ABSTRACT
The literature shows curriculum design for critical literacy development is commonly organised on a theme-based principle. This article, in contrast, emerges from experience in an academic preparation program in which the organizing principle for critical reading module design is not theme but text-type, specifically news reports of the ‘hard news’ genre in Australian English-language newspapers. Prefaced with a sketch of the context in which this alternate approach evolved and an outline of the view of ‘criticality’ that underlies it, this article offers an account of the theoretical evolution of the approach through reviewing insights from the literature on critical literacy and media discourse analysis. Insights from both literatures are distilled in a set of ‘Critical Reading Guidelines’ specifically tailored to ‘hard news’ texts. The rationale in the context of an academic preparation program is also addressed: developing critical media literacy is seen as an effective means of advancing standards of academic literacy among non English-speaking background students on the threshold of Australian academia.

Introduction
Published accounts of ways of facilitating critical literacy development have frequently followed a theme-based principle of program design, where text selection is made on the basis of relevance to a theme of critical concern. Talbot (1992), for example, has addressed critical literacy through the theme of the construction of female teenage gender in the United Kingdom; Wallace (1994) through issues in Third World identity, particularly in Africa; Clark (1995) through the 1991 Gulf War; and Thompson (2000) through relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Benesch’s recent monograph Critical English for Academic Purposes (2001), similarly, gives an account of a program of study based on the theme of anorexia. An alternative approach to critical literacy development adopted in NCELTR’s Direct Entry English Program (DEEP) is to regard not theme but text-type as the organising principle of Critical Reading module design, the text-type being ‘hard news’ reports (see Iedema, Feez and White 1994; White 1997) in English-language newspapers published in Australia and the Australian region. This alternative approach has necessarily entailed not only a different
approach to text selection – any ‘hard news’ text autonomously selected by students – but also a different approach to teaching-learning procedures.

What follows is essentially an account of the theoretical evolution of a particular instance of a text-based (cf Feez 1998) approach to critical literacy development, one that has been in a recursive process of trial and amendment in the delivery of academic preparation programs at NCELTR since 1996. The article begins with some background on the teaching–learning context in which the approach evolved and the view of ‘criticality’ that underlies it. The article then draws on work in the fields of critical literacy and media discourse analysis, advocates a linking of insights from each, and from the discussion distills a set of ‘critical reading guidelines’ tailored specifically to hard news reports in English-language newspapers. Though these critical reading guidelines are only one of a number of teaching–learning aids in the delivery of the Critical Reading component of DEEP, they represent perhaps the central aid in that they offer a procedural point of reference, a framework for carrying out critical text analysis with ‘informational’ texts from the English language news media. The development of critical media literacy, which collaterally involves acculturation to the Australian social context and authentic English-language texts, and a sharpened critical awareness more generally, is here seen as an effective means of advancing standards of academic literacy among non English-speaking background students on the threshold of Australian academia.

The context

The two-week Critical Reading component referred to here currently forms part of a ten-week ‘Direct Entry’ academic language preparation program offered by the English Language Services section of NCELTR. Enrolments for DEEP are almost exclusively overseas students from a language background other than English who intend to enter academic programs at Macquarie University. The program has both educational and assessment purposes: it prepares students in the use of academic conventions and language, and program completion with an overall pass grade is formally recognised by the university as satisfying university language entry requirements. An optional – but less in demand – means of satisfying language requirements for university entry is completion of an IELTS test, where an overall score of 6 (undergraduate) or 6.5 (postgraduate) is required. DEEP is a ‘Direct Entry’ program in the sense that it offers a university in-house qualifying pathway, and so obviates the need for an external language test such as IELTS.¹

The ‘Critical Reading’ component covers two weeks or around 40 hours of class time early in the 10-week program. It follows the first component, ‘Presenting Ideas’, a one-week introductory phase in which learners deliver and
refine short presentations and familiarise themselves with their future academic programs. It feeds into the third and final component, ‘Academic Project’, the major seven-week component of the program in which learners engage with discipline-specific project work. The Critical Reading component serves to establish an approach to interacting with written text that carries through the remainder of the program.

