The Systemic Functional Interpretation of the Multiliteracies Pedagogy

多元识读教学法的系统功能阐释

Dr. William Feng Dezheng (冯德正）
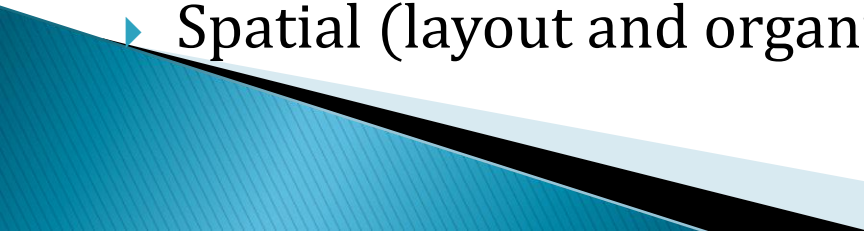
Department of English

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Background

- ## A. Responding to multimodality in EFL

- English language teaching at all levels should "expand the channel of learning and using English by actively employing resources from videos, broadcasts, television, magazines and the internet" (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2011, p. 4).
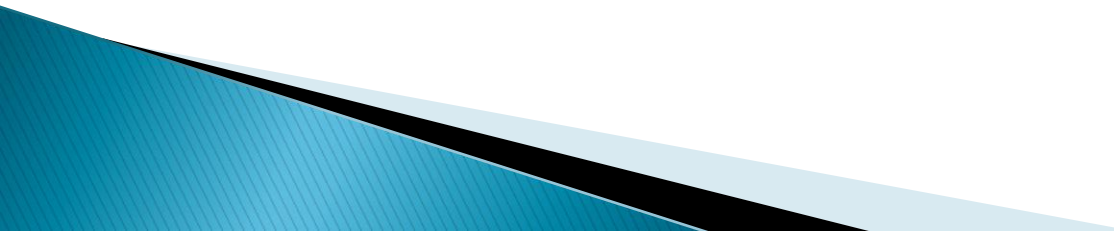
B. The Multiliteracies Pedagogy

The <u>multi</u> in multiliteracies (NLG, 2000)

Multimodality: multiple systems of meaning making in dynamic interaction with each other

- Linguistic (oral and written language, vocabulary, grammar)

- Visual (still and moving images)

- Auditory (music, sound)

- Gestural (facial and body language, movement, stillness)

- Spatial (layout and organization of objects and space)

Principles of multiliteracies pedagogy

▸ Situated practice,

▸ Overt instruction,

▸ Critical framing,

▸ Transformed practice (New London Group, 2000).

▸ The four knowledge processes in Learning by Design – **'experiencing', 'conceptualising', 'analysing' and 'applying'** (Kalantzis & Cope, 2005: 72).

Problems: New bottle, old wine

- Most research on multiliteracies in China has been concerned with the **choice and configuration of multimodal resources**, and there has been no systematic description of the essential steps of multiliteracies <u>pedagogy</u>. In relation to that, while many contemporary classrooms make extensive use of multimodal resources such as PowerPoints and videos, **the teaching is still preoccupied with the memorization of lexical grammatical knowledge, rather than the active construction and creative application of meaning** (Feng, 2015, forthcoming, see also Cope and Kalantzis，2009).

- We have seen teachers bring the new media into the classroom, as if the medium itself were the message (Cope and Kalantzis，2009 :87).
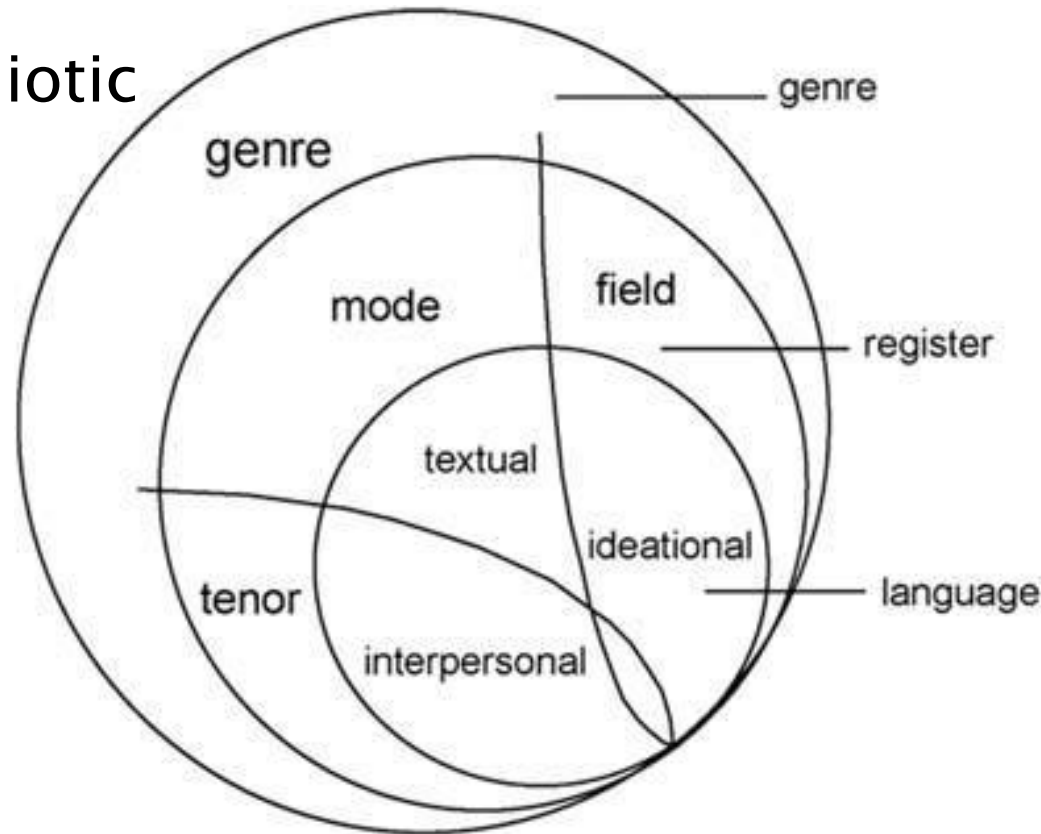
THE WHAT VS. THE HOW

