Transformational Model of Textual Activity: An Approach Based on Critical Realism and Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

In this article, I present the Transformational Model of Textual Activity (TMTA). It has been anchored in Bhaskar’s critical realism. It is divided in four parts. Firstly, I outline elements of critical realism philosophy, discussing in particular the necessity of considering the ontology in the social sciences. Secondly, I present the methodological approach of critical discourse analysis and its relevance to critical social research. Thirdly, I illustrate a Transformational Model of Textual Activity, analyzing a text. And finally, I consider this approach to language to teacher education and social emancipation.

Key words: Transformational Model of Social Activity; Critical Realism; Critical Discourse Analysis; Transformational Model of Textual Activity.
Introduction

Language teacher education has been an attempt to create potential mechanisms for emancipation, leading critical educators and researchers to engage in projects that encourage changes in education\(^1\). The pedagogy of language teaching/learning has been debated by scholars as inherently political, that is, the language teacher must know how to evaluate the implications on his/her practice. Language teachers must, for example, be aware that the issues discussed with their pupils reinforce, maintain, reproduce or transform the existing forms of power and social inequalities. Critical pedagogical practice (Freire, 1970) should enable teachers to analyze and challenge the institutional structures in which they work. Also, critical pedagogical practice should enable teachers, students and coordinators to act more actively as agents of the sociohistorical change, so they can become aware of their own discourse. In other words, they would be able to explore the historical and social nature of their relations as actors in the educational process.

Kincheloe (1997) has reaffirmed that teachers need to think in an emancipatory way and act with “fortified actions”, that is, actions capable of arousing more interest from students, from community members and from other teachers, as well as conducts capable of enabling them to put their intelligence and ethics to practice. In other words, teachers cannot think of a curriculum outside of the social context.

Brown (2009) has discussed a critical realist framework for the study of learning and teaching. In the article “The ontological turn in education: the place of the learning environment”, he has called attention to the learning environment in the sense that it is not simply the location of learning, but the set of conditions that allow and limit learning. The possibilities of knowledge are given by ontology, according to Bhaskar’s critical realism. Brown’s approach has constructed a critical realist alternative by applying a critical realist position to educational contexts. For him, the learning environment is intransitive and therefore “(a) exists whether or not we have (fallible) knowledge of it, and (b) its elements have causal powers or tendencies” (Brown, 2009: 16).

On this view, realist pedagogy can provide emancipatory impulse to both teachers and students in order to make them aware of the social context in which they are engaged. Topics reflecting social problems in the school and in the community, for instance, can help them to be critical and closer to the social reality (Barros, 2008, 2010).

In this paper, I present a Transformational Model of Textual Activity (TMTA) based on an analogy of Bhaskar’s TMSA. I argue that texts (oral or written) are present in daily human action. One way in which individuals can act or interact in the social events is through speaking or writing. The individuals produce texts which are shaped by mechanisms and powers. Can texts produce or transform forms of social life? To

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\(^1\) Some researchers such as Celani 2003; Cox & Assis-Petersom, 2010; Papa, 2008; Barros 2010 have written on critical education in the last years.
answer this question I will utilize CR and CDA which may contribute to changes in our knowledge, beliefs, values, identity and so forth.

Critical Realism: the relevance of the ontology

Critical Realism was developed by Bhaskar in his work ‘A Realist Theory of Science’ (Bhaskar, [1975], 2008). The concept of critical realism is presented in three main phases: (i) Critical Realism – transcendental realism; critical naturalism and explanatory critique; (ii) Dialectical Critical Realism – including transcendental dialectical critical realism (Bhaskar’s first stage on his spiritual turn]; (iii) The philosophy of MetaReality (Bhaskar, 2012) – spirituality.

His philosophical thought has grounded the theoretical and methodological reflections of a large number of critical social scientists engaged in understanding the dialectical interrelation between society and individuals. According to Bhaskar (1998), society does not consist of individuals, but involves the sum of the relations within which individuals stand. For him, emancipation is self-emancipation. It entails the transformation of the individualistic, self-centered person into an external self, towards solidarity and fraternity. This self-emancipation discussed by Bhaskar should necessarily entail the transformation of agents or participants. If we look into the social reality, we see nothing but (re)actions, with their causes and effects.