Like the program as a whole, the Critical Reading component is text-based and task-based in procedural terms. An overview of the way it is implemented may be seen in the shorthand planning and discussion document for DEEP teaching staff shown in the table ‘DEEP Weeks 2–3: Critical Reading component’ (see Appendix 1). This two-week table essentially charts a cyclic pattern of teacher-led sessions, working with teacher-selected authentic materials, interwoven with a pattern of student-led text analysis sessions (‘Reportbacks’ in the table) when student-selected and student-photocopied news reports constitute class materials.

Early in the first week of the component, critical reading guidelines for hard news reports are introduced as an investigative tool. Student text selections for the first week (‘News Texts 1’ in the table) typically focus on hard news texts found on or near the front page, the text-type to which the critical reading guidelines specifically apply. Text selections in the second week (‘News Texts 2’ in the table), after the Media Resources Workshop on news text search techniques using CD Rom databases and news archives on Microfilm/Microfiche, often include other media genres such as editorial commentaries and opinion pieces. Though these are media genres distinct from hard news reports, and are explicitly identified as such, the principles and procedures of critical text analysis applied in the first instance to hard news texts are at this stage sufficiently familiar to be generalisable to texts with other generic conventions.

**A view of criticality and literacy**

As Pennycook (2001: 10) has recently recorded, critical approaches in applied linguistics have in their short history been concerned with certain ‘domains’, characteristically ‘gender, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, culture, identity, politics, ideology and discourse’ – as the themes listed in the Introduction as the basis of program design illustrate. But even if critical approaches share certain preoccupations, a variety of vantage points is also a characteristic. Differing perspectives have been taken, reflected in such labels as critical discourse analysis, critical language awareness, critical linguistics, critical literacy, critical sociolinguistics, critical pedagogy, and feminist pedagogy (cf Hood 1998; Brown 1999; Pennycook 1999 and 2001; Benesch 2001), each having its own – though not discrete – set of theoretical orientations and practical concerns.
It will be noted that not all these perspectives necessarily include language within their field of vision; all nonetheless do, and in doing so they all share an allegiance to a principle of being critical.

The term ‘criticality’ used here, a nominalisation of the core term ‘critical’, is intended to refer through the theoretical haze to what appears to be a defining orientation: a sensitivity to the distribution and deployment of power through society, and to injustice and inequity. The precise direction of this sensitivity may vary according to the way it is framed by social theory – though generally in the spectrum from progressive liberalism through socialism to poststructuralism, and hence positioned somewhere on the left. Accordingly, a central concern of criticality in applied linguistics, which is necessarily based on a social view of language in which language is understood as a social phenomenon, is with connections between language and social conditions in their various dimensions, particularly the socio-cultural, economic, political and ideological. Again, the specifications of these connections may differ according to the way they are theoretically informed.

The view of criticality in literacy that underlies this present article, or more particularly of criticality in reading which is this article’s main concern, flows from what I have attempted to distil at a more general level in the previous paragraph. Critical reading resists the simple reading off of meanings from written text as it occurs on the printed page or electronic screen; it crucially includes ‘reading’ society through written text. It seems relevant here to recall Halliday’s view of language as ‘a social semiotic’ (1985: 3); or, alternatively, ‘a resource for making meaning’ (1994: xxvi) – where the hidden actors, the meaning makers, are social beings. Critical reading involves ‘reading off’ these social beings, being premised on an understanding of text as socially situated. The approach to critical reading discussed here is based on text-type, as opposed to theme, as the organising principle of module design. Theme-based approaches necessarily carry within them the danger that themes may be imposed from among a range of options within a dangerously universalised sense of political correctness, and hence that teachers and others involved in program delivery might be construed as occupying the moral high ground – crowded in, perhaps, by phantoms of dead missionaries. A text-type based approach, particularly one in which course participants are responsible for the selection of materials, provides for greater student autonomy. In this approach, class discussions may be enacted across a range of topics as determined by student choice but informed by a common (teacher-modelled) understanding of both a text-type and a means of teasing layers of meaning from it. And while in the early stages of module delivery classroom activities may be punctuated by the bleeps of electronic dictionaries as students grapple with meanings of a certain sort, this
soon gives way as students realise that the point is to engage with the text as a whole rather than all the individual words in the text, and that knowing the meanings of all the words does not necessarily help. Critical reading tasks, applied in this particular case to news texts of the hard news genre, involve students in exploring why a news item is presented as newsworthy in the first place (and why others are not), what the angle of the writer is on the topic, how the ‘facts’ are structured and how this is significant, and what ideological influences may be at work. Such explorations are a pathway towards a critical shift in approach to reading.