Limited understanding:

所谓情景操练，是指将班级分为几个小组，每个小组的成员根据自己的背景、知识和经历扮演不同角色，使自己沉浸于构建意义的操练之中（葛俊丽，罗晓燕，2010，外语界）。

- Overt instruction means explaining clearly

- No critical framing

- Transformed practice as drilling

The Systemic Functional Interpretation

▸ **Theoretical Foundation**

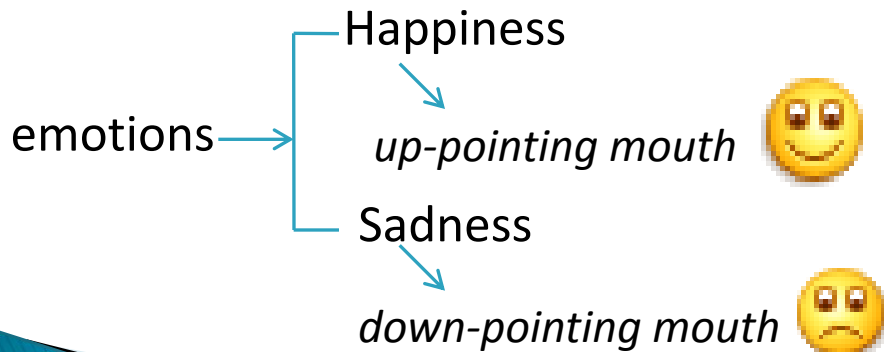Language as social semiotic

- ✓ Strata
- ✓ Metafunction
- ✓ System

The Systemic Functional Model of Strata and Metafunction
(Martin, 1997, p. 12)

▸ # Grammar is the choice we make from the available systems.

syntagmatic ↘ combinations

→ paradigmatic ↘ options

Declarative (陳述句)

→ ↘ Subject+Finite (主語+謂語)   e.g. She is a student.

Interrogative (疑問句)

↘ Finite+Subject (謂語+主語)   e.g. Is she a student?

