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Language and the design of texts

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ABSTRACT: By demonstrating lexical and grammatical analysis – the rough work that underpins critical discourse analysis – this paper demonstrates the importance of grammatical knowledge for the critical reading of texts. It also provides readers with a grammar rubric for working systematically with the linguistic analysis of texts and argues that Fairclough's model enables teachers and students to move beyond text analysis to an examination of texts in contexts.

KEYWORDS: Grammar, language teaching, critical reading, critical writing, text, context, design, meaning.

Although it is possible to view language as a closed abstract system, where each sign, each meaning-bearing unit, is arbitrary and derives its meaning from its place in the system relative to other signs (de Saussure, 1983), this tells us nothing about what happens when language is used. When people use language, they have to select from options available in the system – they have to make lexical, grammatical and sequencing choices in order to say what they want to say. Halliday views language as meaning potential (Halliday, 1985). What is selected from the range of lexical and grammatical options determines how this potential is realised.

All these selections are motivated; they are designed to convey particular meanings in particular ways and to have particular effects. Moreover, they are designed to be believed. Texts work to position their readers; and the ideal reader, from the point of view of the writer (or speaker), is the reader who buys into the text and its meanings. Another way of saying this is to say that all texts are positioned and positioning. They are positioned by the writer's points of view, and the linguistic (and other semiotic) choices made by the writer are designed to produce effects that position the reader. We can play with the word "design", by saying that texts have designs on us as readers, listeners or viewers. They entice us into their way of seeing and understanding the world – into their version of reality. Every text is just one set of perspectives on the world, a representation of it; language, together with other signs, works to construct reality. This is as true of non-fiction as it is of fiction.

These ideas can be illustrated with reference to a talk that I gave at a conference entitled "Critical literacy methods, models and motivation" (Janks, 2001). When I first thought of the title for this talk, I wanted to call it "Critical literacy: methods, models and *motives*". It sounded right. I liked the balance created by the two three-syllable words followed by the three two-syllable words, and the rhythm created by the alliteration. But the word *motives* bothered me. Murderers have motives. The word "motives" keeps bad company. We think of people as having "hidden" or "ulterior" motives. We think of motives as being self-interested more often than we think of them as being pure. The word *motivation*, on the other hand has had a better press. It is associated with a beneficial psychological force that enables us to do good things. We think of people who are "highly motivated" as achievers, as having positive attitudes. As teachers we all want

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motivated learners but are likely to distrust students with motives. So, harnessing all the positive connotations of the word "motivation", I made it a countable noun, chose the plural form, and changed my title to "Critical literacy: methods, models and *motivations*".

However, being a linguist, I decided to check my intuitions by referring to the British National Corpus (http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/lookup.html). On this site, when you type in a word, it gives you the number of occurrences of the word in the corpus and 50 random examples of the word in sentences. I searched for *motive* and *motives* and for *motivation* and *motivations*. I then analysed the sample for positive and negative connotations. Any data that was not clearly negative or clearly positive, I discounted. Examples of positive, negative and unclear connotations appear in Figure 1; the results of the analysis are tabulated in Table 1.

Examples from the corpus of the words used with positive connotations
Instead the eyes settled on her, searching out the motive for such a protective gesture.
With no other interest than glory, and no other motive than a sense of vocation.
If jobs were carefully designed ... then high levels of satisfaction and motivation would result.
Aspirations, a sense of how we can realise our potential, give us power and motivation.
Examples from the corpus of the words used with negative connotations
All her appeals to the students to end the demonstrations had an ulterior motive.
Even today suggestions are being made as to Judas' motive.
Managers can motivate staff – motivation is in the control of the individual.
... subject to allegations of political motivation and partiality ...
Examples from the corpus of the words used with unclear or neutral connotations
Let us please seek for more stronger motives.
Motive power is provided by No 40092.
There is the same motivation.
The majority failed to understand the motivation of the same characters.

