

RECENT TRENDS IN CRITICAL READING METHODOLOGY

Enfoques Recentes da Metodologia de Leitura Crítica

Moderne Richtungen in der Methodologie des
Kritischen Lesens

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SUMMARY

This paper makes a survey of recent approaches in critical reading methodology. I start with the discussion of the role of the language teacher and his responsibility as an educator; he must lead students to a critical evaluation of texts, that is, to acquire a critical sense. The present situation of Brazilian schools does not encourage students to read critically. However, important contributions have tried to deal with the problem. Consequently, in this article I review part of the current literature which deals with the teaching of critical reading. The survey contains theoretical issues as well as pedagogical suggestions which give evidence to the need for critical education and thus critical reading.

RESUMO

O presente trabalho faz uma resenha dos enfoques recentes em metodologia do ensino de leitura crítica. Começo com a discussão sobre o papel do professor de língua e sua responsabilidade como educador; ele deve levar os alunos a uma avaliação crítica de textos, quer dizer, a adquirir um senso crítico. A situação atual das escolas brasileiras não incentiva os alunos a lerem criticamente. Contudo, contribuições importantes têm aparecido para tentar sanar o problema. Consequentemente, neste artigo eu considero parte da literatura existente sobre o assunto, ensino de leitura crítica. A resenha contém questões teóricas assim como sugestões pedagógicas que evidenciam a necessidade de uma educação crítica e portanto de uma leitura crítica.

«A criticidade, como a entendemos, há de resultar de trabalho pedagógico crítico, apoiado em condições críticas... Educador e educando, os dois seres criadores libertam-se mutuamente para chegarem a ser, ambos, criadores de novas realidades.»

PAULO FREIRE

«... we... as foreign language teachers, are more liable to meet, but also, perhaps, better equipped to cope with it. I mean the dangers associated with our condition as citizens of a developing country and members of a culture traditionally disinclined to a critical evaluation of facts, especially of foreign imports...»

SOLANGE RIBEIRO DE OLIVEIRA

Our role as language teachers is not limited to training but it includes an educational dimension. We should also be reminded that as teachers we influence young people on broadening their minds. We have thus responsibility towards these human beings. As Freire has pointed out we are responsible to aid them in their process of awareness in the

world, of transforming objects into subjects who will grow and become free. An education which entails the "practice of freedom," is an act of knowing, that is, a critical approximation of reality. This leads us to advocate that our responsibility as

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teachers and of what we owe to society requires that education be critical. All human beings deserve respect and should be thus given the opportunity for growth and fulfillment. As citizens of a developing country we depend on the technological and scientific advances from developed countries. Another point to take into consideration is that as members of a developing country we are also part of a culture which does not encourage to a critical evaluation of facts whether scientific, technological or cultural in nature.

Significant and deep transformations have been taking place in the last few years in the field of teaching reading in English, especially in what concerns reading strategies which have received a great deal of attention. These strategies take into account the reading process and rely on the studies of cognitive psychologists of the mental processes underlying reading and on discourse analysis. The teaching of reading in English has then attained a high standard. In spite of that, the view of reading as mere extraction of information seems to be predominant in current reading literature.

The present situation appears to be valid but not sufficient for it lacks a critical dimension and it might contribute little to the growth of the human being. As Cavalcanti has noticed, the teaching of critical reading is part of what Rogers and other authors call "learning for life," it prepares students to be ready for other dimensions of life. The ability of reading critically may be transferred to other abilities such as oral and written communication and the learning of a foreign language.¹ The teaching of critical reading in our opinion is, thus, essential in our schools. Cavalcanti also points out to the fact that our teaching of reading stops at the point in which students have acquired the ability of decoding, of reading simple texts sentence by sentence. There is no formalized instruction for the development of reading strategies for global comprehension, interpretation and criticism of texts. This instruction focuses on comprehension of the literal meaning of texts but not on what is beyond the information given in the text, that is, the production of meaning from text, taking into account the student's background and the different readings he might produce from the text.² She relates the lack of ability in reading to the fact that the majority of our students are trained to comprehend only the literal meaning of texts, through the analysis of sentences and phrases without reaching the point of evaluation and interpretation.

The same situation described above seems to stand for the teaching of reading in English. Reading strategies are taught to the point of comprehension not allowing for evaluation or interpretation that is, for reader-text interaction.