Happiness

emotions → ↘ up-pointing mouth 🙂

Sadness

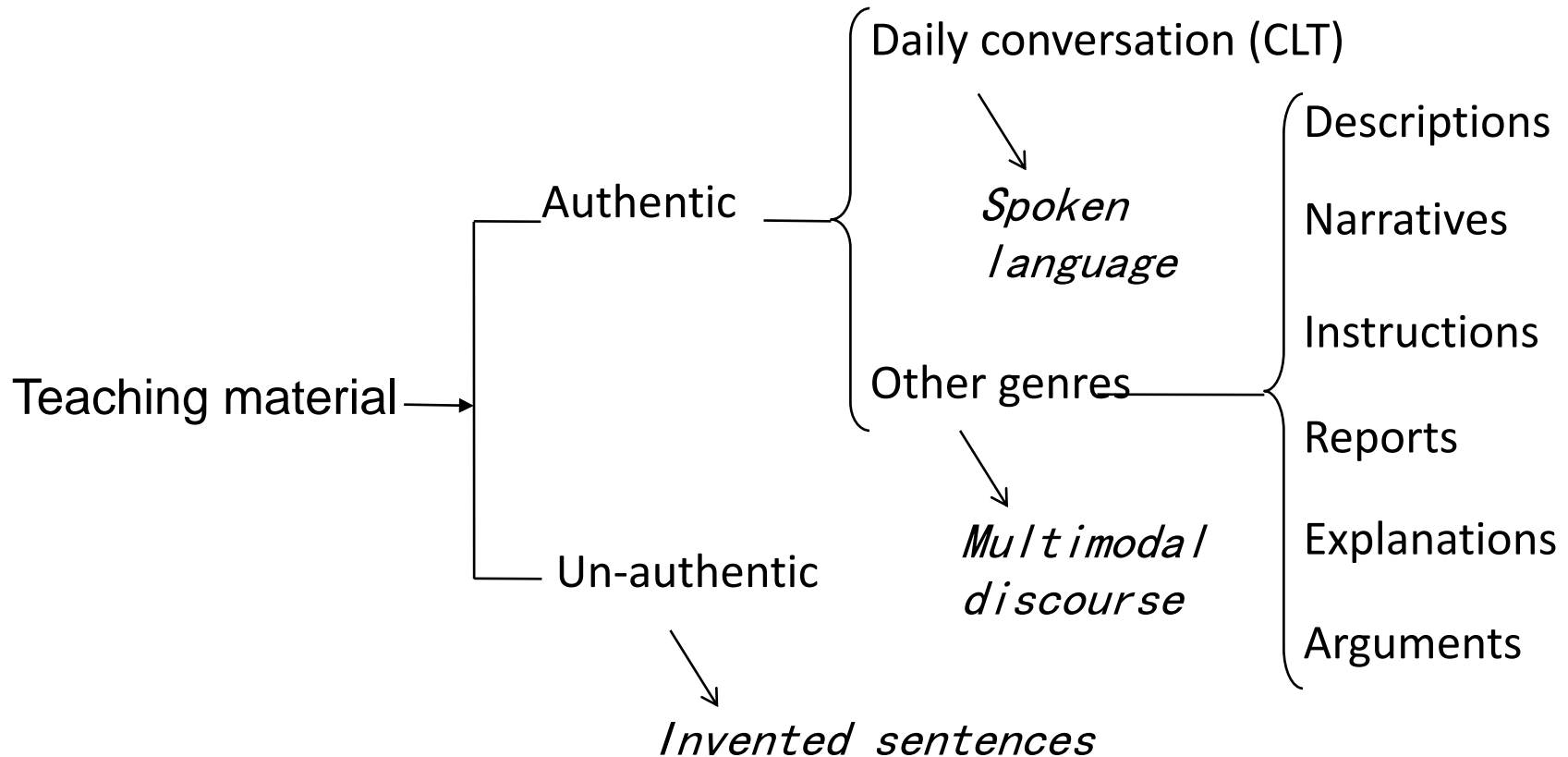↘ down-pointing mouth 🙁
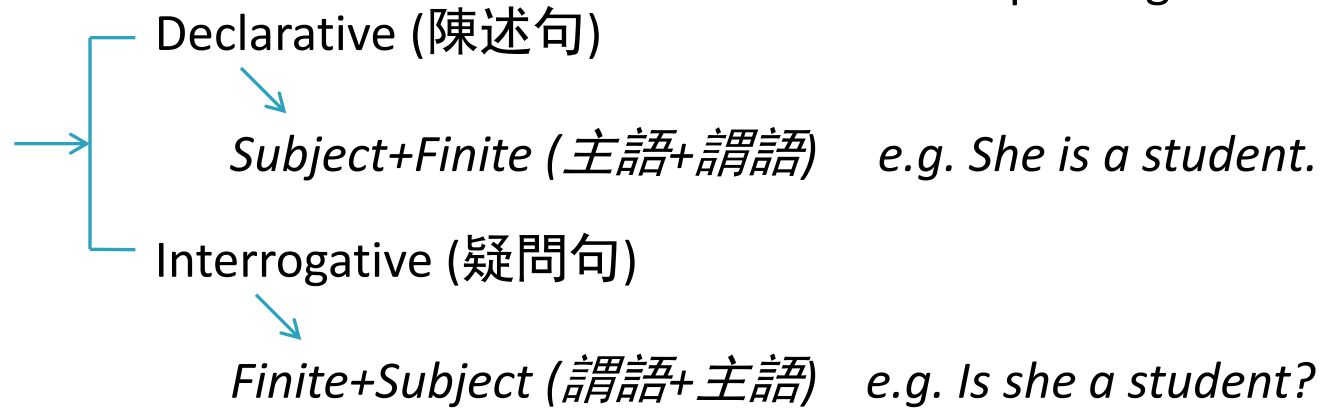
Literacy as Design

Situated Practice

- Knowledge is principally situated in socio-cultural settings and fundamentally contextualized in specific practices and domains (New London Group, 1996; Mills, 2011).

- Limited understanding:*所谓情景操练，是指将班级分为几个小组，每个小组的成员根据自己的背景、知识和经历扮演不同角色，使自己沉浸于构建意义的操练之中（葛俊丽，罗晓燕，2010,外语界）。*

Experiencing — Authentic genres / Authentic situations

A. Genre

Teaching material

- Authentic
  - Daily conversation (CLT)
    - *Spoken language*
  - Other genres
    - *Multimodal discourse*
    - Descriptions
    - Narratives
    - Instructions
    - Reports
    - Explanations
    - Arguments
- Un-authentic
  - *Invented sentences*

1. Vocabulary and grammar teaching in authentic language use
2. Ontogenetic development

B. Context of Situation and activity design

Contextuliz ed
- Field
  - Daily communication（greetings, sharing, etc.）
  - Professional comm（reporting, expounding, etc.）
- Tenor
  - Personal relation (family, friends, etc.)
  - Professional relation (employment, colleague, etc)
- Mode
  - Language (Spoken, Written)
  - Nonverbal (Images, body language, etc.)

Decontextualized

Overt Instruction

What
- "grammar" for meaning making (system networks) **(1st forum)**
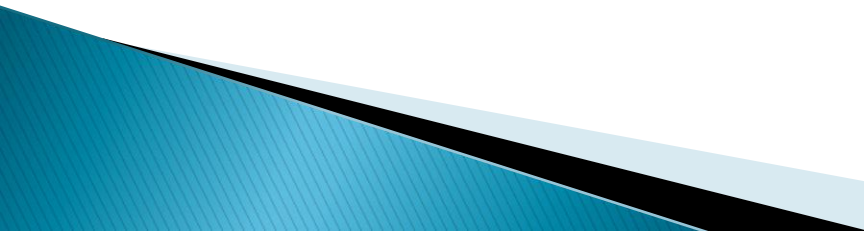- Relation between language and society (strata)

How (scaffolding through I-R-F)

Giving or demanding, goods-&-services or information (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 107)

