



CLAE - project

*Critical Literacies and Awareness in Education
(2017-2019)*

Alexandre Dessingué, Professor

Faculty of Arts and Education

University of Stavanger

uis.no



Main objective : How do we improve critical thinking and critical reflection among pupils?

1. A (trans)cultural objective: to map and compare literacy practices (what kind of learning resources ("texts") are used in the classrooms) in French and Norwegian schools,
2. A pedagogical objective: to discuss with practitioners/teachers and others educational actors (school administrations and school leaders) the way(s) learning resources ("texts") are used in terms of *skills-development*, especially focusing on critical literacy skills,
3. A developmental objective: to develop innovative learning methodologies, resources and activities which focus on the relationships between teaching (textual based) activities and the development of critical awareness among pupils.

A project within the theoretical field of Critical literacy/-ies

(Ref. from Freire and Machado (1987) *Reading the Word and Reading the World*)

“Reading does not only consist merely of decoding the written word or language; rather, it is preceded by and intertwined with knowledge of the world. Language and reality are dynamically interconnected. The understanding attained by critical reading of a text implies perceiving the relationship between text and context.” (Freire and Macedo 1987: 29)

“In a way, however, we can go further and say that reading the word is not preceded merely by reading the world, but by a certain form of *writing* it or *rewriting* it, that is, of transforming it by means of conscious, practical work.” (*Ibid.*: 35)

«Reading always involves critical perception, interpretation and *rewriting* of what is read» (Freire and Macedo 1987: 36); literacy “as an act of knowledge, as a creative act and as a political act”. (Freire and Macedo 1987: 43)

«To study is not easy, because to study is to create and re-create and not to repeat what others say» (Freire and Macedo 1987: 77)



Critical literacy as a methodology within the disciplines : a possible common framework/approach ?

- Cf. Fajardo (2015) «A review of critical literacy beliefs and practices of English language learners and teachers», University of Sydney Papers in TESOL, 10, 29-56
- Recipe : Critical text analysis + Critical pedagogy

Critical text analysis

4 main perspectives when working critically with a text:

1. Reading different texts/perspectives about the same topic
Ciradello (2004) «Democracy's young heroes: An instructional model of critical practices», *International Reading Association*, 58 (2), 138-147 literacy
2. Reading a story that reveals varying points of view
Clarke and Withney (2009) «Walking in their shoes: Using multiple-perspectives bridge to critical literacy», *International Reading Association*, 62(6), 530-534 texts as a
3. Discussing the perspectives of people with different cultural backgrounds
Iyer (2007) «Negotiating critical, postcritical literacy: The problematic of text analysis», *Literacy*, 41 (3), 161-168
4. Identifying the dominant and silenced voices in a text
Mac Daniel (2004) «Critical literacy: A questioning stance and the possibility for change», *International Reading Association*, 57(5), 472-481

Critical pedagogy

- «The principal of shared authority in the classroom, in contrast, supports giving students freedom of choice in selecting texts and issues relevant to their lives (Kesler, 2011) or engaging students in a dialogue to enable them to be aware of their own viewpoints as well as those of others. Such valuing of students' choices and voices allows them to explore their own identities, challenge dominant discourses and understand the complexities of institutional issues» (Robinson (2011) «Thinking better, whatever one thinks: Dialogue, monologue and critical literacy in education», *Critical literacy: Theories and Practices*, 6 (1), 21-35.)

Critical pedagogy (some examples)

Importance of the possibility of taking social action (protesting orally, writing to persons in authority, writing to editors in newspapers, making a video/documentary, etc.)

Bender-Slack (2010) «Texts, talk... and fear? English language arts teachers negotiate justice-teaching», *English Education*, 42(2), 181-203.

Williamson (2016) «Listening to many voices: Enacting social justice literacy curriculum”, *Teaching and Teacher education*, 61, 104-114.

Conducting research to deepen understanding about an issue

Wolk (2009) «Reading for a better world: teaching for social responsibility within young adult literature», *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 52(8), 664-673.

Making documentaries about one's cultural experiences

Comber (2011) «Changing literacies, changing populations, changing places: English teachers' work in an age of rampant standardisation», *English Teaching: practice and critique*, 10(4), 5-22.

Publishing findings in a local newspaper

Rashidi and Safari (2011) «A model for EFL materials development within the framework of critical pedagogy», *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 250-259.

Presenting insights through live performances

Lopez (2011) «Culturally relevant pedagogy and critical literacy in diverse English classrooms: A case study of a secondary English teacher's activism and agency», *English Teaching: practice and critique*, 10(4), 75-93

A Matrix methodological approach...

Critical textual analysis	Critical pedagogy : production of knowledge
Reading different texts/perspectives about the same topic	Dialogical teaching methods : empowerment of the pupil
Reading a story that reveals varying points of view	Importance of the possibility of taking social action (protesting orally, writing to persons in authority, writing to editors in newspapers, making a video/documentary, etc.)
Discussing the perspectives of people with different cultural backgrounds	Conducting research to deepen understanding about an issue
Identifying the dominant and silenced voices in a text	...