However, some authors have tried to deal with the problem. In this article I will thus make a survey of the recent trends in the teaching of critical reading. It contains theoretical issues as well as pedagogical suggestions presented by the authors although it does not mean to be an

exhaustive survey. Since the teaching of critical reading is still at its embryonic stage and current literature is scattered, a multidisciplinary view becomes necessary.

Let us then proceed with a brief discussion of the definition of critical reading. Based on studies of critical thought done by D'Angelo, Cavalcanti defines critical reading as being:

... the process of evaluation of assertions, arguments and experiences... and it has as necessary conditions: intellectual curiosity, objectivity, open mentality, flexibility, intellectual skepticism, intellectual honesty, systematicity, persistence, power of decision, and respect toward the other's point of view. Critical reading refers, therefore, to the reader's readiness to approach a text in an active manner, without being dominated by it. In other words, the reader will feel at ease to criticize a text only if he does not view the text or the writer as an authority.³

The critical reader is, thus, described as a person who is always interrogating the text and exploring different alternatives with curiosity. He is not totally satisfied with the knowledge he has and with the text he is reading. In this manner he produces as well as consumes information, implicit or explicit in the text, without accepting the author and the text as authorities; he interacts with both.

As Carraher points out, the critical reader ought always to have a "critical sense".⁴ He describes a person with a critical sense as one who, besides acquiring knowledge in his area of specialization, doubts and interrogates what has been established as true, explores different alternatives by means of reflection and evaluation of evidence. This person, instead of only consuming, is, in this way, also producing knowledge by not accepting the other's ideas passively. This critical reader uses the ability to comprehend as well as to interpret and evaluate. Evaluation includes distinguishing between facts and opinions (since our ideas are not facts), surface meaning (what is explicit in text) and deep meaning (what is implicit) and also the detection of the author's underlying intention when writing a text.

The teaching of critical reading is part of the process of a critical education. There seems to be a great deal of evidence for the necessity of a critical education in the works of Paulo Freire. In the light of his work education should have the human being as its starting point and his growth, in the social context, as its aim. Education is a process of awareness of the integration of the human being with the world, as Freire says, of becoming a subject instead of a mere object, a thing that adapts to the world without integrating with it. This process of awareness is congruent with the process of the development of a critical sense. The more the human being becomes aware the clearer reality and the world seem to him, since the process of awareness is based in the relation "consciousness-

world".⁵ For instance, when man becomes aware of his historical process, if he is critical he will denounce the existing dehumanizing situation of the world instead of accommodating, that is, not adapting to the world but integrating with it.

This process of education will enable the human being to find his own identity, to exist in the world with his culture and as a consequence to transform the world and himself, instead of adapting to the already existing world of domination. By making decisions, by creating and re-creating the object man becomes a "maker," a transformer of the object. By means of this process he becomes a subject who is not submissive but free.

For the accomplishment of this transformation man-world, there is no place for an education that is not critical. It is an inherent condition for the process of freeing. As Freire points out:

man becomes a subject by means of a reflection about his situation, about his concrete environment. The more he reflects about his reality, about his concrete situation, the more he emerges fully conscious, committed, ready to intervene on reality so as to change it. An education that seeks the development of the process of awareness and of a critical attitude thanks to which man chooses and decides, frees him instead of subordinating, taming, adapting him, as often does the education in effect in a large number of countries, education that tends to adjust the individual to society instead of promoting him in his own line.⁶

Current education gives tasks to students as ready made recipes which promote a complete massification. It is the man-object we have at our disposal, tamed and adjusted. On the other hand, a critical education is dialectical and active. It prepares the student to be receptive to the new, not only because it is new and to refuse the old not only because it is old. Both are accepted for their validity. A critical education also prepares the human being for responsibility in society.

In this context of critical education, critical reading is at its core. It is an essential condition for this education that frees and contributes to man's growth. The reader comprehends, becomes aware of what he is reading, interprets and evaluates by reacting, questioning and appreciating with a critical sense, that is, not viewing the text as an authority.