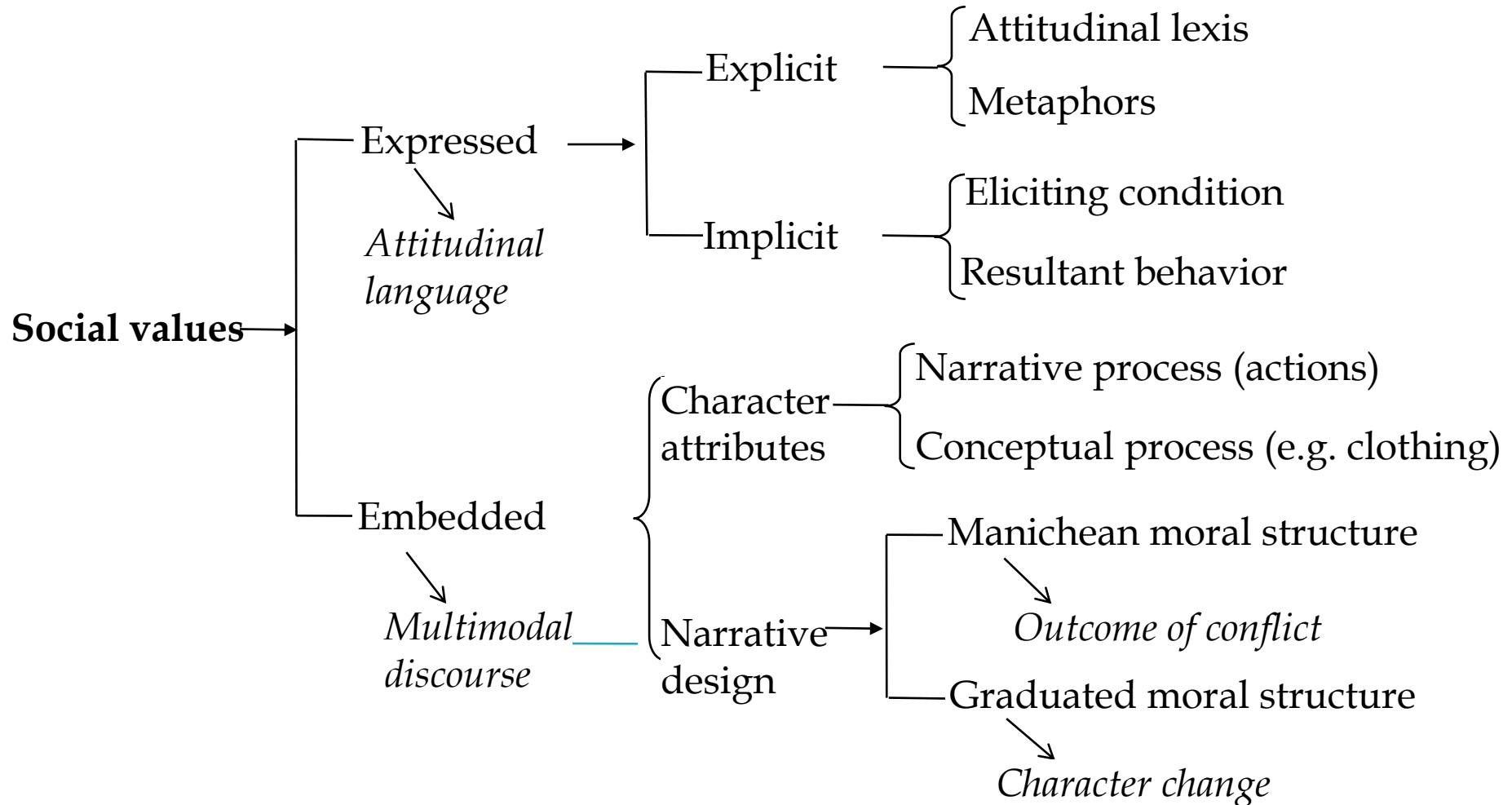| Role in exchange	Commodity exchanged	
	(a) goods-&-services	(b) information
(i) giving	'offer' *Any of the three*	'statement' *Indicative*
(ii) demanding	'command' *Imperative*	'question' *Interrogative*

Critical Framing

New Literacy Theories (Gee, 2005, 2008; Perez, 2004; Street, 2003) : literacy practice is a set of sociocultural practices that reflect the dominant values and beliefs of a society. From this perspective, teaching material can be seen as ideological message systems which serve to "support the performance of social activities and social identities" (Gee, 2005, p. 1).

Critical thinking
Moral education

Social values in multimodal teaching material

Social values →

- Expressed
  - *Attitudinal language*
    - Explicit
      - Attitudinal lexis
      - Metaphors
    - Implicit
      - Eliciting condition
      - Resultant behavior
- Embedded
  - *Multimodal discourse*
    - Character attributes
      - Narrative process (actions)
      - Conceptual process (e.g. clothing)
    - Narrative design
      - Manichean moral structure
        - *Outcome of conflict*
      - Graduated moral structure
        - *Character change*

"unspoken curriculum" (Holly, 1990) or "covert grammar" (Brown, 1997)

- Critical thinking
- Moral education

Transformed Practice

Meaningful tasks in authentic situations—Insights from TBLT.

▸ Willis and Willis (2007: 136) three levels of classroom tasks that 'mirror thereal world': (1) the level of meaning (i.e. learners producing meanings which will be useful in the real world); (2) the level of discourse (i.e. learners realizing discourse acts which reflect the real world); and (3) the level of activity (i.e. learners engaging in activities which reflect directly the use of language outside the classroom).

