[Faculty Publications](#)                    School of Leadership and Human Resource Development

2020

# The Critical Literacies Advancement Model (CLAM): A Framework for Promoting Positive Social Change

Petra A. Robinson
*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College*, petrar@lsu.edu

## Recommended Citation

**The Critical Literacies Advancement Model (CLAM):
A Framework for Promoting Positive Social Change**

Petra A. Robinson, PhD

**Abstract**

This paper outlines the development and structure  of the **Critical Literacies Advancement Model (CLAM)** and discusses its usefulness as a framework for promoting positive social change through the advancement of critical literacy skills which have been classified into five major categories.

## The Critical Literacies Advancement Model: An Overview

Given its concern  with marginalization, oppression, and systematic inequities in society, Critical Theory seeks emancipation and liberation from domination based on an often-legitimized system of power, privilege, and inequity. At the base of the model, that is, the foundational structure, Critical Theory supports and essentially, in this instance, gives rise to critical literacy. Critical literacy in this sense is seen as a practical application of Critical Theory. This is reflected through arrows leading from the Critical Theory base to the critical literacy section of the model.

There are multiple models related to critical literacy, particularly related to teaching and learning and so this model does not focus on specific practical strategies of teaching or developing critical literacy skills. However, it illustrates how the development of critical literacy skills is particularly useful for advancing other critical literacies especially in terms of its practical applicability. This is extremely important and significant for addressing societal problems that may often remain embedded in the hidden curriculum through our formal educational settings or in the hidden societal curriculum which we learn through informal settings. These messages and lessons not only shape the way we think or influence our values, but they also affect the way in which we behave and interact with others as well as the way in which we might perpetuate similar systematic inequities in society.

The CLAM is a useful framework for organizing a critique of societal problems which affect people in a variety of ways, as described in the model in terms of a variety of literacies that are categorized as follows:

*Foundational Literacies*

Examples include: foundational literacy, scientific literacy, and futures literacy.

*Sociocultural Literacies*

Examples include: global literacy, mother tongue literacy, multilingual literacy, and cultural literacy.

*Technological and Informational Literacies*

Examples include: Information literacy, visual literacy, aural literacy, digital literacy, computational literacy, coding literacy, game literacy, cyber security literacy, data literacy, news literacy, media literacy.

