Multimodality, literacy and school English
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Abstract
In this chapter we argue for the need of a multimodal perspective to explore the effects of changing contemporary social conditions on literacy and the teaching of 'English'. It attends to two interconnected social and cultural trends: first, the representational and communicational facilities made available via technologies; and second, the changing forms of knowledge that are mobilized and circulated in the contemporary social and pedagogic landscape. We show how these trends emerge in English, their effects on literacy and on the shapes of curricular knowledge, and changes in the interrelation of *image* and *writing* in English.

We outline a multimodal social semiotic approach, along with a brief introduction to the literature in its application to English. To provide some contextualizing of multimodality in contemporary English, the social conditions that underpin the 'production of English' are briefly discussed. The 'new' technologies clearly are a key part of this; we use the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) as an exemplar technology indicative of significant changes in representational and communicational forms through which to examine the pedagogic space of contemporary English. Illustrative case study examples of English teaching that were undertaken between 2000 - 2003[1] and 2005-2006[2] provide insights into the effects of technology-mediated practices in English. The chapter concludes by highlighting some implications for educational practice and policy with respect to literacy and the teaching of English.

A multimodal approach
The approach to multimodality taken here derives from the linguistic and semiotic work of Michael Halliday which sees language as the product of the constant shaping in its use by people realizing their social purposes (1978; Hodge and Kress, 1988). Social Semiotics has built on the semiotic aspects of Halliday's theory and extended them to a range of 'resources for representation' and their uses in communication. It views them as socially organized sets of resources that contribute to the construction of meaning. This brings the *modes* of image, sound, dynamic representation, gesture, gaze, body posture, spatial orientation and movement into the analytical domain for a discussion of English (for a fuller discussion see Kress, 1996; 2009; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Norris, 2004; Jewitt, 2008, 2009).

A social semiotic take on multimodality focuses on processes of making meaning through situated practices and interpretation, the design (selection, adaptation, transformation) of multiple modes and the representational features available by social actors in the environments of their daily lives. The emphasis is firmly on *sign-making* and the agentive work of the sign-maker in a specific place and time. A

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[1] This data is drawn from 'The Production of School English Project' undertaken by G. Kress, C. Jewitt, K.Jones, J.Bourne, A.Franks, J.Hardcastle and E.Reid.
[2] This data is drawn from research undertaken by G.Moss, C.Jewitt, A.Cardini, V.Armstrong and F.Castle reported in Moss et al, 2007.

multimodal approach (from here on in we use the term 'multimodality' without mention of the social semiotic frame) investigates how the socio-cultural world is realized through material representations in different modes and occasions of communication. This provides an essential link between (changes in) social conditions and the ways in which these are modally instantiated. In other words, how phenomena are represented and communicated in the English classroom speaks to the differential potentials for action by those who are in the classroom.

Key concepts for Multimodality
Six key concepts inform multimodality and the analysis presented here.

1. Metafunctions
Underpinning the analysis is the notion of meaning as differentiated through three inter-related social functions and realised in three metafunctions. According to Halliday (1978), every element simultaneously realizes meanings about *events* and states of affairs in the world. He called this *ideational* meaning. Every element plays a role in *positioning* us in relation to social others and to meanings. He called this *interpersonal* meaning. Every element plays a part in producing a coherent text: he called this *textual* meaning. These metafunctions are analytic means to explore how meanings are articulated through the resources of the grammar of language and, in a multimodal approach, through all other modes used.

2. Mode
The concept of mode is at the centre of multimodality. It refers to an organized set of semiotic resources for making meaning (image, gesture, writing, e.g.).

3. Semiotic resource
Semiotic resources provide the means for making meanings, through selection from these modes in a particular moment. For instance, the *framing* of elements as connected or as disconnected in an image or in a page layout is a use of a visual semiotic resource.
Millenia of work on language mean that much is known about its semiotic potentials. Considerably less is understood about the potentials of other forms of representation. Detailed studies have begun to describe the resources and organizing principles of *image* (see Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), *sound* (see van Leeuwen, 1999), *writing* (see Kenner, 2004, Kenner and Kress, 2003) and how these work together in *multimodal ensembles* (see Kress et al, 2001, 2005, 2009; Flewitt, 2006). Choice of mode and of its associated semiotic resources has epistemological effects through the potentials of designs of concepts. This in turn influences potentials for interaction in the classroom.