▸ For more detailed discussion:

▸ *冯德正．forthcoming. 多元读写教学法的系统功能语言学阐释.*

▸ *冯德正. forthcoming. 英语教学中的人文道德教育：多元读写视角.*

▸ *Feng, D. Moral Education as a Curriculum Goal: The Multimodal Construction of Social Values in EFL Textbooks. (应用语言学论坛Here)*
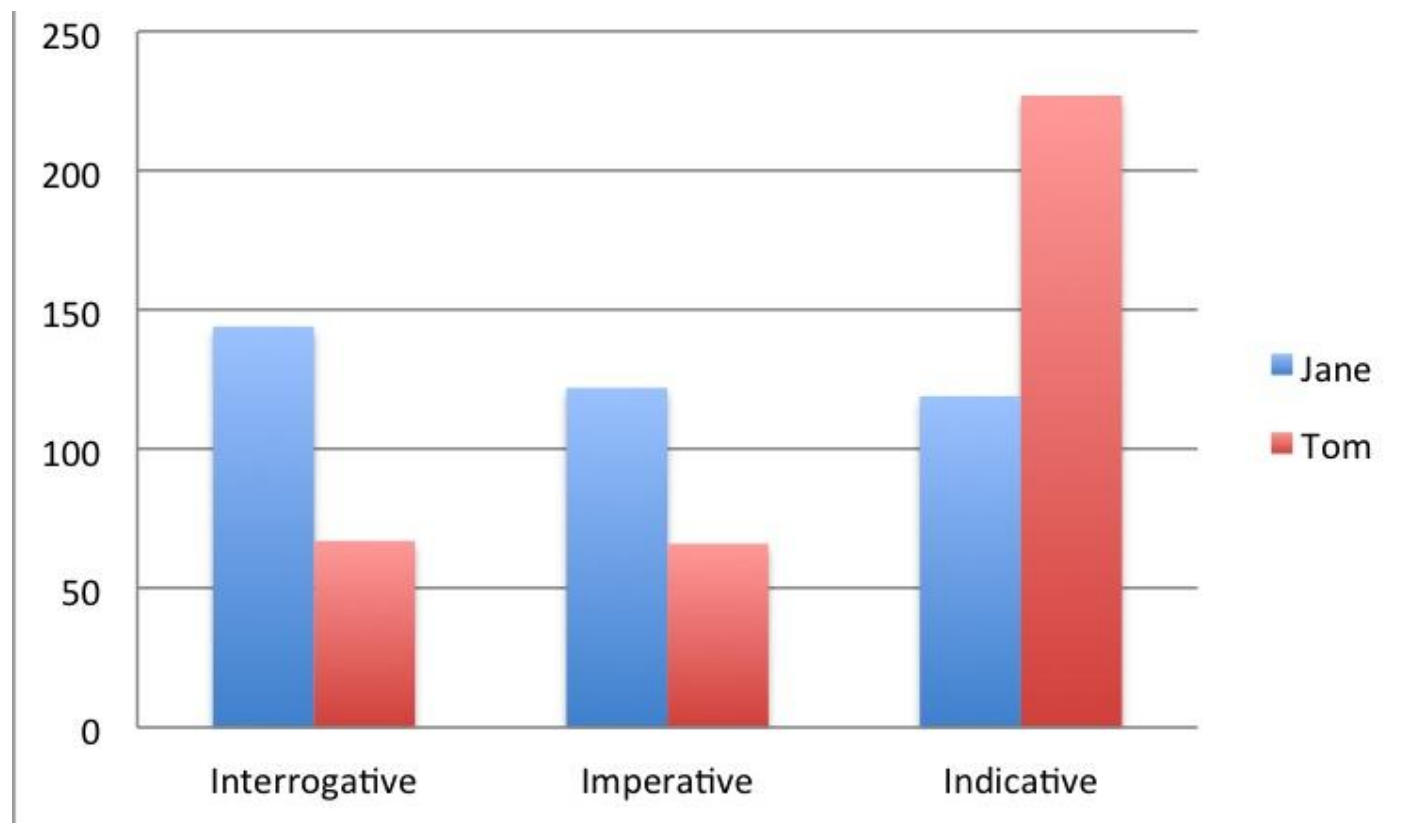
Case 1: The Shenzhen Project (New Media Classroom Analysis)

▸ Video: Grumpy elephant

▸ Before showing the video, the teacher asked the following questions:

  ◦ How are you feeling today?

  ◦ What should we do if our friend feels sad?

▸ Situated practice

  ◦ Authencity of the teaching material

  ◦ Group discussion and **performing**

Overt instruction

▸ **A. Guiding meaning construction**

Qi, Sun and Feng (2015, forthcoming)

- **Excerpt of teacher–student interaction in Jane's class**

- *Jane (1): I want to know who feels very very grumpy. Who? Okay, you please.*

- *Student (1): The elephant.*

- *Jane (2): The elephant feels…The elephant, the whole sentence.*

- *Student (2): Very very grumpy.*

- *Jane (3):* **The old elephant feels very very grumpy.**

- *Who will come to help? Who will come to help?*

- *Okay, you, please.*

- *Student (3): A monkey **is want** to help elephant.*

- *Jane (4): Oh, the monkey **wants to** help the old elephant, right?*

Qi, Sun and Feng (2015)

B. Vocabulary teaching with multimodal resource

- The framework of Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 372), who describe five essential steps in vocabulary learning:
  - having sources for encountering new words;
  - getting a clear image, whether visual or auditory or both, for the forms of new words;
  - learning the meaning of the words;
  - making a strong memory connection between the form and meaning of the words;
  - using the words.   Video