We find therefore that critical reading should be taught to our students in our schools from the beginning. They should acquire a permanent critical attitude. It is true that some people tend to be more critical than others. However, it is debatable whether this characteristic is innate. Evidence seems to reveal that this is the result of environmental stimuli or training, even if informal. Therefore, if the teaching of reading is to be complete, it should also develop in the students a critical attitude. This ability should include verifying the facts first, how and why they have been

put together by the writer of the text. As Carraher notes:

... we need students who are active, who learn early in life how to discover things by themselves, partly by their spontaneous activity and partly by means of the material we lend them;...⁷

As mentioned before, our schools have the tendency to present mostly facts to our students taking for granted that criticism will come with time and forgetting that reasoning and critical thinking must be set forth. Carraher has noticed that

An excessive preoccupation of educators with the transmission of facts or alleged facts instead of the development of the student's reasoning has resulted in texts from primary education to university level virtually lacking opportunities for reflection. This body of knowledge is presented as if the great conceptual problems were already solved.⁸

Further evidence for the need to assure a critical education and critical reading in our schools lies in the fact that the scientific neutrality proclaimed by scientists is a myth. The presence of cultural domination, values and ideologies might be traced even in scientific texts, considered rational and objective. Scott, among others, argues that even the entries of an encyclopedia reflect a world view, which is conditioned by social, scientific and political bias of the author and his culture, at least in terms of the selection of facts.⁹ Consequently, there is no scientific neutrality.

An example that is cited by Carraher shows that doctors who were treating handicapped babies, referred to euthanasia as the "non-treatment of babies," by means of the "non-supply" of food to these children. He does not use the term euthanasia but only euphemisms. In this manner, the writer of the text presents the concept of euthanasia as if it were neutral, devoid of values. This non-treatment would lead to the death of the babies; in spite of that, the case involving deaths of human beings is presented as a simple, scientific, objective matter.¹⁰ Here, even the choice of topic shows us that the text can not be objective. In some cases, even in extremes as the mentioned above, since we are unable to evaluate the arguments, and the underlying ideology utilized by the authors, it is natural and justifiable that we agree with the scientist who is an authority in the field. This is one of the many cases pointed out by Holmes where "*the scientist always tries to protect his theory*".¹¹

Vieira goes even further arguing that teachers of reading of scientific texts have acted like spiritualistic mediums in relation to the umbanda priest, the "pai-de-santo." The medium agrees with the "pai-de-santo" in every situation; "'pai-de-santo' says, it is said." In a similar way the reading teacher has accepted the scientist as an

authority; scientist says, it is said.¹² She points out that:

Normally we do not even verify if he represses interrogations or if he withdraws from dangerous positions in the same manner as the doctored mediums with the 'pai-de-santo'.¹³

According to Vieira teachers seem to consider all scientific texts objective; however, this is not the case. This reverence for the text, as Holmes calls it, might hinder our perception of bias, irrationality or political and economic interests disguised as objectivity.

Based on Vigner, Vieira shows that the objective text does not exist, by drawing a distinction between objective text and "objectified" text and defining poliphonic discourse. The objective text is impersonal and universal whereas the "objectified" text is subjective and partial. The objective text transmits a content. There is no risk of loss of information, ambiguity, or presence of the author; priority is given to the exposition of data, steps taken in the research and the results. Neutrality is such that results are identical no matter the author, the place or the moment of the research. In the "objectified" text the social context is taken into account. It is thus, subjective and partial since it is linked to the scientists' world-views. Vieira has noticed that:

If reality determines the author's or the scientist's situation and his selection of themes, it is comprehensible that a research might appear about the effects of overfeeding in the United States but not in Biafra or in Brazil.¹⁴

Vieira describes the poliphonic discourse of scientific texts as being subjective and collective at the same time. It contains traces of the author, the "I" (the new) but also a multiplicity of voices, that is, bibliographical references, quotations and consolidated knowledge (the archetypical voice). The result is an intertext which can be a source of subjectivity. The author uses and emphasizes only what he supports and is in accordance with his own ideas. Therefore he chooses what he finds relevant despising what he considers irrelevant for his theory. Another point to be taken into consideration is that normally the scientist does not desire to remain anonymous. Consequently, Vieira postulates "*the inexistence of the scientific text without a subject and axiologically neutral.*"¹⁵ Scientific neutrality and objective texts are thus, a myth.

One of the outstanding names in reading is Françoise Grellet. Her book *Developing reading skills* presents systematic and valuable guidelines to the teaching of reading; however critical reading receives only a shallow treatment by the author.