Critical Realism refers to the idea that an external reality exists, independently of any conceptions that exist. Bhaskar ([1975] 1998: 41) distinguishes not only the world and our experience, but also the world’s ontological stratification — the issue of being, as represented by three domains of reality: the Real, the Actual and the Empirical. The Real is everything that exists in nature, whether natural objects (physical and chemical structures) or social objects (psychological, social relations, modes of production etc.). The domain of Real has certain structures and causal powers which act independently of the conditions that allow men access to them. The Actual refers to what happens when these powers are activated (Sayer, 2000:12). And the Empirical is the realm of experience, what is observed. Take for instance a worker, whether a teacher, a doctor etc... His/her physical and mental structures are equivalent to the level of the Real domain, while his/her labour (work), as the exercise of this power and its effects, and belongs to the Actual domain.

Bhaskar argues that world consists of mechanisms rather than events; such mechanisms generate phenomena that constitute the actual states and happenings of the world. It can be represented in Table 1 below:

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Table 1 – Domains of Reality
In distinguishing these three domains, Bhaskar (1998:41) proposes a ‘stratified ontology’ in contrast with other irrealist philosophies which have merely reflected the surface structure of reality, considering only the actual and the empirical.

The concept of critical realism implies that the

world consists of mechanism not events. Such mechanisms combine to generate the flux of phenomena that constitute the actual states and happenings of the world. They may be said to be real, though it is rarely that they are actually manifest and rarer still that they are empirically identified by men. They are intransitive objects of scientific theory. They are quite independent of men – as thinkers, causal agents and perceivers (Bhaskar, 1998:34).

Bhaskar (1998:217) has devised a model of society/person connection in which people do not create society. For him, society must be seen as a set of structures, practices and conventions which individuals can reproduce or transform. His model of the society/person is represented below.

According to his model, society provides all the conditions for human action and their effects. For instance, we act to buy things, to consume, to sell etc. In this sense, the intentional human action becomes necessary. The society exists only because of the human action. Thus, everything that happens in society happens because of the social structure. For instance, I cannot be a teacher without an educational structure or keep my money in a bank without a banking system, and so on. As Collier has pointed out, “the social structure largely determines the developmental tendencies of the society: a capitalist economy must progress technologically” (Collier: 1994:142).

However, there is an ontological space between society and people. If the social activity consists of production and transformation, then events become necessary. In this case, we need to give attention to the mechanisms that generate them. Social
structures are constituted of mechanisms and events. Bhaskar (1998:219) has characterized society as follows:

Society, then, is an articulated ensemble of tendencies and powers which, unlike natural ones, exist only as long as they (or at least some of them) are being exercised; are exercised in the last instance via the intentional activity of human beings; and are not necessarily space-time invariant.

Bhaskar’s concept of societies can provide the necessary conditions for a large number of critical social scientists to be engaged in understanding the dialectical interrelation between society and individuals. As he points out, ‘persons do not create society. For it always pre-exists them and it is a necessary condition for their activity’ (Bhaskar, 1998:216). His ontological realism has been used to develop the framework of society and/or individuals because of the stratified nature of social reality.

Archer (1998) has developed the morphogenetic/static approach which may complement Bhaskar’s TMSA. Basically, morphogenesis (structural elaboration) and morphostasis (structural reproduction) can be understood as transformation and reproduction. As Archer points out, ‘they are processes which come ‘after’ something which existed ‘before’ them’ (360). Thus we can say that the human agents do not create the society. On the contrary, they reproduce or transform it.

Archer’s approach considers the socio-cultural-interaction between the Structural conditioning and Structural elaboration (morphogenesis) and Structural reproduction (morphostasis). Bhaskar (1998:357) himself argues that ‘relations into which people enter pre-exist the individuals who enter into them, and whose activity reproduces or transforms them; so they are themselves structures’ (our emphasis).

Both Bhaskar and Archer’s approaches provide fruitful ways for the understanding of the relationship between society and people, and consequently between emancipation and social transformation. It is important to emphasize that both approaches are anchored in realism itself.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Language is a basic element of social life. Therefore it is an integral part of society. As a social process, language necessarily should involve discourse, understood here as a form of action in the world. It is through discourse that people construct their social reality and act in the world in the sociohistorical conditions and in the relations of power in which they operate. According to Fairclough (1989, 2003), discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning. One way of acting and interacting is through speaking or writing, which includes producing texts (Fairclough, 2003).