Critical framing

- ## A. critical thinking

- Since young learners are not able to interpret the underlying purposes of the texts, teachers are encouraged to provide constant scaffolding to elicit students' thinking. <u>Unfortunately, in Jane's lesson, she does not use any careful questioning to prompt the students to discuss the underlying values embedded in the animation.</u> In the story, the elephant finally becomes happy because he sees "the parrot got a fright and fell over the giraffe, the giraffe got a fright and fell over the monkey, the monkey got a fright and fell over his drum". Acknowledging the humorous effect attempted by the story, we may need to think "Is this how we should do to those who try to help us?" and "Can we take pleasure out of other people's trouble?". It could be dangerous if the kids think this is fun and appropriate. The teacher should be critical about the material, and she could ask 'Why did the elephant become happy finally?", "Is that a good way to make ourselves happy?", "What should we do if our friends fall over?", and so on.

B. Moral education

- *Excerpt of moral education in Jane's lesson*

- *Jane (1):* So, we are so happy to help the old elephant today. Are you happy?

- *Student (1):* Yes.

- *Jane (2):* The old elephant gets very grumpy today.

- We help the old elephant, and a lot of animals help, right?

- So, we are very happy today. Because...because what?

- Roses given, fragrance left.

- Follow me.... (repeat)

- *Jane (3):* Are you happy to help others?

- *Student (3):* Yes.

Moral education based on active critical thinking (Lipman, 1995)

A better example? (Kathy Mills,2011)

- **Teacher:** I need you to think. Why is the author telling you about the environment? He's telling us about polluting the pond. So why did he write this book? What did he want children to think? Simon?

- **Simon: Trash, (pause) put … pollution**

- **Teacher: Trash put pollution? What do you mean? Simon: [No response]**

- **Teacher: Harry?**

- **Harry: Don't pollute the earth.**

- **Teacher:** That's right! This author wrote a lovely book about two fat frogs who had a fight, because he wants you to get the point about not polluting the earth …

Transformed practice

- Two activities that are intended as transformed practice in Jane's class. First, the students play the characters and make their own video, which is the "selling point" of the lesson (over 15 minutes).

- At the end of the class, Jane designs another activity which is closer to transformed practice: she creates a context in which she is getting fatter and fatter on cold days and therefore she feels grumpy, then asks students to form groups and work together to figure out how to make her happy (less than 5 minutes).

Summary of the analysis of Jane's class

▸ The use of native speaking animation facilitated situated practice and overt instruction

▸ Lack of effective guidance for critical thinking

▸ No transformed practice is designed, mainly due to the preoccupation with form imitation and drilling. Consequently, very often, digital media, such as animations, the internet, and software, merely provide new tools for imitation and drilling, rather than facilitating a new pedagogy.

知识观 ⟶		工具观 ⟶		人文观	
词形语音	词汇语法	语篇语义	情景语境	文化意识	价值观
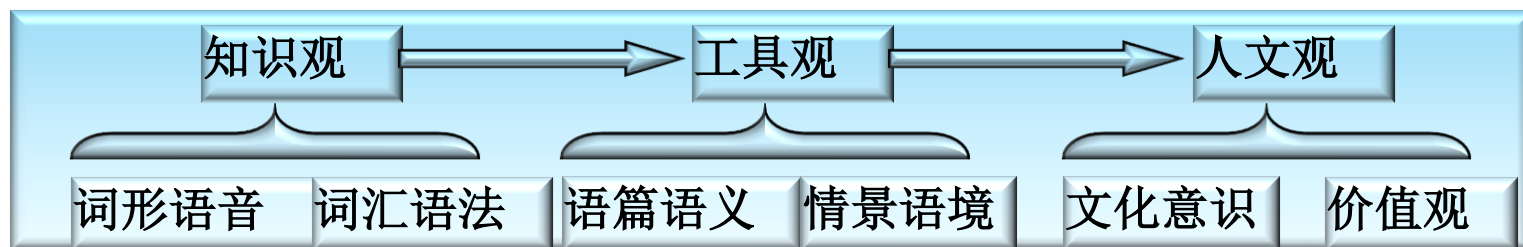
Case 2: Application in EAP Classroom

1. Situated practice: Experiencing

Example: Analyzing stance in news

watching youtube video

The Representation in Xinhua and CNN

(1) <u>Defending Olympic champion Liu Xiang</u> **pulled out** of the men's 110m hurdles first round Monday morning at the Beijing Olympics.

(2) <u>In the last heat of the first round</u>, Liu **quit** the race [[after a false start of Dutchman Marcel van der Westen]].

(3) <u>He</u> **limped off** the track, [[obviously **being troubled** by a foot injury]].

(4) <u>Liu's coach Sun Haiping</u> **said** in a post-race press conference,

(5) "<u>His right heel injury</u> **has been** a long problem since six years ago, even before the Athens Olympics."

(6) "<u>On Aug. 16</u>, we **arrived at** the Olympic village,

(7) <u>medical experts</u> **analyzed** Liu's injury //

(8) and **specified** // (9) <u>there </u>**was** a problem on Liu's Achilles's tendon," // (10) <u>Sun</u> **said**.

(1) Liu Xiang **pulled out** of the Olympics [[before **clearing** his first hurdle on Monday,

    clutching his right leg in pain in front of a stunned crowd at the Bird's Nest]].

(2) Liu barely **got out of** the blocks//

(3) and immediately **started hobbling** in the first heat.

(4) Something **snapped** in his physical resistance after months of uncertainty about an

    inflamed hamstring.