4. (Modal) Affordance
*T*he concept of (modal) affordance is central to multimodality and to the analysis in this chapter. This concept is based on the material (itself socially shaped) aspects of *mode* and refers to the potentials this material offers for the social and historical shaping of a mode in its social uses. Attention to sign-making and sign in a multimodal perspective foregrounds the agentive work of the sign-maker and the importance of their social, historical and cultural location.

5. Interest
The concept of interest is the expression of the historical, social, and cultural biography of the maker of the sign, focused in the moment of the making of the sign by the characteristics and the demands of the environment and oriented towards the prospective making of a new sign. *Interest* underpins and shapes making of meaning as sign.

6. Multimodal orchestration
The multimodal orchestration of modes refers to the actions of teachers and students – as sign-makers – as much as to the work of designer(s) of a text book or other teaching and learning materials, engaged in the in the making of complex semiotic entities, *texts*.

A multimodal analysis uses these key concepts to build a full account of representation(s) in specific contexts with the particular social purposes they realise. This shows how signs are socially made in the actions of social actors and how, at the same time, actors through their signs construe the social world. These concepts offers the potential for well-founded hypotheses about the use of particular features in English. They offer social explanations for a teacher's or students' selecting, adapting and remaking of signs of many kinds, in the process of teaching and learning.

English through a multimodal lens
Multimodal approaches focus on signs arising from the agency and interest of people (sign makers) in the context of production, socially and historically shaped. Building on earlier work on multimodality in school Science (see Kress et al, 2001), the 'Production of School English Project' (SEP) (see Kress et al, 2005) developed a multimodal research methodology to examine English. It analysed the (multimodal) forms of English that resulted out of the interaction of the stipulated curriculum with local social conditions – in and around the school - in which English was produced. This analysis highlighted how students and teachers co-produce notions of *ability*, *resistance* and *identity* through all modes used in interaction. The classroom displays, artifacts, the embodied practices of teacher and students were orchestrated to realise versions of English describably specific to a school. It became evident that a full understanding of English demands attention to the use of all modes in use and the relationships between them. The "Three Continents Project" (see Battacharly et al, 2007) extended this work to explore the post-colonial construction of school English in Delhi, Johannesburg, and London from that same perspective. It showed how subject English articulates national policies on language, identity and power.

In addition to focusing on classroom interaction, multimodal research has shown the significance of the role of image, its relation with writing for the construction of knowledge in textbooks (e.g. Moss, 2003; Bezemer and Kress, 2008). It has highlighted the implications of multimodal design for the navigating of digital and print materials through the creation of reading pathways that involve images, colour and layout (e.g. Jewitt, 2008). Recent work by Bezemer and Kress (2008) investigates changes in the design of learning resources over the period 1935 - 2005 and possible and actual 'gains and losses' of multimodal ensembles for potentials for learning; it provides an account of epistemological and social-pedagogic significance of these changes. The changing relationship between image, writing, action and layout show that image and layout are increasingly central in the construction of content. Their

survey of a sample of textbooks shows that the average number of images per page in English textbooks has increased exponentially from 1930 to 2005 (from an average about 2 per 100 pages to about 3 per 10 pages). Now, images no longer function primarily to illustrate or duplicate what is written on the page or screen, rather image and word attend to discrete aspects of meaning. Increasingly concepts are introduced, established and analysed visually; writing is brought into new relationships with, or substituted by multimodal forms of representation (Bachmair, 2006; Jewitt, 2002, 2008).

The increasingly complex work of becoming 'literate' – of having a full capacity for making and disseminating their meanings -- in multimodal environments has become evident in the investigation of students' production of multimodal texts, models and digital multimedia materials in the English classroom (Kress, 2003; Kenner, 2004; Bearne, 2003). These show the benefits of approaching literacy, writing and reading as multimodal activities (Bearne and Wolstencroft, 2007). Studies of multimodal literacy practices have served to highlight the importance of the spatial organization and framing of writing on the page, the directionality, shape, size, and angle of a script (Kenner, 2004), as well as the embodied dimensions of writing (Lancaster, 2001), the interaction between image, graphical marks and writing (Pahl,1999), the role of voice and the body (Franks, 2003) and the significance of the resources of colour and layout for literacy.