Figure 1: Positive, negative and unclear connotations of "motive", "motives", "motivation" and "motivations"

From examining the corpus, it became clear to me that people often use the word *motivations* as a synonym for *motives*. It is also interesting that the clearest difference in connotation is in the singular. *Motivation*, in the singular, is the word that carries the positive connotations that I intuited and *motive*, in the singular, carries the negative connotations. So I changed my title again, to "Critical literacy: methods, models and motivation". Never let it be thought that critical text analysis is only useful for reading texts. It is also a powerful tool for designing texts. Because I wanted to talk in my address about critical literacy work having a strong social justice agenda, I avoided the tainted word – *motive.*

This example illustrates the way in which lexical choice realises meaning. Choices from the grammatical system work in the same way. It is important to understand that choice of any linguistic option necessarily implies rejection of other options. Because any selection

Word	Number in the corpus from which the 50 random occurrences are chosen	Positive connotations in 50 random occurrences	Negative connotations in 50 random occurrences	Connotation: neutral or not clear in 50 random occurrences
motive	1043	7	28	15
motives	1028	9	21	20
motivation	1524	29	2	19
motivations	237	13	13	24

Table 1: Connotation analysis

directs our attention to what is present in a text and away from any sense of choices that have been elided (Kress & Hodge, 1979), it is useful to consider the range of options from which a choice has been made. Using Saussure's concept of paradigmatic relations, it becomes possible to consider the lexical and grammatical choices in the light of what was not selected but what could have been. Because our choices are constrained by what the language system allows us to choose from, we have to know something about this system. For example, at times we can only choose between two options: the definite and the indefinite article[1], the passive and the active voice. At other times, we have to choose between more than two: consider the vast array of synonyms in the lexis of English or the range of tenses, modality and logical connectors that provide us with options.

KEY LINGUISTIC FEATURES FOR TEXT ANALYSIS

In focusing on the linguistic features that are key for analysing texts, it is important to recognise that text analysis is just one aspect of discourse analysis. For Fairclough (1989, 1995), there are three dimensions of discourse:

1. The object of analysis (verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts);
2. The processes by means of which the object is produced (written, spoken, designed) and received (read/listened to/ viewed) by human subjects;
3. The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis:

1. text analysis (description);
2. processing analysis (interpretation);

[1] Even the choice of a word as seemingly innocuous as “the” is not neutral. The definite article is used only when the referent is specific for both addresser and addressee or, in simpler terms, when both the writer and the reader know what is being referred to. The use of the definite article presupposes shared knowledge. It is therefore used to refer to established information, whereas the indefinite article is used to refer to new information. So, for example, referring to “weapons of mass destruction” as “the weapons of mass destruction” presupposes both that we all know what weapons we are talking about and that they exist.

3. social analysis (explanation).

Fairclough captures the simultaneity of his method of CDA with a model that embeds the three different kinds of analysis, one inside the other. See Figure 2 (Fairclough, 1995, p. 98).