It will become clear through the references in this article that this approach to critical literacy development is closely shaped by, on the one hand, the work of the UK-based critical language awareness school and the related writings of Fairclough and, on the other hand, the work of Australian-based genre theorists. Part of the point of the article is, in fact, to advocate a superimposing of these perspectives. Yet to emphasise these two seems inappropriately to devalue the formative influence of others, of which there are many as will be evident through the paper.

One in particular that has remained curiously unexamined in the literature is the discussion of practices of reading by Althusser in his contributions to *Reading Capital* (Althusser and Balibar 1979). In this analysis of Marx’s major work, *Capital*, Althusser differentiates between modes of reading, from an ‘immediate’ reading that ‘takes the obvious in the text for hard cash’ to a ‘symptomatic’ reading that focuses on elucidating the underlying ‘problematic’ that marks out the text’s horizons of thought (Althusser, in Althusser and Balibar 1979: 18–28). In his discussion of the shaping of these horizons, Althusser makes much of a metaphor of vision: the interrelationship of the invisible and the visible, the interplay of ‘oversights’ (bevues) and ‘sightings’ (vues), the unseen that is the corollary of the seen. Althusser thus addresses issues in epistemology through a discussion of practices of reading. The ideas make connections with potential epistemic outcomes of critical approaches to reading, outcomes that are relevant to EAP students largely destined for postgraduate programs of study: a reformulation of ideas on the nature of knowledge, and on how knowledge is constructed. In this sense, the rationale for critical literacy development in academic preparation programs can be understood in terms of access, a concept that has long underpinned Australian literacy studies. More specifically, what is facilitated is access to some of the more elusive processes and practices of (Australian) higher education.

**Models for critical literacy**

In the literature on critical literacy that relates specifically to the teaching and learning of critical reading, the publications of Catherine Wallace and Romy
Clark have had, as will be shown below, some significant influence. Drawing on Hallidayan functional grammar, both writers have sought to provide procedural guidelines for the teaching of critical reading and to this end have devised checklists of questions to guide the reader towards a critical awareness of the uses to which written language may be applied.

Essentially two models have emerged, each of which is made up of three components. One model may be characterised as the ‘Pre/While/Post’ model (Wallace 1992: 72ff and 1994: 135ff; Clark 1995: 76ff; Allwright, Clark and Marshall-Lee 1996: 83ff), evidently being an elaboration of three consciousness-raising questions for reading proposed earlier by Kress (1989, cited in Wallace 1992: 71):

1. Why is this topic being written about? [ie ‘Pre’]
2. How is it being written about? [ie ‘While’]
3. What other ways of writing about the topic are there? [ie ‘Post’]

The other model may be characterised as the ‘Field/Tenor/Mode’ model (Wallace 1992: 77ff), which is based on the three register variables of Hallidayan functional grammar. In this model, three sets of questions are formulated:

1. Experiential meanings [Field]
   eg Who/What is talked about?
2. Interpersonal meanings [Tenor]
   eg What kind of modal verbs are selected?
3. Textual meanings [Mode]
   eg What information is selected for first position?

The two models, though distinct, are better understood not as discrete but as interrelated. Traces of Wallace’s (1992) ‘Field/Tenor/Mode’ model (following Halliday), for example, are discernible in Clark’s ‘Pre/While/Post’ model (1995). Similarly, the influence of Wallace’s (1992) early elaboration of the ‘Pre/While/Post’ model (following Kress) is evident in the five-question framework offered by Hood, Solomon and Burns (1996: 92). The influence of these two models is hence pervasive – and is evident, implicitly and explicitly, in the frameworks offered in NCELTR’s recent handbook ‘Developing Critical Literacy’ (Brown 1999: 11, 35). In drawing up critical reading guidelines, the general aim seems to have been to establish an optimum generic checklist that can be applied to any text. Critical reading guidelines have accordingly been published under such headings as ‘A Critical Reading Procedure’ (Wallace 1994: 135), ‘Critical reading: questions to ask of yourself and the text’ (Clark 1995: 76) and ‘Critically reading all texts’ (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996: 91). This, it seems,
is consistent with a theme-based approach to program design, and hence to
text selection.