Grellet opens her discussion by defining reading comprehension as "*extracting required information as efficiently as possible, rejecting irrelevant information*".¹⁶

Related to reading there are three important points that she accounts for — what, why and how we read. We read different types of texts including books, magazines, maps, dictionaries, directories, etc. for pleasure or for information. On the other hand, we read by means of skimming, scanning, extensive and intensive reading.¹⁷

Since reading involves a variety of skills, Grellet proposes several types of exercises:

- I) To clarify the organization of the passage, exercises about:
 - the function of the passage (e.g. convincing the reader)
 - the general organization (e.g. argumentative)
 - the rhetorical organization (e.g. contrast, comparison)
 - the intrasentential relations (e.g. derivation, morphology)
 - the cohesive devices (e.g. link-words).
- II) To clarify the contents of the passage, exercises related to:
 - plain fact (direct reference)
 - implied fact (inference)
 - deduced meaning (supposition)
 - evaluation.¹⁸

The author also offers for consideration some assumptions that we should bear in mind when producing comprehension exercises. Grellet states that authentic texts with their original layout should be the raw material for reading. Grading should be done in terms of exercises not of texts.

Grellet also assumes that reading is an active skill; it should develop the powers of inference, judgement and appreciation leading to discussion and reflection on the texts for reading has a communicative function.

Throughout the book Grellet offers different reading comprehension exercise types that fall into these categories as follows:

Reading techniques

1. Sensitizing
2. Improving reading speed
3. From skimming to scanning.

How the aim is conveyed

1. Aim and function of the text
2. Organization of the text: different thematic patterns
3. Thematization.

Understanding meaning

1. Non-linguistic response to the text
2. Linguistic response to the text.

Assessing the text

1. Fact versus opinion
2. Writer's intention.

This last section deserves a more detailed discussion. Its main purpose is to assess and evaluate the text so as to make readers aware of the writer's intention, of his point of view and possible bias. It is the critical reading section, which is further subdivided into two sections. In the first one students are trained to discriminate facts from opinions and in the second section activities focus on the attitude of the writer, the particular kind of bias that can be felt through his writing. However, only a few exercises are proposed.

In spite of the existence of this section, emphasis is given to comprehension, that is to extraction of information, not to critical reading. The aspect of teaching of text evaluation is not essential in Grellet's writings.

John Holmes, in his article "Ensinando Professores a Ler," defines reading comprehension as follows:

... to comprehend is not only identifying the communicative importance of the features of discourse. We should perceive not only the logic used by the author, the presentation of the argument and how the author develops it. We should criticize the text and examine the author's ideas concerning our objectives at the time of reading. All this will take us much further than the mere identification of functions or notions and the way they are expressed by the author. However, the task of the traditional language teacher ended here and the controversial subject of the 'reasoning ability', was exclusive to the reader.¹⁹

According to Holmes, in order to achieve this reading comprehension the teacher should set forth:

- a) Reading strategies which include: skimming, general comprehension, main points comprehension of cohesive devices and hypotheses (indicated by modals or adverbials) and intensive comprehension.
- b) Establishing the desired level or depth of comprehension.
- c) Analysis of the discourse of the text, a minimum discourse grammar.

The final product will be reading comprehension. Its main objective is to guide reader to extract from the text the greatest amount of useful information, instead of information for the sake of information.

Nevertheless, Holmes criticizes the position that reading comprehension is mere extraction of information from the text which upholds:

- a) Reverence for the text. Objective knowledge is extracted and registered:

- b) Reverence for the author, that is, discover his point of view and purpose in writing the text.
- c) The role of the reader is to attain to the text without criticizing, interpreting or "reading between the lines."
- d) Selection of texts containing only facts and no problem of interpretation.

The author adds that, teacher or reading in what concerns scientific texts have acted like children looking through a shop window at the chocolate in order to discover their prices. He says that:

We use all resources we have at our disposal... in order to identify and extract the information contained in the text, without having entered the text or tasted the delicacies that we have identified. In many ways, we have been too humble, too confused by the terrifying role of the scientific text as a vehicle of objective truth.²⁰

He also advocates that if we view scientific texts as objective, rational and impersonal there will be no place for what he calls creative comprehension. He calls critical readers those who achieve a creative comprehension through questioning the explicative power of assertions as well.