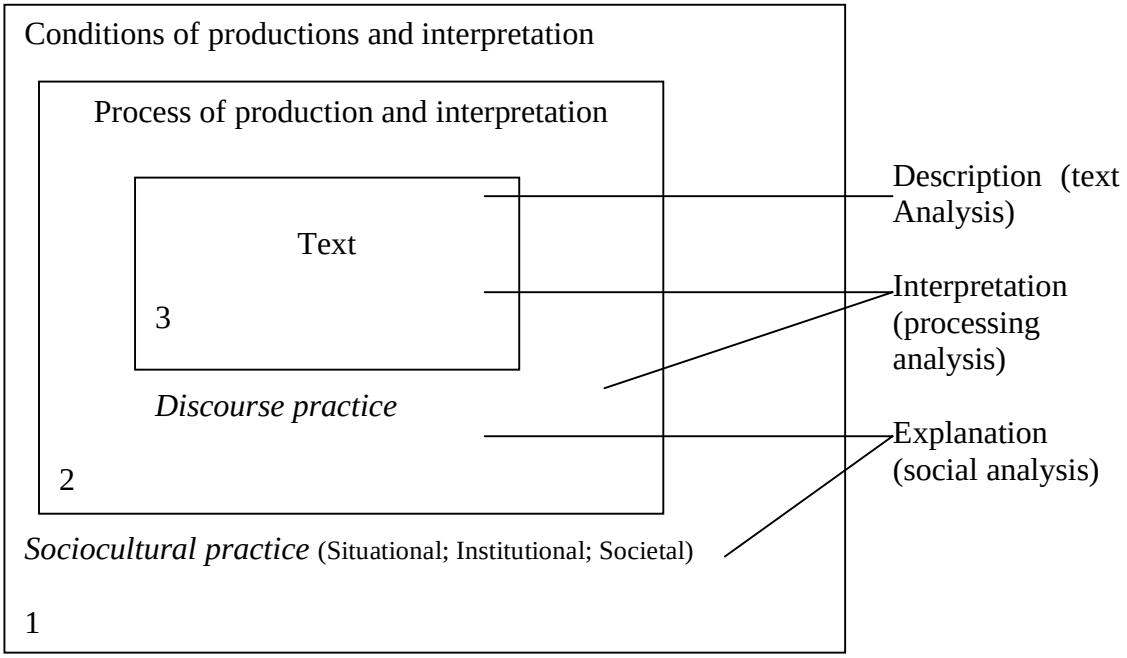


Figure 2. Fairclough's model of dimensions of discourse and discourse analysis.

What is useful about this approach is that it enables analysts to focus on the signifiers that make up the text, the specific linguistic and visual selections, their juxtapositioning, their sequencing, their layout and so on. However, it requires them to recognise the historical determination of these selections and to understand that these choices are tied to the conditions of possibility of that text. This is another way of saying that texts are instantiations of socially regulated discourses and that the processes of production and reception are socially constrained.

Text analysis, that focuses only on the semiotic choices that form the text, is therefore limited because it says nothing about the text in relation to the social context or the conditions of its production and reception. The purpose of this article, however, is purposely limited: it aims to offer an approach to the analysis of linguistic texts without wanting to suggest that text analysis should be done in isolation or that other forms of semeiosis are not as important as linguistic meaning. Over the years I have developed a rubric for analysing the linguistic features of texts[2] (see Table 2). This rubric has three columns. The first names the linguistic feature, the second explains it briefly and the third column is left open for comments about the use of the feature in specific texts.

[2] This rubric is derived from Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1985). Because Halliday works with a grammar as a theory of meaning in context, it is particularly useful for text analysis. While the rubric provides a useful starting point for linguistic analysis, it is not intended to be comprehensive. It is particularly useful for introducing students at different levels to critical text analysis.

Linguistic feature	**Explanation**	
Lexicalisation Overlexicalisation Relexicalisation Lexical cohesion Metaphor Euphemism	The selection/choice of wordings. Different words construct the same idea differently. Many words for the same phenomenon. Renaming Created by synonymy, antonymy, repetition, collocation. Used for yoking ideas together and for the discursive construction of new ideas. Hides negative actions or implications.	
Transitivity	Processes in verbs: are they verbs of: • *doing*: material process • *being or having*: relational processes • *thinking/feeling/perceiving*: mental • *saying*: verbal processes • *physiological*: behavioural processes • *existential*	
Voice	Active and passive voice constructs participants as *doers* or as *done-to's*. Passive voice allows for the deletion of the agent.	
Nominalisation	A process is turned into a thing or an event without participants or tense or modality. Central mechanism for reification.	
Quoted speech Direct speech (DS) Indirect speech (IS) Free indirect speech (FIS). This is a mixture of direct and indirect speech features. Scare quotes or "so-called"	• Who is quoted in DS/IS/FIS? • Who is quoted first/last/most? • Who is not quoted? •Has someone been misquoted or quoted out of context? • What reporting verb was chosen? • What is the effect of scare quotes?	
Turn-taking	• Who gets the floor? How many turns do different participants get? • Who is silent/ silenced? • Who interrupts? • Who gets heard? Whose points are followed through? • Whose rules for turn taking are being used given that they are different in different cultures? • Who controls the topic?	
Mood	Is the clause a statement, question, offer or command?	
Polarity and tense	Positive polarity (definitely yes) Negative polarity (definitely no) Polarity is tied to the use of tense. Tense sets up the definiteness of events occurring in time. The present tense is used	

	for timeless truths and absolute certainty.	
Linguistic feature	**Explanation**	
Modality Degrees of uncertainty	Logical possibility/probability Social authority Modality created by modals (may, might, could will), adverbs (possibly, certainly, hopefully) intonation, tag questions.	
Pronouns	Inclusive we/exclusive we/you Us and them: othering pronouns Sexist/non sexist pronouns: generic "he" The choice of first/ second/ third person.	
Definite article ("the") Indefinite article ("a")	*The* is used for shared information – to refer to something mentioned before or that the addressee can be assumed to know about. Reveals textual presuppositions.	
Thematisation – syntax: the first bit of the clause is called the theme	The theme is the launch pad for the clause. Look for patterns of what is foregrounded in the clause by being in theme position.	
Rheme – syntax: the last bit of the clause is called the rheme.	In written English the new information is usually at the end of the clause. In spoken English it is indicated by tone.	
Sequencing of information. Logical connectors – conjunctions set up the logic of the argument.	Sequence sets up cause and effect. Conjunctions are: • *Additive*: and, in addition • *Causal*: because, so, therefore • *Adversative*: although, yet • *Temporal*: when, while, after, before	