Yet, while there has been little apparent concern to adapt guidelines to text-
type, it is striking how often in the literature the pedagogical application of these
models has been exemplified by means of newspaper texts and more specifically
news reports – whose schematic structure routinely defies such basic conven-
tions as, for example, chronological progression (see Bell 1991: 172). This is
especially true of news reports of the ‘hard news’ genre, being the type of report
that covers ‘significant’ recent events and typically occurs on newspaper front
pages. These, perhaps ironically, have proved especially popular as exemplary
material (eg Wallace 1994; Clark 1995; and various contributions in Burns
and Hood 1998). Notwithstanding the contributions they have made, the gen-
eric critical reading guidelines proposed necessarily do not address the peculi-
arities of the hard news genre.

Perhaps most striking among the features of the hard news genre is a text
structure that has evolved historically in such a way that it has been likened to
an ‘inverted pyramid’, where informational intensity is concentrated at the
outset and progressively diminishes as the text progresses (see Appendix 2 –
from Iedema, Feez and White 1994: 136–7). Another striking peculiarity is
the telegraphic, elliptical, frequently metaphoric and culturally loaded nature
of newspaper headlines (Bell 1991: 188–90; Iedema, Feez and White 1994:
112). Characteristics such as these present challenges to basic text compre-
hension in cross-cultural classrooms, perhaps especially so among overseas
students of academic English whose previous learning experiences have emphasised
types of English-language writing with very different generic conventions. In
this context, it seemed that explicitly drawing attention to the peculiarities of
hard news reports, using perspectives to have emerged from work on media
discourse structure, would be useful.

**Perspectives on media discourse**

Two perspectives are particularly useful in suggesting practical means of
approaching the critical analysis of hard news reports for the purposes of teach-
ing and learning. One is the work of Allan Bell (1991; 1998) which draws
largely on examples from New Zealand and the United Kingdom; the other
is the work in the area of ‘media literacy’ by Sydney school linguists and genre
theorists (Iedema, Feez and White 1994; White 1997) which mainly draws on
the Australian context. Both have placed an emphasis on the role of the head-
line and the lead (generally the opening sentence or paragraph) as the lynch pin
of hard news reports. Each, however, adopts a somewhat different perspective.

For Bell, whose perspective is that of a news text producer as well as analyst,
the focal point is the lead. This element, written by the reporter rather than the
subeditor, constitutes ‘a directional summary’ (original emphasis) of the report as a whole, ‘a lens through which the point of the story is focused and its news value magnified’ (Bell 1991: 183). The headline, seen from Bell’s 1991 perspective as written at a later stage by a subeditor operating within the constraints of page layout, is a pared down version of this summary, and thus has a dependent status. Bell nonetheless regards the headline and lead as essentially interlinked, such that they together constitute the report’s ‘abstract’. In Bell’s view (1991: 164ff), news reports comprise three essential constituents: abstract (made up of headline and lead), attribution (identifying source and authority) and story proper (made up of a disordered sequence of ‘episodes’ and ‘events’ that explicate aspects of the abstract). The main emphasis of Bell’s work tends to fall on the abstract, in which ‘ideologies and priorities held in society’ (1991: 156) are embedded, and the story, whose schematic structure is shown to follow demonstrable patterns even though settings of time and place are ‘fragmented’ (1991: 199).

In a more recent publication that takes into account the growth of interest in critical approaches among discourse analysts, Bell has offered a detailed point-form guide to the critical analysis of news reports. The guide, headed ‘How to analyse and interpret the discourse structure of a news story’ (Bell 1998: 76–80), is organised around a critical framework of four questions (what, who, where and when) that corresponds closely to Bell’s earlier three-constituent descriptive framework. For each question within the later framework there are two sets of steps: the first are ‘basic analytical moves’ and the later, in italics, are ‘more interpretive procedures’.

These two models, the earlier and the later, may be outlined as follows:

1 Abstract
2 Attribution
3 Story proper (Bell 1991)

1 What
   eg What events take place in the lead or intro?
   eg What events in the lead are included/excluded in the headline?