Another characteristic of a critical reader according to Holmes is the ability to perceive the author's underlying presuppositions in the texts. Either his choice of vocabulary so as to transmit his point of view and reasons for writing, or the use of analogies (similarities or differences) will be evidence for the presuppositions. Selection of texts should be done according to the possibility of a creative reading. Texts that contain plain facts are not appropriate.

Another author I will discuss is Michael Scott and his tenets presented in his article "Lendo nas Entrelinhas."

Scott defines a competent reader as the one who creates meaning that is not explicitly indicated in the lines of a text. This competent reader follows maxims that enable him to interpret the coherence of a text. Important factors are taken into account:

- a) Use of background knowledge of the reader, knowledge of the world and linguistic knowledge.
- b) Comprehension of the co-text, i.e., the internal connection of a text which might be:
 - lexical, for example, understand the correct sense of the word "bed" in a text about gardening;
 - grammatical, which includes cohesive devices and linguistic markers, the textual components.
- c) Use of reasoning abilities:

- Supply of information that is not given, i.e., making inferences either by default or related to the culture.
- Perception of similarities and differences, marked or not by cohesive devices.
- Perception of cause — effect relationships. It is dependent on background knowledge.
- Flexibility of mental adjustment. Scott includes at this point predicting hypotheses and confirming them or not and the processing of ambiguities.
- Perception of non-explicit functions. For instance what looks like a mere question might be a request.
- Perception of irony, commentary, "dialogue author — reader," ideology. In order to express the ideational component of his message the author sometimes employs adverbials of commentary. However in most cases the commentary is not explicit or it is ambiguous.
- Ability of defamiliarization so as to "tell the forest from the trees" that is, perceiving the global meaning of the text instead of that of individual lexical items.

Finally, Scott proposes a set of rules or maxims that he calls "a la Grice" to be utilized by the reader while trying to read between the lines. He also suggests that teachers ought to discuss with the students the nature of the reading process, and what reading between the lines involves and formulate suitable questions about the texts. Exercises are also proposed so as to set forth this reading between the lines.

John Holmes and Michael Scott reviewed above explain the reading process in terms of communication and reader-text interaction. For both authors the critical reading of texts is imperative. Reasoning abilities should be developed in readers for the purpose of recognition of the manner the author has constructed his text and what he presupposed while writing it. As a consequence the reader will not be dominated by the text but will interact with it. As Holmes mentions, the so called reverence for the text and for the writer will be eliminated. Scott remarks that if the reader succeeds in "reading between the lines" he will uncover the writer's intentions and all underlying presuppositions which include his ideology (not only political ideas but also his cultural values and beliefs).

Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira in her insightful article "Ideology, Education and the English Teacher" reminds us of our role in society as teachers and the aspect to be borne in mind that we owe a contribution to society. As foreign language teachers our responsibility carries further than just academic concerns. Since we influence what young people will become she argues that our students should be provided with a critical education which would

permit them to unveil the underlying ideology of texts and read critically. She refers to ideology in a broad as well as in a narrower and negative sense. The former refers to world views and value systems whereas the latter is related to "*stratified principles meant to justify privileges which are made possible by oppression within a given society*".²¹

Ribeiro de Oliveira also calls the attention of foreign language teachers to the dangers of an uncritical education in a developing country such as Brazil. She says that "*ingenuous acceptance or radical rejection can lead us to undesirable evils: cultural subservience or cultural isolation*".²² As foreign language teachers we ought to take into account that passive uncritical reading is more likely to occur, due to the reader's lack of security in the treatment of surface forms as well as to ignorance of the cultural background. In addition to this reverence for the text another important factor "*the ingenuous Brazilian awe of almost anything foreign*" comes into play.²³

In order to set forth an ideological, responsive, discriminating and critical reading the author quotes the works of Vieira and Holmes (already reviewed in this article) as well as that of Lewins. The latter's article "Reading Between the Lines" suggests that a number of strategies should be utilized so as to achieve a critical reading. In the first place he recommends a pre-view of the text which includes the examination of the material preceding and following the text. A provocative title for instance will indicate an emotional argument and not an objective text. Intertextual elements as well as the bibliography are important at this stage. Another item to be scrutinized is the amount of space devoted to 'pro' and 'con' arguments. Other points to be analysed here would be the author's biographic data, the information about periodicals in which texts are published and date and place of publication.