(5) He had **competed** rarely this year//

(6) and in June **saw** [[his world record fall to Dayron Robles of Cuba]].

(7) Trouble immediately **showed** //

(8) when he **warmed up**.

(9) [[**Stopping** after two hurdles in the warm-up]], he **crouched down** //

(10) and **walked gingerly back to** the starting area

Discussion

Which report is from China, and which is from US, and Why?

(1)5 minutes to read the reports and provide at least two reasons for your answer.

(2)Vote

(3)Discussion and persuasion

Question

- How to describe the differences in an analytically explicit way, so that we can pinpoint their attitudinal positioning?

2. Overt instruction: Theoretical framework

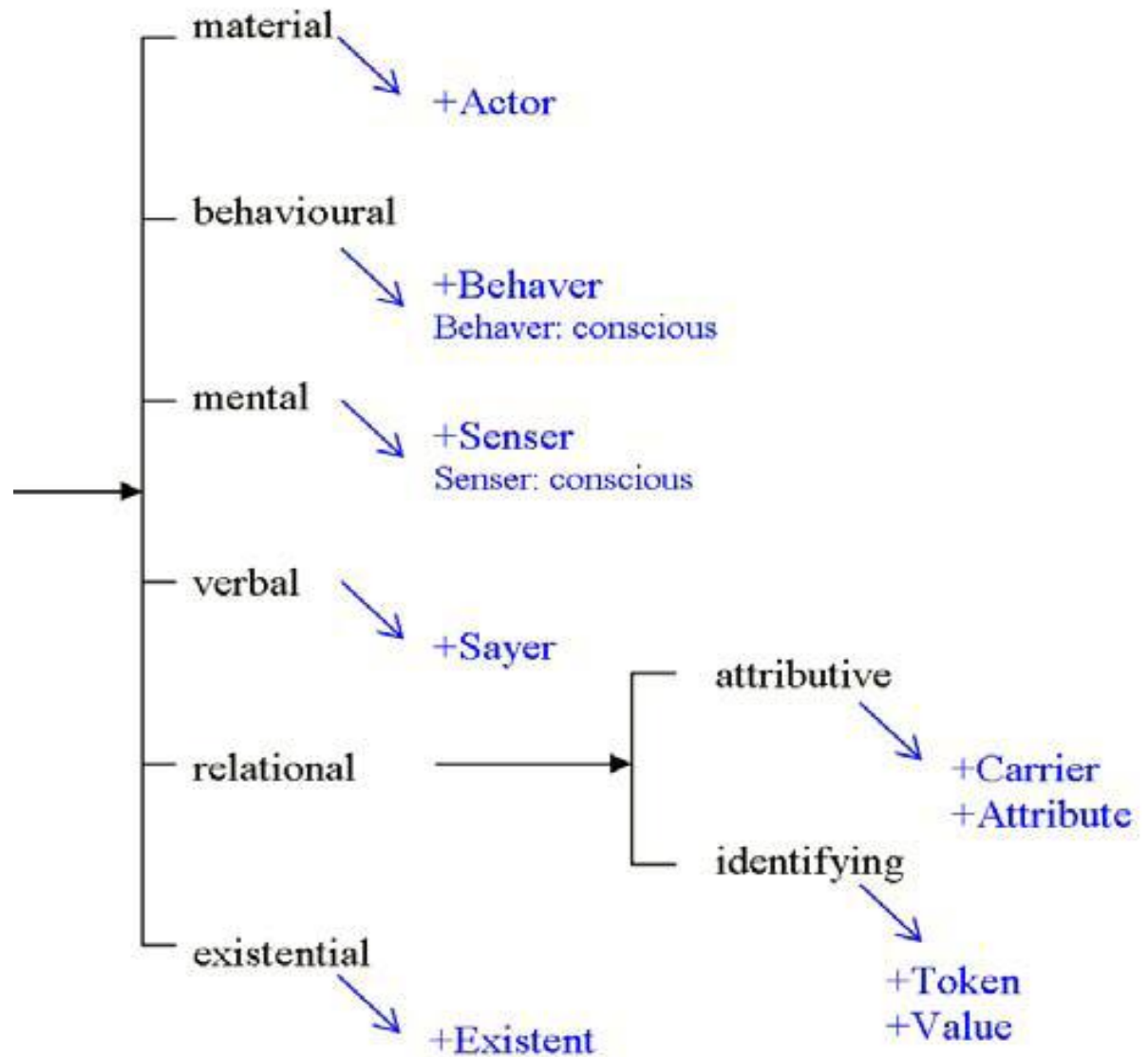Guiding students to use an explicit

metalanguage of design.

Ideational Meaning: Processes and the Construal of the Event

- Stance is realized by semantic choices which are in turn realized by

  lexicogrammatical choices.

- (1)   Policemen killed 100 demonstrators.
- (2)   100 demonstrators were killed.
- (3)   100 demonstrators were dead.

1. Ideational meaning

Processes

material
→ +Actor

behavioural
→ +Behaver
Behaver: conscious

mental
→ +Senser
Senser: conscious

verbal
→ +Sayer

relational
→ attributive
→ +Carrier
+Attribute
→ identifying
→ +Token
+Value

existential
→ +Existent

■ Choices

	Material	Behavorial	Verbal	Relational	Grammatical metaphor
Xinhua	6	1	2	2	1
CNN	5	8	0	0	1

■ Discussion

1. CNN 's behavorial process: highlight the event with detailed description;

    Xinhua: downplay the event, focus on explanation

        Xinhua: Medical experts analyzed and specified that...