Table 2: Linguistic analysis rubric

In Janks (2005), I provide an analysis of *Spot the Refugee* (see Figure 3) an advertisement produced by the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, arguing that it is important not to take for granted texts located in the discourses that we inhabit.[3] When we are confronted by a text that we agree with, it is easy to imagine its positive effects, and hard to see its negative effects.

The analysis begins with the opening instruction, which also serves as the title of the text. "Spot the refugee", the opening instruction, is prominent because it is printed in capital letters in a large bold font. This is the only command in a text that is otherwise made up of statements. If you respond to this imperative by looking carefully at the Lego figures, trying to find the one that stands out as a refugee, the text has already constructed you as someone who thinks of refugees as visibly different. If you refuse this construction, but are nevertheless intrigued by the juxtaposition of Lego dolls and refugees, you may start reading the text. If you then look for the refugee in the *Fourth row, second from the left.*

[3] The poster can be retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/teach/legospot.htm

The one with the moustache, you will nevertheless have been reeled in by the text, only to discover that you have been cheated, because



Figure 3: UNHCR Poster

> *The unsavoury looking character you're looking at is more likely to be your average neighbourhood slob with a grubby vest and a weekend's stubble on his chin. And the real refugee could just as easily be the clean-cut fellow on his left.*

In addition, you will have been constructed as someone who assumes that refugees look like "unsavoury", unshaved "slobs". And because you are now someone who sees refugees as both different from and inferior to you, you need to learn that "clean-cut" *refugees are just like you and me.*

Already it is clear that the pronouns chosen are doing interesting work. First the refugee is referred to as "he", and is constructed as just like "you and me" (the reader and the writer, who represents the UNHCR). Having denied any diversity, reinforced by the

supposed sameness of the Lego dolls, the text immediately sets up a difference, introduced by the word 'except' and encoded in us/them pronouns.

> *Except for one thing. Everything **they** once had has been left behind. Home, family, possessions all gone. **They** have nothing. And nothing is all **they'**ll ever have unless **we** all extend a helping hand.* [My emphasis]

"We" is used here to include the reader and the writer, and to exclude refugees. In the very next sentence, "we" is used exclusively.

> ***We** know you can't give **them** back the things that others have taken away.*
> ***We**' re not even asking for money (though every penny certainly helps).*
> *But **we** are asking that **you** keep an open mind. And a smile of welcome.*
> *It may not seem like much. But to a refugee it can mean everything.*

Here, "we" refers to the UNHCR only. The UNHCR is constructed as knowing what *can mean everything* to a refugee. The reader is in need of instruction on how to behave, and refugees are given no agency and no voice. This sets up the very social divide that the early part of the text is at pains to refute.

Moreover, the text exonerates the reader – unnamed others are blamed for the plight of refugees. Divorced from history and geography, from socio-political and economic conditions, and from the ugly specifics of racial, ethnic and religious Othering, the fact that the UNHCR is currently *responsible for more than 19 million refugees around the world* is presented simply as a state of affairs, with undefined causes and inevitable effects.

The use of pronouns is also interesting because of the way in which it presents the refugee as male, this despite the fact that 80% of refugees are women and children.[4]

In my 2005 analysis, I focused on the use of pronouns, and I gave some attention to lexical and visual semeiosis. I was, in that article, concerned to show how difference is negated by a discourse of sameness and the use of pronouns in this advertisement makes this point quite clearly. What the published analysis does not show is the means to the end. How did I know which linguistic feature would be key? Is it acceptable to pick the feature that suits the argument? What hidden analytic steps lie behind such "finished" analysis?