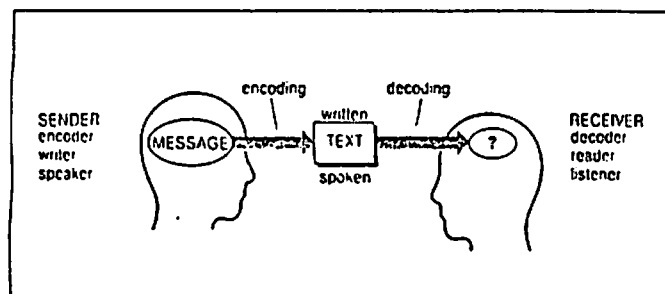
The next step proposed by Lewins encompasses different levels of abstraction for the analysis of texts. The recovery of linguistic clues as well as of omission of facts and the detection of the presence of irony, which is usually taken at face value, should be taught at this stage. Lewins suggests several exercises to develop the students' ability to read critically such as the underlining of rhetorical questions, emotional or judgemental words or the "*comparison of different reporting of the same event with different ideological bents*".²⁴

In closing, Ribeiro de Oliveira proposes that critical reading be taught at any level even to absolute beginners. She illustrates this fact by referring to her book *A tour of Brazil* in which she inverts the conventional formula of a visit to a foreign country introducing a British anthropologist making a tour of Brazil. A major drawback is that the texts utilized are not authentic ones. They have been especially constructed for the book.

Christine Nuttal centers her discussion of the reading comprehension process in the concept of reader — text interaction. Thus, the final product

of the reading comprehension process will be communication.

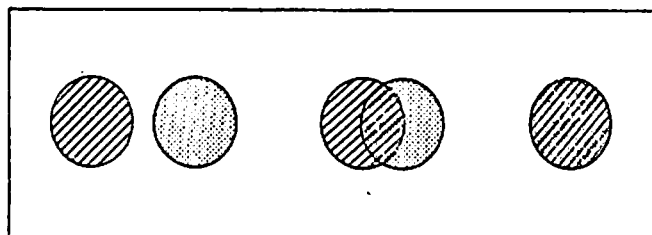
This process is represented in the diagram below:



From this standpoint Nuttall defines reading as "... getting out of the text as nearly as possible the message that the writer put into it".²⁵

Nevertheless, not all meaning gets into the reader's mind. A text that is easy to a reader might seem difficult to another due to lack of linguistic knowledge or the complexity of concepts expressed by the author. In addition, the occurrence of a mismatch in shared assumptions is also possible, as well as the writer leaving unsaid what he takes for granted but the reader does not. These shared assumptions include all knowledge, experiences, attitudes, beliefs, values and cultural background.

Shared assumptions are represented in the central part of the diagram below; on the right and on the left, we have included, respectively, total lack of shared assumptions, and total overlapping of shared assumptions.



The overlapping area stands for the shared assumptions whereas the remaining area stands for the unshared assumptions. The greater the size of the overlapping area the easier communication and vice-versa. As Nuttall notices:

If the writer and the reader are closely similar in background, training, attitude and so on the reader is likely to interpret the text with no conscious effort. There are still dangers of misunderstanding, however: a careless reader may read into the text meanings that are not there, simply because his sense of having much in common with the writer is so strong. Such a reader is assuming that the extent of the shaded area — the common ground — is greater than it actually is.²⁶

At this point we encounter the concept of critical reading. The reader comes across a difficulty and as Nuttall describes it, he actively interrogates the text, in order to recognize if his assumptions differ or not from those of the writer. Nuttall adds

that a careful reader should be able to reconstruct the assumptions on which the writing is based. He must also make the right inferences about what the writer means and remain objective enough to recognize differences in viewpoint between himself and the writer. This is done through the assessment of all the evidence, that is, the choice of words, the selection of facts and the organization of the material. The objective is to get the message intended by the writer rather than the message the reader might have preferred to receive.²⁷

As we have mentioned before, Marilda Cavalcanti posits that in our schools there is a gap between the phase of the acquisition of the ability of reading and the phase of evaluation of this ability. This gap should comprise formal instruction in reading strategies as well as interpretation and critical reading of texts. The teaching of reading strategies and evaluation would include not only literal comprehension but also analysis of the ideas implicit in the text having as a starting point the information present in it and the reader's background knowledge. The end product would be the development of a critical sense in our students.