2 Who
   eg Precisely what is attributed and to whom?
   eg What claims do the attributed sources have to authority?

3 Where
   eg What place expressions are used? Where do they occur in the story?
   eg Is it clear what is happening in which location?
4 When
   eg What is the time structure of the story?
   eg Why has the story been written in this order? (Bell 1998)

The juxtaposition of these two models, represented above in abbreviated
form but faithful to original wordings, demonstrates their interrelationship:
the ‘what’ question of the later model relates to the ‘abstract’ of the earlier model,
the ‘who’ to the ‘attribution’, and the ‘where’ and ‘when’ to the ‘story proper’.

Bell’s later contribution is, to my knowledge, the only published example
of a critical reading checklist dedicated specifically to the news report text-
type. As a critical reading checklist for use with news texts in the DEEP context,
however, it seemed problematical. Its close relationship with Bell’s earlier model,
which features such concepts as ‘event structure’ and ‘episode’, makes it con-
ceptually inaccessible. It is also practically cumbersome in the context of the
language classroom, made up as it is of over four pages of cognitively demand-
ning point-form text. Bell’s work is, after all, designed for a different purpose
and different audience: it is offered as a basis for ‘a sound discourse analysis’,
Bell writes, which ‘students of the media … have sometimes skimmed over at

A crisper, more graphic, more accessible and ultimately more appropriate
perspective for students of academic English at NCELTR is offered in the
Media Literacy report produced by Iedema, Feez and White (1994), a perspec-
tive elaborated in a subsequent publication by White (1997). Drawing on the
insights of Hallidayan grammar and genre analysis, this view models the func-
tional structure of hard news stories in two ways. First, it offers a staged model,
much like that offered earlier by Bell, in which the sequence of news story
constituents is identified as headline, lead, and lead development (as represented
in Appendix 2). Importantly, it then proposes an ‘orbital perspective’ in which
the headline and lead are conceptualised as the nucleus of the news story, and
the lead development as composed of satellites orbiting the nucleus (see
Appendix 3 – from White 1997: 121). The nucleus-satellite perspective of
this orbital model has great impact in the classroom context since it can be
graphically represented in the form of images that indicate dynamic relation-
ships between text constituents, allowing the emphasis to fall on the flow and
cohesiveness of news reports and thus avoiding Bell’s ‘fragmentedness’. By
its nature, the orbital model also holds within it the potential for creative
elaboration: satellites orbiting further from the nucleus, for example, or in
other terms later in the lead development, can be represented as less
significant as they are more remote from the news story’s gravitational
centre. Flexibility and subtlety are not necessarily sacrificed for simplicity
and clarity, qualities that underlie the orbital model’s impact.
In the evolution of the Critical Reading component of DEEP, insights from the literature on both media literacy and critical literacy were important in informing classroom procedures. Models encapsulating the generic structure of hard news reports were presented to familiarise students with the particular features of the texts under discussion, and critical reading checklists of the type referred to earlier in this article were provided to assist students along the path towards critical awareness of language use. While this approach was by no means ineffective, it seemed that an approach that was less compartmentalised (ie into media literacy and critical literacy) and more integrated (ie critical media literacy) would prove more effective. Integration could be achieved through working not to ‘generic’ critical reading guidelines but instead to ‘dedicated’ critical reading guidelines – dedicated in the sense that they key into the information structuring conventions of hard news reports.

**Critical reading guidelines: news reports**

The critical reading guidelines developed in the context of DEEP aimed to focus text analysis and group discussion more sharply on the defining goal of the Critical Reading component: a critical awareness of the socially situated character of meanings in written text, and consequently of the relative character of ‘truth’. If critical literacy is seen as centrally concerned with the interrelationship of written text and social context, the study of news reporting offers a very accessible entry point.

The DEEP critical reading guidelines, handed out in the early days of the Critical Reading component, comprise guidelines in two sets: ‘Critical Questions to Consider’ and ‘Guide to Critical Text Analysis’ (see Appendix 4). Each serves a different purpose, the distinction between the two being essentially that of ends and means. They are printed on opposite faces of a single double-sided A4 page, and are not numbered or in any way presented as sequenced so as to encourage guideline users to flip back and forth in the process of critically exploring written text.

