

Literacies in Professional Services: Implications for Self-Advocacy, Society and Community Development with Tara Furlong

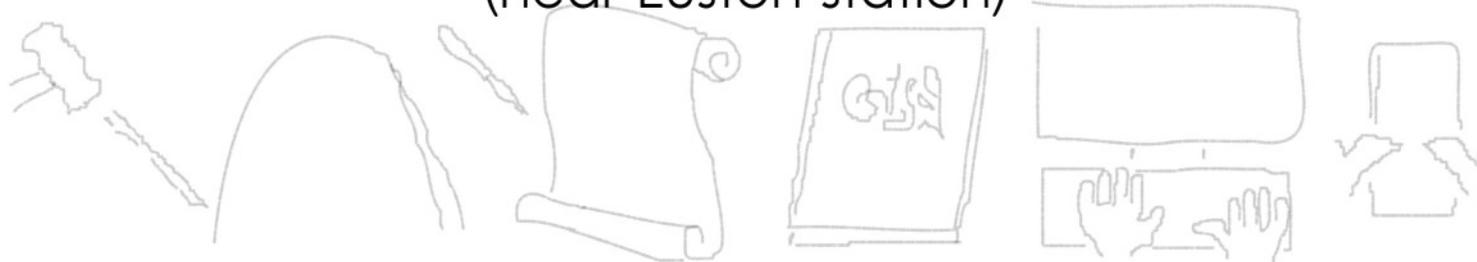
BALID Informal Literacy Discussion No. 24

Wednesday Nov 30th 5.00 pm

Hamilton House

Mabledon Place, London, WC1H 9BD

(near Euston station)



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 British Association for Literacy in Development

Abstract

The complexity of communications practices associated with day-to-day personal advocacy, and also associated with social and community development, is increasing. What are the implications for literacies education?

This presentation follows the implications for practitioners of engaging in what may be 'new literacies', for instance, in writing a letter, developing promotional literature, or presenting theses. There is a developing market in the domain of professional services that such learners may find themselves involved with (World Bank, 2000), and this is also true of the aspirational client care of other industries – whether legal, financial, technological, HR, marketing, or property. As literacy researchers and teachers, we may find ourselves asking 'what are the implications for literacies education?'

Drawing on systemic functional linguistic analysis (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) and discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2014; Bhatia, 2004), we signal some of the decisive factors in advocacy, client or project management and problem resolution including:

- the framing of an individual or client in linguistic terms, such as in the ways they may be agentive, and the pertinent features of a situation;
- a professional's representation of that situation, such as critical items, risk factors or avenues for action; and
- the relationship established between client and professional.

We look at communicative features within literacy practices which may contribute to self-advocacy, poor or exceptional client care, including un/certainty and (lack of) clarity regarding agency, action and risk as well as an inexplicit sense of manners/ rudeness. We focus on the concepts of 'genre' and 'register' as features of successful communication, including stages in the structure and accompanying content, features of the style and vocabulary used (in particular in respect of agency and risk) and interpersonal techniques.

The presentation concludes with looking at the implications of these issues for literacies and curriculum development.

References:

Bhatia, V. K. (2004) *World of Written Discourse* London: Continuum

Fairclough, N. (2014) *Language and Power* 3rd ed London: Longman

Halliday, M. A. K. and Matthiessen, C. (2014) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* 4th ed Abingdon: Routledge

World Bank, The (2003) *Lifelong Learning in the Global Knowledge Economy: Challenges for Developing Countries* Washington: The World Bank