

The Four Resources Model: Critical Literacy

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An overview

- Social Justice, Critical Literacy & the Four Resources Model
- Using the Model for School Renewal and Reform
- Critically Analysing Texts: Lexicon, Grammar and Genre

Freire's model

- Paulo Freire: 'reading the word, we always read the world'
- Traditional education = banking model
- Role reversals by teachers and learners
- Naming and analysing problems and issues in our lives – gaining voice: narrating and telling our stories
- Problem-posing and problem-solving education

limits

- Access to dominant and mainstream language and texts of power – e.g., disciplinary knowledge of science, social sciences, arts, and humanities.
- Cultural capital and mainstream knowledge = keys to further education, employment and engagement with the mainstream.
- Western school/education = move from 1st person to 3rd person, from speech to print, from story to essay.

Social justice and equity

- RE/COGNITIVE JUSTICE: recognition and inclusion of 'other' voices, histories and cultures in school knowledge
- RE/DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE: equitable access to powerful texts, discourses, capital and pathways

Nancy Fraser, 1997

4 Resources Model

- Coding: How Texts Work
 - Semantic: Meaning Making
 - Pragmatic: Interactional Text Use
 - Critical: Deconstruction/Analysis
- Freebody & Luke, 1990 – see Muspratt, Luke & Freebody, Constructing Critical Literacies (Hampton Press, 1998)

CODING: How do I put these symbols together? How do they work?

- Alphabetic knowledge, phonemic awareness, knowledge of print, spelling/orthographic conventions, punctuation, text and page layout
- On the web: layout, icons, colors, visual cues

MEANING: What meanings can I make with this text?

- 'semantics' – using cultural background knowledge to construct, build meanings
- Match/mismatch issues between students' knowledge and that of the text

PRAGMATICS/INTERACTION: What can I do with this text?

- How can I interact with others around this text? What do I do with these texts in everyday life? In institutions like schools, workplaces, community and civic organizations?
- What are these texts used for?

Critical questions

- What/who is re/presented here? (field: content)
- What/who is missing/absent? (field: content)
- What is this text trying to do to me? (tenor: relations)
- In whose interests is this text operating?

See: Vivian Vasquez, Hilary Janks, Barbara Comber

New times, literacies, multiliteracies, citizenship

- 24/7 modes of information: navigating popular culture, advertising, mass media
- Control and bias of modes of information: who controls what we read, write, view?
- How do we gain 'voice', access and critique?
- How do we engage with traditional print cultures, while learning and engaging critically with digital identities, spaces and places (e.g., blogs, facebook, wikis, youtube)?

Great dystopian works about science, information and power

- Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels
- Aldous Huxley, Brave New World
- George Orwell, 1984
- Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 421
- Margaret Atwood, Oryx & Crake/After the Flood

Reading the word? Reading the world?

- Who amongst our students, and who amongst our colleagues 'understand' empirically what happened in the 'global financial crisis'.
- Who can 'comprehend' what 1 trillion dollars in debt means? Or what a mortgage 'derivative' is?
- Who amongst our students, and who amongst us understands the political dynamics at work in the Middle East today?
- Who amongst our students and amongst us understands debates over the 'science' of climate change?

- [Gunfire punctuates Cairo turmoil: Protesters say Mubarak must step down by Friday](#) - la times, 4/2
- [Tense calm in Tahrir Square](#)
- Uneasy standoff follows clashes between pro-democracy protesters and Mubarak loyalists in central Cairo. - Al Jazeera, English 4/2
-
- Egyptian army to hold fire as protests swell
- **By Samia Nakhoul and Sherine El Madany (China Daily)**
- [Globe reporters released by Egyptian military 463](#)
- Soldiers tell reporters army planning major operation; Patrick Martin and Sonia Verma were removed from their vehicle, held three hours
-
- [Armed loyalists attack pro-democracy marchers in Egypt, 6 killed](#) – terhan times
- [Chaos Intensifies in Cairo Streets – AP](#)
- Egyptian army moves to end fighting between protesters and government supporters in Cairo's central square as gunfire kills at least 8. Fox news

- Vanoc officials were concerned about safety of luge track
- Safety of luge track questioned before Olympian's death: Report
-
- [Majority scoffs at usage-based Internet billing in poll 6](#)
-
- **Calgary snow storm cancels minor hockey**
- By Jamie Komarnicki and David Hedley, Calgary Herald
-
- **Housing market poised for tumble: Grit leader**
-
- **Interest rate hike could drown some families, Ignatieff warns**
By Jen Gerson, Calgary Herald

- **Insurance companies' definition of flood leaves Queensland flood families in limbo** [The Courier-Mail](#)
- [Get used to paying more for less](#) - SHOPPERS can expect soaring fruit and vegetable prices for six months as farmers estimate losses over \$800 million following wild weather.
- Swan warns economy may shrink – The Australian
- WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange faces 'denial of justice', court hears
- Etihad tells Qantas chief to stop complaining
- Fashion follies as Myer stitches up sass & bide and DJs pouts-
Kelly Burke February 8, 2011
- **Stinger warning as heat hits powerless residents – Cairns Post**

Critical literacy with an attitude

- Re/presentation: all text is a situated, and 'biased' re-presentation of 'reality'
- Truth and Reality – are 'out there', but texts are opaque and potentially distorting, not transparent windows on the world.
 - **text = prism not window**

Activities: looking at agency in news, media; getting kids to write competing accounts of the same events; looking for 'binary' representations in reports (e.g., North/South Korea)

Lexicogrammar and ideology: Hiroshima Headlines, c. 1945

We Bomb Japs

Yanks Bomb Hiroshima

Enola Gay Dropped Bomb

City Completely Destroyed

The Bombing of Hiroshima

The Dropping of the Atomic Bomb

**- lexical choice, transitivity, agentless passive,
nominalisation (verb to noun)**

cf. the work of: Paul Chilton, Ruth Wodak, Norman Fairclough

MAK Halliday's functional grammar

- Field: contents, how text represents the world (e.g., word choice, transitivity, modality, nominalisation)
- Tenor: relations, how text 'does' social relations, how writers/speakers 'position' others (e.g., lexical choice, mode: imperative, declarative, interrogative)
- Mode: text/genre features (e.g., cohesion, text structure, layout)
 - Language as Social Semiotic (1978)

Functional versus critical

- Critical, analytic, intellectual and cultural work is essential to survive in information economies.
- There's more to to this than 'skills', testing and training – It's about educating for a complex, dynamic and difficult world order where information is redundant, diverse and often untrustworthy.

- ‘skills’ to ‘knowledge’
- ‘testing’ to curriculum/pedagogy
- behaviours to values, beliefs
- training to educating

Critical literacies are ‘new basics’ for globalised, intercultural, digital, economically and culturally volatile times. Don’t leave home without them.