The set entitled ‘Critical Questions to Consider’ interrogates the text through posing three basic questions: *What* is it about?, *How* is it written?, and *Why* is it written like that? The additional questions in italics suggest possible avenues for further enquiry. Information for the ‘What’ question is mainly retrievable from the nucleus; for the ‘How’ question mainly from the satellites/lead development/story proper; and for the ‘Why’ question from individual reflection and group interchange. These questions are what may be loosely described as the ‘main point’, for to reflect on answers to questions of this nature is necessarily to be engaged in a process of critical text analysis. Yet although they are questions that are answerable only after the particular features of the text at
hand have been explored, they are not necessarily the ‘second set’. An awareness of questions such as these also needs to inform, and thus precede, critical exploration of a text’s linguistic features.

The set entitled ‘Guide to Critical Text Analysis’ is more procedural in nature, suggesting a step-by-step approach that focuses in the first instance on the nucleus of the news report. Here a detailed analysis of the elements of the headline and lead, and of their interrelationship, relates most clearly to the first critical question, ‘What is “the news”?’. The next focus falls on the body of the news report, calling attention to both macro and micro features of the text; and generates evidence relevant to the second question, ‘How is it written?’ It is not expected, incidentally, that course participants/guideline users need to fully comprehend the guidelines in their entirety at the outset; familiarisation with items of metalanguage used can be an incremental process arrived at in the course of interacting with text. The guidelines become less prescriptive as they progress into the later stages, where they are intended to form a basis for creative adaptation and extension. No guidelines are offered that directly address the final critical question, ‘Why is it written like that?’. Responses to this question cannot be prescribed, perhaps especially in cross-cultural contexts, and scaffolding at this point ends.

Closing comments

This paper offers an account of an approach to critical literacy development that is organised around a text-based principle of program design, in which texts are limited to a particular text-type. In this way it is distinct from theme-based approaches, where text selection is limited to a theme which – as the literature shows – may be carried across a variety of texts (see in particular Thompson 2000). The example of the Critical Reading component in DEEP referred to here, which has consistently attracted positive student evaluation, may suggest that a text-based approach, or more precisely a text-type-based approach, warrants more attention.

The DEEP choice of text-type, however, has been questioned by colleagues at NCELTR on the grounds that newspaper articles are not ‘target’ texts for an academic preparation program. While this is generally a valid observation, there are reasons for focusing on this text-type. Pre-eminent among these is the relative transparency of news texts for the development of critical reading practices. Clark (1995: 72) has referred to the value of ‘non-academic texts as “training” material’ in critical reading for academic purposes: ‘it is often easier to see what is going on in such texts’, she writes, ‘particularly in the newspaper texts’. In contrast, as Hyland (1999: 100) has observed, there is a tendency in academic writing to ‘downplay the role of social allegiance, self-interest, power
and editorial bias to depict a disinterested, inductive, democratic and goal-directed activity. Academic texts, in other words, are difficult to deconstruct. News reports are less so, and comparatively transparent materials offer more potential for scaffolding.

More broadly, the Critical Reading component addresses teaching and learning goals other than solely the development of a critical approach to reading, central though this outcome may be. The component’s defining goal is ‘to develop critical awareness of texts as socially situated’; the other goals are ‘to engage in authentic written texts’; ‘to develop text-analysis techniques’; and ‘to develop awareness of the Australian social context’. The DEEP experience has shown that selecting news texts as a focus for two weeks early in a ten-week academic language preparation program is an effective means of addressing these broader goals. Reasons for this effectiveness may be summarised under the headings of authenticity and acculturation.

Through engaging with authentic news texts early in the program, students gain a necessary familiarity with materials that are ‘real’ rather than materials that have been specifically designed and often problematically ‘simplified’ for language teaching purposes (see Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996: 64). As many writers have emphasised (eg Breen 1985: 61ff; Little 1997: 225ff), however, the notion of authenticity is not restricted to the question of materials; Hall (1995: 11) in particular has argued that it is ‘not, primarily, the materials themselves which have to be authentic [but] rather, the response to the materials – what is done with them – which should be authentic’. In this context, it is a crucial element of program design that DEEP students can themselves select news topics to work with and present to other members of the group. Typically news reports are selected on the basis of their currency in the national (occasionally regional and international) media or relevance to future studies, both of which have an immediacy and high validity as topics of study.