In short, the answer is that text analysis needs to be systematic. The rubric enables one to work with a range of linguistic features across what (Halliday, 1985) calls ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. The analysis of any feature requires one to examine each instance of its use in order to establish the patterns of meaning. So if one wants to consider the use of transitivity in the passage, one needs to list every process in order to establish which participants are given which processes. Each linguistic feature examined systematically in this way offers a different window on the text; each feature represents a different slice of the (textual) data. Table 3 shows this detailed linguistic analysis. For every clause in the text, I considered the transitivity, voice, mood, tense/modality, theme

[4] See http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/statistics

and lexical choices. This first level of description enables one to count occurrences and to look for patterns.

	Transitivity	**Voice**	**Mood**	**Modality**	**Theme**	**Lexis: T=cohesion**
Spot the refugee	material		command	cat. pres tense		>the= shared knowl
There *he* **is**.	relational – being		statement	cat. pres tense		he
Fourth row, second from the left. *The one* with the moustache. Obvious really. Maybe not	no verbs (relational – being?) abbreviated syntax -– staccato info all therefore theme		statement statement statement statement	categorical categorical high modal. doubt	fourth row ... the one modal.: certn modal.: doubt	pointing out >the one= with factual info e.g. moustache
The unsavoury looking character / / **is** more likely to be your average neighbourhood slob with a grubby vest and a weekend=s stubble on his chin	relational – being		statement	more likely – makes >is= less categorical	the unsavoury looking character	unsavoury average neighbour-hood slob, grubby vest weekend stubble
you=**re looking at**	behavioural		statement	you		
And the real refugee **could** just as easily **be** the clean-cut fellow on his left.	relational – being		statement	could just as easily	[and] the real refugee	clean-cut fellow
You **see**	mental		statement		you	
refugees **are** just like *you and me.*	relational – being		statement	categorical	refugees	the real refugee inclusive: you/me/ refugee
Except for one thing.			statement		[except] for one thing	one *thing*
Everything / / **has been left behind**	material	passive	statement	categorical	everything	every*thing*
they once **had**	rel. – having		statement	categorical	they	exclusive
Home, family, possessions [are] all **gone**.	relational - being		statement	categorical	home family possessions all	overlex. rheme: gone
They **have** nothing.	rel. - having		statement	categorical	they	no*thing* T
And nothing **is** all	relational – being		statement	categorical	[and] nothing	no*thing* is all T
they=**ll** ever **have**	rel. – having		statement	categorical	they	ever T
Unless *we* all **extend** a helping hand.	material		statement	categorical	[unless] we all	helping hand
We **know**	mental		statement	categorical	we	
you **can=t give** them **back** the things	material		statement	can=t give back	you	*things*
that *others* **have taken away**.	material		statement	categorical	others	
We= **re not** even **asking** for money	material		statement	categorical (even)	we (UNHCR)	exclusive we money
(though every penny certainly **helps**).	material		statement	certainly helps	every penny	
But we **are asking**	material		statement	categorical	[but] we	
that you **keep** an open mind.	material		statement	categorical	[that] you	open mind

And a smile of welcome.					[And] a smile of welcome	smile of welcome
It **may not seem** like much.	relational		statement	may not seem	it (a smile of welcome	[not] much
But to a refugee it **can mean** everything.	?relational/ mental		statement	can mean	[but] to a refugee	you: it [not much] refugee: it every*thing*
UNHCR **is** a strictly humanitarian organisation	relational – being		statement	categorical present tense	UNHCR	strictly humanitarian
[that **is**] **funded** only by voluntary contributions.	material	passive [is] funded	statement	categorical	[UNHCR]	only by voluntary contributions (nom)
Currently it **is** responsible for more than 19 million refugees around the world	relational – being		statement	categorical present tense	currently {UNHCR]	more than 19 million around the world

Table 3: Detailed linguistic analysis of UNHCR poster

On the basis of this work one is able to fill in the third column of the linguistic analysis rubric (see Table 2) in relation to this advertisement (see Table 4).

Linguistic feature	**Explanation**	UNHCR advertisement
Lexicalisation	The selection/choice of wordings. Different words construct the same idea differently.	If you look for the refugee in the *Fourth row, second from the left. The one with the moustache,* you will have been reeled in by the text, only to discover that you have been cheated, because – *The unsavoury looking character you're looking at is more likely to be your average neighbourhood slob with a grubby vest and a weekend's stubble on his chin. And the real refugee could just as easily be the clean-cut fellow on his left.* In addition, you will have been constructed as someone who assumes that refugees look like "unsavoury", unshaved "slobs". And because you are now someone who sees refugees as both different from and inferior to you, you need to learn that "clean-cut" *refugees are just like you and me*.
Metaphor	Used for yoking ideas together and for the discursive construction of new ideas.	Lego dolls is a visual metaphor – human beings are constructed as look-alike manipulateable toy dolls.
Euphemism	Hides negative actions or implications	Everything they once had has been left behind.