Social conditions shaping literacy and English
Four contemporary social trends seem directly relevant to conceptions of literacy and English: *first*, the reconfiguration of representational and communicational resources and the resultant shapes of knowledge; *second*, the fluidity of configuration of boundaries between everyday and specialized knowledge; *third*, the changing and blurring boundaries between users and the producers of knowledge, typified by terms like 'creative consumption' (Sefton-Green, 2006); and *fourth*, the modularization of knowledge into 'bite-size' chunks and its consequent effect on 'attention' (Jewitt et al, 2007).

These conditions apply *across* the social and communicational landscape in which the English classroom is situated; it shares a space with sites such as You-Tube, Flickr and other internet resources, *all* connected through the movement of people across media-scapes. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) analysis of Newspaper front pages showed that even maintaining tradition and stability is itself continuous work.

Our perspective acknowledges the effects of technologies as social and cultural tools in remaking, mobilising and circulating texts and in disseminating practices and shaping how people learn: in short "…changing the conditions for learning and for our ideas about what knowledge is" (Saljo, 2004: 217). Uncoupling multimodality from 'new' technologies helps avoid easy dichotomies, such as that between 'print literacy' and 'digital literacy' or page and screen. It asks how the facilities of a specific technology – 'old' or 'new' - configure image, word and other modes.

From this starting point questions about the consequences of social change can be asked across all sites of literacy and English: 'how do the representational and communicational facilities made available in the contemporary English classroom

effect literacy and the understanding of what English is? What modes are available, how are they used and for what purposes? What sites of display exist or are newly introduced into the classroom and how do these become drawn into practices? Whether as the use of walls or the use of the IWB all affect the relation of teacher and students in the classroom. The question is: 'what is the effect?'

Illustrative case-studies
In our exploration of emergent trends we draw on two in-depth case studies of the teaching of English. One comes from the SEP project (see Kress, et. al. 2005); the other from the project "Interactive Whiteboards, Pedagogy and Pupil Performance Evaluation"- the IWB project (see Moss et al, 2007).

Our focus is on examples that can generate analytical dimensions and questions concerning the changing relationship of image and writing in contemporary English. We use a multimodal and historical perspective to look across the two data sets to describe trends indicative of changes in literacy and English against the backdrop of changes in the technologized pedagogical space of the English classroom. In the two examples - the teaching of a poem - the teacher involved had participated in both projects: in 2000, teaching with the aid of an OHP and in 2005 with an IWB[3].

The changing pedagogic space of the contemporary English classroom
At the time of the first project, the majority of families in the UK were not connected to broadband, mobile phone usage was limited, and digital cameras and camcorders were too expensive to be available to the majority of the population. Google had been established for just over a year and neither Youtube nor Flickr had yet appeared. Some specialist schools and Media/ English departments were equipped with digital cameras and editing equipment but this was not the case for the majority of English teachers. At the time of the SEP project, technology in the English classroom was a television, a video player, sometimes an Overhead Projector and occasionally a computer on the teacher's desk (usually beaming out stars from a black and white screen saver). Occasionally students were taken on whole-class trips to the computer suite to word process completed written work for presentation or to research a topic on the school intra-net.

Nearly a decade on, the English classroom has become digital, albeit to different degrees. A key factor is the use of IWBs in secondary school English, due to considerable government funding in 2004/5 for IWBs for core subjects, including English; it can be seen as a response that articulates and mediates the changing social conditions outlined earlier. The IWB provides a touch-sensitive multimodal digital hub in the classroom – a portal to the Internet. Its use has the potential to expand the kinds of texts that enter the English classroom; to change the practices and experiences of teachers and students and therefore change the possibilities for learning. This move speaks of the need to make curriculum knowledge 'relevant' by connecting with students' out of school experience; the desire to increase student 'engagement' through 'interactivity'; as well as the pressures of examination and the promise of 'speed' (Jewitt, et al, 2007).

Our research on the use of IWBs in English suggests that, increasingly, image now

provides the starting point for an English lesson (Moss et al, 2007; Jewitt, 2008). It is common for English Teachers (although there may be generational differences in this) to show a clip of digital video (often via U-tube)[4] or to display an image – often downloaded from the Internet - to offer a route into a concept. Teachers frequently use PowerPoint presentations to present their argument, they annotate texts visually or they connect to a webpage. The use of image is also prevalent in students' work in English, with the use of clipart, digital photographs – taken by students or downloaded from the Internet - designed as PowerPoint presentations and project work both in class and out of school for homework.

