

Addendum: A Note on Climate Change Communication Techniques

Climate Change Education: A Parent's Call to Action (series)

The purpose of this content series on 'Climate Change Education: A Parent's Call to Action' is to mobilize progressive Canadian parents in advancing the Climate Change Education curriculum nationally. The series takes the form of several content pieces using multi-modality formats by considering accessibility issues, including a two-part text-based blog series, as well as a corresponding podcast on the same topic as the blogs, including transcription of the podcast. The following climate change communication techniques are utilized in this series:

1. **Accessibility:** The series considers accessibility issues through not only creating content in multi-modality formats, as expressed, but also in terms of reducing the cognitive load of the content, through increasing readability in easily digestible language and content formats (Rallo *et al.*, 2019). Such as the blog is divided into a two-part series instead of a long essay, as well as both the blogs and podcast avoid using jargon and complex terminology or concepts. Lastly, part two of the series uses sub-headers to divide the content and again make it more easily digestible.
2. **Analogy & Framing:** The series uses an analogy approach by framing the issue in comparison to the historically fraught-over education of 'Sex Ed.' Such as by making several comparisons between the target concept of Climate Change Education and analog concept of Sex Education, including where the analogy diverges towards the end of the blog series part 2 (Armstrong, Schuldt & Krasny, 2018a). Furthermore, the content is also framed as a personal 'call to action' by one parent to another through sharing my own personal story as a parent (Armstrong, Schuldt & Krasny, 2018b).
3. **Audience Segmentation:** The audience is segmented in terms of the content being tailored specifically for progressive Canadian parents. Taking the concept of audience segmentation from the Yale's Program on Climate Change Communication with the 'Six Americas,' it is understood that combined the 'Alarmed,' 'Concerned' and 'Cautious' audience segments represent 74% of the American public whom may in turn support strong climate policy if effective communication is tailored to their specific audiences' needs (YPCCC. (2020). Hence, taking this study and applying it to Canada, I make the presumption here that similar audiences exist in Canada that would support strong climate policy as they would support strong Climate Change Education policy. Additionally, I make the further presumption that those that would support robust climate change curriculum in schools would support progressive 'Sex Ed' in schools. While there are several assumptions made here, it is with audience segmentation in mind that I tailor this content specifically for progressive parents that I believe would support calls for advancing Sex Ed and Climate Change Education simultaneously.

4. **Storytelling:** I use the power of storytelling techniques through the personal anecdote of sharing the struggle I have with having to talk to my son about climate change one day, as well as other anecdotes from speakers on the podcast about their personal struggles on related topics like climate anxiety. By placing the analogy, mentioned above, in the context of personal stories it helps to exemplify the argument I am making in this series and information I am sharing through relational and emotional connections. This follows the tradition in Indigenous epistemology with the use of storytelling in sharing information through the generations that is both data rich, but also rich in terms of being a political, sacred and a relational act (FNP, 2009; Iseke, 2013; Sium & Ritskes, 2013).
5. **Communicating values and trust:** Both the message and the messenger matter in terms of effective climate change communication, in so far as speaking to your audience's values and fostering trust (Armstrong, Schuldt, Krasny, 2018c; Moser, 2016). In terms of the message, the series is formed around a central value of parents in terms of protecting the wellbeing of children and hence, a health frame likened to sexual health, to be discussed further below. Lastly, as a messenger, I identify myself throughout the series as a mother myself, as well as a climate activist and Graduate student with ongoing research into this topic as to foster trust with the parent audience.
6. **Loss & Gain frames:** As a central concept, the issue is framed as a health crisis in terms of physical and mental health impacts to youth from the climate crisis (Maibach, Nisbet, & Weathers, 2011). Utilizing the study by Connor *et al* (2016), this health framing is a means of sustaining the message in interpersonal communication online amongst parents, namely through loss frames to do with health impacts to their children. However, I also use gains-frames in the series (*Ibid.*), in terms of what youth can gain through alternative approaches to Climate Change Education that goes beyond just teaching it through the science discipline, such as psychological resilience, alternative climate solutions and fostering a sense of citizenship in a warming world. The idea behind using gains-frame in this way is to use it as a technique to motivate parents into action for advancing this kind of curriculum nationally (*Ibid.*; Hine *et al.*, 2016).

References:

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