Transitivity	Processes in verbs: are they verbs of: • *doing*: material process • *being or having*: relational processes • *thinking/feeling/ perceiving*: • *mental* • *saying*: verbal processes	The use of transitivity shows that the refugee is constructed predominantly with relational processes of "being" and "having", whereas the reader and the UNHCR are constructed with very few relational processes. They are given both mental and material processes, and the UNHCR in addition, is given verbal processes. They are shown acting. The UNHCR is the only participant that speaks.
Voice	Active and passive voice constructs participants as doers or as "done-to's". Passive voice allows for the deletion of the agent.	All active voice except for "everything has been left behind" which is a passive construction, removing agency. Un-named "others" are blamed.
Nominalisation	A process is turned into a thing	"a smile of welcome"
Quoted speech	The use of direct, indirect or free indirect speech	
Turn-taking	• Who gets the floor? How many turns do different participants get? • Who is silent/ silenced? • Who interrupts? • Who gets heard? Whose points are followed through? • Who controls the topic?	Only the UNHCR speaks and it speaks for refugees. It alone knows what refugees want and need. No refugee's voice is heard.
Mood	Is the clause a statement, question, offer or command?	The opening instruction, *SPOT THE REFUGEE*, prominent because it is printed in capital letters in a large bold font is the only command in a text that is otherwise made up of statements. Statements providing information are used throughout, suggesting that the reader needs to be informed by the UNHCR.
Polarity and tense.	Tense is used for categorical statements	Almost all clauses are in the present tense and are categorical. Modality is used to create uncertainty only about our ability to recognise or understand the needs of refugees.
Modality Degrees of uncertainty	Logical possibility/ probability Social authority	
Pronouns Generic "he" used to include "she"	The pronouns chosen are doing interesting work. First the refugee is referred to as "he". The use of pronouns is also interesting because of the way in which it presents the refugee as male, this despite the fact that 80% of refugees are women and children. The gender stereotyping is reinforced in the visual images, where women tend to be shown without the occupation markers of the male figures and with jewellery.	
Us and them	The refugee is constructed as just like "you and me" (the reader and the writer, who represents the UNHCR). Having denied any diversity, reinforced by the supposed sameness of the Lego dolls, the text immediately sets up a difference, introduced by the word "except" and encoded in us/them pronouns. *Except for one thing. Everything* ***they*** *once had has been left behind. Home, family, possessions all gone.* ***They*** *have nothing. And nothing is all* ***they'll*** *ever*	

	*have unless **we** all extend a helping hand*. [My emphasis]	
Inclusive we/ exclusive we	"We" is used here to include the reader and the writer, and to exclude refugees. In the very next sentence, "we" is used exclusively. ***We** know you can't give **them** back the things that others have taken away.* ***We**'re not even asking for money (though every penny certainly helps). But **we** are asking that **you** keep an open mind. And a smile of welcome. It may not seem like much. But to a refugee it can mean everything.* Here, "we" refers to the UNHCR only. The UNHCR is constructed as knowing what *can mean everything* to a refugee. The reader is in need of instruction on how to behave, and refugees are given no agency and no voice. This sets up the very social divide that the early part of the text is at pains to refute	
Definite article ("the") Indefinite article ("a")	"The" is used for shared information – to refer to something mentioned before or that the addressee can be assumed to know about.	Spot the refugee – "the" suggests that there is a refugee in the group of Lego figures and that this is shared information.
Thematisation – syntax: the first bit of the clause is called the theme	Look for patterns of what is foregrounded in the clause by being in theme position.	An analysis of theme, shows movement in the text from the refugee, to you (the reader), to possessions thematised four times and expressed as everything and as nothing, back to the reader (and his or her attitude) – "a smile of welcome" is thematised twice, once with the pronoun "it". The text concludes with the UNHCR in theme position.
Rheme – syntax: the last bit of the clause is called the rheme.	In written English the new information is usually at the end of the clause.	The bottom right hand corner of the text, the prime position for new information, is reserved for the UNHCR.
Sequencing of information. Logical connectors – conjunctions set up the logic of the argument.	Sequence sets up cause and effect. Conjunctions are: • *additive*: and, in addition • *causal*: because, so, therefore • *adversative*: although, yet • *temporal*: when, while, after, before	The logic of the text is maintained by the way in which information is sequenced. Additive conjunctions predominate with two noticeable variations – the use of "except" to signify the shift to the one thing that differentiates refugees, and the use of "but" to underscore how important people's attitudes are to a refugee.