Fairclough (2003:38) considers a relational view of texts and text analysis in which the ‘internal relation’ (semantic, grammatical, lexical etc.) of texts are connected with their ‘external relations’. Other dimensions of social events, social practices and
social structures are mediated by an ‘interdiscursive’ analysis of genres, discourses and styles which are articulated together.

Inspired by CR, Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) devised an analytical model to help identifying social problems, as materialized in oral or written texts. This opening of transdisciplinary possibilities allowed CDA to be increasingly disseminated in critical social science, enabling discourse analysts to develop a broader understanding of the social life, particularly relating to micro- and macrosocial elements.

Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999), in conformity with Bhaskar (1998), understand that CDA research should focus on the practical issues of social life, thus contemplating an explanatory critique, which is grounded on observations of social problems originating from social practices, and from there seeking solutions to surmount them. In order to fulfill the explanatory potential, according to Bhaskar, the starting point must be to analyze how meanings are constructed in social practice.

Fairclough (2003) proposes an approach to discourse analysis that may help critical social research to expand, since CDA emphasizes the dialectical relation between discourse and other elements of social practices (including other forms of semiosis: body language, visual images etc.).

The analysis model proposed by Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) is based on the explanatory critique of Bhaskar (1998) and suggests five steps:

1) Identifying the problem;
2) Obstacles to the problem being tackled;
3) Function of the problem in practice;
4) Possible ways past the obstacles;
5) Reflection on the analysis.

In the first step, according to the authors, Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999), the critical discourse analyst should identify a problem possibly affecting the social life at some level (e.g. education, politics, economy etc.).

In the second step, the critical discourse analyst should recognize possible obstacles to be tackled, carrying out an analysis termed by Chouliaraki & Fairclough as analysis of the conjuncture. According to these authors, the conjuncture they refer to represents a particular path of a network of practices constituting the social structures. When conducting an analysis of the conjuncture, the critical discourse analyst should focus on the analysis of a particular practice or social practices. Chouliaraki & Fairclough identify four moments of social practice: material activity, social relations, mental phenomena and discourse.

An important aspect pointed out by Chouliaraki & Fairclough in the discourse analytical research is to work in combination with other social scientific methods, particularly ethnography. According to these authors, the combination of these methods
could benefit both. Ethnography requires the presence of the researcher in the social practice context for a period of time, for knowledge beyond the text.

In the third step, *function of the problem in practice*, Chouliaraki & Fairclough point to the need for evaluating how and if the problematic aspect of the discourse has a particular function in the social practice. It means that the analyst should concentrate only on one aspect of the analysis, beyond obstacles, in order to tackle the problem. It also means shifting from ‘is’ for ‘should’. In other words, it means shifting from the *explanatory* stage of the practice that leads to the problem, on to the *evaluative* stage of the practice in terms of outcomes.

In the fourth step, *possible ways past the obstacles*, the critical discourse analyst again should shift from ‘is’ to ‘should’. In other words, if practices are found to be problematic, faulty, one should try and change them. The critical discourse analyst should thus look into the generative effects of practices.

In the last, fifth step, *reflection on the analysis*, the critical discourse analyst should adopt a reflexive approach, approaching social research from a critical research standpoint. Here reflection by the discourse analyst should take into account whether the research being conducted indeed aims at some type of change in the social practice.

It should be noted that, according to van Dijk (2008:12), studies involving discourse analysis can consider other more traditional methods of social science, such as *participant observation, ethnographic methods and experimentation*. According to this author, the discourse is analyzed as a social practice or as a type of communication in a given social, cultural, historical or political situation. In other words, the analyst needs not only to resort to the enunciations of oral and written texts but also to conduct field work to observe how people behave and to describe the spatial or temporal situation, the participants, their communicative and social roles, and so on.

**Transformational Model of Textual Activity (TMTA)**

This approach has been anchored in Bhaskar’s critical realism and in his TMSA which has contributed to social theory. According to TMTA, society is understood as a set of the structures, practices and conventions which individuals can reproduce or transform through their texts (oral or written). It is represented in the figure below.
Following the model, society exists in virtue of the individuals, who can reproduce or transform it. However, this is only possible because of the language. Collier has pointed out that our language only continues to exist because we talk. Our acts of talking do reproduce and transform the language. Language is used by speakers for different purposes, and not for reproduction of the language. For instance, children learn language without being taught (reproduction). When they learn grammar and vocabulary, their languages change over time without noticing it (transformation).

