, Afrikaans, and various periods of English. Illustrations presented by our authors cover an even broader range of language sources: (e.g. Scots, Korean, Swedish). There is no denying, however, that English features prominently in most chapters. The special position of English stems from the fact that the resources invested in the documentation and research into both its historical and contemporary shape have been more robust than in the study of other languages. This has resulted in the availability of easily accessible, modern electronic databases, which were not only designed for linguistic purposes, but have accounted for the multilingual nature of its development and usage. Some resources have also incorporated aspects of multimodality (e.g. the *Punch* magazine). Regardless of the language(s) discussed, the case studies presented in the volume bring results which pave the way for generalisations and extension to cover further data representing other languages and periods.

## References

- Baldry, Anthony, and Paul J. Thibault, 2006. *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis: A Multimedia Toolkit and Coursebook with Associated on-line Course*. Equinox: London and New York.
- Barret, Sébastien, Dominique Stutzmann, and Georg Vogeler, eds. 2016. *Ruling the Script in the Middle Ages. Formal Aspects of Written Communication (Books, Charters and Inscriptions)*. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Bateman, John A. 2008. *Multimodality and Genre. A Foundation for the Systematic Analysis of Multimodal Documents*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bateman, John A. 2014. Developing a GeM (genre and multimodality) model. In *Interactions, Images and Texts: A Reader in Multimodality*, edited by Sigrid Norris and Carmen Daniela Maier, 25–37. Berlin: De Gruyter.

- Bateman, John A., Janina Wildfeuer, and Tuomo Hiippala. 2017. *Multimodality. Foundations, Research and Analysis: A Problem-Oriented Introduction*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bös, Birte, and Matti Peikola. 2020. Framing Framing: The Multifaceted Phenomena of Paratext, Metadiscourse and Framing. In *The Dynamics of Text and Framing Phenomena in the History of English*, edited by Matti Peikola and Birte Bös, 3–31. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Caroll, Ruth, Matti Peikola, Hanna Salmi, Mari-Liisa Varila, Janne Skaffari, and Risto Hiltunen. 2013. Pragmatics on the Page. Visual Text in Late Medieval English Books. *European Journal of English Studies* 17 no. 1: 54–71.
- Casas, Maria C. 2009. *Multimodality in Canadian Black Feminist Writing: Orality and the Body in the Work of Harris, Philip, Allen, and Brand*. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi.
- Claridge, Claudia 2020. Discourse Representation in Early Modern English Historiography. In *Speech Representation in the History of English: Topics and Approaches*, edited by Peter J. Grund and Terry Walker, 212–237. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fenlon, Jordan. 2015. *Seeing Sentence Boundaries: The Production and Perception of Visual Markers Signalling Boundaries in Signed Languages*. PhD thesis, University College London.
- Goffmann, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Double-day.
- Grund, Peter J., and Terry Walker 2020. Speech Representation in the History of English: Introduction. In *Speech Representation in the History of English: Topics and Approaches*, edited by Peter J. Grund and, Terry Walker, 1–28. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jaffe, Alexandra. 2000. Introduction: Non-standard orthography and non-standard speech. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4 no. 4: 497–513.
- Jewitt, Carey ed. 2017. *Handbook of Multimodal Analysis*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Kopaczyk, Joanna. 2017. Administrative Multilingualism on the Page in Early Modern Poland: In Search of Framework for Written Code-Switching. In *Multilingual Practices in Language History. English and Beyond*, edited by Päivi Pahta, Janne Skaffari, and Laura Wright, 275–298. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kress, Gunther. 2010. *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Kress, Gunther and Theo van Leeuwen. 1996. *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, Gunther, and Theo van Leeuwen. 2001. *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes of Media of Contemporary Communication*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Leppänen, Sirpa, Samu Kytölä, and Elina Westinen. 2017. Multilingualism and Multimodality in Language Use and Literacies in Digital Environments. In *Language, Education and Technology. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, 3rd ed., edited by Steven L. Thorne and Stephen May, 119–130. London: Springer.
- Lyons, Agnieszka. 2018. Multimodal Expression in Written Digital Discourse: The Case of Kineticons. *Journal of Pragmatics* 131: 18–29.

- Maxwell, Kate. 2015. When Here is Now and Now is Then: Bridging the Gap in Time with “Sumer is icumen”. In *Building Bridges for Multimodal Research: International Perspectives on Theories and Practices of Multimodal Analysis*, edited by Janina Wildfeuer, 359–368. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Maxwell, Kate. 2016. Beyond Sound, Image, and Text: The (More) Hidden Modes of the Manuscript. *Medieval/ Digital Multimodalities. Seminar for the New Chaucer Society* 2016. Available at <http://dhmedievalist.com/scalar/medievaldigitalmultimodalities/medievaldigital-multimodalities>.
- Norris, Sigrid. 2004. *Analyzing Multimodal Interaction: A Methodological Framework*. New York: Routledge.
- Pahta, Päivi, Janne Skaffari, and Laura Wright, eds. 2017. *Multilingual Practices in Language History. English and Beyond*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Pearsall, Derek. 1989. “Gower’s Latin in the *Confessio Amantis*”. In *Latin and Vernacular: Studies in Late Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, edited by Alastair J. Minnis. York Manuscripts Conferences: Proceedings Series 1. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 13–25.
- Peikola, Matti, Aleksi Mäkilähde, Hanna Salmi, Mari-Liisa Varila, and Janne Skaffari, eds. 2017. *Verbal and Visual Communication in Early English Texts (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 37)*. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Peikola, Matti, Jukka Tyrkkö, and Mari-Liisa Varila. 2021. Graphic Literacy in the History of English. CofP. ICEHL pre-conference workshop, Leiden, August.
- Pennycook, Alastair. 2004. *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows*. London: Routledge.
- Scollon, Ronald, and Suzie Wong Scollon. 2003. *Discourses in Place: Language in the Material World*. London: Routledge.
- Sebba, Mark. 2012. Researching and Theorising Multilingual Texts. In *Language Mixing and Code-switching in Writing. Approaches to Mixed-Language Written Discourse*, edited by Mark Sebba, Shahrzad Mahootian, and Carla Jonsson, 1–26. London: Routledge.
- Thomas, Martin. 2014. “Evidence and Circularity in Multimodal Discourse Analysis.” *Visual Communication* 13 no. 2: 163–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357213516725>
- van Leeuwen, Theo. 2004. Ten Reasons Why Linguists Should Pay Attention to Visual Communication. In *Discourse and Technology: Multimodal Discourse Analysis*, edited by Philip LeVine and Ron Scollon, 7–19. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Włodarczyk, Matylda, Joanna Kopaczyk, and Elżbieta Adamczyk. 2018. Crossing the Language and Discourse Boundaries in the *Electronic Repository of Greater Poland Oaths, 1386–1444 (ROThA)*. Invited presentation at the symposium on *Understanding Multilingual Sermons of Middle Ages*, Vienna, Austrian Academy of Sciences.