Table 4: Linguistic analysis of a UNHCR poster per rubric

Only once one has an overall grasp of the design of the text is one really able to offer an interpretation of *how* the text means, that is, of how the patterned choices produce meaning effects. This text analysis in itself, is only a part of discourse analysis.[5] In Fairclough's three-part model, such analysis forms the descriptive base for interpretation

[5] Although in this paper the focus is on text analysis only, a much fuller analysis which considers this text in relation to other UNHCR advertisements and the conditions of possibility of its production and reception can be found in Janks, 2005.

(process analysis) and explanation (social analysis). In short, description is not able to say anything about the processes of production and reception nor the social conditions which govern both production and reception. Nevertheless, it is the foundation on which these other forms of analysis are built. According to Halliday,

> A discourse analysis that is not based on grammar, is not an analysis at all, but simply a running commentary on a text: either an appeal has to be made to some set of non-linguistic conventions, or to linguistic features that are trivial enough to be accessible without a grammar, like the number of words per sentence…or else the exercise remains a private one in which one explanation is as good or as bad as another (Halliday, 1985, p. xvii).

I began this paper with reference to a presentation that looked at methods, models and the motivation for teaching critical literacy. I will end by suggesting that this paper has shown the importance of grammatical knowledge for both writers and readers of texts. An understanding of how lexical and grammatical choices realise the meaning potential of language in texts enables producers to design texts purposefully and it gives readers the power to see how texts have been designed – *how* they mean, not just *what* they mean. In the old days of teaching grammar, students were asked to rewrite texts transforming active voice to passive voice or direct speech to indirect speech or present tense to past tense in order to demonstrate their technical facility with these different linguistic forms. Grammar was taught as form not meaning. Such decontextualised grammatical exercise can be redesigned to focus on meaning. If one takes a sentence in a text and makes different linguistic choices, one can ask students to explain what the change does to the meaning. To illustrate this idea, I have suggested some changes in relation to *Spot the Refugee* (see Table 5).

Original version	**Changed version**
Spot the refugee	Who is the refugee*?*
Spot *the* refugee	Who is *a* refugee
They have *nothing*.	They have no *material possessions*.
We know *you* can't give them back the things that others have taken away.	We know *we* can't give them back the things that others have taken away.
Your average neighbourhood slob.	Your average clean-cut neighbour.
Picture of lego people arranged *in rows*.	Picture of *real* people *not in rows*.

Table 5: Suggested changes to *Spot the Refugee*

These conversions serve to draw attention to the choices that have been made by the writer and invite students to compare the meaning of the original and the changed version, sensitising them to the effects of particular selections. In rubbing original texts up against transformed texts, we help to see the effects of the original choices and to recognise them as choices, rather than as natural and inevitable ways of encoding meaning. This provides both a purpose for learning and understanding grammar and the motivation for doing so. Where grammar for grammar's sake may be boring, meaning is not. Most importantly, this method of teaching language can be used with any text, at any level.

When we add to this the other dimensions of Fairclough's model and ask students to think about the effects of these meaning choices in particular socio-historical contexts, then the study of language is immeasurably enriched. In relation to this text for example, we could ask questions such as:

- Are people the same? Why is it so important to think of people as the same rather than as different?
- Why are people who have no possessions viewed as having nothing? What other kinds of "things" might people have?
- Who is said to be responsible for taking the refugees things? In what ways might our government or other governments be responsible?
- What percentage of refugees in the world are men?[6]

To such questions I would always add the key critical literacy questions:

- Whose interests are served by this text?
- Who benefits?
- Who is disadvantaged?

If discourse analysis is not possible without grammar, and critical reading is not possible without discourse analysis, then we do our students an educational disservice if we do not teach them grammar. In this paper I hope to have provided the motivation for teaching grammar along with a method and a model for thinking about the use of grammar in texts and contexts.

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[6] These questions are addressed in Janks, 2005.