The relationship between the visual and English is not new, though the specific ways in which writing, image and other modes now feature in the classroom is changing in ways significant for literacy and English. IWBs and access to the internet shape how information and knowledge are created, recreated, mobilized and shared in the classroom.

Sites of display and configurations of space in the English classroom
The introduction of IWBs has affected the sites of display in the English classroom and altered how it is configured.

In 2000 - 2003, it was common for English teachers not to have a desk in the classroom; some had a desk at the front or on one side or the other. In the lessons we observed, teachers positioned themselves differently in the classroom; often sitting on the edge of the students' desks; they moved around the classroom or knelt by a small group or an individual student in interacting with them. The IWB brings a regulation of this diversity. English classrooms now have a desk for a computer connected to the IWB; that desk needs to be at the front, somewhat to the side; if teachers do move around, usually now they need to return to their desk; and from front of class they operate the computer; though schools which invested in wireless peripherals such as 'slates', enabling interaction with the IWB from any point in the classroom, have newly freed teachers from being at the front of the classroom. This designed freedom offers new possibilities for the shaping and control of pedagogic space. The research seems to indicate, however, that the introduction of IWBs has led to an increase in whole-class teaching (Moss et al, 2007).

Several teachers used scanners to enhance the presentational and interactive potential of the IWB: to bring a text or some artefact 'to life' in a lesson, making it easier to focus whole class discussion on an item and available for manipulation and annotation in 'real time' and in new ways. The IWB offers ways of displaying students' work directly to the whole class, with an immediacy not provided by wall displays. This can enhance whole class discussion and engagement that is more focussed on general, abstract, 'conceptual' issues in that work.

Starting points for English
The IWB examples show three distinct *modal* starting points for contemporary school English: a starting point in *image*, one in *writing* and one that is *multimodal*. Each shapes the learning environment through specific semiotic resources with their

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[4] An observation made by John Yandell, Institute of Education during his observation of Beginner Teachers work in London Schools.

modal affordances; each involves the 'interests' of teachers and students in the *multimodal orchestration* of English. What counts as knowledge is articulated through ideational, and textual meaning. Writing, image and movement featured in significant ways in the classrooms observed in our first project; though writing was the starting point in most cases and dominated the production of English, even though often in fragmented and 'stunted' form. From what we saw, the use of the IWB seems to be re-mediating English with increasing emphasis on the visual and multimodal; in that process visual aspects of writing (font, layout) are coming to the fore.

Visual starting point and space
Now English lessons may start visually; for example introducing a poem via an image on the IWB or using images to explore a narrative or the notion of symbolism. In a lesson on Macbeth, a teacher used a series of images to initiate a discussion of the development of character and narrative in Macbeth. She displayed images, downloaded from the Internet, on the IWB and asked the class to offer words / concepts that characterized the atmosphere of the play. That in turn led to a discussion of the mood of the play. In another lesson a teacher displayed a photograph from the Royal Shakespeare Company archive showing Banquo and Lady Macbeth on the IWB to explore the notion of tragedy. He asked the students to suggest who the two characters were, what they might be saying to one another and how they might be feeling. The students wrote their responses on post-it notes, which the teacher collected and read aloud as he stuck them on the IWB. These *visual* starting points offered relatively open routes into the play and connected more directly with the students' own experiences – visually - via genres of the 'soap' for example.

A dynamic starting point
As well as the distinct *modal* starting points, the IWB also offers different *medial* starting points. In a display of video clips at the start of a lesson, IWB technology re-iterates older forms of media and pedagogy. However this can open up new pedagogic repertoires through links and hyperlinks connecting out to television, to advertising, to holiday websites, to YouTube and other video sites. In other words, different domains can be directly connected to the English classroom: the everyday, the commercial, the popular. This diversifies the kinds of texts that come into the classroom and blurs the boundaries between traditional educational spaces and others - making third spaces - pedagogizing the everyday. For English, it undoes (and will, no doubt, eventually remake differently) the formerly strong boundaries between the values of the canonical text and the everyday text. In an English lesson on 'Persuasive speech-writing', for example, the teacher used the students' recent work about healthy eating in another subject to structure the topic and make it 'relevant' to pupils' experiences. She showed two short clips: one downloaded from Channel 4's website entitled 'Jamie's School Dinners' and another clip from an American film "Super Size Me". These generated a lively discussion, which engaged the whole class and provided the basis for the writing task.