The usage of language (written or oral texts) can bring change to our knowledge, our beliefs, values, emotions etc. Fairclough (2003) has pointed out that texts can start wars, and can also contribute to changing the material world, industrial relations, education, and so forth. The individuals texture texts and they are parts of social events which are shaped by the causal powers of social structures. To interpret their meanings it is necessary to relate the discourse to its referents and contexts. There are meaningful qualities of social practices which are based on interpretations.

It is important to point out that I am using the term text to refer both to textual activity and to the product of the activity. This is an analogy with the transformation model of social activity for textual activity. Here the text focuses on just like an activity in the transformational model of social activity. I understand that there is no completely only textual activity. Most of social activity is partly textual, partly conceptual and partly material. Even writing it is conceptual in part and it is material in part. Thus when I textualize an activity I need to look to a particular form or aspect of social activity in general. Text is an analogue to a society. The crucial question is: how are the texts reproduced or transformed? In this sense I need to consider text in two different ways: $T_1 – \text{text as a social product and } T_2 [T_3, T_4, T_n] – \text{text as a social activity}$. They are represented in the figure below.

Figure 2 – Transformational Model of Textual Activity (TMTA)
Sayer (2000:20) has pointed out that “the social reality is only partly text-like”. There is a multiplicity of mechanism being operated and much of them are unperceived. Some research approaches have concentrated on deepening meanings. Research methods such as discourse analysis, ethnography, life narratives etc. have been fruitful to explain the underlying mechanisms.

In considering texts as part of the social life, with their mechanisms and causal powers, I am suggesting that they are present into the laminated system [or laminated circles], organized in a hierarchy of scale from more macroscopic to less macroscopic, in a overlapping way, according to the diagram below:

Diagram 1 – Laminated systems for the TMTA
Global Structure, Macrosocial Interactions, Microsocial Interactions, Individual and Sub-Individual are dialectically related to. To guarantee a comprehension between Society and Individuals, we need to focus each one of these five laminated systems:

**Global Structure** — this is oriented to relationships in “whole traditions and civilizations and the planetary (or cosmological) level concerned with the planet (or cosmos) as a whole” (Bhaskar, 2010:10). Following this concept, it is relevant to consider the causal effects of global structure which may inculcate and sustain ideologies. The ideologies, for instance, can be enacted in ways of acting, and it is embedded in the identities of capitalism societies. It can be recognized at the level of discourses.

Sayer argues that structure is a ‘set of internal elements whose causal powers, when combined, are emergent from their constituents’ (Sayer, 2000:18). That is, when something happens, it has nothing to do with how many times we observe a specific object (regularity of events). On a critical realist view, it depends on discovering the nature of the structure or object which possesses mechanism or powers. According to Sayer, structures are the product of the agent’s actions. There are no structures without actions. People reproduce or transform the structure through their actions.

**Macrosocial Interaction** — this is oriented to the understanding of the functioning of whole societies or their regions. If we consider the educational institution of a particular region, for instance, the power carried out by the teacher and learners depends on their relation inside the classroom. Also, there are other contexts (inside and outside) that may be involved. In this case, it is relevant to give attention to the walls and gates that enclose the school. Problems encountered by the community such as sexual abuse, racial discrimination, environment etc. could be brought up for discussion, via curriculum-related projects, previously organized by the teaching staff. Professional associations, politicians and nongovernmental organizations would be invited to participate in the discussions, via lectures and seminars.

**Microsocial Interactions** — it is concerned with the relations between functional roles such as a capitalist and a worker, a teacher and a student, etc. The social relations between the individuals or between teacher and students happen in a particular social context. Fairclough (2003) argues that one way of interacting in a specific social event is through speaking or writing (language). Thus when we are using language/discourse (oral or written) we use it to act and interact in different ways. For instance, teacher and learners (classroom teaching and learning) use the language to interact with each other. Social events are shaped by networks of social practices which articulate ways of acting. Thus ways of (inter) acting among teacher and learners can be figured in genres (lectures; seminars; interviews; letters; poems etc.).