After defining critical reading as the ability to approach a text in an active way without being dominated by it, Cavalcanti enumerates suggestions for the development of the critical sense:

- a) lead students to distinguish the different types of reading and their purposes for reading every text;
- b) introduce inquisitive questions about the texts;
- c) make the readers aware of point of view and attitudes expressed by the writer;
- d) teach the students to be skeptical about texts not considering them as authorities.²⁸

In closing, David Carraher in his book for social scientists discusses critical reading in terms of the creation of a critical sense in the minds of the readers. He thus defines a critical reader:

An individual who has the capacity to analyse and discuss problems in an intelligent and rational manner, without accepting, in an automatic way, his own opinions and the opinions of others, is an individual of critical sense.²⁹

This critical reader ought to be able to analyse the distortions of discourse found in books, magazines, newspapers, conferences. Critical reading requires a reflection about possible bias that favor certain positions; the social meaning of assertions is not the literal meaning but the interpretation that might be given. Also, arguments, distortions by means of fallacies, different ways of persuading, for example, by using the appeal to an authority or a specialist, so as to make an idea seem valid. Another very important point to be taken into account by a critical reader is the existence of

implicit presuppositions, semantic presuppositions or inferences that are filled by the reader based on his background knowledge and experience.

Carraher also posits that the critical thinker while considering the positions of a certain author, the concepts presented is also evaluating his own coherence, his attitudes, beliefs and values.

Final remarks

In this article, I have reviewed some of the great contributions for the teaching of critical

reading. However, the teaching methodology is still at its embryonic stage. I would also like to point out that there is still a great gap between the theory presented here and our classroom reality.. The majority of our students are still far from being "free" as Freire desires them to be. As Cavalcanti has remarked we are still training students who *don't know how to read*.

NOTES

- 1 CAVALCANTI, Marilda do Couto. Ensino de leitura, avaliação de compreensão do texto sem prática de leitura crítica. *Ensino de Línguas*, São Paulo, 17 : 107, 1984.
- 2 CAVALCANTI, p. 105-6
- 3 My translation of CAVALCANTI, p. 107.
- 4 CARRAHER, David W. *Senso Crítico: do dia-a-dia às ciências humanas*. São Paulo, Pioneira, 1983. p. 14.
- 5 FREIRE, Paulo. *Conscientização. Teoria e prática da libertação*. São Paulo, Ed. Moraes, 1980. p. 26.
- 6 My translation of FREIRE. p. 35.
- 7 My translation of CARRAHER. xvii.
- 8 My translation of CARRAHER. p. 124.
- 9 SCOTT, Michael. Lendo nas entrelinhas. *Linguística*, São Paulo, 16 : 111, 1983.
- 10 CARRAHER. p. 127.
- 11 HOLMES, John. Ensinando professores a ler: o problema da compreensão de textos acadêmicos. *Linguística*, São Paulo, 16 : 135, 1983.
- 12 VIEIRA, Else Ribeiro Pires. Leitura crítica de um texto científico. *Anais I Encontro interdisciplinar de leitura*. Londrina: 171-91, 1984.
- 13 My translation of VIEIRA. p. 171.
- 14 My translation of VIEIRA. p. 175.
- 15 My translation of VIEIRA. p. 176.
- 16 GRELLET, Françoise. *Developing reading skills*. Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982. p. 3.
- 17 GRELLET on p. 4 defines the main ways of reading as follows: ← Skimming: quickly running one's eyes over a text to get the gist of it. — Scanning: quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information. — Extensive reading: reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure... involving global understanding. — Intensive reading: reading shorter texts, to extract specific information... involving reading for detail.
- 18 GRELLET. p. 5.
- 19 My translation of HOLMES. p. 125.
- 20 My translation of HOLMES. p. 134.
- 21 OLIVEIRA, Solange Ribeiro de. Ideology, Education and the English Teacher. *Estudos Germânicos*, Belo Horizonte, 5(1) : 333, dez. 1984.
- 22 OLIVEIRA. p. 332.
- 23 OLIVEIRA. p. 339.
- 24 OLIVEIRA. p. 346.
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- 28 CAVALCANTI. p. 112.
- 29 My translation of CARRAHER. xvii.