Re-visualization of the pedagogic space of the classroom
These starting points do not imply a rejection of writing; they do reposition writing in the landscape of English. To that extent English is indicative of what is happening in the contemporary communicational landscape more generally. This shift matters.

It affects how knowledge is represented, in which mode and through which media. That in turn is crucial to knowledge construction and to the shapes of knowledge. In other words forms of representation are integrally linked with meaning, literacy and learning more generally. How phenomena or concepts are represented shapes both *what* is to be learnt (e.g. the curriculum) as well as *how* it is to be learnt (the pedagogic practices involved). Image, writing and all modes at use in a school subject take on specific functions in the construction of school knowledge. Image and writing offer different potentials for 'engagement' and make different demands on the learner; they offer differential potentials for learning, different pathways for learners through texts and, in that, different potentials in the shaping of learner identities.

Choice of form shapes knowledge (Kress et al, 2001, 2005; O'Halloran, 2005). Texts previously associated with one medium and one mode (novels, poems) are now available online, for study. In that process of re-mediation and re-modalization a formerly printed text is 'repackaged' with image, with animation, with speech, with music and other features of sound; it is digitally annotated, differently organized and in that differently generic, fragmented to a 'traditional' view. It is connected via hyperlinks to an author's biography, to historically and socially relevant knowledge: it becomes part of a web of texts. This remakes the authority of texts, changes its genre, unsettles the boundaries and forms of knowledge and creates connections across previously distinct boundaries. The relationship between 'consumption', 'reading' and 'production' and writing (composing and designing) is blurred, seen from the traditional perspective - or remade, seen from a contemporary standpoint. The fluid connectivity enhanced by the turn to the multimodal serves to erode the boundaries across domains and disciplines: always, it needs to be stressed, as a ratification or enactment of the already permitted social potentials.

Modes, knowledge and practice
Common sense assumes that English is about language and texts – written or spoken, literary or everyday. Yet the making of English happens in the orchestration of many modes, shaped by the social, cultural and historical context of classrooms and schools. The "Three Continents Project" showed that the extent to which students' body posture, movement, gesture, gaze and talk as well as spatial arrangements of classrooms, of furniture, the use of walls are drawn into the production of English is regulated differently via curricular notions of English and literacy, 'standing in for' social categories such as citizenship.

Writing in contemporary classrooms
In the SEP project, writing featured in 'learning materials', in class work and in course work. There was frequent (attempts at) avoidance of extended writing. Teachers were worried about their students' competence in writing and a lack of their sense of its of importance. This trend appears to have continued. Writing is present but in 'reduced' forms: as *annotation* of texts, as cloze procedures, in the collecting up of thoughts written on post-it notes, in recording 'brain storming' as mind-maps. In its present use, the IWB is not conducive to extended writing: it encourages a variety of forms accompanied by hyper-textual practices that both fragment and build new connections across written forms.

Teachers prepare PowerPoint presentations and annotate them by hand; or they

annotate the screen of a website, for instance, to highlight examples of persuasive writing. Throughout a lesson on Macbeth's soliloquy the teacher used PowerPoint slides to display the text to the whole class; these were discussed and annotated by the teacher in real time. The contrast of handwriting with typed writing creates a distinct focus and a distinct sense of agency/authorship: the typed work of the teacher contrasts with her handwritten 'scribing' of the collective voice of the class. The typed writing appears as 'evidence' – "this is Macbeth's Soliloquy" - the handwriting appears as the class' interpretation in response. This associates *type* with English in canonical form and *handwriting* with the personal work of *interpretation*. In this way the teacher's choice of mode and material is a key element in the production of English and this becomes a resource for the work that is expected of students.

How the *visual* features in English
The ready availability of images from the Internet and elsewhere supports a re-making of the formerly classic relationship between image as *illustration* of writing. As the example below from the IWB project demonstrates, the visual is no longer an adjunct as illustration to writing; image and word are integrated and frequently image is the first step in accessing the effects of language.