According to Sayer (2000:18), ‘many mechanisms are ordinary, often being identified in ordinary language by transitive verbs, as “they built up a network of political connections”’. It is relevant to focus on emergent powers which arise from the social relations, through language, which may block or modify the individual’s action. The focus must be on the relationship between teachers and learners and also on the
texts which must be analyzed and debated in the classroom. Both teacher and learners must be aware of and critical about their social context. It is also important to point out that each particular social event as the classroom, for instance, arises from mechanisms which derive from the social structures.

**Individual** — it is related to physiological, biological and psychological structures. The psychological structures include ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’ structures (Sub-Individual). According to Bhaskar (1998:271), these structures [physiological, biological and psychological] ought not to be regarded as differentiating distinct kinds of events, but distinct kinds of mechanisms. In an open-system event these structures may be simultaneously applicable.

**Sub-Individual** — it refers to ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’ structures, including emotions, values, feelings and identity. Both Individual and Sub-Individual structures may overlap. This structure must be a voluntary act or a will, an inner feeling that arouses our emotions (Bhaskar, 1998:410). This would permit us to acknowledge who we are, how we act in this world and for whom. The agents need radically to commit to social issues and recognize that changes cannot happen by a change of consciousness, but, rather, it happens especially through ‘action’, in a collective exercise of solidarity.

In presenting the laminated system [or laminated circles], we need to have in mind that they operate in different levels of reality. As Bhaskar (2010:10) has pointed out:

> These range from the cosmological, through the physical, chemical, geological, biological, ecological (including the ecology of functioning ecosystems, living organisms in their environment and of climatic systems), psychological, social and normative. Focusing on individual entities in their environment allows us to define a clear hierarchy in which a higher order level has as its condition of possibility a more basic lower order level.

According to Bhaskar, we need to focus on a multidisciplinary approach, involving a variety of disciplines and fields of study. This can have implications for both curriculum and pedagogy at higher education and at secondary and primary education levels.

In considering the reality as structured, differentiated and potentially transformative, we need also to reflect on the philosophy of MetaReality (Bhaskar, 2012:93), giving more attention to spirituality (‘with all faiths or no faiths’). MetaReality can be understood as the possibility of human emancipation considered as an indispensable condition for any human being. ‘Human emancipation depends upon expanding the zone of non-duality beings in a world of duality’. Non-duality is the level of what Bhaskar (2012:11) has called a ‘being’s ground-state’. The cosmic envelop or ‘God’ interconnects the ground-state with all other states, ‘something like an absolute zero of consciousness’. He points out,
money with both language and the law) is the dominant force in our world today (Bhaskar, 2012:16).

According to such conception, I need to develop our sense of spirituality to be capable to act in the world in order to change it. And the philosophy of MetaReality may be a fruitful way to develop our psychological structures in terms of beliefs, values, feelings and identity.

Working with texts in the classroom

In the example below I present a letter (narrative genre), wrote by Peter (fictitious name), age 16, student at the ‘Meninos do Futuro’ School (Future Boys School). This school is located inside the Socieducational Center which shelters young boys under judicial guard and at social risk situation. His essay was written in 2010. I will present only one of the laminated systems or [laminated circles], giving more attention to Peter’s identity [Individual level].

“This is my story... when I was 13 years old I started a fight in the Dom Aquino neighbourhood between Morro and Aldeia. At the beginning everything was nice, and it was a joy to name things in the neighbourhood...time went by...time went by...and when I was 15 years old I tried to kill a guy there for the first time...I fired 04 shots....in the next day the guys from Aldeia tried to kill me, but thanks to God, the gun misfired...this came as a warning for me to change my life...and at 16 I shot 2 guys...I started to steal again....and one day the guys got hold of me again and hit my head with a rifle butt and I stayed 05 days at the ICU...and my goodness! I got well and today I am here because I stole...and you see, teacher, I regret it all...Virgin Mary! without the affection of my girlfriend whom I love so much...my family...It’s very difficult but my goodness I am going to change...I don’t want this life for me”.

