

Text Analysis: Economic and Social History: Environment

Part one:

The purpose of this text is to give information to its readers about the environmental requirements for humans, and the lack of such requirements in the past. It also retells the development of these requirements throughout history. I believe this text to be typical to an information text. Although at first, I had considered it to be a combination of a recount and an information text. Upon learning that a text can only have one genre but can include elements of other genres, I re-analysed the text and came to the conclusion that it is an information text. My reason for believing this is the structuring of the text. The general statement at the beginning which describes the subject, then lists a series of facts in a specific order which is typical to an information text. It has an element typical of a recount, in that it is retelling a series of events but the other linguistic features such as; lack of attitudinal lexis, use of factual and technical language and the use of third person, categorizes it into the genre of an information text.

The vocabulary in the text is typical to an information report. The minimal use of attitudinal lexis is most common for this genre. I found only two examples of attitudinal lexis; 'Throughout the twentieth century the *overwhelming* majority...' and '....it is hardly *surprising* that elsewhere....' both italicised words are communicating an emotion to the reader. The other language used in this text is technical and factual ('sanitation system', 'environmental requirements for humans', and 'primitive system'). The text is written in third person. Which creates a distant relationship between the writer and reader, because the writers' purpose is to convey information there is no need for a close relationship between the two. All of these elements form to construct the tenor and mode typical to an information text.

Part two:

This example has been written with many features typical to written texts. In this part I will discuss and provide examples of: passive voice, top-level structure, text cohesion, subject-noun phrases and specialist vocabulary.

Passive voice occurs when the subject of a clause comes after the verb or is not present at all. An example from the text would be 'Throughout the twentieth century the overwhelming majority of the world's people had neither.' This is written using passive voice because the *object*, being the 'world's people' is before the verb 'had' and the subject 'clean water and a sewerage system' mentioned in the previous sentence is not mentioned in this one, making the reader focus on the *object*.

Top-level structure enables readers to identify the links between ideas within a text. The top-level structure of this text is in the form of descriptions and lists. The text has a description in the first sentence 'Two basic environmental requirements for humans are a supply of clean water and a sewerage system....' and the following sentences have countries and dates that list different points through history about this topic. Some examples are 'In 1900....', 'Dundee in 1910...', 'In Paris...', 'As late as 1960...' and 'Not until 1912...' This use of top-level structure links the subsequent sentences to the first sentence which introduces the topic.

Text cohesion is 'the study of the way in which text 'hangs together'.' (M Emmitt et al. 2010, p.120). In the text there are many examples of cohesive ties. One example is the use of metonymy. The whole, being the 'world' mentioned early in the text followed by 'Britain', 'Manchester', 'Europe', 'Moscow', and 'Japan' which are all parts of the world. Another example is the collocation in the text which is the use of different words that refer to the same 'semantic field' (M Emmitt et al. 2010, p.122). Such as 'lavatory', 'water closets', 'privies', and 'public conveniences'. Reiteration is another cohesive tie that the writer uses in this text. For example the word 'system' appears in the text seven times this is a tie which uses repetition of the same word.

Subject-noun phrases are used to give the reader more information. An example from

the text which displays this concept is in the sentence 'If in the early twentieth century the *wealthiest states* in the world still had very primitive systems...' the italicised words are extending on the noun world.

Specialist vocabulary is the use of words that are harder for readers to understand and that relate to the topic. In this text I found a few examples of these types of words that may cause confusion for younger and inexperienced readers. Some that I found were 'rudimentary', 'excrement', and 'primitive'. These words all link to the topic in the text and are typical to written text vocabulary.

After analysing the linguistic features within the example, I have concluded that it is typical to written texts. The example displays various features that are typical to written texts and I was able to find more than one example of each of the different concepts, which form to create a written text.

Part three:

To be able to live a healthy life there are many needs that humans must have. Two of these very important needs are clean water and a sewerage system that doesn't make our water dirty. Many, many years ago a lot of people in all parts of the world didn't have either of these. This was a problem because many people would get sick from drinking the dirty water, and country towns and cities were very smelly. In 1900 Britain was known as one of the richest countries in the world, and even they didn't have a very good water supply or sewerage system. A lot of countries and towns had a very low number of toilets.

In the town Manchester, more than half of the people that lived there did not have their own toilet. In 1910 a town called Dundee only had toilets in three of their hotels and two of their houses. These toilets weren't like the ones we have today. They didn't have a flush button like our toilets do. Instead people would use a bucket of water to get rid of the waste. Not everyone in the town was allowed to use these toilets. The rest of the people in the town had to use a different type of toilet. These toilets were separated from the rest of the home and usually as far from the house as possible. They did not use buckets of water for these toilets. They would go to the toilet and once they had finished, they would leave whatever they had done for the next person to wash it down with their urine. Up until the 1960s in Paris a lot of the waste from the city still went into a famous river called the Seine.

It wasn't until many years later that a lot of the countries in Europe had their own toilets and clean water. This happened because a lot of the houses in the cities were destroyed,

but even then some waste was still taken out to the ocean where people used to swim. Not all countries throughout the world were doing as well as some in Europe. Some countries like Japan and Moscow did not have enough sewers. In the 1960s more than half of the people in Moscow were not connected to a sewerage system and a lot of their waste was taken out to the Moscow River. Japan did not have their own sewerage system until 1912 and even up until 1972 half of the country still did not have sewerage pipes connected to each house.

References

Emmitt, M., M. Zbaracki, L. Komesaroff and J. Pollock. 2010. *Language and Learning: An Introduction for Teaching*. 5th ed. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.