2. Grammatical metaphor: Xinhua: His right heel injury has been a long problem.

    CNN: He saw [[his world record fall to Dayron Robles of Cuba]]. highlight

     impact on Liu

■ **Choices of Theme**

	Liu Xiang	Liu's coach	Liu's injury	doctors	marked theme
Xinhua	2	2	1	1	2
CNN	7	0	2	0	0

■ **Discussion**

CNN is concerned with (highlights) Liu Xiang and his injury.

Xinhua tries to background Liu Xiang in this negative event and brings in the voices of the coach and doctor

3. Critical framing

- Encouraging students to interpret the social context and purpose of designs of meaning.

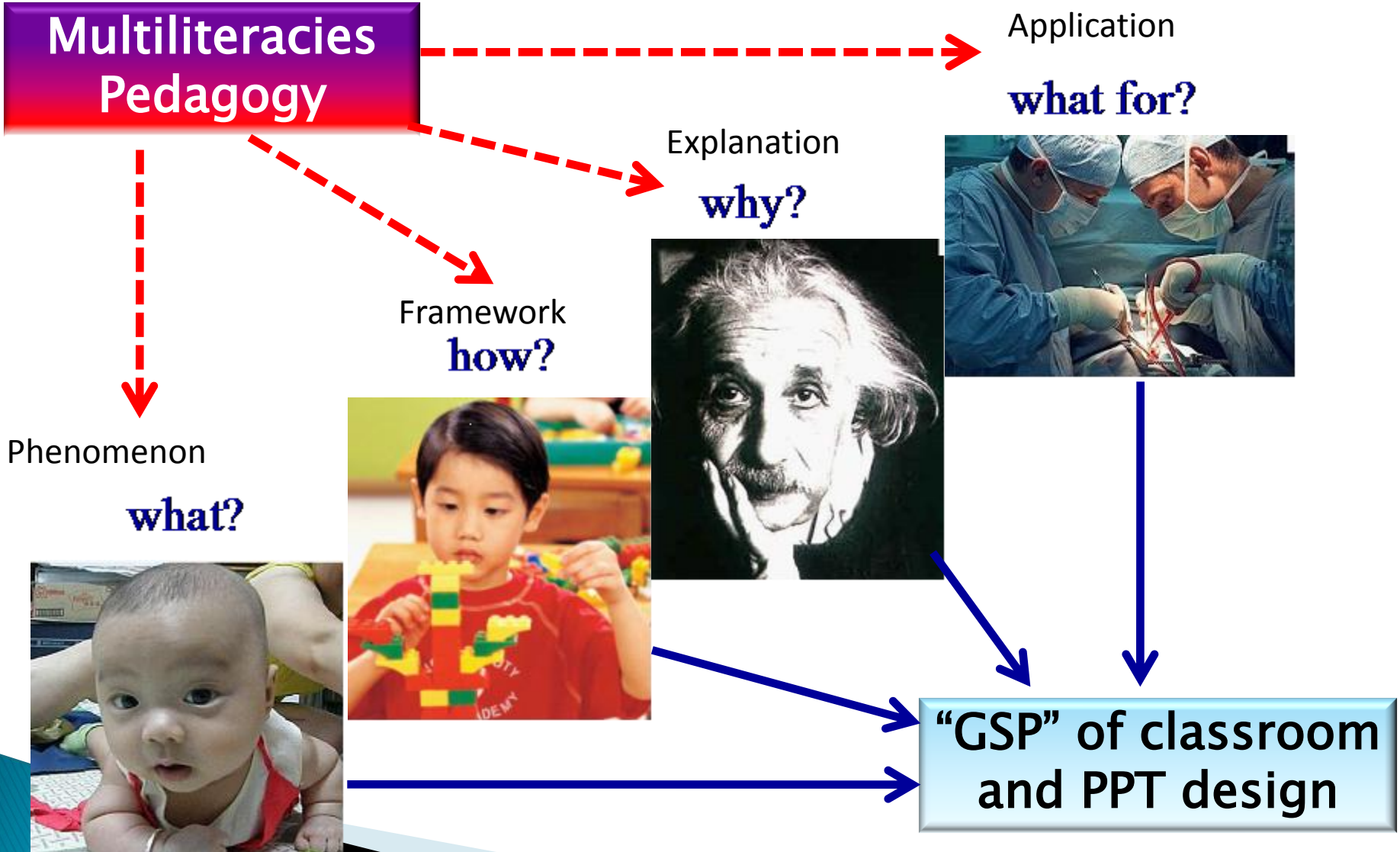Stance: positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation

van Dijk (1995: 144): The description and attribution of negative actions tend to be de-emphasized for ingroups (e.g. by detopicalization), and emphasized for outgroups.

4. Transformed practice

- **Task**

- Find two news reports with different stances and explain how they are constructed (e.g. reports on toddler peeing on the street from Mainland and Hong Kong).

Classroom and Powerpoint Design in EAP Classroom

Going beyond micro-level semiotic analysis

Multiliteracies Pedagogy

Application

what for?

Explanation

why?

Framework

how?

Phenomenon

what?

"GSP" of classroom and PPT design

Summary

▷ **Doing Multiliteracies Research in China**

❖ **Theory Development 理论探讨**

❖ **Empirical classroom Analysis 课堂教学分析**

❖ **Application in teaching 教学应用**

❖ **Action research 行动研究**

❖ **Reception studies 受众研究**

Thank you!

will.feng@polyu.edu.hk