THE END (Peter)
Regarding one of the ‘laminated circles’ \textit{[Individual and Sub-Individual]} more attention will be given to the \textit{Identificational} meaning proposed by Fairclough (2003) which is related to ‘style’, identities. Emotions, values, feelings, etc, according to Bhaskar, will also be considered. For instance, Peter says “\textit{I always had everything...brand clothes, family affection.}” These sentences show his interest in evaluating positively his family. The attributive process “have” signalizes his relationship with the family. The positive attribute \textit{“affection”} also denotes value judgement. Peter seems to show love for his family.

Religiosity is also identified in the Peter’s text. He uses exclamations like \textit{“Virgin Mary!} and expressions like \textit{“thanks to God”} to expresses his faith in evaluative and affective elements. Hall (2001) has argued that those identities are made of language, history and culture. Following the same argument, Castells (2000) talks about identities as processes of construction based on cultural attribute. According to him, identities are also constructed with dominant institutions. Peter demonstrates that he has internalized religiosity as a result of his engagement during the religious activities which took place every week in the Socioeducational Center.

Peter’s text also shows that the violence is strongly pointed out. He says: “\textit{I tried to kill the first guy there for the first time;}” “\textit{I fired 04 shots;}” “\textit{started to steal again.}” It seems that he wishes to show that violence has been part of his life.

In this circle, the teacher needs to work with activities that give priority to socio-affective aspects. To value these kinds of texts, the teacher allows students to construct new meanings, and representations, stimulating in them the desire to change their lives. It is important to point out that this cycle cannot appear in a particular genre. In this case, the teacher needs to give more attention, according to Bhaskar (1998), to value, emotions, feelings etc. In other words, the teacher gets involved in projects dealing with social responsibility and solidarity projects, through a voluntary act, a \textit{will}, an inner feeling that arouses emotions. This would necessarily entail the teacher to acknowledge \textit{who we are, how we act in this world and for whom}, radically committing to social issues and recognizing that changes cannot happen by a change of consciousness alone but, rather, it happens especially through \textit{‘action’}, in a collective exercise of solidarity.

Looking at the ‘\textit{Microsocial interactions’}, I can recognize that Peter’s text shows the close relation between his life and the classroom. He says: “\textit{I am going to change,}” “\textit{I don’t want this life for me.}” It is a strong way to ask for help. In this case, the teacher needs to know how to identify this kind of situation. It can affect the relationship between the teachers and the learners in the classroom. The teacher can try to understand the causes and effects, offering activities to overcome these obstacles. It is important to point out that this particular social event arises from mechanisms and causal powers which derive from the Socio-educational Center.
The teacher needs to know all the social structure of the school. For instance, the teachers need to know the relationship between the learners and the other members of the staff. How is their relationship with the school security, for instance? Does the security believe that the pupils can change their lives in an exclusionary context? These are questions that need to be answered by the teachers.

In relation to the social structure, we note that Peter’s text highlights other issues that have affected the school. Peter says: “I tried to kill a guy there for the first time” “I fired 04 shots”, “at 16 I shot 2 guys” “I started to steal again”. The material processes such as “kill”, “fire” illustrate ‘violence’ which is strongly emphasized in Peter’s text. There are certainly other problems that the teacher might find out (sexual abuse, racial discrimination, etc).

In this sense, I need to draw attention to the causal effect of the social structure and social practices which may inculcate and sustain ideologies. The Socio-educational Center has become a place where the dialogue between the teachers, the senior administrators and the clerical staff is almost inexistent. It seems to that the school structure and the more empowered social structures have had difficulty to work together aiming at effective and collective actions with the potential to bring about significant changes to the school and all the community. The teaching staff and school community need to empower themselves to be able to fight against the oppression which occurs inside the Socio-educational Center. Peter’s text is clear signals that the teachers and all Socioeducational Center staff need to maintain a closer relationship.

Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have discussed the Transformational Model of Textual Activity based on critical realism, emphasizing in particular the necessity to rethink the role of critical language educators in a globalized society, considering in particular the problems experienced in the daily context of the school. Peter’s text is an opportunity to make the teacher aware about what is happening in the school context. It can be brought up for discussion, via curriculum-related projects, designed by the teaching staff.

The staff needs to develop collective actions in order to bring about relevant changes in the students and in the school community. It is important to point out that to achieve this requires overcoming many obstacles inside the social structure of the school and in the community in terms of power relations, authority and oppression.

My challenge as a researcher and teacher is to pursue causal powers and mechanisms in order to surmount obstacles in the classroom, in the school and in the community.
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