In an English lesson on the use of image and sounds in poetry, the poem used is "The Blessing" by Imtiaz Dharker; it is studied for examination in the module 'Poems from Other Cultures'. The teacher's starting point for the analysis of the poem is an illustration that accompanies the poem – a drawing of children dancing and playing around a burst water pipe. The discussion of the image by teacher and students centres on the question 'what does the poem show and what might it be about?' The class 'brainstorms' the title and the teacher produces a spider-diagram on the IWB to filter and organize the comments. She shows a series of photographs on the IWB related to the poem including a 'congregation' and a seedpod. The students are asked to match these images to the words and match them to lines in the poem (moving the images on the board and drawing lines between them). Later in the lesson the teacher displays a poem written by a student, which she had scanned and made digital. This was discussed and annotated.

The 'matching exercise' treats the 'reading' of poetry as a multimodal process. Visual imagery in language is re-presented as a visual image, providing a *realist* sense of 'imagery' and giving students another route to understanding the poem. What English is, what is to be learnt and how it is to be learnt, are reshaped by the now legitimate use of image and other modes. What is involved in English and demanded of the learner has changed.

Meaning in English is now differently anchored. With the same teacher teaching a poem in 2000 using an OHP and with an IWB in 2005, we note any number of differences: they mark a significant trend for English and literacy as much as for thinking about both. There is the use of image rather than of writing as a starting point for discussion of the poem; the disappearance from the students' tables of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED); images rather than the OED used to define words considered difficult for the students. The poem is now displayed in 'chunks' spread across the IWB screens – as words, lines, or title. In 2000 the poem was displayed on the OHP as a whole; that was then slowly 'carved up' in a process of

interrogation. With the IWB, the teacher works with the whole class and students interact with the meaning of the poem right from the start of the lesson - in matching image and word, for example - and in answering questions. In 2000 the teacher drew a strong boundary between *reading* the poem and *analyzing* it. Boundaries of many kinds have been remade.

All this has far-reaching effects for English and literacy: for the texts that come into the classroom, how they are mobilized, how they circulate and are inserted into social interactions. This changes the place, the functions and uses of image, writing and speech. The boundaries between canonical texts and the texts of the everyday, of the aesthetically and historically valued, of the mundane are changed. In important ways these changes mark the social and political boundaries of English - determined by teachers, schools, Local Education Authorities, by policy and by diverse social interests – boundaries hitherto tightly guarded and, regulated by a highly prescriptive policy context. Drawing texts from the Internet (images, Youtube) connects English with the technologies and students' experiences out-of-school and remakes the boundaries of canonical knowledge and what counts as socially valued.

This changes the semiotic landscape of the English classroom, even though these changes vary across an uneven social terrain.

Conclusion: Emergent trends for *English* multimodality, literacy and education
Against the backdrop we have provided literacy needs to be newly located within multimodal ensembles where the relationships of writing and image, screen and page, are unsettled in new relations (Kress, 2003; Jewitt, 2008). The textual cycle and the forms appearing in contemporary English remake the classic relationship between image and writing. The visual is no longer - if indeed it ever was - an illustrative adjunct to word; images are used fully in representation; they are integrated in multimodal ensembles. Increasingly image provides the first step in accessing topics and issues including the effects and uses of language. The profound effects on English have barely begun to be recognized: in slogan form and as one instance, ontologically, socially and affectively, we would say: the world *shown* is not the same as the world *told* (Kress, 2003).

One immediate question is about implications and applications; a less immediate question is about implications of the future role, the future 'shape' of English. The question 'What is English for?' demands an answer now; and maybe a different answer for the medium to long term. We want to suggest that a major issue is that of recognition. Immediately, there is the question of recognition of where and how young people make meaning. How do we begin to understand the different principles and means of composition which students bring to bear on their engagement with their cultural environment, including their lives in school? And more difficult still: what forms of imagination, what kinds of sensibility but also what kinds of practical and essential abilities, tools and practices do students show in their meaning making and in their work of dissemination.

Quite specific questions would follow: where does production happen? What kinds of production? In what kinds of modes and what kinds of media? What principles of composition are at work in that production? In implementing the curriculum which

is prescribed, with the assessment criteria which are explicit or implicit, teachers may still be able to find such questions productive for their own practice, as means of connecting with the life-worlds of their students; and enabling them, reciprocally to make the fullest possible use of the resources offered in the existing curriculum of English.

The medium to longer term result would be an enhanced sense of possible answers to the question "What *is* English for and why *does* it remain essential for students and their futures?'

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