*Psychosocial and Environmental Literacies*

Examples include: Health literacy, emotional literacy, food literacy, financial literacy, ethical literacy, civic literacy, and environmental literacy.
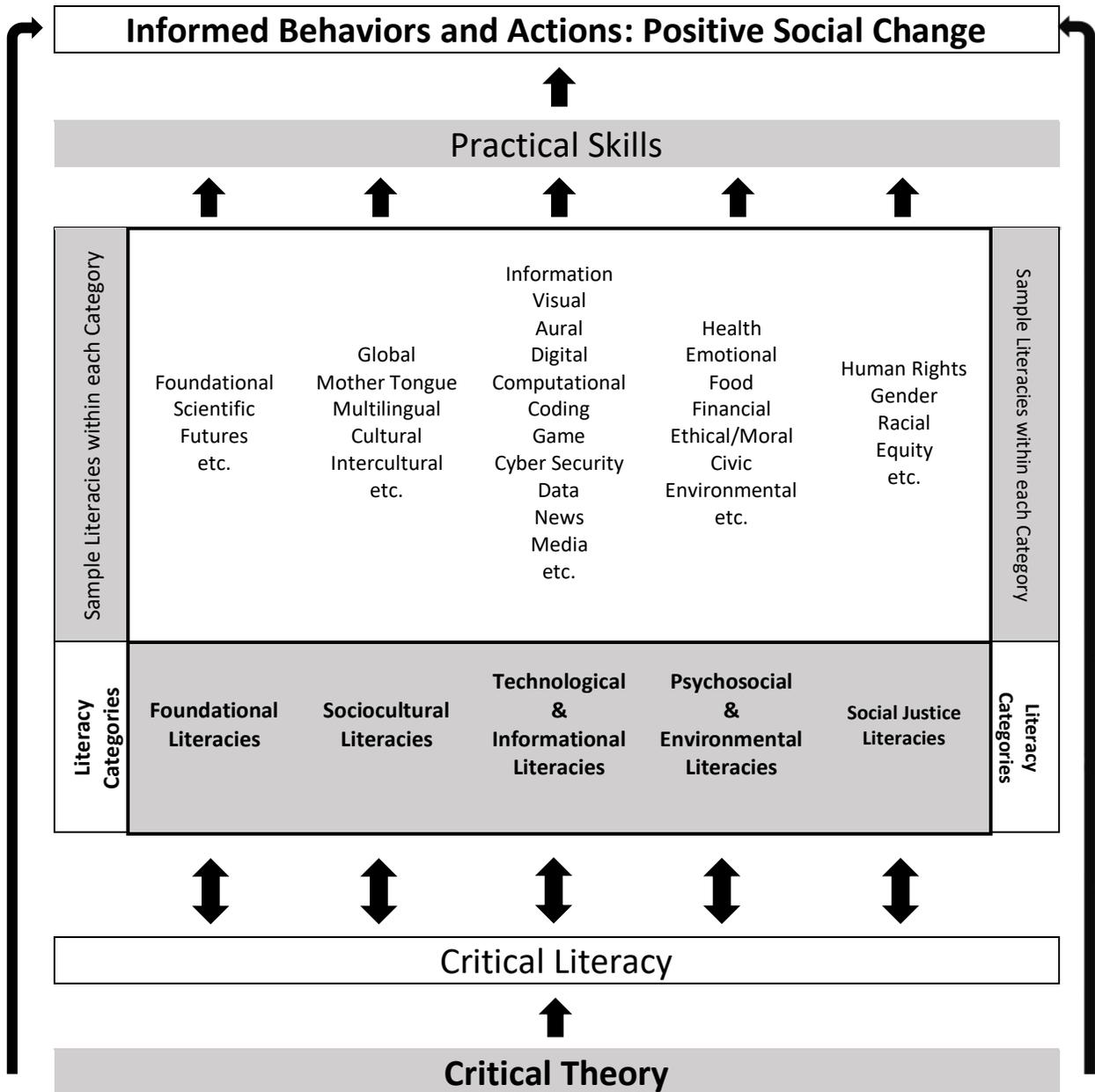
*Social Justice Literacies*

Examples include: Human rights literacy, gender literacy, racial literacy, and equity literacy.

These categories were broadly defined in order to be encompassing for a wide range of literacies, some of which are listed as examples in the model. It is understood that there are other literacies not listed in the model, but they should be able to be grouped according to the five (5) overarching categories of literacies documented in the model. These are shown with bi-directional arrows to indicate the dynamic nature of the model. The argument therein is that as one strengthens or develops critical literacy skills,

one can further enhance the development of other critical non-traditional literacies which ultimately leads to informed actions and behaviors that can promote social change.

**Critical Literacies Advancement Model**

| Informed Behaviors and Actions: Positive Social Change |
|---|

↑

| Practical Skills |
|---|

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

| Sample Literacies within each Category | Foundational Scientific Futures etc. | Global Mother Tongue Multilingual Cultural Intercultural etc. | Information Visual Aural Digital Computational Coding Game Cyber Security Data News Media etc. | Health Emotional Food Financial Ethical/Moral Civic Environmental etc. | Human Rights Gender Racial Equity etc. | Sample Literacies within each Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Literacy Categories | Foundational Literacies | Sociocultural Literacies | Technological & Informational Literacies | Psychosocial & Environmental Literacies | Social Justice Literacies | Literacy Categories |

↕ ↕ ↕ ↕ ↕

| Critical Literacy |
|---|

↑

| Critical Theory |
|---|