

This is a pre-print version of the Timothy R. Amidon's webtext "Brightness Behind the Eyes: Rendering Firefighters' Literacies Visible" published in *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, Pedagogy*, 25(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/25.1/inventio/amidon>

Transcript of "Chief Burke: Structure Fire Audio Description"

This visualization surrounds a set of tools and practices described using while managing an incident at a structure fire. There are three main branches of practice in this data visualization. That means, there are three key tasks he uses to manage an incident. He uses an set of tools and practices to gather information and observe; he uses a set of tools and practice to plan; and he uses a set of tools and practices to communicate. In this recording, I orally describe the data that is visualized.

From the information gathering and observation segment, we have a 360, which is a walk around genre where a firefighter walks visually and kinesthetically around a scene to listen for and visually gather information about what is there. Radio communications is another way that the chief noted that he gathers information. He was listening aurally and thinking about that information to make observations. He specifically noted that he'd be evaluating the reports of crews, and so he's listening to radio communications and listening to the tone they are speaking in, which are making use of oral, aural, and cognitive work that he's engaging in. He also noted that while he's observing he's making use of space and visual modalities in order to observe collapse zones. A building might collapse, while folks are working in it and he wants to be aware of where those collapse zones could potentially be.

Chief Burke also noted that he observed a building's structural integrity, which is another visual and spatiotemporal practice that he's engaging in. He's also reading smoke—visual and spatiotemporal as well. He's observing the architecture of the building, again spatiotemporal and visual. And, making note of notable building construction types. He's also using cues to thinking about what the likely floor plans are for that type of building and architecture—using visual and spatial cues to get a sense of where various rooms might be located. Within there, there is a sub-segment where he is observing a crew working. We have monitoring crews off of the observe branch. He's looking visually and listening aurally to see what the search crew is doing. He's hoping that the search crew—this a cognitive and communicative branch from that branch—is that crew sharing information that they are gathering from the thermal imaging camera, the SCBA gauges, and can he tell if the crew is using effective search patterns and techniques as they move through space. Are they sweeping their hands to determine if a victim is present. These are things he wants to hear, and listen and see for, if has a view of their work).

I'm going back up a hierarchical level to the planning and strategizing segment. Chief Burke noted that he uses NIMS/ICS to plan and manage incidents. He also notes that he draws from

experience. These are meta-cognitive resources that he uses to engage in meditational activity while working. He is also planning, and one tool that he uses is the accountability board, including the accountability tags that represent individual personnel. These are visual and alphanumeric tools that he uses to mediate work. He's keeping time while he does this, so a spatiotemporal and visual modality. He's also taking notes as a list to indicate key events to jog his memory as he works. He also consults his iPad, where he has had crews create gather information about specific locations and properties in his response jurisdiction. So he'll pull up the notes and information that he has on a specific address to fold into his decision making. He's also using radio communication (aural-oral-communicative) to help coordinate work.

05:27 Our final segment is the interpersonal and transnational segment, which is part of the larger communications node. He noted that he would be speaking on the radio (oral-aural). One key genre that he uses is the size up, which is based on the 360 walk-around genre. The information he gathers is used to offer incoming firefighters a size up of the incident that they are responding to. At that point, he may also give an assignment to an incoming unit or make notifications to dispatch about information that needs to be shared. He may tell dispatch to contact a utility company to come cut power or call for a neighboring district to send a resource that his department does not have. He also noted that he will listen for and call for PAR checks which are oral and aural, and it enables him to maintain radio contact with crews working in areas he cannot see. And, that helps him get a bit of feedback about what they are doing. He also noted that if situations warrant he'll call for an evacuation, which will send out a set of tones that unique and that inform personnel that they need to evacuate the building. That is an oral order, but it gives rise to an aural and oral alert, and apparatus operators will sound their aural air-horns in unison to signal evacuation. It will be something that personnel can hear and feel. The air horns—you can feel them in your bones and it's not a super good feeling—it means it's time to get out of the building because the building is about to collapse or fire behavior may have intensified. He also noted using face to face communications, and may be using gesture and touch or pushing and pulling personnel if they are in a dangerous location to move them out. He also noted using jokes. That is Chief Burke's genre ecology while working at a structure fire. I hope that his audio transcript has been helpful. Thanks!