At the same time, the study of authentic news texts predominantly of Australian origin activates various processes of acculturation (seen as processes of gaining greater ‘familiarity’ – cf the discussion in Candlin and Plum 1999: 213). Familiarity is developed with aspects of the Australian social context, together with a range of attitudes and concerns within it. Furthermore, since students are responsible for text selection and texts are most often selected on the basis of relevance to future studies, familiarity is developed with aspects of future fields of study and instances of field-specific technical terminology. Significantly, too, the use of news texts develops familiarity with a written register that is impersonal, ‘factual’, lexically dense and often highly nominalised, and hence shares some of the ‘technicality and abstraction’ that is characteristic of academic writing (Martin, in Halliday and Martin, 1993: 203ff). An awareness
of the significance of sources, moreover, is raised. These later points in particular stand DEEP students in good stead in the immediately following and major component of the curriculum, the Academic Project – in which the study of research articles and book reviews sourced from academic journals in the university library is central.

NOTES
1 International English Language Testing System
2 The term criticality is not an innovation: it has been used by Rice (in Burns and Hood 1998) and Brown (1999), possibly for similar reasons.
3 Other publications by Kress (eg Kress and Hodge 1979; Kress and van Leeuwen 1990; Kress 1991), together with the 1989 publication cited here, indicate the range of Kress’s work – and influence – in the field of critical literacy.
4 The work of Fairclough based in social theory of the New Left and poststructuralism (especially 1992a) has also been influential though in a less immediate sense. See also Fairclough (1992b; 1995a; 1995b; 1998).

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NICHOLAS COPE

Thompson, C 2000. 'Critical literacy and text selection in English for academic purposes courses'. *Prospect*, 15, 2: 39–47
## Appendix 1

### DEEP WEEKS 2–3: CRITICAL READING COMPONENT

#### Flow of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wk 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>News texts 1</strong></td>
<td>Reportbacks 1</td>
<td>Reportbacks 1</td>
<td><strong>News texts 2</strong></td>
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<td>Broadsheet vs tabloid disc’n</td>
<td>Reportbacks 1</td>
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<td>Reportbacks 1</td>
<td>Reportbacks 2</td>
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<td>Loaded terms</td>
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<td>Model ‘hard news’ text analysis + CR guidelines h/o</td>
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<td>Headline &amp; lead analysis: angle</td>
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<td>Small group Consultations</td>
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<td>CR tasks h/o</td>
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<td>Hand in writing task 1</td>
<td>Media resources workshop</td>
<td>DEEP class meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wk 3</strong></td>
<td>Model ‘media commentary’ text analysis</td>
<td>Reportbacks 2</td>
<td>Reportbacks 2</td>
<td>Hand in writing task 2</td>
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<td>Cohesion input &amp; text analysis</td>
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<td>Hand in draft writing task 2</td>
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<td>DEEP meeting</td>
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DEEP planning document
NCELTR, 2001
Appendix 2
THE INVERTED PYRAMID STRUCTURE OF THE NEWS STORY

THE NARRATIVE IMPULSE IN MASS-MEDIA REPORTING

Orbital structure of Telegraph Mirror ‘Tahiti Riot’ report

Appendix 4

CRITICAL READING GUIDELINES:
‘Hard News’ in the mass media

CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1 WHAT is ‘the news’?
   – What is the source event?
   – What is the source?
   – What is the angle?

2 HOW is the story/issue represented?
   – What is being emphasised? What voice is favoured?
   – What is not being represented? What voice is muted?
   – What message is being conveyed?

3 WHY is the story/issue represented in this way?
   – What interests does this representation serve?
   – From whom is the message issuing and to whom is it addressed?
   – What other ways could the story/issue be represented?
GUIDE TO CRITICAL TEXT ANALYSIS

1 Nucleus

- analyse elements in headline; lead; photo and caption (if present)
- assess transitivity
- assess lexical choices

2 (a) Macrostructure (text level)

- number the paragraphs
- identify cohesive ties
- group paragraphs/identify satellites
- identify foregrounded information/schematic structure

(b) Microstructure (sentence level)

Explore, for example:
- nouns/pronouns [veteran/tyrant, we/they]
- noun modifiers [heroic/so-called]
- nominalisation [destruction]
- presupposition [the mistake]
- metaphor [the lion’s den]
- attribution/reporting verbs [said vs claimed]
- passive voice [was destroyed]
- modal verbs [should, will have to]
- verb modifiers [apparently, certainly]
- independent vs dependent clauses
- etc